



QUALITY
ASSURANCE
HANDBOOK

for

SRI LANKAN
UNIVERSITIES

Committee of Vice-Chancellors & Directors
and
University Grants Commission

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QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

COMMITTEE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS AND DIRECTORS

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

SRI LANKA

List of contents

Handbook	Page number
Purpose and main components of Handbook	3
General principles	4
Components of a national quality assurance system	5
Table showing aspects of institutional and subject review	6
Table of definitions and purposes of institutional and subject review	7
Institutional review	8
Subject review	13
Review judgments	17
Review outcomes	19
Review protocols	21
Review cycle	23
List of Annexes	
A Guidance on self-evaluation for institutional review	24
B Institutional review: sample self-evaluation	32
C Institutional review: guidance on preparing the review report	52
D Institutional review: schedule of meetings for a review visit	54
E Guidance on self-evaluation for subject review	56
F Subject review: sample self-evaluation	65
F Appendix (Statistical indicators)	86
G Example of a subject review meetings schedule	91
H Guidance on preparing a subject review report	92
I Note on peer observation for subject reviewers	93
J Student work: assessment and evaluation form	95
K Reviewer profile and skills matrix	97
L Provisional review cycles	103

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The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance for higher education institutions, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Directors (CVCD) and the University Grants Commission (UGC) in Sri Lanka on the implementation of quality assurance procedures at Institutional and subject level.

The handbook is divided into the following sections:

- General principles
- Components of a national quality assurance system
- Institutional review
- Subject review
- Review judgments
- Review outcomes
- Review protocols
- Review cycle
- Illustrative material (Annexes A to L)

The handbook is the outcome of collaborative work undertaken with the CVCD and UGC, and builds on preparatory work during 2001 and 2002. The following material provides background information on the preparatory work in 2001 and a project undertaken in 2002-03 to design and implement a quality assurance system for higher education.

- Two project reports by Professor K Tillekeratne
- An earlier report by Ms C Webb (University of the West of England, Bristol, UK) and Ms G Clarke (University of Bristol, UK), summarising the outcomes of a 3-day preparatory workshop with the CVCD and UGC in February 2001.

The project is being taken forward by the Committee on Quality Assurance (CQA), a joint committee appointed by the University Grants Commission, chaired by Professor K Tillekeratne.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

"Responsibility for quality and standards can only lie effectively where the powers to control or change practices exist, that is, with the institution itself - not with an external body"

Universities are public institutions. They hold and must conscientiously exercise, and be seen to exercise, their responsibility for quality and standards. Higher education is a 'public good' and is of crucial importance to the health, wealth and well being of society and the economy in Sri Lanka. University accountability for quality and standards is a key factor in promoting and safeguarding public confidence in Sri Lankan higher education.

The following **general principles** apply to the quality assurance procedures adopted for the purpose of institutional and subject review in Sri Lanka:

1. To safeguard the standards of awards and the quality of delivery of academic programmes in Sri Lanka
2. To encourage good management of academic institutions.
3. To identify and share good practice in the provision of education
4. To develop a national quality assurance system in Sri Lanka that combines institutional review (quality, standards and management), with subject level review
5. To implement procedures that is based on academic peer review combined with strong administrative support at national and institutional level
6. To provide sufficient funds nationally to cover the central costs of the quality assurance system, including the payment of academic reviewers and a central administrative team and perhaps providing earmarked funding to support quality assurance in individual universities/institutions
7. To enable funding judgments to be taken on the basis of the outcomes of reviews
8. To recruit a national team of academic reviewers, all of whom will receive training for institutional and subject review
9. To implement the system in such a way as to make use of existing structures, documents and other materials wherever possible, rather than to introduce additional bureaucracy

COMPONENTS OF A NATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Within the national quality assurance system, the Committee on Quality Assurance has agreed that the following components of each institution's provision will be reviewed:

- The university's corporate plan and whether it sets out objectives, activities and targets in the national, regional and local community contexts
- Curriculum design, content and review: adoption of rational and defensible processes, maintaining transparency at all levels
- Teaching and learning infrastructure, including teaching and learning resources
- Teaching, learning and assessment arrangements
- Research
- Quality of students (including entry qualifications/requirements, the concept of multi-level entry and exit; implications for quality of the current system of allocating students to universities)
- Postgraduate studies
- University/industry/other partnerships
- Extension activities (work done in the community)
- Careers guidance and counseling services
- Generation and management of financial resources
- Administration and management
- Staff quality, development and appraisal, including peer observation and sharing good practice
- Students: peer assessment and use of student feedback
- External degree programmes

The above components for a national quality assurance system for Sri Lanka will be incorporated in institutional review and subject review respectively, as follows:

<u>Institutional review aspects</u>
<u>University goals and corporate planning</u>
<u>Financial</u> resources and management
Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research goals and strategy ▪ Funding ▪ Staff support and opportunities ▪ Research infrastructure ▪ Monitoring and evaluation
Quality management and administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality policies and strategies ▪ Learning infrastructure ▪ Administrative support for quality assurance
Quality assurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regulation of awards and qualifications ▪ Entry standards and policy (including pre-entry information) ▪ Programme design and approval ▪ Programme/subject monitoring and review ▪ Assessment procedures ▪ Recruitment, reward and development of teaching staff ▪ <u>Feedback and verification mechanisms</u>
<u>Learning resources and student support</u>
<u>External degree programmes</u>
University/ industry/ community/ other extension activities
<u>Subject review aspects</u>
<u>Curriculum design, content and review</u>
<u>Teaching, learning and assessment methods</u>
Quality of students, including student progress and achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suitably qualified students on entry ▪ Satisfactory progression through the programme ▪ Achievement that matches learning outcomes
<u>The extent of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative</u>
Postgraduate studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate support and resources for postgraduates ▪ Critical mass of permanent research-active academic staff ▪ Availability of training in research methods and other areas
<u>Peer observation</u>
<u>Skills development</u>
Academic guidance and counseling

Definitions and purposes of institutional review and subject review

This table compares the purposes and foci of institutional review and subject review. In some areas, the dividing line is somewhat arbitrary, for example, both institutional review and subject review will look at how standards are set and maintained (by monitoring and review) in courses/programmes.

However, the focus of institutional review is on how the institution assures itself that course/programme approval procedures operated in faculties and departments are acted upon as required. A subject review focuses on how a specific course/programme has been shaped and improved by a systematic process of considered design and review.

<i>Institutional review</i>	<i>Subject review</i>
Institutional review analyses and tests the effectiveness of an institution's processes for managing and assuring the quality of academic activities undertaken by the institution. It evaluates the extent to which internal quality assurance schemes can be relied on to maintain the quality of provision over time.	Subject review evaluates the quality of the student learning experience at programme level. It is about management and assurance of quality at programme, rather than institutional level. Internal evaluation of the quality of education at subject level is normally part of a university's quality assurance scheme.
<p><i>Key features</i> are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peer review by senior university staff ▪ Completion of an analytical self-evaluation document covering university structures, procedures and quality assurance schemes ▪ Provision of a relatively small amount of supporting documents, e.g. committee minutes and terms of reference, internal reports and other evidence of university management of quality matters ▪ Discussions with senior management staff (administrative and academic) about how they assure and manage quality in the institution ▪ Discussions with committees responsible for policy development and implementation ▪ Discussions with students about the management and assurance of the quality of education in the institution 	<p><i>Key features</i> are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peer review by academic staff with significant experience as subject practitioners ▪ Completion of an analytical self-evaluation document covering programmes being reviewed ▪ Provision of documents such as: examples of student work, student handbooks, statistics covering student progress and achievement, external examiners' reports, minutes of subject committees ▪ Observation of teaching ▪ Discussions with subject staff to discuss statements made in the self-evaluation and supporting documents provided by staff delivering the subject ▪ Discussions with support and administrative staff concerning university quality assurance and resources matters ▪ Discussions with students to obtain their views on the quality of the learning experience in their programme of study

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

Institutional review focuses on the powers and responsibilities, which universities hold for quality and standards. It is concerned with how a university assures itself - and the wider public- that the quality and standards it sets for itself are being achieved. Institutional review is separate from, though still closely linked to, subject review. Institutional review is concerned with university-wide processes, which support sound quality management and university planning to maintain an appropriate environment for teaching, learning, research and other activities.

Institutional review - purpose

The overall purpose of institutional review is to achieve accountability for quality and standards and by using a peer review process to promote sharing of good practice and facilitate continuous improvement. We can sub-divide this overall purpose into four specific parts:

- a) **Confidence:** to instill confidence in an institution's capacity to safeguard standards, both internally and externally, through a transparent process which involves and is owned by staff throughout the institution and is accessible to students and other external groups with an interest in an institution's teaching, learning and research activities;
- b) **Accountability:** to achieve accountability through external review and public report of an institution's evidence of its own attentiveness to quality and standards, and of actions taken to improve and be responsive to feedback from students and others engaging with the institution as a provider of academic activities;
- c) **Information:** to provide systematic, clear and accessible information on the standards and quality claimed by an institution so as to inform the choices and decisions of potential students, employers, funding bodies and other 'users' of an institution's intellectual resources and qualifications;
- d) **Improvement:** to promote improvement by identifying and sharing through peer review, good practice and encouraging innovation and active use of national and international standards and benchmarks.

Institutional review can also determine a threshold measurement for an institution's capacity to set standards and maintain quality in a diverse and developing national system.

Institutional review - scope

The scope of institutional review is largely determined by the extent of the powers and responsibilities held by institutions for quality and standards. There is also a practical dimension. The review process is shaped by how much can reasonably and practicably be covered in a periodic external scrutiny process without imposing a burden on institutions which would reduce their effectiveness in teaching and learning. The aim is to use evidence and data generated and used by an institution itself to appraise its quality and standards. The greater the reliance of external review upon an institution's own evidence of self-scrutiny, the greater is the prospect that standards will be safeguarded and. quality will be enhanced

The areas selected for scrutiny through institutional review reflect the concerns and expectations of senior staff in Sri Lankan universities of areas regarded as key to university capacity - and to building capacity - to maintain and develop an effective and competitive higher educational system, within and beyond Sri Lanka.

Requirements for institutional review

Institutional review is based on a prior process of institutional self-evaluation, that is, a willingness by university representatives to gather and consider evidence of university policies and processes in action and to discuss an institution's own view of its periodically accumulated evidence of effectiveness with a team of external peers. In preparation for institutional review, therefore, institutions are expected to have or to develop over the first review cycle:

- capacity to set university goals and objectives
- implementing strategies and procedures
- a desire for university self-knowledge (gained through inquiry, evidence and feedback) commitment to gathering and using data to support inquiry and evaluation
- willingness to engage in constructive self-critical review without threat or hindrance 'ownership' of the process of inquiry, data collection and review at all levels in the institution

Key review questions

These are simple, but powerful. They have the merit of focusing on operations and activities and are applicable at any level in an institution.

- i) How do you discharge your responsibilities for quality assurance?
- ii) How do you know how effective your processes are?
- iii) How do you assess your effectiveness?
- iv) What is your evidence?
- v) How reliable is your evidence?
- vi) How do you use external benchmarks?
- vii) Where do you need to improve?

Outcomes of institutional review

The outcome of institutional review is a published report. Its purpose is to inform the institution and external parties of the findings of the review and to provide a reference point to support and guide staff in their continuing quality assurance activity.

In particular, the report will give an overall judgment on the reviewers' level of confidence in the university's quality assurance arrangements, supported by commentary, on:

- i) the rigour and robustness of the university's mechanisms for discharging its responsibility for the standard of its awards, the quality of the education it provides, the effectiveness of its planning, quality and resource management; and the efficiency of its administration;

- ii) the sufficiency, reliability of the evidence used and its accessibility to external scrutiny; and, in the light of these judgments,
- iii) a statement on the level of confidence in the university's quality assurance system overall.

The commentary will include areas of commendation and areas where improvements or actions need to be taken.

The Review Process

The review process has three distinct parts:

- i) Preparation
 - by the review team
 - by the institution
- ii) The review visit
- iii) The report and discussion of the report and outcome with the institution before publication

Preparation for review

University : Some months before the visit, the institution will have begun to compile its self evaluation document to be completed by a date agreed in advance for submission to the review team in advance of the visit. (See Annex A for guidance on the self-evaluation document for institutional review)

Preliminary meeting : About two months before the review, a preliminary meeting takes place between review team representatives and the university, to agree on the broad scope of the review process, including the range of documentation to be made available and the timetable for the visit.

