



QAA

Outcomes from institutional audit Institutions' support for e-learning



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Summary

The first 70 institutional audit reports were completed before the publication in September 2004 of a revised version of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (the Code of practice), Section 2: Collaborative provision*, which incorporates a revision of the 1999 *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning (the Guidelines)*. The revised *Code of practice, Section 2* was entitled *Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)*. The audit reports indicate, however, that most institutions were aware of the *Guidelines* and also of the potential of modes of learning based on information and communication technology (e-learning) to enhance the student learning experience, whether delivered on campus or at a distance.

Features of good practice are cited in several reports and identify strengths in such aspects as the approach to developing e-learning and distance learning, the careful monitoring of developments, and effective support for students studying by e-learning and distance learning. In addition, the care taken by institutions in addressing the quality assurance issues associated with distance learning is noted positively in several of the reports.

Overall, the reports indicate that institutions were meeting the challenges involved in implementing strategies and policies, resourcing and coordinating projects and initiatives, and providing guidance and support for staff developing and delivering e-learning and distance learning. There was also general recognition of the need to harness experience and expertise within the institution and to encourage the sharing of ideas and dissemination of good practice. Several institutions had recognised their responsibility to provide training in the pedagogical, as well as the technical, aspects of e-learning and distance learning. Some recommendations in the reports deal with the delivery of specialist learning support for e-learning and distance learning, such as the need to take a strategic overview of the development of virtual learning environments and to assure the quality of materials delivered on-line.

During the period covered by the reports e-learning and distance and flexible learning were, in many institutions, at an early stage of development. Awareness of the potential of flexible modes of delivery was, however, noted in many reports and an expansion of e-learning identified by many institutions as an enhancement activity. Recommendations made in several reports focus on the need for a strategic approach to the development of institutional frameworks and policies for both e-learning and distance learning programmes.

From the audit reports, most institutions offering distance-learning programmes had found the QAA's earlier *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning (1999)* helpful in adapting and extending their standard quality assurance procedures for the approval, monitoring and review of programmes to cover non-traditional forms of delivery. In view of the impact of blended teaching methods on students' learning experience, several reports indicate that care had been taken in collecting student feedback.

In general, the reports confirm that students welcome the increased use of e-learning and are generally positive about the quality of their experience of e-learning and distance learning.

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 will not be published until spring 2006, *Learning from institutional audit* is unlikely to be published before 2007. To give institutions and other stakeholders more timely information, the Agency 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. In the initial listing of features of good practice in paragraph 5, 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 Section 2 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 Section 2 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, to be published throughout 2005, can be found at Appendix 3 (page 00).

This 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, and 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 its web site and cited, with acknowledgement.

Introduction and general overview

1 This paper is based on a detailed consideration of the 70 institutional audit reports published by 5 November 2004 (see Appendix 1, pages 12-13). A note of the methodology used to produce this and other papers in the *Outcomes...* series can be found in Appendix 4 (page 16).

2 In recognition of the growth in off-campus provision of programmes of higher education, QAA published the *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning* in March 1999. In this document 'distance learning' was taken to mean a way of providing higher education that involves the transfer to the student's location of the materials that form the main basis of study, rather than the student moving to the location of the resource provider; those materials could include 'material on the world wide web and other electronic or computer-based resources'. In the institutional audits conducted since 2002, a section of the Main report discusses the assurance of quality of teaching delivered through distributed and distance methods. Many audit reports contain references in other sections to e-learning, defined as modes of learning that are based on information and communication technology. In September 2004, the second edition the *Code of practice, Section 2: Collaborative provision*, which incorporated a revision of the *Guidelines*, was published with the extended title of *Collaborative provision, and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)*.

3 There are sections on the assurance of quality of distance learning in most of the 70 reports under consideration, although in a number of cases it is noted that the relevant institution had little, or none at all, of this type of provision. There are references to e-learning in more than half of the 70 reports; and of those, more than half of the references occur in the section on distance learning, although almost as many reports contain references under learning support resources, with rather fewer references under the institution's intentions for the enhancement of quality and standards and occasional references in other sections, such as staff support and development or the reports of discipline audit trails. *Outcomes from institutional audit: Learning support resources, including virtual learning environments* discussed learning support resources for e-learning and virtual learning environments (VLEs), essential for the support of e-learning.

