



QAA

**Outcomes from institutional audit
Institutions' work with employers
and professional, statutory
and regulatory bodies**



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Summary

Consideration of the institutional audit reports published by November 2004 shows that higher education institutions engage constructively with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) and work in a wide range of ways with employers.

Audit reports from 2003-04 include many examples of the involvement of both PSRBs and employers in the design, validation and review of programmes with some institutions having arrangements for joint accreditation and/or validation events. Institutional guidelines may require or encourage consultation with employers and members of PSRBs as part of the initial design phase and in some cases representatives of these bodies may be used as external assessors on approval panels.

It is clear from the audit reports that some institutions offer central support to subject areas preparing for PSRB visits and require the results of such visits to be reported and discussed by the deliberative committee structure, either directly or as a part of the annual monitoring process. In other cases, liaison with the PSRB and response to accreditation reports remains at the department, school or faculty level. In such cases, there may not be opportunities for the institution to learn more widely from issues or good practice identified in a PSRB report.

Many audit reports note the importance of links between institutions and PSRBs and/or employers which are based on individuals, particularly in strongly vocational areas of provision. In such cases, staff may be active members of the PSRB for their own area, engaged in consultancy with employers, or may be employed part-time by an institution while still active as practitioners. A number of audit reports also identify the contribution made by members of relevant professions who are also members of institutions on a part-time basis.

The introduction of Foundation Degrees has increased the number of students engaged in work-based learning, with employers involved in both the design and delivery of these awards. Additionally, many audit reports identify strong employer links in programmes on which students undertake a work placement.

Feedback from employers on the needs of graduates can be sought through a range of methods, including the use of industrial advisory panels. Careers services are also noted as providing key links to employers. Features of good practice in the institutional audit reports in this area relate to the strong links particular institutions have established with employers and PSRBs, in order to develop their curricula and ensure currency, to provide work placements for students, and to enhance student employability. To sit alongside this, there is a cluster of recommendations which relate to the systematic collection and analysis of feedback from employers. Likewise, where institutions work with PSRBs, there is a cluster of recommendations that institutions consider how they might ensure they extract as much information as possible from engagements, such as accreditations, and disseminate it internally.

The Teaching Quality Information website includes information about employer links and, while this was not mandatory at the time of the audit, a number of institutions had nonetheless described mechanisms for its provision. Some audit reports also noted that information about relevant PSRB and employer links had been published in programme specifications.

Preface

An objective of institutional audit is to 'contribute, in conjunction with other mechanisms, to the promotion and enhancement of high quality in teaching and learning'. One of the ways in which this can be accomplished is through identifying features of good practice across the reports and areas where reports have commonly offered recommendations for improvement.

In due course, QAA intends to produce an extended reflection on institutional audit in the *Learning from audit* series, but since the final institutional audit reports in the present audit cycle were not published until spring 2006, *Learning from institutional audit* is unlikely to be published before 2007. To give institutions and other stakeholders more timely information, QAA has therefore decided to produce a series of short working papers, describing features of good practice and summarising recommendations from the audit reports, to be published under the generic title *Outcomes from institutional audit* (hereafter, *Outcomes...*).

A feature of good practice in institutional audit is considered to be a process, a practice, or a way of handling matters which, in the context of the particular institution, is improving, or leading to the improvement of, the management of quality and/or academic standards, and learning and teaching. *Outcomes...* papers are intended to provide readers with pointers to where features of good practice relating to particular topics can be located in the published audit reports. Each *Outcomes...* paper therefore identifies the features of good practice in individual reports associated with the particular topic and their location in the Main report. Although all features of good practice are listed, in the interests of brevity not all are discussed in this paper. In the initial listing in paragraph 6, the first paragraph reference is to the numbered or bulleted lists of features of good practice at the end of each institutional audit report, the second to the relevant paragraphs in Sections 2 and 3 of the Main report. Throughout the body of this paper references to features of good practice in the institutional audit reports give the institution's name and the paragraph number from those sections of the Main report.

It should be emphasised that the features of good practice mentioned in this paper should be considered in their proper institutional context, and that each is perhaps best viewed as a stimulus to reflection and further development rather than as a model for emulation. A note on the topics identified for the first series of *Outcomes...* papers, which are being published throughout 2005-06, can be found at Appendix 3 (page 15).