Review team : The review team meets about four weeks' in advance of the visit, having read the the university's self-evaluation document, to identify lines of inquiry and identify any further information they need to see in advance, either to fully understand the document or to plan their detailed inquiries. They will also identify individuals and groups they will wish to meet during their visit. The team may decide to allocate particular areas of inquiry to individual reviewers.

Review Visit

During the visit, the review team will:

- test and verify (so far as possible) the judgments in the university's self-evaluation;
- review with the university any specific concerns arising from reviews of subjects or professional body reviews;
- gather any further evidence necessary to enable it to form a view on the effectiveness of

- the institution's arrangements for the management of quality and standards.

The visit should last no more than one week, and may take less time, depending on:

- size of the university;
- number of campuses/sites;
- diversity of provision;
- clarity and depth of the university's review document.

In the first institutional review cycle, it is anticipated that review visits will last between one and five days, depending on the size and complexity of the university.

Programme of meetings

The review team will divide its time between meetings with staff and students and reading documented evidence provided by the institution. It may also request a tour of the main campuses, though the extent and purpose of this should be judged in the light of the team's view of its main lines of inquiry.

Most meetings will be planned in advance to a schedule suggested by the review team, having read the self-evaluation. The team may request meetings with individuals or small groups, for example with:

- members of the university council/governing Body (or equivalent
- the Vice-Chancellor/Director
- members of the senior management team
- Senate or equivalent (or a representative group from)
- heads of school, departments or other subject units
- heads of services, for example library and learning support services
- a cross section of lecturers and tutors (to follow up different cross-institution themes)
- students and student representatives
- external examiners (if appropriate)
- community representatives or employers with links to or involvement with the university

An example of a meetings' schedule for a institutional review visit can be found in **Annex D**.

The review team will also consult documentation provided by the institution. It will endeavour to keep to a minimum the amount of documentation it requests during the visit. The aim is to consider evidence used by the institution and to focus on discussions with staff and students to get a clear picture of the institution's processes in operation. The review team should always seek to read and use all information requested.

The visit should conclude with a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor/Director and senior staff. The team may give a general indication of its overall findings at this point. At the end of the visit, and before it departs, the review its stated schedule.

Evidence

Institutional review is evidence-based. The judgments made by the review team emerge from consideration of the evidence and collective consideration. They should not rest on unsupported views or prejudice. Most evidence for review will come from information and documentation used by the institution itself. In addition, and as available, review teams will draw on other relevant material such as (professional body accreditation reports, UGC sub-committee reports where appropriate etc). All reviews will draw upon the following principal sources of evidence:

- The university's self-evaluation prepared for the review
- Evidence referenced in the self-evaluation
- Use of local codes of practice developed or adopted by the university Use of national benchmarks and guidelines as available
- Information gathered by the review team during the review visit

Review reports

The review report will be published by UGC/CVCD. The report will include:

- a brief description of the institution
- a brief description of the review process (a review visit programme may be appended to the report)
- sections dealing with the review topics (which should be consistent for all institutions) · clear summaries of the aspects considered by the review team
- a concluding section with a general summary of the team's findings
- a statement on the level of confidence in the institution's effectiveness in quality assurance
- a list of commendations and recommendations for further action

An executive summary of the report will also be produced for wider readership.

Review team

Institutional review teams will normally have between three and five members and may be supported by a review secretary. One member of the review team will serve as Review Chair and will have overall responsibility for co-ordinating the team's work. The review team as a whole will elect the Review Chair.

Reviewers will be selected from university nominees accepted by the Committee on Quality Assurance and, insofar as this is possible, will be matched in knowledge and experience with the main characteristics of the university under review.

SUBJECT REVIEW

Introduction

Subject review evaluates the quality of education within a specific subject or discipline. It is focused on the quality of the student learning experience and on student achievement. It is designed to evaluate the quality of both undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.

The main features of the subject review method are:

- peer review
- production of an analytical self-evaluation by the academic staff delivering the programmes
- review against the aims and intended student learning outcomes contained in the self evaluation
- a review visit of 3 to 4 days
- an overall judgment, contained in a short report

Peer review

Review visits are carried out by a team of academic reviewers and are normally chaired by a subject specialist.

The reviewers receive the university's self-evaluation and supporting documents in advance of the review, gather evidence during the visit, then make judgments on the quality of education.

Reviewers are required to provide detailed and specific evidence to the chair of the team, to support all judgments they make.

All reviewers (subject specialists and chairs of teams) are required to participate in specialist academic reviewer training.

Self-evaluation

Guidance on preparing the self-evaluation for subject review is at **Annex E**

The self-evaluation is provided by the staff delivering the programmes. It includes the aims and intended student learning outcomes in the programmes, a summary of the students, staff and facilities involved, and provides an evaluation of the student learning experience and of student achievement in the relevant subject(s). It also includes some statistical tables (see examples at **Annex F**. These are examples only; the statistics provided with the self-evaluation will be those appropriate to the subject and university being reviewed)

The evaluation of education is written under three main headings:

1. Overview of provision: aims, student learning outcomes and programme details
2. Students, staff and facilities

3. Evaluation of the aspects of education under review, namely:

- Curriculum design, content and review
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods
- Quality of students, including student progress and achievement
- The extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative
- Postgraduate studies
- Peer observation
- Skills development
- Academic guidance and counseling

As with university review, the agenda for subject review is highly dependent on the **quality of the self-evaluation**. Detailed guidance on preparing the self-evaluation is at **Annex E**.

Review against aims and intended student learning outcomes

The aims and learning outcomes contained in the self-evaluation provide an important reference point for subject review. They are also published in the subject review report.

Reviewers evaluate the quality of education in the subject(s) under review according to the aims and learning outcomes aspired to by the subject team. They do not use any externally set standards against which the programmes are judged.

This means that the university mission, the staff and student profile and the nature of the programmes are all evaluated according to the aims and learning outcomes set by departments or schools themselves and allows the subject review process to take account of diversity of institutions and students.

Aspects of provision

The eight aspects above have been chosen by the Committee on Quality Assurance as the most important areas for review at the subject level. Together with the elements of institutional review, they make up the components of the national quality assurance system (see page 6 above)

Briefing meeting

About three months prior to the visit, a briefing meeting takes place between representatives of the review team and members of the university. The purpose of this meeting is to agree the broad scope of the review, including any special features (for example, a multidisciplinary visit), the documentation to be provided, and the review timetable.

Review visit

The purpose of the review visit is to review, consider and test the evidence provided by the subject provider(s) in the light of the aims and intended student learning outcomes. A visit normally lasts for 3 to 4 days. During the visit, reviewers meet staff and students. There is a

separate meeting with subject staff for each aspect of provision. There is normally one meeting with undergraduates and another with taught postgraduates during the visit. These meetings are often best structured over an informal lunch.

Reviewers will normally arrive at the institution on the day prior to the review proper. They will have a private meeting to discuss their own impressions of the subject(s) being reviewed, based on prior reading of the documents sent to them. This will determine a provisional agenda of questions for each of the aspect meetings to take place later in the review. Each subject specialist reviewer takes lead responsibility for up to two of the aspects of provision, although all subject specialists are asked to contribute to making judgments in all aspects.

Towards the end of this first day, there will normally be a brief meeting (10-15 minutes) with the Vice-Chancellor or his / her representative and any other senior staff nominated by the institution. It is often helpful if subject staff are also present at this meeting, the purpose of which is for the Vice-Chancellor or his / her representative to set out the university context and to mention anything special about the subject being reviewed.

Immediately following this introductory, relatively formal welcome meeting, it is helpful for subject staff and academic reviewers to meet more informally as a large group, to discuss the agenda for the visit and to be introduced to one another in preparation for the teaching observations. This meeting usually lasts about one hour and takes place over light refreshments. The first day ends after this meeting has taken place.

Meetings with staff about the aspects of provision, and reading of documents and student work provided by subject staff, will be fitted in between teaching observations, which will normally take place during the first two days of the review visit.

Each of the team of three subject specialists should undertake about five observations during the visit. The chair of the team does not observe teaching. His / her role is to ensure that fair judgments are made collectively by the team and to ensure suitable evidence is available to support those judgments.

As part of the materials received in advance of the visit, the team normally requests a copy of the teaching timetable for the week of the review. The timetable should give details of all teaching events taking place during the visit. Team members should select potential teaching sessions they might observe, taking account of individual expertise, background and abilities. It is the responsibility of the review chair to receive suggestions from team members and arrive at a pattern of observations that:

- provides a balanced overview of the teaching provision in the department/school, enabling the team to make a sound judgment across all programmes and levels of students, and different types of learning and teaching
- as far as possible, ensures that individuals are observed only once, or at most, twice

Teams will normally not be able to observe all teaching staff - a representative sample is sufficient. Final decisions on which reviewer will observe which session are normally made when the team first meets together on the first afternoon of the visit. It is courteous to let the department/school know as soon as possible which sessions will be observed and by whom.

Reviewers can then identify individuals whose teaching will be observed and ensure that they are well briefed on the aims and learning outcomes for the session, where it fits in the module or unit, and within the programme, and can read any materials provided for students.

The review visit usually ends on the fourth day, with a feedback meeting to subject staff and the senior management of the institution (probably all those who have been present at the introductory meeting on day 1). The review chair will summarize the findings of the team and invite questions for factual clarification, but this meeting should not be seen as an opportunity to question the team's judgments. The section below on Review Outcomes contains details on procedures following the receipt of a draft report by the university.

REVIEW JUDGEMENTS

In both institutional and subject review, there will be one overall judgment concerning either the university's quality assurance systems (institutional review), or the quality of provision in the university concerned (subject review).

There will be three options open to the review team in making this judgment:

- confidence
- limited confidence
- no confidence

In all cases, the overall judgment will be supported by the evidence contained in the report, as indicated elsewhere in this handbook.

If an overall judgment of limited or no confidence is given, the report will give clear reasons for this judgment and suggest how the university might address the matters giving rise to the judgment.

Judgments of no confidence will be exceptional. In institutional review, there would need to be evidence of significant weaknesses in a majority of the aspects, giving rise to serious concerns. For an overall judgment of no confidence to be given in subject review, a team will need to have judged at least three of the eight aspects to be unsatisfactory.

A summary statement will support the overall judgment for each of the aspects in either institutional or subject review. These aspects are listed in full on page 6 of this handbook.

The national system for quality assurance identifies eight broad areas for scrutiny in both institutional and subject review. Universities affirm different missions and there are acknowledged differences in size, age and maturity of institutions. It is important that the review process does not distort the national picture by unreasonably and inaccurately measuring all universities by a fixed 'gold standard'. At the same time, all universities are expected to have in place and to be able to account for arrangements for quality assurance which support and sustain the standards and quality they claim and reflect agreed national guidelines.

Institutional review

Institutional review is a complex process. It involves analysis of data and commentary on complex processes and an awareness of the university's own mission and claimed objectives which make inter-university comparisons difficult. Review judgments are rarely categorical; they are not readily represented in 'pass/fail' terms, nor easily 'scored' on a numerical scale.

Nevertheless, clear and concise outcomes are expected which will enable the wider public to form a picture of each university's effectiveness in maintaining the standard of its awards and the quality of the education offered in its name.

Not all of the institutional review aspects will be of equal importance to all universities. Thus review judgments should take account of those areas where minimum standards and proper inter-institutional comparisons can be made (for example in programme approval procedures, operation of student assessment and recruitment and induction of new academic staff) and areas to which an institution may give particular emphasis.

All universities will be subject to the same process of institutional review, which will focus on the same eight areas. The report will summarise the team's views under each of the eight aspects.

The review team's judgment on a university's overall effectiveness will be expressed through an averaging of its judgments under each of the eight headings.

In the first review cycle, there will be no link between institutional review outcomes (including the summative score) and the level of funding received by that university from the UGC. However, in future cycles, it is possible that the outcome of institutional review (which in itself will take account of preceding subject reviews and action taken to remedy any weakness by the university) will influence the UGC's allocation of funds to individual universities.

Subject review

In addition to the overall judgment, review teams will provide a separate judgment of each subject review aspect. The collective statements on each of the eight aspects will lead the team to their overall judgment of: broad confidence; limited confidence; or no confidence.

As indicated in the guidance on report writing, teams will summarise their findings in each aspect, noting strengths, good practice and weaknesses. At the end of each aspect, they will use one of three judgments:

- good
- satisfactory
- unsatisfactory

In judgments of good or satisfactory, teams will wish to highlight strengths and good practice in the aspect. In the 'good' category, there are likely to be few, if any, weaknesses. In the 'satisfactory' category, there will be at least one weakness; and in the 'unsatisfactory' category there are likely to be no examples of strengths or good practice.

