Promoting higher quality

Subject Review Report

University of Teesside

Psychology

Reviewing the Quality of Education

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) was established in 1997. It has responsibility for assessing the quality of higher education (HE) in England and Northern Ireland from 1 October 1997 under the terms of a contract with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

The purposes of subject review are: to ensure that the public funding provided is supporting education of an acceptable quality, to provide public information on that education through the publication of reports such as this one, and to provide information and insights to encourage improvements in education.

The main features of the subject review method are:

Review against Aims and Objectives

The HE sector in England and Northern Ireland is diverse. The HEFCE funds education in over 140 institutions of HE and 75 further education (FE) colleges. These institutions vary greatly in size, subject provision, history and statement of purpose. Each has autonomy to determine its institutional mission, and its specific aims and objectives at subject level.

Subject review is carried out in relation to the subject aims and objectives set by each provider. It measures the extent to which each subject provider is successful in achieving its aims and objectives.

Readers should be cautious in making comparisons of subject providers solely on the basis of subject review outcomes. Comparisons between providers with substantively different aims and objectives would have little validity.

Review of the Student Learning Experience and Student Achievement

Subject review examines the wide range of influences that shape the learning experiences and achievements of students. It covers the full breadth of teaching and learning activities, including: direct observation of classroom/seminar/workshop/laboratory situations, the methods of reviewing students' work, students' work and achievements, the curriculum, staff and staff development, the application of resources (library, information technology, equipment), and student support and guidance. This range of activities is captured within a core set of six aspects of provision, each of which is graded on a four-point scale (1 to 4), in ascending order of merit.

The aspects of provision are:

- Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Student Progression and Achievement
- Student Support and Guidance
- Learning Resources
- Quality Management and Enhancement.

Peer Review

Reviewers are academic and professional peers in the subject. Most are members of the academic staff of UK HE institutions. Others are drawn from industry, commerce, private practice and the professions.

Combination of Internal and External Processes

The review method has two main processes:

- Preparation by the subject provider of a self-assessment in the subject, based on the provider's own aims and objectives, and set out in the structure provided by the core set of aspects of provision.

- A three-day review visit carried out by a team of reviewers. The review team grades each of the aspects of provision to make a graded profile of the provision, and derives from that profile an overall judgement. Provided that each aspect is graded 2 or better, the quality of the education is approved.

Published Reports

In addition to individual review reports, the QAA will publish subject overview reports at the conclusion of reviews in a subject. The subject overview reports are distributed widely to schools and FE colleges, public libraries and careers services. Both the review reports and the subject overview reports are available in hard copy and are also on the world-wide web (see back cover for details).

Introduction

1.   This Report presents the findings of a review in May 2000 of the quality of education in psychology provided by the University of Teesside.

2.   The University has its origins in Constantine College, founded in 1930 as Middlesbrough's first technical college. In 1970 the institution became Teesside Polytechnic, and achieved University status in 1992. The University describes itself as 'The Opportunity University', reflecting its commitment to providing opportunities to all who can benefit from higher education. The main campus, near to the centre of Middlesbrough, offers academic, social and welfare services, as well as accommodation for over 1,000 students. The University is organised into six schools and an Institute of Design which, between them, are responsible for the education of around 7,618 full-time and 4,922 part-time students, undergraduate and postgraduate. Programmes are offered within the University's credit accumulation modular scheme (CAMS) and the academic year is based on two semesters. Psychology is taught by the psychology section of the School of Social Sciences with the Clinical Psychology doctorate being managed by the School of Health.

3.   In the 1999-2000 session, there are around 500 students following undergraduate programmes, with a further eight studying for the MSc Health Psychology. There are 32 students following the clinical doctorate. A total of 34 students are studying in part-time mode. There are 21 full-time teaching staff in the section and three part-time staff teaching the clinical doctorate.