Features of good practice

4 Features of good practice identified in connection with e-learning and distance learning include:

- the approach to developing e-learning and distance learning, and the supporting infrastructure that has been established [The Royal Veterinary College, paragraph 25 ii; paragraphs 66, 112 and 139]
- the dissemination of experience of, promotion and support for blended e-learning [Brunel University, paragraph 216 iv; paragraphs 109, 114 and 212]
- effective policy implementation for students studying by distance learning [University of Durham, paragraph 212; paragraphs 80 to 82]

Outcomes from institutional audit

- the work of the Online Study Centre in supporting distance-learning students based in the School [School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, paragraph 299 v; paragraph 178]
- the close attention paid by the University to monitoring the development of its distance learning provision [Loughborough University, paragraph 317 vi; paragraph 114]
- the approach to the use of technology supported learning, including Wolverhampton On-line Framework [University of Wolverhampton, paragraph 295; paragraphs 125, 129, 130]
- the breadth, depth and accessibility of material provided by the internet-based Interactive Education Unit to meet the needs of students with respect to their personal development and wider understanding of cancer and cancer therapies [The Institute of Cancer Research, paragraph 142 iii; paragraphs 99 to 104].

5 Although the arrangements for e-learning and distance learning are explicitly mentioned as features of good practice in relatively few reports, the care taken by institutions in the development and quality assurance of such provision is noted with approval in several reports, including:

- the addressing of the quality assurance issues associated with distance learning in an increasingly coordinated and effective way [University of Bradford, paragraph 97]
- the exercise of considerable thought and care with regard to its developments in the area of distance learning and the attention given to meeting the needs of distance-learning students and to assuring the quality of their experience [Brunel University, paragraph 113]
- the rigorous and effective arrangements for the monitoring of standards and quality assurance in distance-learning provision and the opportunities for promoting good practice [University of Leeds, paragraph 100]
- the serious consideration given by the University to assuring the quality of teaching through distributed and distance methods, including the implementation of the *Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning* [The Manchester Metropolitan University, paragraph 87]
- the care with which the small provision of distance and distributed learning had been developed and was supported [University of Oxford, paragraph 99]
- the operation of the MSc in Reproduction and Development delivered on-line overseas which represents a model of good practice in several respects [University of Bristol, paragraph 106].

Themes

6 A consideration of the features of good practice and recommendations in the audit reports under consideration that relate to e-learning and distance learning suggests that the following broad themes merit further discussion:

- approaches to the development of e-learning and distance learning
- support arrangements
- quality assurance processes
- student feedback.

Approaches to the development of e-learning and distance learning

7 During the period covered by the first 70 institutional audit reports e-learning and distance learning were, in most institutions, at an early stage of development. One institution was reported to have almost 1,000 students registered for distance-learning programmes, mainly at postgraduate level, and another to have around 600 students studying principally or wholly through e-learning and to provide all its students with the opportunity to experience e-learning. These were, however, the exception and more institutions were reported to be 'exploring the potential' of e-learning, or taking a 'cautious', 'prudent' or 'judicious' approach to the introduction and development of e-learning and distance learning. The potential for e-learning to enhance student learning had been recognised by several institutions and the development of innovative teaching and learning methods, such as e-learning, identified as an area for enhancement activity. Among the enhancement plans of one institution was the establishment of an e-learning steering group, an e-Lab development unit and publication of an e-learning strategy to enrich the repertoire of approaches to teaching through e-learning tools.

8 Institutional audit reports have noted cautious institutional approaches to the introduction of e-learning in several instances, some involving pilot studies or small-scale initiatives and, in one case, a collaboration with a private sector e-learning company. It was noted in one report that, following a successful two-year pilot activity in several curriculum areas, the institution had committed itself to expanding e-learning across its whole portfolio. In another institution, departments and faculties were encouraged to develop e-learning approaches when they could be seen to add value to the existing provision. Even in institutions where audit teams found experience of teaching delivered through distance learning to be limited, and not identified as an area for significant future expansion, it was noted that increasing use was being made of e-learning approaches as a part of existing programmes of study. Several institutions were found to be developing more flexible approaches to programme delivery within a 'blended' model that combines e-delivery with face-to-face teaching. It was reported that one institution had encouraged 'the fusion of traditional and e-learning methodologies in an integrated approach', with the result that all its students had been given the opportunity to experience e-learning and, in addition each faculty had developed a fully e-learning or distance-learning course.