The first series of *Outcomes...* papers is based on the 70 institutional audit reports published by the end of November 2004. The second series will draw on institutional audit reports published following the 2004-05 audits. It is likely that there will be some overlap in topics between the first and second series. Papers in each series are perhaps best seen as 'work in progress'. Although QAA retains copyright in the contents of the *Outcomes...* papers they can be freely downloaded from QAA's website and cited, with acknowledgement.

Institutions' work with employers and PSRBs: introduction and general overview

1 This paper is based on a review of the outcomes of the first 70 institutional audits published by 5 November 2004 (see Appendix 1, page 12). A note on the methodology used to produce this and other papers in the *Outcomes...* series can be found in Appendix 4 (page 16).

2 As part of the institutional audit process, QAA asks its audit teams to discuss with institutions how they work with external bodies, including, where this is relevant, employers and PSRBs. As part of such discussions, audit teams are asked to explore with institutions how they obtain and analyse feedback from graduates and their employers, and employers more generally.

3 One purpose of such discussions is to allow audit reports to comment on how institutions inform themselves about shifts in the external environment that may require changes to the curriculum and/or the learning environment. It follows, therefore, that audit reports contain information on how the views of employers contribute to programme development, validation and review, especially in subject areas with direct vocational relevance. Further information on institutions' work with employers is to be found in the sections of the audit reports which address personal support and guidance provision, where reports are expected to identify where there are links between institutions' careers advisory services and employers. The increasing emphasis in recent years on work-based learning in higher education, whether through work placements during the course of vocational degrees, or in the development of Foundation Degrees, has also created opportunities for audit reports to consider this further aspect of institutions' relationships with employers.

4 Where a higher education institution offers a significant number of vocationally orientated awards it is likely to engage with a wide range of PSRBs. At their most influential, such bodies offer the only means of obtaining a licence to practise a particular profession. An example of such a body is the Law Society. In other cases, admission to membership of a PSRB is taken to demonstrate the attainment of a particular range of occupational and professional skills. Hence, accreditation of a higher education programme by a PSRB may exempt graduates of the programme from further examination or assessment for membership, and give access to a licence to practise. In other cases, graduation from a programme with a stated award may only grant a partial exemption from the PSRB's requirements. In some cases, all graduates from the accredited programme obtain such exemptions; in others, there are further restrictions, such as a requirement that students complete and pass an individual project as part of their course.

5 Accreditation by a PSRB will usually require an institution's staff to prepare some form of self-assessment. Typically, the panel appointed by the PSRB to scrutinise the institution's self-assessment will examine curriculum content, the skills developed by students and facilities and resources available to them and the extent to which the programme meets the requirements of the PSRB. Scrutiny of the self-assessment will often be followed by an institutional visit and the submission of a report to the PSRB and the institution. In some cases, reports by PSRBs on institutions' programmes are

confidential to the recipient and the PSRB and may not, therefore, be available for scrutiny in institutional audit. Accreditation may be awarded in full for a number of years or conditions may be set. Some PSRBs require at least one cohort of students to have graduated before they will consider a request for accreditation.

Features of good practice

6 Consideration of the published institutional audit reports shows the following features of good practice relating to institutions' work with employers and PSRBs:

- the work of the Alumni Relations Office and the Careers Management Centre in integrating feedback on the School's provision from alumni, recruiters, former staff and employers [London Business School, paragraph 204 iii; paragraph 91]
- the contribution made by members of relevant professions, particularly through membership of the School Advisory Councils or as members of teaching staff [Royal Agricultural College, paragraph 176 i; paragraphs 56, 86 and 101]
- the contribution of professional practice to the delivery of the curriculum and to enriching the student learning experience [Norwich School of Art and Design, paragraph 154 v; paragraph 67]
- the many links the University has developed and sustains with employers, for example, in the provision of placements and the development of the curriculum [Loughborough University, paragraph 317 ii; paragraphs 86 and 247]
- the range and depth of links with external agencies and their contribution to the professional currency of the School's educational provision [The School of Pharmacy, University of London, paragraph 159 i; paragraphs 10, 11, 54, 57 and 62]
- links with practice at school and departmental level. In particular, the variety of links with industry, professional bodies and practice used to inform the curriculum, assist student employability and support research [University of Reading, paragraph 187 i; paragraphs 5, 34, 107, 130 and 134]
- the way that the College involves external experts, and the benefits derived from the experience brought into the taught programmes by practitioners in the profession [Rose Bruford College, paragraph 150 ii; paragraphs 63, 73 and 79]
- the University's commitment to the development of placement opportunities and the communication of their benefits to students and its efforts to enhance the employability of its students through the opportunities provided by the placement scheme [Brunel University, paragraph 216 iii; paragraph 97]
- the University's efforts to combine major course reviews with those required by PSRBs [University of Bradford, paragraphs 250 ii; paragraph 60]
- the introduction of a University-wide Standing Group to provide enhanced institutional level focus on interactions with PS[R]Bs [The Manchester Metropolitan University, paragraph 202 iv; paragraph 57].