4.   The following provision forms the basis of the review:

- BSc (Hons) Psychology

- BSc (Hons) Psychology (major and minor routes)

- BSc (Joint Hons) (Criminology; Sociology)

- Graduate Diploma in Psychology

- PgDip/MSc Health Psychology

- DClin Psychology

- Top-up DClin Psychology.

5.   The statistical data in this Introduction are provided by the institution itself. The aims and objectives are presented overleaf. These also are provided by the institution.

The Aims and Objectives for Psychology

Aims

A common purpose of programmes is to produce psychologists who are eligible for British Psychological Society (BPS) membership at undergraduate or postgraduate registration level. Programmes have been designed around BPS specified curricula but their distinctiveness comes from the range of modules with an applied or vocationally relevant focus, and the wide range of practically-based learning experiences in core modules. In accordance with the University's stated mission of 'Opportunity', we aim to promote access and develop the potential of people from a range of backgrounds.

On all programmes module tutors aim to create a stimulating learning environment where they:

- guide students through complex academic material to facilitate deep learning of key concepts;

- promote active learning experiences that enable students to understand ways that psychological concepts are applied in practice;

- provide students with a solid grounding in relevant psychological theories, methods and processes;

- build on this grounding to enable students to study aspects of the discipline in more detail, and to develop areas of expertise based on their interests.

All provision recognises that students should be equipped to pursue lifelong learning after their studies, and to possess competencies that have value in the workplace and community through practice in the following transferable skills:

- research design, data collection and data analysis skills;

- criteria evaluation and higher-order analytic skills;

- skills of oral and written presentation;

- individual and group working skills;

- generic and discipline-specific information technology (IT) skills.

Objectives

General objectives for all programmes

The following objectives are common to both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

- Students' work complies with the BPS code of practice.

- Students assume greater responsibility for learning as they progress through programme stages (in line with the University Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy), culminating in final research projects.

- Students develop academic and transferable skills that enable them to pursue further study and be effective learners in other contexts.

Undergraduate psychology programmes

On successful completion of single, major or joint honours undergraduate programmes, all students will be able to demonstrate:

- knowledge of key topics and perspectives in psychology and the ability to evaluate knowledge in those areas;

- understanding of the scope and limitations of enquiry within the discipline;

- the ability to identify an issue for investigation, formulate research questions and competently operate appropriate methodologies in response to those questions;

- the ability to apply relevant analytic techniques to empirical data, to interpret outputs and to present findings in an intelligible format;

- the ability to evaluate their own and others' research findings critically, and to make explicit their own theoretical orientation.

Single honours students will also demonstrate:

- expertise in integrating the major psychological perspectives within specialist areas of study;

- breadth and depth in their understanding of the discipline based on topics studied in option modules and dissertation.

Major route students will also demonstrate:

- some specialism through their study of option modules and dissertation;

- understanding of theories and methods and an appreciation of the scope of their minor discipline.

Joint honours students will also demonstrate:

- a corresponding level of knowledge in both disciplines and evaluation of competing perspectives;

- some specialism through their dissertation.

Students following a minor route in psychology (or who take psychology modules as part of other programmes) will demonstrate some understanding of psychological theories and methods and an appreciation of the scope of psychology.

Postgraduate Psychology Programmes

Graduate Diploma in Psychology

This programme is designed for graduate students. Its purpose is to allow them to complete the BPS requirements for Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR); therefore it has the same objectives as those identified for the single honours undergraduate psychology programme.

PgDip/MSc Health Psychology

On successful completion of the programme all students will be able to demonstrate:

- knowledge of the interdisciplinary nature of health psychology ;
- knowledge of how health psychology can be employed to protect and promote health in various settings;
- the ability to make informed contributions to current debates within the field;
- the ability to evaluate critically the nature and practice of research in relation to the delivery of health care.

Masters students will also demonstrate:

- depth in their understanding of an applied area;
- competence as academic researchers through the execution of a substantive dissertation project;
- the ability to conduct an oral defence of their dissertation.