9 In view of the rapid advance of e-learning technologies, and the dangers involved in an uncoordinated approach to their adoption and development, a number of recommendations in the institutional audit reports focus on the need to develop an integrated strategic approach and to establish coherent institutional frameworks for the delivery and management of e-learning. In some cases, audit teams noted that learning and teaching strategies had been expanded to encompass

an e-learning strategy. Several institutions were found to have established e-learning strategy groups to review existing strategies or to develop new ones. One audit team was presented with evidence that the institution was considering the best way to achieve coherent and unified strategies for e-learning; another audit report stated that, following a recognition by the institution that its e-learning arrangements had developed in a 'somewhat fragmented way', various initiatives and reports were to be coordinated and integrated into a more defined strategic direction.

10 In a number of institutional audit reports similar recommendations are to be found on the need for institutional frameworks and policies for the development and delivery of distance-learning programmes. In one case the audit report noted with interest that the institution's learning and teaching strategy included an intention to build on experience and expertise in distance learning in order to develop a more coherent framework for the delivery of such programmes. Following their own internal audits of existing provision or the adoption of a VLE, several other institutions were found to have revised policies on distance learning to set down core principles for the future development and support of distance learning programmes in order to ensure comparability of quality and standards between distance-learning and face-to-face teaching.

Support arrangements

11 Several audit reports note that institutions were aware of, and were responding to the challenges involved in implementing strategies and policies, resourcing and coordinating projects and initiatives, and providing appropriate guidance and support for staff developing and delivering e-learning and distance learning. One institution, with a commitment in its learning and teaching strategy to becoming a high quality on-line provider of e-learning, both regionally and internationally, was reported to have overseen extensive expansion and strategic investment in e-learning, both on campus and on distance-learning programmes

12 There is general recognition in the audit reports of the central importance of VLEs for the effective delivery of e-learning. In view of the sometimes uncoordinated adoption of e-learning across some institutions, the need for a strong infrastructure providing a common interface was recognised as essential. There are recommendations in several reports concerning the need to take a strategic overview of the development and use of VLE technologies and to give consideration to the development of a clear policy to progress the implementation of, and support for, a VLE. The development of VLEs is covered in greater detail in *Outcomes from institutional audit, Learning support resources; including virtual learning environments*.

13 The audit reports reveal a variety of ways of organising support for staff developing and delivering e-learning and distance learning, with the arrangements made by several institutions identified as features of good practice. Some institutions were found by audit teams to have established either e-learning committees, usually reporting to learning and teaching or quality assurance committees, or e-learning project boards to coordinate central support and oversee the implementation of strategies and policies. In some cases dedicated e-learning units, centres or offices,

headed by directors or coordinators of distance and online learning, had been established to oversee the development of e-learning. In other institutions the remit of established learning and teaching development units had been extended to include responsibility for the development of e-learning.

14 In the case of an institution the success of which in promoting and supporting blended e-learning had been identified as a feature of good practice, the audit report noted 'the speed and enthusiasm with which the Learning and Teaching Development Unit had promoted e-learning and engaged staff in its introduction and development' [Brunel University, paragraph 109]. In the interests of disseminating good practice, several institutions were found by audit teams to have identified 'champions' of e-learning in each school or faculty and others had established forums for the development of ideas and the exchange of effective new practice. In one institution a Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Learning was found to operate as a club of innovators in e-learning, with departments paying an annual fee to access facilities such as online learning environments.

15 Institutional audit reports note support for the development and delivery of e-learning and distance learning taking a variety of forms. In acknowledgement of the particular challenges presented by the design and delivery of distance-learning programmes, one institution had produced a Distance Learning Support Pack, while in another, a Course Developer's Guide was found to give clear guidance on the additional materials needed for the approval of distance-learning programmes, with particular reference to e-learning methodologies. One institution had developed Guidelines for Technology Supported Learning. Its arrangements were described in the audit report as involving both technology supported learning as a supplement to teaching and as a replacement for face-to-face teaching, including full online distance learning programmes. The institution's Guidelines for Technology Supported Learning were found to offer detailed guidance on the content and design of such learning, requirements for online assessment, staffing, resources and student support and feedback. Overall, the University's approach to the use of technology supported learning was identified as a feature of good practice [University of Wolverhampton, paragraph 127]. Another institution, whose close attention to monitoring the development of its distance-learning provision was identified as a feature of good practice, was found to provide well-defined guidelines and excellent support for staff developing programmes [Loughborough University, paragraph 114]. In another institution staff wishing to offer teaching through distance learning and encompassing both paper and electronic media were provided with technical and procedural advice in an Open and Distance Learning Handbook: A Guide for Developers. A Virtual Distance Learning web page in one institution provided information about where to get help in the development of distance learning, with links to more detailed sources of information.