7 There are recommendations in 16 reports for further action or development with respect to engagement with PSRBs or employers. They group into two main areas of concern: the oversight by the institution of the reports received from PS[R]Bs (as opposed to responses from individual subject areas) and the systematic gathering and use of feedback from employers.

8 Consideration of those sections of the institutional audit reports which address programme review and accreditation by external agencies, together with sections examining engagement with employers, suggest the following broad themes:

- registering the needs and requirements of PSRBs and/or employers in programme development, approval and review
- institutional oversight of the receipt of reports from PSRBs
- members of staff who represent the views of PSRBs and/or employers to their institutions
- supporting work-based learning
- securing feedback from employers: industrial and practice advisers, liaison groups and other techniques
- provision of public information about institutions' links with employers and PSRBs.

Registering the needs and requirements of PSRBs and/or employers in programme development, approval and review

9 A number of institutions encourage contact with relevant PSRBs and employers, or scrutiny of their requirements, when developing new courses, modules and programmes of study. For example, one report noted as a feature of good practice that employers and PSRB members often work closely with schools in programme development and in informing the curriculum [University of Reading, paragraphs 5, 34, 107, 130, 134]. At another institution good practice was identified in the range and depth of links with external agencies and their contribution to the professional currency of educational provision [The School of Pharmacy, University of London, paragraphs 10, 11, 54, 57, 62].

10 Many reports give examples of consultation with employers, in terms of both content and likely demand for the programme [Aston University, paragraphs 52 and 55; Bournemouth University, paragraph 84; University of Leeds, paragraph 34; Loughborough University, paragraphs 54, 86 and 247; Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, paragraph 102; University of Reading, paragraph 34; University of Southampton, paragraph 65; Trinity College of Music, paragraph 67]. In other cases, guidelines for the approval process necessitate reference to any PSRB requirements.

11 In a few cases, audit reports noted a potential for conflict between PSRB requirements and institutions' standard regulations or educational aims. Reports gave examples of ways in which such conflicts had been resolved, such as allowing variation from the institution's standard regulations if this was necessary to meet the PSRB's requirements.

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12 In some cases, PSRB accreditation can be combined with institutional approval or periodic review, thus reducing the burden on staff. For example, one institution noted in its self-evaluation document its policy to design curricula in partnership with representatives from the professional areas and, where possible, to undertake PSRB initial approval and accreditation reviews in conjunction with its own approval/review processes. This effective engagement with accreditation by external bodies was cited in the audit report as a feature of good practice [University of Bradford, paragraph 60]. Other reports note that, wherever possible, internal requirements for quality assurance were aligned with PSRB reviews to reduce the burden on staff. In one case, however, an institution had taken the approach of having a PSRB visit completely replace periodic programme review. In this instance, the audit report recommended that the institution consider whether the information derived sufficiently fulfilled the institution's own purposes.

13 Even when the approval or periodic review event is separate from accreditation, a number of institutions include in their guidelines for these processes the option of drawing one of the external members of the panel from a relevant PSRB or from employers more generally.

Institutional oversight of the receipt of reports from PSRBs

14 While the process of accreditation by PSRBs is demanding, it can lead to valuable feedback on a range of issues of interest to the institution as a whole as well as those particular to the specific subject area.

15 Some institutions provide central support in preparation for PSRB visits. In one example, accreditation documentation must be approved by the University's Learning and Teaching Committee before submission. In another, there is an option of help from a central academic quality unit in preparing for the review.