DClinical Psychology

On successful completion of this programme all trainees will:

- be eligible to register with the BPS as chartered clinical psychologists;
- possess practitioner, academic and research skills to underpin practice;
- achieve basic clinical competence in four core areas of practice, and greater competence in a further two areas;
- acquire knowledge of a range of psychological models relevant to clinical psychology practice;
- demonstrate the ability to conduct a major, empirical, in-depth investigation in service settings, culminating in a dissertation;
- the ability to conduct an oral defence of their dissertation.

'Top Up' D Clin. Psychology

All successful students will demonstrate the final two objectives listed above for DClinPsy.

Summary of the Review

6.   The graded profile in paragraph 7 indicates the extent to which the student learning experience and achievement demonstrate that the aims and objectives set by the subject provider are being met. The tests and the criteria applied by the reviewers are these:

Aspects of provision

1. Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation

2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

3. Student Progression and Achievement

4. Student Support and Guidance

5. Learning Resources

6. Quality Management and Enhancement.

Tests to be applied

To what extent do the student learning experience and student achievement, within this aspect of provision, contribute to meeting the objectives set by the subject provider?

Do the objectives set, and the level of attainment of those objectives, allow the aims set by the subject provider to be met?

Scale points

1
The aims and/or objectives set by the subject provider are not met; there are major shortcomings that must be rectified.

2
This aspect makes an acceptable contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives, but significant improvement could be made.

The aims set by the subject provider are broadly met.

3
This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however, there is scope for improvement.

The aims set by the subject provider are substantially met.

4
This aspect makes a full contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives.

The aims set by the subject provider are met.

7.   The grades awarded as a result of the review are:

Aspects of provision	Grade
Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation	**4**
Teaching, Learning and Assessment	**3**
Student Progression and Achievement	**3**
Student Support and Guidance	**3**
Learning Resources	**4**
Quality Management and Enhancement	**3**

8.   The quality of education in psychology at the University of Teesside is **approved**.

The Quality of Education

Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation

9.   Considerable flexibility is offered by the range of awards available to undergraduate students. The major route is intended for those who wish to predominantly study psychology but have an interest in another discipline. Students on minor routes may follow a specialism in psychology, such as social or developmental psychology, by taking sequentially related modules. Students studying all these routes take a compulsory core module in psychological research methods. All of the awards, with the exception of the minor route, are approved by the British Psychological Society (BPS) to provide graduate membership and the Graduate Basis for Registration (GBR). The clinical psychology programmes are also accredited by the BPS.

10.   The single honours structure has both coherence and progression; stages 1 and 2 cover the BPS specified core curriculum, while stage 3 allows students the opportunity for choice and to undertake a range of applied modules. Research methods are taught throughout the first two years and prepare students for the dissertation in Stage 3. Students on the two joint honours programmes undertake all the single honours core curriculum as well as a psychology-based dissertation, thus ensuring GBR.

11.   The graduate diploma is designed for graduates from other disciplines. Students present their own portfolio of previous education and experience, and then follow appropriate modules from the first and second stage single honours course curriculum. The MSc Health Psychology programme has a broad curriculum and covers a range of perspectives. It has two strands, covering health psychology and research methods. The masters award comprises a dissertation including empirical research.

12.   The DClinPsy curriculum was devised to conform to the BPS criteria for chartered accreditation. It consists of three parallel strands; academic study, supervised practice and research. The research strand culminates in the production of a major project and dissertation conducted over three semesters. The coherence of the doctorate programme is achieved through the close integration of theory and practice and the clinical, academic and research elements of the programme. No one model of therapy predominates and an eclectic and integrated approach is encouraged. In the third year, the trainees choose their area of special interest. There is also a top-up framework whereby trained clinical psychologists can obtain a doctorate by completing a substantial research project and dissertation.