REVIEW OUTCOMES

Universities will be expected to plan follow-up action as a result of either institutional or subject review.

One year after a review, the university will be asked to provide a brief report for the Committee on Quality Assurance on action taken in response to the review recommendations. The report following an institutional review may include a summary of action taken in response to any subject review outcomes.

Should an institutional or subject review report result in an overall judgment of no confidence, the Committee on Quality Assurance will agree with the university what action is required. This would normally include a follow-up visit within one year and is likely to lead to a further or amended, published report.

Should any of the subject review aspects be judged 'unsatisfactory', the university concerned will be required to take action within six months to remedy the problems identified, and report accordingly to the Committee on Quality Assurance. It will be for the Committee to decide whether a follow-up visit is necessary. Once the Committee is satisfied with the outcome, an amended report will be published to reflect the action taken.

Request for discussion

Following either an institutional or subject review, a university may ask the Committee on Quality Assurance for a discussion with the review team about the contents of the review report, prior to publication.

The university should notify the Committee of its wish to take up this opportunity within two weeks of receipt of the first draft of the report, highlighting the particular areas it wishes to discuss.

The discussion meeting may last up to one day and should take place within three months of the university making the request. The meeting should normally be chaired by a member of the Committee on Quality Assurance. The chair of the meeting may not be a member of the university concerned, nor may he or she have any other close links with it.

Others present at the meeting will be members of the review team (all if possible, but at least two), and representatives chosen by the university, who are likely to include some of the staff who participated in the review and members of the senior management of the university.

Detailed notes of the meeting should be taken, if possible by a representative of the Committee on Quality Assurance.

The discussion's is likely to focus on one or more of the following:

- A request from the university for clarification of one or more of the statements made in the draft report.

- A request from the university that one or more of the statements in the report be changed.
- The university wishes to ask the review team's advice on how to address issues raised during the review.
- The university wishes to discuss how to build on good practice identified by the review team, perhaps taking account of practice at other universities.

The notes of the meeting will be approved by the Chair, if necessary after consultation with colleagues on the Committee on Quality Assurance. He or she will then make a final decision on the contents of the report, which will then be published.

REVIEW PROTOCOLS

Institutional and subject reviews are essentially interactive. They are assisted by a mutual understanding between review teams and those being reviewed about the purpose of review and a commitment to achieving a beneficial outcome. Review protocols - representing shared expectations of good practice in the conduct of reviews - should help to reinforce this understanding and commitment. The following protocols shall apply.

Standing and selection of reviewers

Reviewers will be selected and appointed to teams on the basis of:

- Nomination by a university, including a written endorsement of suitability and experience from a senior university representative, normally the Vice-Chancellor or Dean;
- Appointment by the Committee on Quality Assurance;
- Evidence of completion of reviewer training (and, in due course, participation in a recognised/accredited national system for reviewers);
- Self-declaration of any involvement with a particular university/subject department which might render an individual ineligible as a member of an external review team;
- Membership of the relevant Inter University Subject Committee (for subject reviewers);
- Evidence of knowledge and awareness of relevant national and international standards and requirements, as appropriate to the review;
- Evidence of experience of quality assurance activity in areas appropriate to the review; Evidence of awareness of national, professional and employers' requirements of graduates;
- Acceptability to the university being reviewed, as independent reviewers with suitable subject or institutional expertise.

Reviewers will also have the personal qualities appropriate to their role. These are specified in the matrix attached to Annex K.

Review arrangements, including communications

Consistency and clarity in interactions between a review team and a university will be helped by:

- Designation of the review team Chair as the team's formal point of contact with the university/subject department before, during and after the review;
- Designation of a university contact to co-ordinate communications between the university/subject department and the review team and the Committee on Quality Assurance;
- Commitment of reviewers to maintaining good communications within the team by an agreed means for the duration of the review;
- Acceptance in advance of a review visit that hospitality provided by a university for the visiting reviewers should be no more than is necessary to enable the team to carry out its work efficiently and effectively;
- Commitment by the review team to limit requests and requirements of the university/subject department (e.g. additional documents), to the minimum necessary to enable the review's objectives to be met;
- Acceptance of non-participant observers from other universities (with the specific consent of the university under review) to facilitate awareness and dissemination of information about national quality assurance arrangements;
- Commitment to openness and transparency in communications other than where sensitive information requires agreement to confidentiality or where an incomplete process/inquiry requires confidentiality to avoid misunderstanding or confusion.

Conduct of reviewers

Reviewers will strive to uphold the highest standards of professional practice throughout the review process, exemplified by:

- Respectful, professional conduct towards staff and students at all times;
- Awareness and application of guidance provided through reviewer training on the conduct of peer observation of teaching;
- Acceptance of the primacy of review business for the duration of a review visit;
- Acceptance of individual responsibility for assigned tasks within the review team;
- Acceptance of collective responsibility for the review team's judgments.

REVIEW CYCLE

It is planned that the institutional and subject review cycles will be coordinated so that each can inform the other.

The first institutional review cycle will begin in 2003 and end in 2005. Four institutional reviews will take place in each year.

The first subject review cycle will begin in 2003 and end in 2007. Subjects will be clustered to enable all subjects to be covered in the cycle, with as even a distribution as possible across the years.

At **Annex L** are provisional cycles for institutional and subject review.

Pilot institutional and subject reviews will take place from September 2002 in selected universities. Assuming that the pilot reviews proceed as planned, the outcomes may be used as the first review, of whatever kind, for the universities concerned. In these cases, the report will indicate that it was a pilot review.

With the agreement of the university concerned, representatives from other universities may be permitted to observe the pilot reviews.

With the exception of the pilot reviews, universities will be given no less than six months' notice of the commencement of the first institutional and subject review cycle.

Guidance on Self-Evaluation for Institutional Review

1 Introduction

Quality assurance is not the same as external inspection. Responsibility for quality and standards in higher education lies primarily within, not outside, universities. Institutional selfawareness, informed by periodic self-evaluation of the strengths and areas for improvement of quality management and assurance provides the principal point of reference for any external review process. A university's self-evaluation is therefore a key document, both for the university under review and for the review team.

To undertake a self-evaluation of a university's quality assurance processes is a significant institutional challenge. The actual process of self-evaluation is beneficial in itself, even without the subsequent external review. If the self-evaluation document is concise, accessible to 'outsiders' and constructive in its approach, it should enable external review to build upon and strengthen internal processes.

2 Coverage and accuracy

A university's self-evaluation should describe briefly, analyse in some depth with supporting evidence, and comment upon, the effectiveness of the ways in which the university discharges its responsibility for academic standards and quality.

In particular, the self-evaluation should seek to answer the following questions:

How do you assure yourselves and others that your arrangements for setting academic standards, for maintaining these through the awards you make to students, and for maintaining the quality of teaching, learning and research undertaken in your name are effective?

What is your evidence for your self-evaluation and how do you know that your evidence is valid and appropriate to your objectives for quality assurance?

The self-evaluation should refer to the outcomes of any internal or external subject reviews and any implications of these for the effectiveness of the university's overall management of quality and standards.

The self-evaluation document should also indicate how the university has responded to any national guidelines, local codes of practice and other recognised points of reference in safeguarding standards and promoting high quality.

It is largely upon the self-evaluation that the review team's view of a university's effectiveness of control of its quality and standards will be based in the first instance. A university should ensure, therefore, that its self-evaluation is accurate and verifiable and is not used as an opportunity to make exaggerated claims that will cause the review team to doubt the reliability of the university's view of itself.

Where a university is in the process of making changes to aspects of its systems or procedures at the time of the review, evidence may not yet be available to illustrate the effectiveness of the new procedures. If this is the case, the university should seek to address how it is managing the process of change in its self-evaluation document.

3 Focus of the self-evaluation

At the heart of the review team's enquiries is the way in which the university safeguards the standards of the awards made in its name, the quality of the teaching and learning which prepares students for assessment, and the quality of research which contributes to the mission and academic standing of the institution. The university's 'awarding function' is not simply a question of the soundness of its administrative procedures for the award of degrees and other qualifications (though it must include this). It has wider significance. Each university carries responsibility within the wider Sri Lankan higher education community to uphold and demonstrate accountability for practices ensuring that all academic awards carrying national (and international) recognition are made rigorously and consistently.

The university's policies and procedures and its use of national guidelines and/or local codes of practice provide a major focus for institutional review. The extent to which these matters are dealt with cogently and candidly in the university's own self-evaluation will affect the review team's judgment about the level of confidence it can place in a university's quality assurance system.

4 Relationship to subject review

The university self-evaluation document should include analysis and commentary on the outcomes of subject reviews. These reports provide valuable audit trails to test the efficacy of the application of university-wide policies within departments and other units.

The self-evaluation should analyze the effectiveness of, rather than merely describe, a university's quality assurance policies and processes, although some description will be necessary to enable the review team to understand the context in which policies are enacted. If the document does not contain careful and accurate analysis, the review team may ask for a longer visit, so that it can undertake its own fuller enquiries. Where a university expresses a view that it is satisfied with the effectiveness of its processes, the evidence upon which this view is based should be made clear in the document.

5 Scope of the self-evaluation document

Institutional review extends across all educational provision for which the university has responsibility. This includes all teaching and learning (undergraduate, postgraduate (taught and research), full-time, part-time, collaborative, overseas, distance and electronic-based); research; financial and quality management arrangements which support educational provision and research; and community and extension activities. The self-evaluation document should also cover all these activities and arrangements and list all partnerships between the university and other institutions in Sri Lanka and elsewhere, including any franchise partnerships, consortia, accreditation agreements, and distance learning partnerships leading to the university's awards.

6 Structure and content of the self-evaluation document

A self-evaluation document should:

- i. describe and analyse developments in the period preceding the institutional review (this should cover no more than three years, or the period since the university's establishment and/or merger if this has occurred within the three-year period);
- ii describe and analyse responses to any completed subject reviews and the ways in which lessons learnt from these have been taken into account in the enhancement of university practice;
- iii describe briefly the key features of processes for assuring the academic standards of awards, the quality of programmes and of research, using the suggested headings in Appendix A as a guide;
- iv provide a commentary on the university's observance of national guidelines and/or local codes of practice relevant to the headings;
- v provide a view on the perceived strengths and limitations of current quality assurance arrangements; and
- vi outline intended strategies for the next three years to further enhance practice and remedy any shortcomings identified.

7 Length

The self-evaluation document should be concise and analytical. It should be self-contained and no longer than 40 pages of A4. Appendices should be kept to a minimum and contain illustrative or statistical information essential to the main text. There will be no penalty for shorter or longer submissions but universities should be mindful that long or unwieldy selfevaluations may colour the review team's view of the ability of the university to communicate its systems to a wider public. A successful self-evaluation document should be readily accessible to a reviewer unfamiliar with the university. It should minimise the need for further clarification by the review team and provide a reliable starting point for the review visit, so keeping to a minimum the amount of time the team needs to collect additional evidence.

8 Additional Documentation

So far as possible, the self-evaluation document should be self-contained. It should not need to be accompanied by numerous other papers. However, universities may wish to supplement their document with other papers they believe will help a review team to a fuller understanding of the university and its structure and function. The team may ask for some key documents to be circulated to its members in advance of the visit, but the quantity of papers requested for such advance circulation should be kept to an absolute minimum.

9 Confidentiality

The self-evaluation document shall remain confidential to the university and the review team.

10 Suggested headings for the self-evaluation document

Guidance on how to structure the self evaluation, including suggested headings, is given in Appendix 1 to this Annex, together with indicative questions which a review team might ask under each of the headings. The relative importance of the headings themselves, and specific topics under the headings, will differ from university to university. There is an opportunity for a university to indicate the relative importance of headings in accordance with its own mission and objectives by choosing to give greater weight to certain aspects (for example research or extension activities) in its own self-evaluation. The review team will take account of this weighting in its own assessment of the university's self-evaluation.

11 Self-evaluation and institutional accreditation

Some national quality assurance systems (for example, in the UK) require institutions to undertake self-evaluation as part of the process of accreditation for degree awarding powers and designation as a university. Appendix B shows the headings used for this purpose. They correspond closely with areas covered by the process of institutional review.