16 A number of audit reports noted that PSRB reports were integrated with the institution's quality processes with, for example, some indicating that the PSRB report informed the annual monitoring process, others stating more explicitly that a progress report on the actions following from PSRB comments formed a part of the annual monitoring report. Rather than waiting for the annual monitoring cycle, many institutions submit PSRB reports directly to a university-level academic committee for discussion. One report notes as good practice the existence of a PS[R]B Standing Group reporting to a central academic committee which provides 'a systematic basis for the university to monitor, extend and augment its feedback from a sector of employers with strong relevance to many of its programmes'.

17 Many audit reports indicated that the primary responsibility for engaging with PSRBs was vested in departments, schools or faculties with, in a few cases, a degree of central oversight. In one such case, the self-evaluation document was cited to the effect that 'salient' information from PSRB reports was presented to the University committee, but the audit team found no evidence of this taking place and recommended that, in order to develop as a learning organisation, there should be opportunity to reflect on such reports on a regular basis. In another case, the audit report expressed concern that, although there had been a recent decision to consider an annual report on PSRB

outcomes at the institution's quality committee, there had been delay in establishing the procedure and the (already full) agenda for the relevant meeting gave rise to the possibility that cursory consideration might be given to the report.

18 Several audit reports expressed concerns that there was little evidence of institutions using PSRB reports in their quality assurance processes. In a number of instances, liaison with the PSRB, receipt of the report and monitoring of consequent actions was carried out at departmental, school or faculty level, with no clear means to allow institution-level oversight, or to encourage wider learning from the experience. In one case, for example, little information was provided to the audit team about the processes employed in responding to PSRB reports and responsibility remained largely at departmental level, with responses not routinely monitored at faculty or institutional level. In another case, the responsibility for compiling and making the submission to the PSRB was found to be at departmental level, with a minimum of institutional participation. Overall, about one in ten of the audit reports analysed for this paper made recommendations that the institution should review the way in which it engaged with the PSRB accreditation process in order to ensure institutional oversight and consider any strategic implications in PSRB reports.

Members of staff who represent the views of PSRBs and employers to their institutions

19 Many higher education institutions employ, as part-time teaching staff, individuals who are also practising their professions or working in industry. This is particularly the case in specialist colleges. Such engagement with external expertise and the benefits derived from the experience brought into the taught programmes by practitioners in the relevant professions was noted as a feature of good practice in three audit reports [Rose Bruford College, paragraphs 63, 73 and 79; Royal Agricultural College, paragraphs 56, 86 and 101; Norwich School of Art and Design, paragraph 67].

20 A number of other audit reports note the value that part-time staff of this kind can bring in terms of programme review and development by ensuring the curriculum is up to date. In one such example case, the students' written submission was cited as having confirmed that 'visiting tutors played a vital role in keeping the exchange of ideas fresh', in another the report noted that practitioners visiting as lecturers 'provide a regular channel of communication with the perspective of employers and the world of professional practice'. In one conservatoire institution, the majority of staff combine teaching and coaching with careers as professional musicians leading to a very close relationship between the institution and the world of professional music to which its graduates aspire. Such links are also recorded as being of direct benefit to students with practice-based staff used as mentors in one institution or noted as giving subject-specific careers advice.

21 In one or two instances, audit reports found that institutions were not taking full advantage of the opportunities presented by their employment of practitioners as part-time staff. In one example, although a significant number of staff are also practising professionally, the audit report noted that the involvement of such staff in course review and development was not consistent.

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22 From the audit reports, it is clear that many full and part-time teaching staff are active members of their own professional bodies and the reports demonstrate that such activity is generally encouraged by institutions. Where this is the case, such participation is seen by the relevant institutions as supporting strong links with the PSRBs, providing support for the development of accredited programmes, and providing a wider national context to committee discussions. In one such case, the institution recorded such links as part of its staff appraisal process. Material from the discipline audit trails notes several instances of departmental links to individual PSRBs. In other cases, audit reports noted indications in institutions' self-evaluation documents that in their internal development and review processes they take account of the work of their staff for professional bodies.

Supporting work-based learning

23 Although discussed in *Outcomes from institutional audit: Work-based and placement learning, and employability*, institutions' arrangements for work-based learning are worth considering for the way in which they deepen their contacts with employers and PSRBs.