13.   Skills are fully embedded in the design of curricula, with a focus on practical applications. The undergraduate programmes assist the development of a number of skills, including those of oral and written presentation, individual and group work and IT. Students are given a grounding in subject-specific skills, including a knowledge and understanding of psychological theory, method and processes. Independent learning is developed progressively throughout the undergraduate programme, culminating in the final research project. Current and former students and employers testify to the development of these skills throughout the course. The employers and clinical supervisors also testify to the clinical and research skills of both the clinical psychology trainees and graduates, and to the high quality of the training.

14.   Currency of all courses is ensured by the research activities and professional practice of the staff. This is particularly evident on the postgraduate programmes, reflecting the strong research interest in health and clinical psychology. Contemporary and applied issues are also covered on the undergraduate programme, particularly in the third stage optional modules.

15.   This aspect makes a full contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives. The aims set by the subject provider are met.

Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation: Grade 4.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

16.   There is a strategy to promote active learning through progressively more challenging learning activities. These foster increasing learner autonomy and the effective use of learning outcomes and assessment criteria. There are specified learning outcomes for each stage of the undergraduate courses and most modules have statements explaining how they meet these outcomes.

17.   The reviewers observed a sample of 14 teaching sessions, covering all stages of the undergraduate provision and the doctorate course. These included lectures, seminars/group sessions, individual tutorials, workshops and practical sessions. Observations included a representative sample of activities across programme stages and teaching personnel. The quality of the observed sessions was generally excellent. Teaching staff were well prepared, committed and conveyed their enthusiasm for their subject to their students, who were clearly engaged in the learning process.

18. Teaching is carried out largely through lectures with associated group sessions involving a range of teaching and learning activities that vary across modules. Psychology practical activities are a feature of all core modules as well as in research methods modules. Many examples were seen of the innovative use of IT in support of learning. There is greater autonomy in learning as students progress. This culminates in the research dissertation which is a feature of all courses. Teaching and learning strategies encourage the development of subject-specific and general transferable skills. However, study skills at Stage 1 could be fostered more systematically and pro-actively in the approaches to teaching and learning.

19. There was evidence of staff providing written feedback on work and written comments on failed examination answers. However, this was of variable quality and not available to the reviewers for all modules. The exception to this was on the DClinPsy course, on which feedback was detailed and constructive.

20. Assessment policies and practice are described in School and course handbooks, and in module outlines provided for students at the start of each module. There is also information available to students on the Psychology intranet. There is a need for more effective section-wide procedures for reviewing and ensuring the appropriateness, clarity and consistency of assessment.

21. Student workloads appear to be appropriate and staff have made efforts to balance assessment demands. There is an intention to provide explicit assessment criteria for each assignment. There is evidence of these being in place for some undergraduate modules, though not universally. Whilst marking guidelines are provided, assessment criteria for the undergraduate dissertations are limited. In some cases, more specific assessment criteria could help to ensure a more accurate picture of students' attainment and allow greater discrimination throughout the scale of achievement. Dissertations for MSc Health Psychology and the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology would also benefit from explicit assessment criteria. Applied research is being encouraged in dissertation work, including the Research Exchange scheme which involves links with government agencies locally for research collaboration.

22. External examiners have commented on some reluctance by markers to use the full range of available marks. Staff are currently developing strategies to increase the frequency of First class honours degrees. However, care is needed to ensure that the early identification of high achievers does not have a detrimental effect on other students.

23. First and second marks are sent to externals. A sample of undergraduate work is double-marked and all postgraduate work is double-marked. Double-marking for the Diploma in Clinical Psychology is blind. There is a need for explicit guidelines in the moderation process involving internal marking.

24. This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however, there is scope for improvement. The aims set by the subject provider are substantially met.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Grade 3.

Student Progression and Achievement

25. The undergraduate intake for the single subject and joint honours psychology degree programmes has fluctuated recently, decreasing last year. The ratio of applicants to places averages around 4:1. In keeping with the University mission of 'Opportunity', the undergraduate programmes have a regular intake of between 30 and 40 per cent mature and non-traditional entry students, whilst 64 per cent of students are from the northern region. Typical entrants average scores around 13 GCE A-Level points.