16 Several institutional audit reports found that institutions with a substantial involvement in e-learning and distance learning had identified staff training and development as a priority. In recognition of the need for dedicated training in the use of e-learning methodologies, one institution had set up a working party to identify staff development needs, while another offered a Certificate of Professional

Development in e-Learning, Teaching and Training to staff who had undertaken training in new technologies. One institution was reported to be in the process of identifying e-learning advisers for each faculty who would help indicate for academic staff how e-learning technology could be used in their individual teaching and procuring, and developing appropriate hardware and software. In addition to acknowledging the need for staff, especially those involved in the delivery of distance learning, to be, and remain, fully abreast of relevant technical developments, several institutions were reported to recognise their responsibility to provide training in the pedagogical, as well as the technical, aspects of distance learning.

17 The institutional audit reports reveal that an increasing reliance on e-learning to support teaching, self-study and assessment presents a challenge for the delivery of specialist learning support resources. In one case, the audit report identified the approach used by one institution to produce and support resources such as multimedia materials for computer-aided learning and a digital image bank of over 1,000 high-quality images, as a feature of good practice [The Royal Veterinary College, paragraph 112]. In another report, an 'Interactive Education Unit' was identified as a feature of good practice and seen as 'exceptional in the breadth and depth of its content and its appropriateness as an interactive learning aid for students at all stages of their studies' [Institute of Cancer Research, paragraphs 99-104].

18 The arrangements for the quality assurance of materials used in distance learning are noted in several reports: in one institution manuals were found to be regularly updated and tool kits for web-tutors to have been developed; in another guidelines for the quality assurance of structured learning materials included the establishment of an editorial board to be responsible for the oversight of both the production process and the subsequent updating of materials; in another a Centre for Educational Technology and Distance Learning was identified by the audit team as a key resource for development of distance-learning materials and delivery methods. One audit report noted with interest the use of an online course materials repository, into which teaching staff were encouraged to place course material. This repository had grown rapidly and the availability of the facility was strongly supported by students who met the audit team.

Quality assurance processes

19 *The Guidelines* focused on those aspects of distance learning where the 'distance element' presents a special challenge to the assurance of quality of provision and the security of academic standards of programmes of study and awards. Increasing the flexibility of on-campus delivery by e-learning has also been recognised as requiring particular vigilance in respect of quality assurance mechanisms.

20 Consideration of the institutional audit reports published by November 2004 shows that they reflect the rapid development of more flexible forms of delivery and indicate the intention of many institutions to extend the use of e-learning and distance learning. Several audit reports identify good practice in this area; for example, one institution was found to be addressing the quality assurance issues associated with distance learning in an increasingly coordinated and effective way [University of Bradford, 97], and another was reported to have rigorous and effective arrangements for the monitoring of standards and quality assurance in distance-learning provision [University of Leeds, paragraph 100].

21 There are recommendations concerning quality assurance procedures for e-learning and distance learning in several of the institutional audit reports. These recommendations for action include the need to consolidate existing arrangements into a more explicit framework of quality assurance; the institution satisfying itself that its procedures for reviewing the processes used to monitor modes of module delivery and assessment were able to capture and take account of the introduction of any new forms of teaching; the need to develop specific guidance for the quality assurance, including approval, monitoring and periodic review, of programmes delivered through flexible learning; consideration of the extent to which procedures for course approval, annual monitoring and periodic review may need to be modified to take account of distance learning; and reviewing the appropriateness of the current programme approval procedures for a change in the mode of delivery to distance learning.