24 Work placements and initial professional development periods (varying in duration from a few weeks to a full year) have long been an important element of many vocational programmes, and the advent of Foundation Degrees has meant that even more students are involved in learning in, and from, the workplace. Support for such learning requires close co-operation between institutions and employers.

25 A number of audit reports note how institutions have worked with relevant employers during the development of Foundation Degrees to ensure the curriculum meets the employers' needs. In one such case, this included staff taking placements in local business to enhance their understanding of business practice and needs. Employers may also contribute to delivery of such programmes [Coventry University, paragraph 93].

26 In such arrangements, clear information for both students and employers about minimum expectations has been seen as essential, and several audit reports have commented positively on this aspect of institutions' work. In one example, a supervisor, appointed by the company, meets the relevant school's Placement Adviser and receives a copy of an 'Employers' Placement Leaflet' explaining the minimum requirements of the institution. The same report commented favourably on the support provided by the institution for students and employers during the placement.

27 In another audit report, a key part of the success of the institution's commitment to the development of placement opportunities was found to stem from the considerable efforts made by staff throughout the institution, supported by work placement officers and the Careers Service, to get feedback from employers and secure placement opportunities. The way in which staff had developed these arrangements was noted as a feature of good practice [Brunel University, paragraph 97].

28 In the case of another institution, the audit report identified the many links it had developed and continued to sustain with employers in the provision of placements. In this particular instance, employers commented not only on the performance of individual students, but on the appropriateness of the range of skills they had acquired prior to the placement; together, these were seen as a feature of a good practice [Loughborough University, paragraphs 86 and 247]. Other reports also noted that employers providing work placements for students frequently formed an informal source of feedback. However, in one case, although placements in some areas of activity led to a high level of contact between course staff and potential employers of graduates, the audit report noted little evidence of formal analysis of the resulting material, or of its use in course enhancement.

Securing feedback from employers: industrial and practice advisers, liaison groups and other techniques

29 As noted in paragraph 2, the institutional audit report structure requires audit teams to inquire into and to report on how institutions gather feedback from students, graduates and employers and how they use such feedback information in their own quality assurance and management arrangements. Consideration of the audit reports published by November 2004 suggests that many institutions view accreditation visits by PSRBs, and the employment of practitioners as part-time staff, as effective ways of gathering feedback from both PSRBs and employers. Institutions also use a number of other mechanisms, however, to seek the views of those who employ their graduates. These include liaison groups, industry advisers, practice advisers, invitations to specific seminars or events [London Business School, paragraph 91], feedback from staff carrying out external consultancy work [London Business School, paragraph 91], and special projects to study employment issues [Open University, paragraph 86; The Manchester Metropolitan University, paragraph 112].

30 Liaison groups are most often reported at a departmental or broad-subject level, especially in those areas of provision which have an explicitly vocational element. In the case of one institution, the audit report noted that external advisers make annual visits and that these have led to programme changes [Norwich School of Art and Design, paragraph 61]. Other reports note the establishment by the relevant institutions of advisory boards or committees, including employer members, for programmes where graduates proceed to commercial, scientific or engineering-related careers. Such bodies typically assist with the scrutiny of new programmes, may recommend new programme development and help in establishing links with prospective employers. More generally constituted advisory boards may also have employers as members. However, audits also report resistance to the widening use of advisory panels and variations in the effectiveness of their use.

31 Some specialist colleges and institutions with less specialised remits operate institution-wide groups. For example, in one specialist institution the audit report noted the establishment of a Pharmacy Advisory Committee to advise them on the curriculum and matters of professional practice, the membership of which includes a regional prescribing adviser; a hospital director of pharmacy; and a hospital pharmacy practitioner, as well as representatives of industry, community pharmacies, the

London Region and the Department of Health [The School of Pharmacy, University of London, paragraph 76]. In other institutions, employers' groups have been established to provide informal advice to senior university staff or to assist students reach key figures of influence in their chosen profession. Regular and formal surveys are used in several institutions and their introduction is planned in others.

Careers advice and guidance

32 Most higher education institutions offer careers guidance to students and graduates, frequently through a careers centre or unit operating institution-wide. In several reports, these centres or units are stated to have established good links with employers and, in some cases, acting as a major conduit for employer views on the institution's provision.