26. Progression rates from Level 1 to 2 average above 85 per cent, although only 68 per cent pass without resits. Between Level 2 and 3 the figure is above 95 per cent. University records of reasons for withdrawal show that most students do so for personal reasons. Whilst there are quite high initial failure rates on some modules there are few overall failures. The postgraduate clinical training programme has an excellent completion rate. In 1998-99, across the three years, 24 students were successful, one withdrew and one failed. In contrast, the MSc Health Psychology has a disappointing completion rate. This programme has not recruited in the current year and is being revised.

27. In 1998-99, 66 per cent of undergraduate students obtained Upper Second class degrees with a further 32 per cent obtaining Lower Second class degrees. There was no discernible difference in performance between the traditional and the non-traditional entrants to the degree programmes.

28. Much of the work of the undergraduates is of sound quality and a range of abilities is evident in samples of written assignments. The better undergraduates display good knowledge and understanding of psychological issues, including research methods, demonstrate analytical skills and achieve a high level of transferable skills. However, there is scope for further achievement in skills of critical evaluation. External examiners' reports

generally indicate that the undergraduate programmes offer an appropriate education. There is some criticism of students' performance on the masters degree, relating to the lack of reference to psychological theory in their work, a view endorsed by reviewers.

29. In 1999, the external examiner for the postgraduate clinical training course commented on the strong performance shown by the students in the academic, research and clinical components of the course. The reviewers, who had access to the academic and research components, strongly endorsed that view. The report of the recent accreditation of the course by the BPS (January 2000) commended it for the progress that has been made since its inception in 1996.

30. Employers and former students indicated satisfaction with the appropriate subject-specific and transferable skills developed on the psychology degrees. Current students were particularly appreciative of the preparation they were receiving towards future occupations. Destination data indicate a high proportion of graduates obtaining employment across a wide spectrum. They show that 17 per cent of students go on to further studies and 100 per cent of those who complete the postgraduate clinical training take up relevant posts.

31. This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however, there is scope for improvement. The aims set by the subject provider are substantially met.

Student Progression and Achievement: Grade 3.

Student Support and Guidance

32. The University Student Charter demonstrates a commitment to ensuring that students receive appropriate support during their studies to enable them to make effective progress. Within this, the Psychology Section recognise that learning is an individual experience. They have designed their support system around a personal tutorial system that aims to provide both academic and pastoral support. Whilst the system is well conceived, the load on some tutors is excessive as a result of large student numbers.

33. Students report difficulties in accessing some tutors, despite a system of office hours. Student evaluations of the personal tutorial system indicated that two-thirds of students are not in regular contact with their tutors, and at student meetings it was reported that some students had no contact with their personal tutor. Attempts are being made to address this at Stage 1 by having personal tutors deliver mark profiles to students after

semester one assessments. Another strand of the tutorial system involves students completing personal and academic logbooks. However this was not considered helpful by a majority of students with over three-quarters of those surveyed not completing the logbook. The reviewers judged that the system experienced by the undergraduates was reactive rather than pro-active. The existing strategy for study support does not allow early identification of students with learning support needs or academic difficulties. A more active approach is important, given the large numbers of mature students recruited to undergraduate courses and the many younger students with relatively weak academic profiles. The section has responded to student concerns by making changes for the 1999-2000 session, although the effectiveness of these has yet to be seen.

34. The DClinPsy has its own effective and comprehensive system for student support and guidance. It uses personal tutors for academic support, regular trainee forums to discuss issues of concern to students, supervisors to provide support and training on placement, and lists of suitably qualified individuals who are willing to provide additional sources of support independent of the course. Doctoral students were very appreciative of the support provided.

35. Support for students on the MSc Health Psychology follows the undergraduate model, providing personal tutors. However, the small numbers ensure that students feel well supported by all the staff teaching on their course. A comprehensive range of documentation is available to inform students about all aspects of the University and Psychology Section provision.