Appendix 1 to Annex A

Suggested headings for the self-evaluation document

UNIVERSITY GOALS AND CORPORATE PLANNING

University mission/characteristics

- Recent history/establishment
- Current context and mission
- Corporate planning procedures

Are the mission and educational objectives clear?
Are they accompanied by implementing strategies?
How and to whom are these communicated within the university?
Does the University claim any distinctive 'characteristics'?
How are these reflected in and supported by its implementing strategies? How does corporate planning work?
Are responsibilities clearly defined?
How is accountability for planning and implementation secured?

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

- Resource allocation procedures
- Executive responsibilities
- Academic planning and resource allocation · Additional sources of finance

Are resource allocation procedures clear and applied in accordance with requirements?
Are responsibilities for decision-making and accountability clear?
How are academic planning and resource allocation mechanisms co-ordinated?
What evidence is there to show that the university uses its resources effectively to achieve its academic objectives?

RESEARCH

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for, and for monitoring:

- Setting university objectives and policy;
- Research centres or units;
- Provision of support (including resources and research time allowance) for staff;
- Completion of projects and external recognition;
- Monitoring and evaluation.

Is the university's research policy clear?
Does it set targets? If so, how are these monitored?
How are staff encouraged and supported to undertake research?
Are there arrangements to support junior members of staff?
How are research results disseminated within and outside the university?
How is research related to teaching?

QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

University quality strategy

The effectiveness of university policies and practices relating to:

- Objectives;
- Procedures;
- Monitoring and review.

Are the objectives clear?
How and to whom are they communicated within the university?
Are the procedures clear?
Are they 'fit for purpose', complex, consistently applied or patchy?
Are they monitored for their effectiveness?
How do the central university authorities and subject departments work together on quality assurance?

Quality management

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for and for monitoring:

- Definition of responsibilities;
- Financial and related resource management in support of academic quality;
- Reporting and accountability arrangements.

Are roles and responsibilities clear?
How are they perceived by post holders?
Are reporting lines clear? Does action follow?
How is academic planning and decision-making connected with resource planning?
Is quality management supported by appropriate administrative arrangements to ensure action and follow-up?

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Academic standards of courses and awards

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for, and for monitoring:

- Entry qualifications and admission of students;
- Regulatory framework;
- Approval of new courses;
- Monitoring, evaluation and review;
- Student assessment;
- Use of external examiners;
- Postgraduate students and research students.

Where are these policies and practices documented?
Who 'owns' them?
Are they widely known and understood?
Who monitors practice against requirements and expectations?
What external benchmarks/ points does the university use to compare its policies and practices?

Staffing

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for, and for monitoring:

- Appointment;
- Induction and probation;
- Staff development;
- Recognition and reward.

Are staff recruitment and appointment procedures documented?
Are there clear criteria for the appointment of academic and non-academic/administrative staff?
Are new/inexperienced staff required to serve a probationary period? How is this monitored?
Is there an induction programme for all new staff?
How are new staff made aware of the University's requirements and expectations for quality assurance?
What incentives exist to promote quality? How effective are these in achieving the university's objectives?

Communication processes

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for, and for monitoring:

- Informal and formal mechanisms;
- Student representation;
- Student complaints and academic appeals.

Are internal communication channels clear? Are they used?
How are these viewed at all levels?
Are students encouraged to take part in university processes?
How are they prepared and supported?
Are procedures for making complaints and academic appeals documented?
How do students know about them?
How does the university monitor their application?
What data is collected on complaints and their outcomes? Is there evidence of institutional learning from complaints and appeals?

LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND STUDENT SUPPORT

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for, and for monitoring:

- Learning support;
- Student support and guidance;
- Careers guidance and preparation.

How are learning support needs matched with teaching methods and students' learning requirements?
How are students' learning support needs identified? How is student feedback on learning resources obtained?
Does this feedback affect policy development and resource decision-making?
How is new programme/subject planning integrated with decision-making about resources? Is this a departmental or a central university responsibility?
How are learning resources and student support co-ordinated across the university?
What services exist to prepare students for employment and career development after graduation? .
How does the university communicate with employers of its graduates?

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES

- Validation and approval of external degrees;
- Assistance and support for external institutions;
- Monitoring and review of programmes;
- Comparability of awards;
- Comparability of the students' experience on external degree programmes.

Are approval and validation procedures for external degree programmes identical to internal programmes?
How is the quality of the students' experience in external institutions monitored?
Are responsibilities for standards and quality on external programmes clear?
How effective are inter-institutional communications?

UNIVERSITY/INDUSTRY/COMMUNITY/OTHER EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

External communications

The effectiveness of university policies and practices for, and for monitoring:

- Publicity and recruitment;
- Links with industry and commercial and other public service sectors;
- Professional body accreditation;
- Community involvement and service.

How well does the university communicate with its external audiences?
How does it know that its communications are effective?
Is student feedback on publicity/admission material sought? How is it used to inform decision-making?
How are professional body requirements for course accreditation monitored and met? Are responsibilities (at university and departmental level) clear?
How are community-oriented objectives and strategies implemented?
Who is responsible?
How are standards and quality assured on continuing professional development courses? Is community involvement expected of all or only some staff?

CONCLUSIONS/CURRENT ACTION LIST

Are there any conclusions to the self-evaluation?
Is there an action list?
Are any specific issues identified for discussion with the review team?

LIST OF EVIDENCE

This might be attached as an appendix and should list all sources, categories of documents, references etc. on which the university has drawn for its self-evaluation and which it would expect to make available for scrutiny by the review team.

Appendix 2 to Annex A

Self-evaluation and institutional accreditation

Sound quality assurance arrangements appropriate for a university should demonstrate:

- clear and consistently applied mechanisms for establishing academic objectives and outcomes;
- arrangements to ensure that teaching, learning and research activities consistently meet stated objectives and outcomes;
- arrangements to ensure that courses are carefully and regularly monitored;
- procedures for monitoring effectiveness of the learning and teaching infrastructure; provision for academic and other support requirements of students studying away from the campus;
- commitment to maintaining standards of students' achievement at a recognized level, and strategies for improving the quality of academic provision;
- that effective action is taken to address weaknesses, promote strengths and demonstrate accountability;
- administrative systems able to manage current operations and plan for the future;
- that the qualities and competencies of staff are appropriate for an institution exercising degree-awarding powers;
- arrangements to enable staff actively to engage with the pedagogic development of their discipline;
- encouragement and support for staff to maintain high professional standards and to accept professional responsibilities associated with a university environment.

Annex B

Institutional Review: Sample Self-Evaluation

The attached is a sample of sections of a university self-evaluation prepared for institutional review. The document is not a complete self-evaluation. This is a document that must bear the distinctive imprint of each university. The detailed content and list of supporting evidence will vary from one university to another. This sample document makes use of information used in an actual self-evaluation document (though not produced by a university in Sri Lanka) with additions and some changes to facilitate its wider application.

The four sections included in this sample document have been chosen to give readers a flavour of what reviewers might expect to find in a self-evaluation. The aim is to show how sections should aim to include descriptive, analytical and evaluative material in a reasonably concise way. This is not a 'model' self-evaluation: it contains issues which a review team might choose to open up to learn more about why the university has chosen to do, or not to do, certain things. It leaves some matters unresolved, and it makes claims to good practice which reviewers may choose to test.

The List of Evidence is meant to be indicative of the range of material, which a university might choose to refer to as sources of evidence to support its self evaluation.

SAMPLE

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW: SELF EVALUATION

CONTENTS

UNIVERSITY GOALS AND CORPORATE PLANNING
(sample text provided)

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH

QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION
(sample text provided)

QUALITY ASSURANCE
(sample text provided)

LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND STUDENT SUPPORT
(sample text provided)

EXTERNAL DEGREE PROGRAMMES

UNIVERSITY/ INDUSTRY/COMMUNITY/OTHER EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

CONCLUSIONS/CURRENT ACTION LIST
(sample text provided)

LIST OF EVIDENCE
(sample text provided)

1 UNIVERSITY GOALS AND CORPORATE PLANNING

A review of the University's Statement of Mission and Educational Objectives

- 1.1 The preparation of the University's self-evaluation coincides with a full-scale review of the University's mission and educational objectives led by the Vice Chancellor and the Board of Governors. The self-evaluation for the forthcoming Institutional review has contributed to that review as evidence from the University Senate to the Board of Governors. It is one element in a comprehensive process which has involved widespread consultation with the Vice-Chancellor and the senior management team and key groups and categories of staff across the University. The Senate's committees and all Departmental Boards have participated in that process.
- 1.2 At an early stage in its review process, the Board of Governors re-affirmed commitment to 'the existing educational character of the institution'. The review has therefore been set in a framework of continuity; on this premise, all aspects of the University's educational character, activity and the related infrastructure have been subjected to scrutiny. The University's quality assurance and development processes derive from its statement of mission, consistent with and supportive of the educational objectives as determined by the Board of Governors.
- 1.3 The Board of Governors was particularly concerned that the review's terms of reference should emphasize the need to maintain the University's distinctive emphasis on the utility of knowledge and on both the initial preparation and continuing education of students in support of their careers.
- 1.4 At a special meeting in June 2000 the University Senate considered a paper from the Vice-Chancellor to the Board of Governors, which inaugurated the process of agenda setting for the review of the University's educational objectives. The Vice-Chancellor summarized the purpose of the review as being, amongst other things, to: 'renew the University's commitment to the educational objectives determined by the Board of Governors and re-express its statement of mission in contemporary language and terms which endorse the emphasis on the utility which comes from knowledge and retains a clear and particular commitment to education, training, and research which is distinctly applied and career focused'.

Strategic educational developments: 1999-2002

- 1.5 A new Faculty of Health Sciences was created, with effect from January 1999. It followed the incorporation of a regional college of Health Studies into the University. This was the biggest single project undertaken during the past five years, a project of considerable scale and complexity. The new Faculty's remit is crucial to the University's presence in the local and regional community. The Faculty's work is subject to intensive quality scrutiny, not only by the University's own processes, but also by external professional monitoring and review and professional contracted services. Thus there is little likelihood of inadequate evaluation and the real challenge is to prevent the Faculty being swamped or its priorities distorted by the new external institutional review process.

- 16 Since 1999, the University has engaged in a thorough review of its regional strategy. In July 1999, the Board of Governors endorsed the University's continuing commitment to a strategy of enhancing access to higher education, with a particular emphasis on widening participation. The University is seeking to work closely with local colleges to strengthen progression opportunities between higher education in colleges and the University. The success of the new strategy will depend very substantially on the effective implementation of plans to encourage progression, widen participation and encourage lifelong learning, currently being developed in a Working Group representative of the University and its further education partners.
- 1.7 Another recent development has been approval by the Board of Governors of a link between the University and the local College of Dance and Drama. In due course, it is intended that the University will validate programmes offered by the College of Dance and Drama leading to University awards and that the College will become an Associate School of the University.

University-wide operational developments in support of educational objectives

- 1.8 During 1999-2000 the University undertook a major quality review of the whole of its undergraduate programmes.
- 1.9 The review of all undergraduate programmes envisages that proposals will be brought forward in the next five years for models for modular and credit-based courses, ranging from a fully credit based approach in some subject areas to a more limited model in the Faculty of Science and Engineering. In summary, the outcome of the review of undergraduate programmes made evident the need for a comprehensive review of the University's Academic Regulations and its Quality Assurance Handbook.
- 1.10 The University has also undertaken three major initiatives in teaching and learning:
- a. a University-wide policy to provide continuous professional development for academic staff in teaching and learning by the creation of a Professional Development Programme under the auspices of the Faculty of Education, managed by a University-wide steering group;
 - b. the adoption of a strategy for developing key skills for graduates as an integral aspect of all undergraduate studies. A substantial pilot project involving selected award routes in three faculties was launched in 2001. It will, in due course, be extended to all faculties with a view to University-wide implementation from 2004 onwards. The pilot has raised interesting questions for student assessment and has resulted in a level of curriculum and assessment analysis not anticipated when the proposals were endorsed by Senate in June 2000. The critical factor has been the commitment to embedding skills development and assessment within the curriculum. Although the approach is intensive and detailed, it reflects the fundamental educational objectives of the University: a standardized, bolt-on skills model would have been the antithesis of the University's educational philosophy;

- c an exploration of initiatives in the use of ICT in learning and teaching. There have been a number of interesting developments at departmental level. However, progress in co-ordinating initiatives across the University has been more limited and the senior management team is considering how this can be promoted more effectively.