33 In the case of one institution, the work of its Alumni Relations Office and Careers Management Centre in integrating feedback from a number of sources, including employers, was identified as good practice [London Business School, paragraph 91]. In another instance, the Careers Advisory Service of the institution is noted as providing a range of activities, including industrial advisory boards and employer visits, which constitute the main conduit for its contacts with employers. In several institutions, employers are represented on their careers advisory service boards and similar groups.

34 Overall, 10 per cent of the published reports made formal recommendations suggesting that consideration be given to setting up improved mechanisms for systematically obtaining feedback from employers, although comments in more than a quarter of the institutional audit reports indicate that the relevant institutions had no discernible means to gather or analyse this feedback. In a further 10 per cent of the audit reports, it was noted that feedback from employers was largely collected through informal channels or gathered at school or faculty level only. One report noted the institutional view that employer feedback mostly affected research. In several others, the institution's self-evaluation document was cited as having stated that obtaining effective feedback from employers of the institutions' graduates was regarded as problematic or challenging.

Provision of public information about institutions' links with employers and PSRBs

35 A number of reports describe the means by which institutions publish information concerning their links with employers, not least because such information now forms part of the information set displayed on the Teaching Quality Information website. Although the provision of this information was not a requirement at the time of publication of the audit reports analysed for this paper, nonetheless some institutions indicated in their self-evaluation documents that they were preparing, or intended to prepare, summaries of employer links for publication. In one case, this was intended to form part of a summary of the institution's statement of its learning and teaching strategy.

36 Many audit reports note that the programme specifications prepared by the relevant institutions referred to links to PSRBs. In some cases, however, there was little detail, considerable variation in what was provided, or it was unclear how the specification articulated with the PSRB's requirements. One institution considered that the need to include specific employers' needs and opinions in programme specifications would distort the aims and objectives of many of its programmes.

Conclusions

37 Taken together, the information from the 70 audit reports published by November 2004 demonstrates that institutions engage constructively with PSRBs relevant to their provision, particularly at subject level. However, in a number of cases, further development is needed to maximise the benefit of such engagements to the institution as a whole and encourage the spread of good practice between subject areas.

38 The reports further demonstrate a wide range of ways in which institutions work with employers, including use of practitioners as part-time staff, the links set up by careers services, the development of work-based learning and membership by employers of advisory boards. There remains a need, in some cases, to develop systematic means of seeking feedback from employers and using such feedback to enhance provision.

Appendix 1 - The institutional audit reports

2002-03

University College Chichester, February 2003
The Royal Veterinary College, February 2003
Cumbria Institute of the Arts, March 2003
Institute of Education, University of London, March 2003
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, March 2003
Middlesex University, March 2003
Royal Academy of Music, March 2003
Royal College of Art, March 2003
University of Cambridge, April 2003
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, April 2003
Bath Spa University College, May 2003
University of Lincoln, May 2003
London Business School, May 2003
Newman College of Higher Education, May 2003
Norwich School of Art and Design, May 2003
Rose Bruford College, May 2003
Royal College of Music, May 2003
Royal Northern College of Music, May 2003
The School of Pharmacy, University of London, May 2003
College of St Mark and St John, May 2003
The Surrey Institute of Art & Design, University College, May 2003
Trinity and All Saints College, May 2003
Trinity College of Music, May 2003
Royal College of Nursing Institute, July 2003

2003-04

University of Bath, October 2003
University of Bradford, November 2003
University of Buckingham, November 2003
University of Essex, November 2003
University of Exeter, November 2003
University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, November 2003
University of Sheffield, November 2003
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, December 2003
Royal Agricultural College, December 2003
University of Southampton, December 2003
St Martin's College, Lancaster, December 2003