36. Both the undergraduate and postgraduate admission systems are clearly documented and appear to operate well. Open days are held for prospective undergraduate students and are evaluated positively by them. There are well-designed and fairly extensive induction systems for undergraduates and DClinPsy students, which function effectively. The doctorate course team are to be commended on their rigorous approach to admissions and induction, with integral evaluations and a history of continuous improvements to their system. By comparison, the MSc induction is more modest and the course team may wish to address this. All systems are clearly understood by both staff and students.

37. The University provides an extensive and appropriate range of pastoral and welfare systems. Whilst students valued all of the provision, the careers service was singled out for particular commendation for its responsiveness to their needs. The careers service is working closely with the Section to try to create more employment

opportunities for psychology students after graduation. Liaison between University services and staff in the Psychology Section is well established and effective.

38.   This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however, there is scope for improvement. The aims set by the subject provider are substantially met.

Student Support and Guidance: Grade 3.

Learning Resources

39.   The Psychology Section head, informed by academics, technical staff and student representatives, submits an annual plan for the provision of learning resources to the School Director. The University and School planning priorities also inform final decisions on expenditure on learning resources. Psychology has received significant levels of investment in the past few years but the annual bidding process makes it difficult to plan for replacement and updating.

40.   The DClinPsy has its own ring-fenced budget and is therefore better able to plan strategically. This budget also allows for equipment and book purchases in addition to the University provision. While the provision is still relatively new, it is building up an appropriate resource base for students. These students also have the opportunity to use NHS libraries and other resources such as psychological test libraries. Although some shortages of specialist texts have been identified, students are encouraged to make extensive use of interlibrary loans, funded by the course and the University, to broaden their reading. Students on the doctorate have identified some problems with the lack of IT equipment on some placements, and in their University accommodation. The course team is addressing this by providing laptop computers for loan.

41.   University library services are located in a new, spacious, purpose-built learning resource centre (LRC). The centre is very well equipped, with 1,307 study spaces plus 18 bookable individual study rooms, three bookable video-editing suites, four group work rooms and 400 computer work stations. There is also a staffed resources room with an excellent range of equipment for students with disabilities. The LRC also houses a drop-in student skill centre (DISSC), offering individual and group study-skill sessions for students. Staff in the resources room and in DISSC provide support services for students that are highly valued. Opening hours are extensive, totalling 90 hours each week.

42.   The library has a sound stock of psychology books and journals, including electronic versions, that is appropriate for the curriculum (13,000 books and

55 journals). The Section has its own annual budget and there are arrangements for liaison between the subject librarian and the academic staff. Whilst there had been some reported shortages of texts, students appreciated the efforts made to ease the situation, using short and overnight loans and reference only copies of books.

43.   The Section has extensive computing provision, with exclusive or prioritised access to five computer laboratories, comprising in total 148 PCs and eight Macintosh computers, with a range of appropriate software. The Section also makes extensive use of the intranet to provide a wide range of materials, including lecture notes to support teaching. Students evaluated this very positively.

44.   There is a good range of new specialist accommodation, with appropriate technical support, including a perception laboratory, a biopsychology laboratory, a cognitive laboratory, a psycholinguistics laboratory, an electrophysiology laboratory, six interview rooms and an interaction laboratory. Whilst the provision of specialist equipment is not generous, and some needs updating, all laboratories have good IT resources. The test library is limited in scope and the Section does not support the cost of psychometric tests in undergraduate student dissertations. However, a variety of other support for dissertations is available, including specialist software.

45.   This aspect makes a full contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives. The aims set by the subject provider are met.

Learning Resources: Grade 4.

Quality Management and Enhancement

46.   The University has robust mechanisms of quality management, operating through committees at university, school and subject levels. Courses are subject to rigorous validation procedures and five-yearly reviews. The Section also considers quality issues at meetings of course leaders and at regular meetings of the staff. Additional specific meetings consider particular issues such as moderation and assessment. However, there is some variation in the depth and level of critical reflection of the module reviews and annual programme reviews. Despite a specified format for the latter, clear action points and follow-through of issues are not always evident.