1.11 Work is continuing on each of these initiatives.

Research

- 1.12 The scale and nature of the University's research activities have developed considerably since the University was created in 1996. The University's research mission is currently defined as: to cultivate a scholarly ethos conducive to good teaching and to project centred learning, by providing opportunities for staff to pursue and satisfy their intellectual curiosity; and to advance the transfer, understanding, and problem solving or commercial application of knowledge and of technological or scientific discovery'.
- 1.13 Evidence from internal research reports shows that staff undertakes research corresponding to the full range of their teaching activities and there is a significant emphasis on applied research. Notable features are: a high proportion of multi- and interdisciplinary research; research of social and economic relevance; and, the accessibility of the University's researchers to the wider community.
- 1.14 Research income has increased substantially since 1996 (detailed information will be made available to the Institutional review team in advance of the review visit). The number of bids for external funds has doubled in the last four years and there is an increased tendency to bid collaboratively across faculties and with other organizations. A new unit, the Research Bids Unit, runs a series of training events for academic staff in bidding and contract management and has supported the substantial growth in this area.
- 1.15 The University has undertaken a detailed review of its research potential. This has highlighted the continuing growth in research volume across the institution, particularly in terms of both quantity and quality of publications. It has revealed that the University has a significantly increased number of 'research-active staff'
- 1.16 There have been considerable developments in relation to research degree supervision. The University is considering whether increased powers can be given to departments to enable them to recruit research students and approve proposals for research leading to research degrees of the University.

2 QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

- 2.1 The University undertook a major quality review as a key part of its self evaluation in preparation for external Institutional review. This was begun in 2000 in anticipation of the commencement of the national external review of quality assurance systems in higher education. The process included three rounds of consultation with Departmental Boards, discussion with Deans and Heads of Departments, and a day conference with senior staff as well as the deliberations of Senate and its committees.

- 2.2 The principal changes which ensued from the major quality review were:
- a a reinforcement of the recognition that staff delivering and managing taught programmes have primary responsibility for quality;
 - b the initiation of a formal departmental review process;
 - c a commitment to give greater attention to skills, especially communication skills, to support graduate employment;
 - d the establishment of a credit steering group to develop thinking on credit structures to increase flexibility and choice for undergraduates.
- 2.3 Most of the detailed changes related to items (a) and (b) are incorporated in the University's Quality Assurance Handbook (2002). A new body, the Credit Steering Committee has been established to take forward the credit initiative across the University.
- 2.4 In 2002 the University published revised and expanded Academic Regulations and the Quality Assurance Handbook replacing out-dated and less ambitious documents. Regulations and procedures for supervision of postgraduate research students have also been thoroughly overhauled and now reflect national guidelines aimed at improving consistency and clarity for postgraduate students.

Institutional quality strategy reviewed

- 2.5 In essence the original quality assurance processes established by the University when it was created in 1996 have served the University well. They have proved capable of refinement and adaptation to accommodate the substantial growth in the University's portfolio of courses and its wider activities. They anticipated increasing national interest in academic standards and the quality of student learning opportunities. Indeed, standards and the student experience are at the heart of the University's review of its educational character. The University's quality strategy, however, also emphasizes the importance of the quality factors associated with staff.
- 2.6 An important outcome of the Quality Review (2000) was the strengthening of management oversight of quality within the University's procedures. The term 'management' is not to be applied exclusively to members of the senior management team. It covers academic leaders at all levels from Vice Chancellor through to subject unit and module leaders.
- 27 Annual planning agreements with each department provide the primary vehicle for management evaluation of performance. The role of Departmental Boards in providing a quality check on the work of Departmental Executives is seen as an important contribution to securing accountability. Although the effectiveness of Departmental Boards varies from one Department to another, at its best it is highly effective. This framework is designed to reinforce the robustness of the University's

quality arrangements and a lively record of active participation in Departmental Boards can be readily demonstrated.

- 2.8 The effectiveness of the University's consultative and deliberative arrangements is dependent upon the readiness of staff and students to engage, whether through the standard constitutional structures or in the special events such as one-day in-house consultation conferences which have to be accommodated within routinely intensive schedules of work. The University has benefited from consistent staff responsiveness. Annual planning agreement discussions confirm the benefits of this in performance terms but also make increasingly apparent the pressures on staff time in the context of the growing research agenda.

Departmental structures and University-wide initiatives

- 2.9 Departmental structures have provided a key focus for the Quality Review. The dynamic between decision-making at departmental and corporate University levels is at the heart of the University's quality strategy. There are inevitably tensions in this relationship from time to time and the maintenance of the right balance between central direction and departmental freedom is critical to ensuring the achievement of the University's educational objectives.
- 2.10 Departmental Boards have been designated as the key academic planning and budgetary units. The Department has therefore become the basic building block in the University's organisational structure.
- 2.11 The continuing significance of the department in the University's operation is demonstrated by a quotation from the consultation paper received by the University Senate: 'Arguably, subject departments are now the most important dynamic in the University's structure. They provide a clear and attractive focus for both staff and students'.
- 2.12 The centrality of the Department in planning, delivery and quality has proved well founded, permitting speedy and flexible response at an appropriate level as confirmed through the annual planning cycle. Staff, and to a more limited extent, students readily identify with their departmental home and can share actively in peer processes. However, not all academic and administrative staff can participate fully in University-wide consultation and procedures. For that reason, the University relies heavily on the Head of Department to communicate University-wide initiatives and on the effectiveness of Departmental Boards in formulating and communicating a departmental view.
- 2.13 Some initiatives necessarily require, or are best achieved by, corporate action. Such University-wide innovation normally requires a reasonable lead in time. A department's capacity for flexible and innovative response in its own territory may be swifter than that of the University as a whole. The University has sought to distinguish between the two and to match them to the appropriate quality processes. A number of initiatives have either been realized more slowly than is ideal or are not as far advanced as would have been desirable.

- 2.14 . The strengths of the departmental focus are readily identifiable. For example, the introduction of a Joint Honours framework, changing arrangements for student support, the growing visibility of assessment criteria and ICT-based teaching and learning all indicate vibrant and innovative departments. They also suggest that the University will soon need to turn its attention to increased coordination at University level.
- 2.15 University-wide attention is particularly needed to promote sharing of good practice, both in teaching and learning and, more generally, to support improved quality assurance. The value of sharing good practice has strengthened during the last few years and it has been reflected in the preparation of the University's self-evaluation. There are also developments in learning and teaching processes more generally, on which the University expects to build rapidly in the next few years.
- 2.16 Another area of debate revolves around the implementation of the University's international policy. The University has not pursued an active international franchising strategy. International students make up approximately 3% of the full-time student population overall. The growth of research and consultancy too has an international dimension. Nonetheless, by comparison with longer standing institutions, the University's international activities are not as fully developed as it would wish and this issue is being considered in the context of the University's review of its educational character.
- 2.17 The oversight and co-ordination of quality processes and procedures in a system encouraging devolution to subject departments is of critical importance. The Vice-Chancellor has re-assessed the strengths, deficiencies and prospective demands on the University's academic administration. The outcome was the establishment in July 2001 of a new central service - the Academic Registry - headed by a new senior post of Academic Registrar. The Academic Registry has faced a challenging agenda in the first year of its establishment and the full benefits of the new administrative service are still being realised.

Quality and staffing

- 2.18 The University's Mission states that 'the University believes that staff professionalism, confidence and expertise are primary determinants of excellence in the corporate life of the institution and the educational experience of students'. The University stands by this view. Foremost among recent developments are the introduction of a scheme of University-wide promotion to senior lectureship posts, primarily based upon teaching quality and the individual's contribution to curriculum development. A limited scheme of promotion of research active staff to readerships has also recently been established.
- 2.19 Appraisal schemes are now in place for senior managers, academic, administrative, professional, clerical and technical staff. The Board of Governors has approved a new statement of staff development policy following lengthy consultation and there has been continuing development and refinement of good practice over a range of Personnel matters.

- 2.20 In terms of teaching and learning quality, the major development has been the adoption by Senate in June 2001 of a new policy of continuing professional development for all academic staff. Its application in relation to teaching builds upon the success of the initial professional development course.
- 2.21 The University's concern for staff is to enable them to manage the demanding and multi-faceted roles required of them in the changing context of higher education. The University's proven capacity to attract high calibre staff is critical to teaching and learning and a measure of its success. It also needs to ensure that it continues to attract and retain research active staff to underpin its quality strategy. Expectations of staff commitment and responsibility for the maintenance and enhancement of quality have to be matched by University responsiveness to changing staff aspirations and expectations. This is necessarily an ongoing process, in which more can always be achieved.
- 2.22 The concluding paragraphs of the University's self-evaluation record some staff reservations about the increased burden laid upon them by the requirements of quality assurance: The weight of scrutiny from the requirements of internal and external academic review, when combined with the requirements of professional accrediting bodies, inevitably raises questions of the appropriate balance between teaching, learning and research and proper scrutiny and accountability'. The University remains as fully committed as ever to the need for, and value of, external accountability, both in the interests of enhancement and as the proper responsiveness of a public service. Any movement towards potentially punitive scrutiny appears to reflect a presumption that without external pressure higher education universities will have insufficient care for the quality of their work. This University does not share this pessimistic view. The University retains its conviction that quality is not primarily about systems or scrutiny but rests in the hands of the commitment of staff, the co-operation of students, and with the University's ethos and values.

3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Academic standards of programmes and awards

- 3.1 The setting of academic standards results from a complex interaction of individual and collective judgments. Many of these are formalized and documented at defined points in the University's procedures and processes for quality assurance. Others flow from the decisions and choices made by individual staff through their teaching, guidance and support for students in the learning process and through their determination of assessment requirements. Similarly, once standards are set and documented by decisions to approve a new award or programme, to define a new award route, to recommend credit or an award to a student, or to approve provision of teaching through partnerships with external bodies, the maintenance of standards is then dependent upon a range of formal and informal activities. These are concerned with the monitoring, verifying and evaluating of learning outcomes and student attainment and quality management and enhancement procedures.
- 3.2 Within the University, responsibilities for setting and maintaining academic standards are divided between University-managed and departmental procedures and processes.

These are set out fully in the University's Quality Assurance Handbook. The key points at which academic standards are explicitly addressed and set are:

- a approval by Senate of academic regulations which define the levels and structure of the University's awards;
- b validation of the curriculum, learning outcomes, approaches to teaching and learning, and strategies for assessing students;
- c approval and validation of new study modules;
- d approval of the registration of students for research degrees by the relevant department, and central approval of all research degree examiners and examination arrangements;
- e management and operation of assessment practice within an explicit framework aimed at ensuring that assessment is rigorous, fair and comparable within and across all programmes and awards;
- f exposure and verification of the academic judgments of teaching staff through involvement of external examiners in assessment and examining.

Academic standards are reviewed and maintained through:

- g regular and systematic monitoring by departments which, in turn, are accountable to the University through Senate and its subcommittees;
- h central consideration of external examiners' reports;
- i scrutiny and feedback from other external 'stakeholders' who have a direct interest in the maintenance of the University's standards, including the employers of the University's graduates, professional and statutory bodies which accredit the University's awards for professional recognition, and other organisations who take on our students for placements and work experience.

The regulatory framework

- 3.3 The University's Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Handbook provide it with a core, unifying framework for the setting and maintenance of academic quality and standards. The framework applies to all learning and teaching leading to the University's awards. The Handbook also applies the University's approved quality assurance arrangements to University-managed short courses offered as continuing professional development and other courses, which do not lead directly to a University award.
- 3.4 The University is currently reviewing its assessment regulations for undergraduate programmes. It is considering making radical changes, which would eliminate different sets of assessment regulations for different subjects and awards and replace

these with a single, University-wide set of assessment regulations applying to all undergraduate awards, irrespective of subject.

- 3.5 The University believes that it is very important to ensure that students are assessed fairly and equitably in all departments. At present, students may be discouraged from combining courses offered by different departments because they believe that different sets of assessment regulations may be applied in different subject areas and that this may put them at a disadvantage when their overall degree performance is assessed.
- 3.6 The University's review of its undergraduate assessment regulations has set the following objectives:
- To encourage consistency and comparability of practice in the setting of academic standards and expectations of learning outcomes for students in each year of their course; .
 - To encourage use of a common terminology to communicate assessment requirements to students and to facilitate consistent and clear decision making by examining boards;
 - To require all study modules to incorporate and make available to students statements of learning outcomes and clear descriptions of the provision for assessment and reassessment;
 - adoption of a common approach to the classification of honours degree awards.
- 3.7 The adoption of and monitored adherence to a common assessment framework represents a significant step forward for the University. We recognise that we need to build further by encouraging the fullest possible engagement of staff at all levels in accepting and applying the new assessment regulations. Plans to achieve this include the organisation of staff briefings by the Academic Registry and joint centre-departmental workshops.