University of Surrey, Roehampton, December 2003
University of York, December 2003
University of East Anglia, January 2004
University of Durham, February 2004
University of Liverpool, February 2004
Writtle College, February 2004
Bournemouth University, March 2004
The Institute of Cancer Research, March 2004
University of Kent, March 2004
University of Leeds, March 2004
Loughborough University, March 2004
Open University, March 2004
University of Oxford, March 2004
University of Salford, March 2004
University of Warwick, March 2004
University of Wolverhampton, March 2004
Aston University, April 2004
University of Birmingham, April 2004
University of Bristol, April 2004
University of Central Lancashire, April 2004
Coventry University, April 2004
The London Institute, April 2004
University of Portsmouth, April 2004
Anglia Polytechnic University, May 2004
University of Brighton, May 2004
Brunel University, May 2004
University of Keele, May 2004
The Nottingham Trent University, May 2004
University of Reading, May 2004
University of Sussex, May 2004
Wimbledon School of Art, May 2004
University of Greenwich, June 2004
King's College London, June 2004
University of Lancaster, June 2004
The Manchester Metropolitan University, June 2004

Appendix 2 - Reports on specialist institutions

The Royal Veterinary College, February 2003
Cumbria Institute of the Arts, March 2003
Institute of Education, University of London, March 2003
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, March 2003
Royal Academy of Music, March 2003
Royal College of Art, March 2003
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, April 2003
London Business School, May 2003
Newman College of Higher Education, May 2003
Norwich School of Art and Design, May 2003
Rose Bruford College, May 2003
Royal College of Music, May 2003
Royal Northern College of Music, May 2003
The School of Pharmacy, University of London, May 2003
The Surrey Institute of Art & Design, University College, May 2003
Trinity and All Saints College, May 2003
Trinity College of Music, May 2003
Royal College of Nursing Institute, July 2003
Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, December 2003
Royal Agricultural College, December 2003
Writtle College, February 2004
The Institute of Cancer Research, March 2004
The London Institute, April 2004
Wimbledon School of Art, May 2004

Appendix 3 - Projected titles of *Outcomes...* papers

In most cases, *Outcomes...* papers will be no longer than 15 sides of A4. QAA retains copyright in the *Outcomes...* papers, but as noted earlier, they may be freely used, with acknowledgement.

Projected titles of *Outcomes...* papers in the first series are listed below.

Title	Publishing date (provisional)
Initial overview	April 2005
External examiners and their reports	April 2005
Programme specifications	April 2005
Staff support and development arrangements	October 2005
Student representation and feedback arrangements	November 2005
Programme monitoring arrangements	January 2006
Assessment of students	January 2006
Learning support resources, including virtual learning environment	January 2006
Validation and approval of new provision and periodic review	January 2006
Work-based and placement learning, and employability	March 2006
Arrangements for international students	March 2006
Progression and completion statistics	March 2006
Collaborative provision in the institutional audit reports	March 2006
Specialist institutions	July 2006
The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland	July 2006
Subject benchmark statements	September 2006
Arrangements for combined, joint and multidisciplinary honours degree programmes	October 2006
Institutions' work with employers and professional, statutory and regulatory bodies	October 2006
Institutions' support for e-learning	October 2006
Academic guidance, support and supervision, and personal support and guidance	October 2006
Institutions' arrangements for the management of quality and academic standards	tbc
Learning outcomes	tbc

Appendix 4 - Methodology

The methodology followed in analysing the institutional audit reports uses the headings set out in Annex H of the *Handbook for institutional audit: England* to subdivide the Summary, Main report and Findings sections of the institutional audit reports into broad areas. An example from the Main report is 'The institution's framework for managing quality and standards, including collaborative provision'.

For each published report, the text was taken from the documents published on QAA's website and converted to plain text format. The resulting files were checked for accuracy and coded into sections following the template used to construct the institutional audit reports. In addition, the text of each report was tagged with information providing the date the report was published and some basic characteristics of the institution (base data). The reports were then introduced into a qualitative research software package, QSR N6[®]. The software provides a wide range of tools to support indexing and searching and allows features of interest to be coded for further investigation.

An audit team's judgements, its identification of features of good practice, and its recommendations appear at two points in an institutional audit report: the Summary and at the end of the Findings; it is only in the latter, however, that cross references to the paragraphs in the Main report are to be found, and it is here that the grounds for identifying a feature of good practice, offering a recommendation and making a judgement are set out. These cross references have been used to locate features of good practice and recommendations to the particular sections of the report to which they refer.

Individual papers in the *Outcomes...* series are compiled by QAA staff and experienced institutional auditors. To assist in compiling the papers, reports produced by QSR N6[®] have been made available to provide a broad picture of the overall distribution of features of good practice and recommendations in particular areas, as seen by the audit teams.

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