47.   Recommendations of external examiners are considered by the subject staff, and by the clinical team in relation to the DClinPsy, and are addressed within the Annual Programme Review. The Section head has recently adopted the procedure of responding to examiners, formally reporting the staff responses to points raised. Whilst there is evidence of considered

reflection on certain issues, examiners on both the undergraduate and the masters level programmes have drawn attention to points raised, but not addressed, in previous years. The University might consider whether two external examiners are a sufficient number for these undergraduate programmes.

48. There is substantial evidence of the course team's and institutional responses to points raised by the professional body through the BPS accreditation procedures. There is also some evidence of reflection on module and award outcome data, but processes for ensuring parity and equivalence of assessments and performance across the range of provision are not fully evident. Difficulties with the dissemination of results of the assessment board have occurred, caused by the unreliability of the student tracking system. Some students have received letters wrongly advising them that they had failed some semester one modules. This caused distress, despite efforts of the course team to deal with the problem.

49. Student opinion, obtained through formal representation on course boards and responses to set questionnaires, is an effective element of module and course monitoring. Students were able to provide a range of examples where changes to course provision had occurred in response to their feedback. Examples include modifications to the delivery of the curriculum in research methods, more feedback on practical work, and changes to the joint honours provision. Students on the DClinPsy were particularly vocal in their praise for the responsiveness of the course team to issues raised.

50. Staff development needs are identified through the annual personal development reviews and more generally at subject/clinical team level. All new teaching staff draw up an initial development plan, are required to undertake a postgraduate certificate in higher education and are allotted mentors. Recent expansion of staffing and loss of established staff means that mentoring falls heavily on a small number of key individuals. There is an effective system of peer review which informs individual staff development, guides development at the level of the subject and generally enables the sharing of good practice. Staff have engaged in a range of activities related to teaching and learning, student support and research which have had a positive effect on course delivery.

51. The self-assessment provides a fair description of the provision but the reviewers noted a lack of critical evaluation and the omission of some areas of concern. Given the general emphasis on student involvement in the quality process there was less evidence of student engagement with this than might have been expected.

52. This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however, there is scope for improvement. The aims set by the subject provider are substantially met.

Quality Management and Enhancement: Grade 3.

Conclusions

53. The quality of education in psychology at the University of Teesside is approved. All aspects make at least a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives and the aims are at least substantially met. The reviewers come to this conclusion, based on the review visit together with an analysis of the self-assessment and additional data provided.

54. The positive features of the education in psychology in relation to the aspects of provision include the following:

a. Well-designed, coherent and progressive curricula at all levels, offering appropriate opportunities to a variety of students (paragraphs 9 to 12).

b. Excellent, well-planned teaching in the observed sessions, led by committed and enthusiastic and well-qualified staff (paragraph 17).

c. The excellent progression and achievement shown by the trainees on the DClinPsy programme (paragraph 29).

d. Effective systems for admission and induction of students, and responsive careers support. (paragraphs 36; 37).

e. The excellent learning resources provided, especially the newly built Learning Resource Centre and the refurbished accommodation (paragraphs 39 to 44).

f. The robust mechanisms of quality management developed by the University at all levels, and their responsiveness to input from students (paragraphs 46; 49).

55. The quality of education in psychology could be improved by addressing the following issues:

a. The need for assessment criteria to fully reflect student attainment (paragraph 21).

b. The need for an explicit strategy for achieving consistency in the moderation process involving internal markers (paragraph 23).

c. The low proportion of undergraduate students who pass first-year assessments at their first attempt, and the disappointing completion rate on the MSc Health Psychology (paragraph 26).

d. The failure of the current personal tutorial system to meet the needs of all students (paragraph 33).

e. The failure of systems to respond in a timely and effective manner to some comments from external examiners (paragraph 47).

f. The occasional unreliability of the student tracking system (paragraph 48).