Validation and approval of new courses

- 3.8 The validation and approval of new courses, award titles and new study modules remains a central University responsibility. University procedures require departments to expose their new course design and development processes to scrutiny outside the department itself. New award titles and changes to award titles require prior approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Once approval for the design of a proposed new course is given by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the department then assumes full responsibility for developing the proposal, utilising its New Course Committee and, where applicable, its industry advisory group. The Academic Registry, with oversight by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor, has responsibility for undertaking and reporting on the outcome of the central course validation process.
- 3.9 The basic features of the validation and approval process have not changed significantly over the last five years. Validation procedures may involve full

validation events lasting a day; other forms of scrutiny are also used, involving both internal and external peers including, where appropriate, representatives of professional bodies. Course validation panels will typically review the course's stated aims and objectives; the adequacy of resources for specialist subject teaching; the qualifications and experience of staff at the level(s) at which the proposed course is to be offered; the clarity of learning outcomes, and the procedures for course management, monitoring and review after the new course has been approved.

- 3.10 The University is currently conducting a pilot project to revise all its awards in the Faculty of Law with reference to national benchmarking statements (reflecting similar statements adopted by the Faculties of Law and the Law Society in the United Kingdom). Some two years ago, all departments were given powers to modify approved courses subject to University scrutiny of the effectiveness of departmental procedures and annual reports to Senate. Where deficiencies have been identified, departments have been required to take the necessary corrective action.

Student Admissions

- 3.11 Some three years ago, the University commissioned two international consultants to review procedures for student admissions. The system then in place had worked well in most subject areas, ensuring that enrolment targets were met. The system had strengths on which it was important to build. These included: a student-centred approach, represented by the close involvement of the Centre for Student Affairs (CSA) in the arrangements for dealing with students' admission enquires and communicating admission decisions, planning open days for prospective students and parents and following up with questionnaires to students some 12 weeks after they enter the University for the first time. The main weaknesses perceived by the University as being in need of action were: fragmentation of the admissions process; lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities between 'University' and departmental staff; inadequate systems for recording and integrating data on enquiries, admissions, recruitment and marketing; lack of explicit performance standards; and insufficient training of staff in the student admissions area.
- 3.12 Acting on the consultants' recommendations, the University has recently created a new Student Admission and Enquiry Service (SAES) to provide a single contact and information point for enquirers and applicants. It was judged that this approach would build on existing strengths; ensure a consistent standard of service across the University; improve response times to enquirers and applicants; cascade applications more effectively; identify performance indicators; and improve data collection and dissemination.
- 3.13 The first phase of implementation - for full-time undergraduates - has been completed. The new staffing structure is in place and all the posts have been filled; a staff training and development programme has been started; the information system is being enhanced; data collection and dissemination have been markedly improved; student selection criteria have been clearly identified and documented; and initial targets for responses to enquiries and applications have been achieved. The second phase includes a survey of Postgraduate students and their admissions processes and the formation of a Student Admission Advisory Committee of Senate.

- 3.14 The University calibrates the standards of its awards primarily through the external examining system. The University's external examiners and its own staff acting as external examiners in other higher education institutions help to ensure comparability of standards within subject disciplines. Furthermore, the University's extensive engagement with professional and other statutory bodies both at individual and institutional levels contributes significantly to this calibration process.
- 3.15 The annual review by the Academic Quality and Audit Committee (AQAC) of external examiners' reports confirms the ongoing strength of the University's programmes, the satisfactory standards being attained by students and the efficiency of assessment administration. However, examiners do not hesitate to be critical where there are signs of variable performance between particular cohorts and/or award routes and they play a key role in ensuring the maintenance of academic standards.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

- 3.16 Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of courses belongs with departments. They are required by Senate to establish and keep under scrutiny clear procedures for course management, monitoring and evaluation. They may determine their own arrangements and structures for monitoring and evaluation providing that account is taken of the following factors common to all departments:
- a the responsibility of the Head of Department for the continuing quality and standards of all courses offered by the department and for the quality of subject groups. The Head of Department reports annually to the Departmental Board on the quality and standards of the Department's courses, taking account of evidence from detailed monitoring and evaluation of student achievement;
 - b the direct responsibility of Course Management Committees for active monitoring of courses at the operational level.
- 3.17 The University has evidence from periodic surveys by Senate (acting through its Academic Quality Committee) that Heads of Departments are generally discharging their responsibilities as required. It is confident that departmental level monitoring and evaluation is generally effective in assuring the maintenance of academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience. This confidence is supported by evidence obtained for this self evaluation and other examples of periodic scrutiny of subjects based upon peer review.
- 3.18 This approach reflects the University's commitment to devolution of responsibility to departments for matters over which it is reasonable for them to exercise academic control. The University does not believe in forcing uniformity of procedures on all departments. However, it is concerned to ensure that there is clarity about the principles which underpin the assurance of standards and quality and that there is a sound rationale for the distinctive mechanisms devised by individual departments. To this end, departments are required to inform Senate when they make changes to their monitoring and evaluation procedures.

- 3.19 Opportunities for student feedback are provided through student representation on Course and Award Management Committees and/or student/staff committees. However, students do not always take up these opportunities, despite considerable effort by staff in encouraging them to do so.

Quality improvement

- 3.20 Quality management and enhancement are addressed at both University and departmental levels through executive and committee structures. Quality management takes place through the executive. Deans, Heads of Departments, departmental senior management teams and course directors are all involved in identifying and disseminating good practice and in correcting poor practice. Senate papers show that its Quality and Assessment Committees provide an important opportunity for those with academic leadership responsibilities to exchange experiences, share good practice and identify action to improve quality.
- 3.21 The University is nevertheless seeking to improve its arrangements to support quality enhancement. For example, while Senate's Academic Quality Committee receives reports from Heads of Departments, it rarely finds sufficient time to consider these reports in detail and identify follow-up action. Departments are expected simply to take relevant action themselves and are trusted to do this within reasonable timescales. Measures are currently being considered to tighten up Academic Quality Committee's scrutiny of departmental action plans and the University is considering ways in which it might support the development of internal and external benchmarking to encourage standard setting in key areas affecting the students' learning experience.

4 LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Learning infrastructure

- 4.1 The University regards the provision of good quality learning and teaching resources as key underpinning to its mission. Over the past five years, investment in library provision has included an extension to the University Library to widen the range of services available to students.
- 4.2 A more integrated library service has been developed and library staffing restructured to support a range of changes, including development of electronic library services and the creation of a unit able to make off-air video recordings to support growing use of videos in teaching and learning. These changes have been directed through the University's annual planning process and debated in Senate's Academic Quality Committee and its Teaching Committee. The University has made considerable efforts to ensure that comparable services are available in all its library outlets, both large and small.
- 4.3 Similar investment has been made to develop the IT infrastructure, hardware and software for both academic and administrative purposes. This has placed a considerable strain on the University as it has sought to recruit the right kind of staff in a competitive labour market. Rising expectations of students outstrip the

University's ability to deliver. Budget constraints have meant that the University struggles to keep pace with the development needed. Overall, however, we still believe that considerable progress has been made.

- 4.4 Changes in teaching and learning methods are beginning to emerge as the University grows more confident in affirming its commitment to active student participation in learning. Correspondingly, the pressure on the use of laboratories, workshops, studios and similar facilities has increased. Longer opening hours are demanded. More student work is supported by technician staff. Some Departments are beginning to consider increased use of project work by students.
- 4.5 While considerable effort and resources have been devoted to the harnessing of modern technology in support of teaching and methods, the challenge for the University over a period of continuing growth in student numbers and pressure on resources has been to manage its teaching and student accommodation effectively and efficiently.
- 4.6 Continuing changes in the student population require the University to keep its learning resources under constant review. The University's commitment to increase the number of postgraduate students and increased flexibility of student study and consideration of some forms of distance learning all have resource implications. The University would like to enable all its students to have ready access to good quality information at times and in forms which meet students' needs and preferences.

Development of library and information services

- 4.7 The library uses a range of means to gauge the quality of its services and the degree of client satisfaction. These include: surveys and group discussions with staff and student users; designation of library staff with responsibility for named subject departments, an appraisal scheme for library staff and an active Library Advisory Group of staff from across subject departments to advise on library management. Feedback from departments suggests a high degree of satisfaction with library services.

Information strategy

- 4.8 The university sector faces escalating demand for more IT applications to support the changing pace of knowledge transfer without a corresponding increase in university budgets. Against this background, it is essential that maximum value for money be obtained from the University's investment in ICT that supports its teaching and learning. A recent survey of IT applications in teaching and learning in the University showed how much this vary between disciplines. A major challenge facing the University will be to co-ordinate developments at departmental level, identify relevant good practice elsewhere and developing enabling strategies and standards to further good practice in the University.
- 4.9 To this end, responsibility for the management of the IT strategy rests with a small IT executive group chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. A number of key staff from

faculties is active members of an IT Forum aimed at sharing and developing good practice.

Student support and guidance

- 4.10 New students are offered an induction programme to introduce them to key people within the Department and to the range of central and departmental based services that are available. Induction sessions are also often offered to continuing students to help them to understand and meet the demands of the next phase of their course. Departmental student handbooks are used to give essential basic information such as procedures and schedules for assessment. Many academic staff and faculty librarians advertise office hours so that students can book a session when they need extra help or advice. Good practice recognises the need to provide orientation for students to a new environment, rather than merely induction to systems and processes and the need to check whether information is actually received.
- 4.11 Pastoral and academic support for students at the University are undertaken at faculty level by a wide range of academic and administrative staff. Student advisers or personal tutors normally act as the first point of contact for discussions about academic progress and advice on personal matters. Award Leaders and members of module teams offer general academic support, including information about programme structure, details of module delivery and guidance on module assessments. Students also have access to written guidance, and 'module fairs' are increasingly used to enable informed student choice of options.
- 4.12 In the past academic staff have almost invariably provided this support. As the pressure grows on staff to teach, research and respond to the increasing range of external demands and initiatives, a number of faculties are finding it more effective to assign front line responsibility for this task to administrative staff. This trend is expected to continue.
- 4.13 Skills support is offered in a variety of ways. These include IT induction, the use of study skills modules, the explicit embedding of skills in subject modules, the provision of workbooks and the use of dedicated study skills tutors. There is also self-help material available in libraries. Some courses offer study skills modules as part of formal learning. Library staff aims to provide training in information retrieval skills for students.
- 4.14 A pilot 'key skills' project is designed to enable undergraduates to recognise and record their achievement in key skills and other capabilities acquired through their higher education experience. It is hoped eventually to support this through the establishment of a guidance and support framework provided by a central Careers Service. The pilot has already proved to be extremely positive for students who had failed to recognise that they were acquiring and developing such skills.
- 4.15 In one department, a key skills project has been used to stimulate course development by clarifying staff expectations of graduates. A profile of skills and capabilities reflecting the subject's requirements has been produced and this is driving changes in learning outcomes, content and assessment.

- 4.16 Support for international students varies between departments, largely as a function of numbers and origins of such students. Some departments have dedicated staff to assist international students, organise special induction and 'welcome' events and handle pastoral issues. The University makes particular efforts to provide residential accommodation for international students.
- 4.17 With the growth in student numbers, careers advice must increasingly be geared to 'self-help', supported by appropriate material and databases. Similarly, student counseling aims to provide effective but limited intervention the University is not resourced to provide comprehensive support for all its students.
- 4.18 Student advice, academic counseling and support require staff familiarity with a growing range of issues: Communication on matters of this kind with students and academic staff has become increasingly complex. A wide variety of literature is produced but concern remains about the extent to which it is read and retained.

Current issues

- 4.19 The University's self-evaluation has identified strengths and examples of good practice in student support and guidance. It has also highlighted some areas for improvement. The position for postgraduate students requires attention. Some procedures are too reactive and students far whom the later stages of their studies prove too challenging are not always readily identified.
- 4.20 The University cannot say with certainty that all students receive the same level of support irrespective of their subject. There has been insufficient analysis of the nature of student support passable with increased numbers and decreased resources, and the University does not have a fully consistent position an the extent to which the student is responsible far his or her awn learning. This has been recognized in recent Senate debates. The University recognizes the increasing complexity of students' lives and that mare central ca-ordination of departmental activity may be required.