22 It was suggested in one institutional audit report, in which the need had been identified for more clarity in a common institution-wide approach to the definition of distributed and distance learning, and the establishment of policies and procedures, that the *Guidelines* could provide a framework to address distance-learning provision. In another audit report it was recommended that the *Guidelines* should be considered when reviewing policies and procedures in relation to distance learning provision. Although one institution was reported to envisage developing guidelines on distance learning once the QAA *Guidelines* and relevant section of the *Code of practice* had been revised and approved, most institutions with any significant provision of distance learning were found by audit teams to be aware of the *Guidelines* and to have adopted them; deployed them in the validation of distance learning programmes; undertaken monitoring of distance learning provision in accordance with them; carried out detailed mapping against them as part of the validation of distance learning programmes; ensured that institutional guidelines or codes of practice articulated with them or made explicit reference to them; or had developed procedures that had been informed by them.

23 There is general recognition in the institutional audit reports on those institutions offering programmes involving e-learning and distance learning of the need for additions to the standard quality assurance processes. The additional elements in approval, monitoring and review procedures noted by audit teams include the use of expert external advice in the validation or approval of programmes involving on-line or distance learning; a requirement that chairs and members of validation panels have appropriate expertise and training; evidence of external scrutiny of course materials; a detailed checklist of requirements embracing all aspects of distance learning, from initial course approval through to more detailed operational matters; supplementary criteria which must be met before validation can occur; adjustments to means of establishing student representation and feedback; review procedures tailored to meet the particular characteristics of distance provision, with student feedback gained through e mail or telephone discussion.

24 In one institutional audit report, the focus of which was an institution where close attention to developing its distance-learning provision was identified as a feature of good practice, it was noted that all proposals for programmes and modules delivered through distance-learning methods were subject to standard procedures of

internal approval, monitoring and review but, in addition, 'the University requires all proposals to give details of developmental costs, provide evidence of long term market demand, and make a commitment to regularly update materials and make use of expertise in this area from elsewhere across the University' [Loughborough University, paragraph 112].

Student feedback

25 There are several recommendations for action to enhance the student experience of e-learning and distance learning in the first 70 institutional audit reports. In view of a planned expansion of mixed-mode delivery of teaching, one institution was advised to give high priority to ensuring that it was in a position to assure and monitor greater equity of students' learning experience between campus-based and distance-learning courses. It was noted in another audit report that, although the institution had an effective system for assuring the quality of flexible and e-learning provision, the systems for dealing with changes to, and annual monitoring of, programmes primarily delivered on campus did not allow for sufficient consideration of the impact on students of the introduction of a substantial proportion of self-directed learning. In the case of another institution, the audit report recommended that it would be desirable to ensure that its monitoring procedures were strong enough to ensure that students did not perceive electronic delivery as a substitute for face-to-face teaching.

26 One institutional audit report noted that, although the development of blended e-learning could be expected to have a major impact on students' learning experience, there did not appear to be parallel efforts to establish how it was viewed by students, or to treat students as experts in relation to their own learning experiences. It appears, however, from other reports that the challenge of collecting student feedback on e-learning and distance learning had been met by devising specialised feedback forms and varying feedback and representation arrangements to fit with the mode of delivery. In several reports positive student responses to surveys and questionnaires on e-learning were noted. Although reports on discipline audit trails have occasionally indicated some variability in student responses to e-learning developments, audit reports have generally found that students have been positive about the quality of their experience of e-learning and distance learning, and appreciative of the support that they have received.

Conclusion

27 The evidence of the 70 institutional audit reports published in 2003-04 is that, although the introduction of e-learning and distance learning was at an early stage, the potential of e-learning to enhance student learning was recognised and institutions were giving careful consideration to the development of appropriate strategies and policies. Also generally recognised was the need to provide guidance and support for staff involved in the development and delivery of e-learning and distance learning.

28 Most of the audit reports published by November 2004 found the relevant institutions to have been aware of the *Guidelines*, which were current at the time of the institutional audits conducted between 2002 and 2004, and of the need to make adjustments to quality assurance processes to fit more flexible forms of delivery and especially means to give students feedback on their work and to gather feedback from them on their learning experiences. It appears from the reports that, in general, student reaction to the introduction of e-learning has been favourable.

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
Academic guidance, support and supervision, and personal support and guidance	October 2006
Institutions' support for e-learning	November 2006
Institutions' frameworks for managing quality and academic standards	November 2006
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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