Management of change

- 4.21 One of the greatest challenges facing the University is the continuing need to manage change in a large organization. Inevitably, much of the process occurs at departmental level but it is essential far this to take place in the context of a University strategy.
- 4.22 Recent changes - and this self-evaluation - have shown that University staff are under increasing pressure to develop their teaching and respond to rising student numbers While seeking to establish a foothold in research. The consequences of the kind of changes seen aver the past two years far the mare traditional roles of staff and their expectations of interaction with students has led the University to recognize the need to include such issues in the induction and development processes far new staff as well as far existing staff. It is accepted that there is a considerable way to go in this respect. Similarly, training to equip staff with the communication and IT skills to make mare effective use of new learning resources is not well developed. While considerable progress has been made in same areas, often by individual effort,

dissemination remains a challenge, as does enabling staff in faculties and the central learning support services to cope with the pace of change.

5 The University's view of its self-evaluation

- 5.1 This self-evaluation represents the University's attempt to take stock of the strengths, weaknesses and overall effectiveness of University policies and procedures for quality assurance. It has made reference to the evidence it has drawn upon itself to evaluate its arrangements for assessing the quality of its provision and the standard of its awards. The self-evaluation was initially compiled by a small number of groups of staff with student representation chosen to reflect the range of subjects, courses and activities supported by the University. It has been the subject of extensive consultation and refinement by Senate and its committees.
- 5.2 In approving the self-evaluation document, Senate has confirmed it as an accurate reflection of the University's understanding of the effectiveness of its academic quality assurance arrangements, demonstrating both strengths and areas where continuing attention is needed to maintain and enhance quality.
- 5.3 The self-evaluation has formed part of a wider review of University strategy begun by the University's Board of Governors. The key strategic aim in the period 2002-05 is to safeguard quality in the face of resource constraints while pursuing the educational goals derived from the University's statement of its Mission and Educational Objectives.

Institutional review: Sample Self-Evaluation

List of evidence

A

Academic Registry: structure
Annual Departmental Planning Agreements
Annual Review of External Examiner Reports
Assessment Regulations (Senate paper on proposed changes 2002)

B

Board of Governors:

- Board of Governors: minutes
- Student Affairs Committee: minutes

C

Centre for Student Affairs: additional documentation

- Annual reports
- Careers
- Counselling
- Graduate employment survey

Course Validation Reports (sample)

D

Departmental documentation:

- Examining Board Minutes (sample)
- Course Outlines (sample)
- Course Management Committee: minutes (sample)
- Dean's Report to Departmental Board (sample)
- External Examiner Reports (sample)
- Departmental Boards: minutes (sample)
- Handbooks for Students (sample)
- ICT: use in teaching and learning (examples)
- Induction Programmes: Staff (sample)
- Induction Programmes: Students (sample)
- Industry Advisory Groups: minutes (sample)
- Study module evaluation questionnaire (sample)
- Monitoring and Evaluation Committees: minutes (sample)
- Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (sample)
- Departmental Staff/Student Committees: minutes (sample)
- Departmental Teaching and Learning Committees: minutes (sample)

H

Heads of Schools Forum

Handbook: Quality Assurance Handbook

I

Information Technology Reports

K

Key Skills Project

L

Library Advisory Group: minutes Library Service Reports

M

Marketing and Communication: surveys

P

Probation Arrangements for new academic staff

Q

Quality Review 1999-2000 Quality Assurance Handbook 2002

R

Research Centres: list

Research Degree Monitoring Reports Research Reports

S

Senate: minutes

Senate Committees:

- Academic Quality Committee: minutes
- Teaching Committee
- Assessment Committee
- Research Committee: minutes

Staff Appraisal Procedures

Staff Development Policy

Statement of University Mission and Educational Objectives Student Admission Report

Student Complaints Framework

Student Involvement in University Committees

Student Support and Guidance

U

University Academic Regulations 2002

University Committee Handbook

University Prospectus 2002

University Publications

University Student Handbook 2002

University Website: details

Institutional Review: Guidance on Preparing the Review Report

Purpose

Review reports are compiled by review teams from the evidence received and considered through the process of institutional review. The review report is self-contained. It aims to be a concise, accessible account of the review process, an analysis of the issues and evidence considered by the review team and discussed with members of the university through the review process, and incorporating the review team's considered reflections, conclusions and containing its overall judgment of the level of confidence placed in the university's quality assurance arrangements.

The report contains the following sections:

- 1 a brief introduction to the university and its review context
- 2 the review team's view of the university's self-evaluation
- 3 an overview of the university's approach to quality assurance
- 4 commentary sections on the eight aspects of institutional review
 - University goals and corporate planning
 - Financial resources and management
 - Research
 - Quality management and administration
 - Quality assurance
 - Learning resources and student support
 - External degree programmes
 - University/ industry/community/other extension activities
- 5 overall judgment of level of confidence in the university's quality assurance arrangements
- 6 commendations and recommendations
- 7 summary

Members of the review team will take responsibility for individual sections of the report. Assistance with the drafting of the report may be given by an audit secretary. The Chair of the institutional review team will co-ordinate the sections of the report to produce the final text which shall be agreed with the team as a whole.

Report sections

All sections, other than section 1, will have the same structure: description (sufficient to enable the reader to understand the arrangements referred to) followed by analysis and commentary, followed by judgment.

Section 1: brief introduction to the university and its review context

This will introduce the reader to the university and the context for the review. It will summarise the outcomes of previous subject reviews and any interim institutional review reports which may have preceded this final report. It will identify any key issues within the eight aspects of institutional review which the team has identified for particular scrutiny from the university's self-evaluation.

Section 2: review team's view of the university's self-evaluation

This presents the review team's view of the university's self-evaluation and its relationship to the findings of previous subject reviews and interim institutional review reports, if any. It will identify any major strengths and weaknesses and any areas for particular scrutiny by the review team in the review itself.

Section 3: overview of the university's approach to quality and standards

This presents the review team's observations on the overall approach of the university to quality assurance and management. It will describe the key features of the university's approach and arrangements, any recent and proposed developments and evidence from the self-evaluation of the university's capacity to take action to remedy weaknesses and seek improvement.

Section 4: commentary sections on the eight aspects of institutional review

This presents the review team's analysis of the effectiveness of the university's processes under each of the eight component headings. Where appropriate, reference will be made to national guidelines and/or local codes of practice as reference points for the review team's commentary.

Section 5: overall judgment of confidence in the university's quality assurance arrangements

This will set out the review team's overall judgment of the level of confidence which the review process has shown can be placed in the university to safeguard standards and maintain quality.

Section 6: commendations and recommendations

This will list the commendations (of areas of good and/or innovative practice) and any recommendations for action to remedy weakness or to achieve change in areas where alternative approaches elsewhere may assist and lead to improvement.

Section 7: summary

This will summarise the review team's findings from the review process. It will be written for a wider audience and contain sufficient information from the body of the report to constitute an executive and representative summary of the report as a whole. It will be no longer than 1000 words.

Appendix

The university may provide as an appendix to the report an outline of its governance and main committee arrangements relevant to its quality assurance systems where such information will assist the general reader.

Annex D

Institutional Review: Schedule of Meetings for a Review Visit

This schedule assumes a five-day visit to a large university. The number of visit days and meetings would be fewer for a smaller university. The order of the meetings and the assignment of topics to particular days are indicative only. It is likely, however, that the visit will begin and end with the meetings shown with senior representatives of the university.

Pre-visit evening	arrival of the review team
Day 1	
9.00-10.30	Review team private meeting to check programme and agenda for whole visit and meetings for the first day
10.30	Meeting with the Vice-Chancellor
11.00	Meeting with senior management team
12.00	Meeting of review team
12.30-13.30	Meeting with students (student representatives)
13.30-14.0	Meeting of the review team
14.00-16.00	Meetings with small groups identified by the review team (chosen to enable the team to become acquainted with the main features of the university's quality assurance arrangements).
16.00-17.00	Meeting of the review team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap on day and bullet points for report Check agenda and allocation of topics for day 2
Day 2.	
am	Meetings with groups chosen to enable team to explore quality assurance processes in support of undergraduate teaching in two or three different areas of the university (informed by findings of previous subject reviews)
lunch	Working lunch, if appropriate, to enable team to meet postgraduate and research students
pm	Meetings with representatives of learning support and other non-academic services in the university, including administrative services supporting quality assurance
16.00-17.00	Meeting of the review team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recap on day and bullet points for report Check agenda and allocation of topics for day 3

Day 3

am	Meetings with groups selected to enable the team to explore the university's research activities, including research degree supervision
Lunch	Working lunch to enable the team to meet representatives of employers of the university's graduates and of placement students
pm	Meetings with groups selected by the review team to enable it to explore aspects of the university's involvement in the community
16.00-17.00	Meeting of the review team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recap on day and bullet points for report• Check agenda and allocation of topics for day 4

Day 4

am	Open meeting for any members of staff to meet the review team
lunch	Working lunch with representatives of the university's governing body
pm	Meeting of the review team
	Visit to external institutions involved in external degrees awarded by the university (if applicable)
	Further meetings with groups chosen to enable aspects of the university's quality assurance processes to be explored at different levels (academic and/or on-academic)
16.00-17.00	Meeting of the review team: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recap on day and bullet points for report• Check agenda and allocation of topics for day 5

Day 5

am	'checking' meeting for review team with Vice-Chancellor and senior management team
	Meeting(s) as necessary with groups selected to enable the review team to 'close' any outstanding matters for clarification identified from previous meeting

- 11.00-14.00 (approx) Meeting of the review team to agree overall judgment. The review team will agree the outline of the report and confirm responsibilities and deadlines for completion of report sections with individual team members.
- 14.00 Final meeting with Vice -Chancellor and senior management team to give feedback on key findings and overall judgment.

Guidance on self-evaluation for subject review

Introduction

The purposes of the self-evaluation are:

1. To provide evidence that the subject provider(s) have evaluated the education to be reviewed in a constructive, but self-critical and analytical manner; .
2. To enable the subject provider(s) to express their aims in delivering the programmes or courses being reviewed, and the corresponding intended learning outcomes.
3. To enable the reviewers to take a view on:
 - 3.1 The appropriateness of the academic standards set for the programmes under review,
 - 3.2 The effectiveness of the curriculum in delivering the intended student learning outcomes,
 - 3.3 The effectiveness of learning and teaching methods in enabling learning outcomes to be achieved by students,
 - 3.4 The suitability and effectiveness of assessment methods in measuring student learning outcomes.

General guidance

The self-evaluation should consider both the strengths and weaknesses of the programmes being reviewed. It should refer to internal and external reviews of the programmes that have taken place previously, including feedback from external examiners, and show how action has been taken to address any recommendations.

In the normal course of events, the providers of the education being reviewed will have an idea of where improvements still need to be made to the relevant programmes. It is important to mention such weaknesses and say how they are being addressed. This will show the reviewers that there is a culture of on-going enhancement to programmes, and should not disadvantage the providers of the programmes in the review process.

One of the most important principles in the whole quality assurance system is that it is based on peer review. The providers themselves initially provide judgments on the academic standards of degrees awarded and the quality of the programmes offered to students, through the self evaluation. That document is therefore at the centre of the review and needs to be well thought out and well organised to enable external reviewers to form a basis for their judgments.

A self-evaluation that is descriptive rather than evaluative, or that does not provide sufficient coverage of the essential areas, will mean that the reviewers do not begin the review with a firm knowledge base. They will need to work harder to assure themselves that the programmes under review have been subject to suitable internal scrutiny and that there is a culture of evaluation and enhancement in the department(s)/institution concerned. .

Another important principle is that programmes are judged according to the provider's intended aims and learning outcomes. In this way, the system is designed to accommodate diversity and variation in institutional mission, for example more emphasis on community education in one institution and on research in another. The overall aims of the institution in which the programmes are located (as indicated in the institutional plan) will provide sufficient background information for the reviewers about institutional mission. The self-evaluation should reflect the institutional ethos and goals and if there is departure from them at subject level, a rationale for this should be given.

It will often be the case that programmes are grouped for the purposes of review. In these circumstances it will be agreed between the providers and the reviewers in advance of the review visit whether one or more self-evaluations would be more appropriate.

Specific guidance

An example of a self-evaluation document is at Annex F. It is for a combined medical sciences subject review in Anatomy and Physiology. It is an adapted version of a self-evaluation written for the purpose of an actual subject review in the UK and was therefore subject to strict word and page length constraints. These restrictions mean that there are not as many illustrative examples to support statements made in the text as we would normally provide, and that all explanations of why and how things are done in a particular way are more restricted than usual.

Overview of provision: aims, learning outcomes and programme details

The self-evaluation should begin with a statement of general aims in the subject, i.e. what the department(s) set out to achieve in delivering the programme(s).

The aims should cover both the level of achievement expected of students (knowledge, understanding, intellectual and personal/transferable skills), and the effort and resources provided by the department(s) concerned to enable students to meet these levels of achievement.

In summary, the aims should outline the general purposes of the programme(s).

These should be supplemented by student learning outcomes, which should differentiate between the programmes offered. Although not essential, it may help to group student learning outcomes under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding;
- Intellectual and analytical abilities;
- Personal, transferable skills.

The introductory section should also contain a list of the programmes to be reviewed, split into undergraduate and postgraduate, with current student numbers and full-time equivalents for each programme.

As a guide, this section should be about three sides of A4 in length.

Students, staff and facilities

This section should comprise relatively brief summaries about:

students - numbers, types of applicant, types and range of entry qualifications, degree results, etc

staff- a list of staff is often helpful, including status (lecturer, professor, etc), year appointed and brief details of departmental teaching responsibilities

facilities - a brief overview of the facilities available to staff and students to support the learning experience (including: teaching accommodation, library provision, ICT and audio-visual aids)

Please see Annex F for an example of this section, which should be about 2-3 pages in length (no longer than 3 pages).

Evaluation of the education under review

This section should be written under the sub-headings previously identified, namely:

- Curriculum design, content and review;
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods;
- Quality of students, including student progress and achievement;
- The extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative;
- Postgraduate studies;
- Peer observation;
- Skills development;
- Academic guidance and counseling.

The whole of this section should be about 10-12 sides, but no longer than about 15 sides of A4

Curriculum design, content and review

This section should review the effectiveness of the content and the design of the curriculum in enabling students to achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programmes under review.

It should refer to the relevant aims and learning outcomes in the introduction of the self evaluation, and summarise how the curriculum enables these to be achieved.

In summary, this section should be written to address the following questions.

In relation to the design and content of the curriculum, the reviewers are likely to ask how appropriate the curriculum design is to the intended student learning outcomes.

They will take into account whether:

- The programme(s) and units within it/them are at a suitable academic level;
- There are sufficient opportunities for students to gain suitable subject knowledge and understanding, intellectual and analytical skills and personal transferable skills;
- There is both sufficient breadth and depth in terms of subject coverage;
- The programme(s) is/are organised so as to make suitable intellectual demands on students as they progress through the curriculum;
- There is sufficient flexibility and student choice;
- The programme(s) have been accredited by a professional body (if relevant);
- Any interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary elements are suitably provided;
- The curriculum facilitates progress to employment and/or further study.

Questions concerning curriculum review are likely to include the following:

- How often is the curriculum reviewed, by the department(s), the school (where relevant) and the University?
- How is action taken in response to the outcomes of such reviews?
- How is student feedback taken into account in reviewing the curriculum?
- How are any comments from the external examiner concerning the curriculum addressed? Is there evidence that the curriculum is informed by recent developments in the subject(s)
- (Research and scholarship), and in learning and teaching methods?
- Is there consultation with employers on curriculum design and content?

Teaching, learning and assessment methods

This section should begin with a summary of the teaching, learning and assessment strategy in the subject being reviewed, which should cover all programmes.

Then, there should be an overview of the teaching, learning and assessment methods used in the programme. There should be a rationale for the use of different teaching and learning activities, saying why each has been chosen and how they relate to the assessment methods used for the various parts of the programme.

It is often helpful to append to the self-evaluation a matrix for each programme, showing how the different learning outcomes (subject-specific, intellectual and analytical ability and personal/transferable skills) are a) acquired through the learning opportunities provided in the various core modules, and b) assessed. This matrix can then be referred to in the self evaluation.

Reviewers will consider, overall, how teaching, learning and assessment methods enable and facilitate the acquisition of the specified learning outcomes by students. Questions they may ask include the following:

- What is the teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the programmes being reviewed?
- How does it articulate with the department or school's stated aims?
- Does it enable students to achieve intended learning outcomes?
- Are learning outcomes clear to students and staff?
- Are assessment requirements clear to students and staff?
- From the evidence provided (including external examiners' reports, teaching and learning materials, student feedback, teaching observations, meetings with students), what strengths and weaknesses emerge?
- Are student workloads balanced and reasonable?
- To what extent are students given opportunities to interact, with staff and with peers.
- Is the range of teaching, learning and assessment methods appropriate, e.g. do they cater for a range of learning styles and abilities?
- Are assessment methods suitably balanced, e.g. so that there is not undue reliance on unseen examinations, and do they test whether learning outcomes have been achieved?
- In summary, do teaching, learning and assessment methods promote learning?

Quality of students, including student progress and achievement

This section should cover the recruitment and admissions procedures in the programmes being reviewed, the effect of teaching, learning and assessment strategies on student progression, and the extent of academic support that is provided for students in the learning process (and how this varies depending on the quality of the students being recruited).

Recruitment and admissions

There should be a brief description of the recruitment and admissions process, together with a rationale for the procedures used and how they contribute to meeting the programme aims. Issues concerning the selection of students and also the practicalities of the admissions process should be explored.

There should be an analytical account of the student profile and how it fits with the programme aims in the introduction to the self-evaluation (see Overview of provision above). It should refer to the statistical annex and comment on topics such as:

- the extent to which pre-selection and distribution of students to universities at a national level enables or inhibits achievement of a satisfactory student profile to meet programme aims;
- whether or not the ratio of applications to places is representative of the demand for the programmes being reviewed;

- student entry qualifications and how well prepared students are to complete the programme(s) satisfactorily;
- the range of applicants for programmes, commenting on different student backgrounds.

Progress and completion

Again, reference should be made in the self-evaluation to statistical information, which will include data on year-on-year progress within programmes. Comment should be made on whether progress and completion rates are satisfactory, identifying trends and evaluating the reasons for unusual or unexpected statistical evidence.

This section should also comment on student achievement, in terms of academic standards, with reference made to institutional academic standards and national subject standards, including the requirements of any accrediting organisations. Where relevant, reference should be made to the national and institutional qualifications frameworks.

Questions reviewers are likely to ask under these headings might be:

- Do statistics show that aims and learning outcomes for the programmes under review are being achieved?
- Do recruitment and admissions procedures ensure that students who are recruited have the potential to benefit from the programmes they study and that entry requirements enable academic standards to be maintained?
- Are progression rates satisfactory at each stage of the programme, differentiating between academic failure, withdrawal for personal or financial reasons and transfers in and out of programmes?
- Are programme completion rates satisfactory?
- Are qualifications awarded at suitable academic levels and are they in line with institutional and national academic standards, such as those specified in the institutional or national qualifications frameworks?
- Do the qualifications awarded indicate a satisfactory level of student achievement in relation to the intended learning objectives?
- Do samples of student work indicate that students are achieving the intended learning outcomes?

Student achievement

Student achievement should correspond to:

- The level at which students enter the programme;
- The "added value" anticipated as a result of studying at the institution;
- The intended learning outcomes for the programme.

Reviewers will use the examples of student work provided to help them assess whether or not student achievement is satisfactory, together with the statistical information provided and any

other relevant information. They will also use meetings with students to evaluate this element, and external examiners' reports.

They are likely to ask the following questions:

- Do the qualifications awarded indicate an appropriate level of student achievement in relation to intended learning outcomes?
- What evidence is there in the samples of student work that students have achieved the learning outcomes?
- What do external examiners say about student achievement?
- Do students think they are achieving their potential?
- Do students' first destinations reflect an appropriate level of achievement?

The extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative

This section should cover the department's use of student feedback, both qualitative and quantitative. Reviewers might expect to find evidence of the use of student questionnaires, student forums, student/staff liaison committees, etc. As with student progression and achievement, reviewers will use the meetings with students to check the extent to which the department regularly seeks and acts upon students' views.

Questions reviewers might ask concerning this section are as follows.

- How is student feedback obtained and at what intervals?
- Does the feedback cover both module and programme/course information?
- What methods does the department use to seek student feedback?
- Is there student representation on departmental committees?
- Is there a dedicated student/staff liaison committee?
- What do the minutes of committees on which students are represented indicate?
- Is there evidence that students are consulted for their views?
- Is there evidence that action is taken in response to issues raised by students?
- How do students know that action is taken in response to the feedback they provide?
- How is such information communicated to students?
- Are students consulted on the quality of learning resources available to them?
- What examples are there of the department acting upon student feedback?
- Are students generally satisfied with their experience?

Postgraduate studies

This part of the self-evaluation should cover all aspects of the support, guidance, facilities and training provided for research students. It should look in detail at supervisory arrangements, expectations about completion, suspension and / or extension of studies, training opportunities, including research methods, etc.

Questions reviewers might ask about this aspect are as follows:

- What are the numbers of research students in the department?
- Are staff numbers sufficient to support them generally?
Is the quality of staff sufficient to provide academic guidance and leadership for the dissertation topics students are currently engaged in?
- What are the supervisory arrangements for students?
- Are there departmental mechanisms to ensure that supervisors have sufficient time to spend with research students?
- What are student completion rates?
- How are students funded?
- Is proper account taken of research councils' (or equivalent) requirements?
- What research facilities (apart from staff) exist in the department?
- How are they funded and are they adequate to meet the needs of students?

Peer observation

Reviewers will expect to find some evidence that the department monitors the quality of teaching provided to students, has mechanisms to share good practice, and has procedures for enhancing the quality of teaching.

This section should describe the peer observation practices used by the department and also evaluate the extent to which this is used to improve teaching performance.

Questions reviewers are likely to ask include the following:

- Does the department have a procedure for observing teaching?
- Does this apply to all staff, including part-time and visiting staff?
- Is the quality of teaching carried out by research students monitored?
- Are peer observation procedures effective?
- What is the evidence for this?
- Do staff perceive the peer observation process to be helpful in enhancing teaching quality? · Are academic staff external to the department involved in peer observation?
- Are there formal outcomes of peer observations?
- If so, how are they used - for example, do they contribute to the annual staff appraisal process?
- Are peer observation outcomes 'triangulated' with student feedback and other material to support staff development?
- What evidence is there that the peer observation procedures in the department result in enhancement of teaching quality?

Skills development

Embedding of student skills development in academic programmes is considered a priority by the CVCD and UGC, also by employers. The way in which this is done is important to the success with which students develop skills. Skills development is more likely to succeed if teaching, learning and assessment methods in the subject they are studying are designed to enable development of personal skills at the same time as acquisition of subject knowledge and understanding.

Reviewers will be looking for evidence of opportunities for students to develop personal skills and will be interested in whether they are assessed on these abilities, as well as subject-specific knowledge. Questions they might ask include the following:

- Does the department have a strategy for skills development as part of the curriculum?
- If so, how is this achieved - is the strategy successful?
- If not, are there special modules dedicated to student skills development?
- What are the skills the department intends students to acquire?
- Are these clearly expressed in student learning outcomes?
- Are students aware that they have opportunities to develop personal skills?
- Is there evidence that students acquire the intended skills?
- Do assessment methods evaluate students' personal skills as well as their subject knowledge and understanding?
- Does the department consult employers about curriculum design?
- If so, what skills do employers think are important?
- Is there evidence that the department takes account of employer feedback in this area?

Academic guidance and counseling

This is an important area of student support. The self-evaluation should indicate the extent of academic guidance and counselling available to students, and by whom it is provided. It might be that this section of the document will also touch on personal guidance and counselling, because of the frequent links between academic and personal problems.

The self-evaluation should make clear the strategies for academic support in the department, including making clear what individual responsibilities are. Any peer mentoring, for example by final year students for first years, should be included here.

Questions reviewers might ask include the following:

- What is the department's strategy for providing effective academic guidance and counselling to students?
- How do they know whether or not it is working?
- What training do staff (and, if appropriate, students) receive in preparation for their role as academic counsellor or personal tutor?
- Do students receive effective academic guidance from the point of application to receiving their final award?

- Do arrangements for academic guidance match the student profile, the way in which the curriculum is structured and the teaching, learning and assessment methods used?
- Is there evidence that students' progress and achievement is enhanced by the academic guidance they receive?
- What do students think of the academic guidance and counseling they receive?
- Are there good links between the department and any other student support services available in the university?

SUBJECT REVIEW

ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

**SAMPLE
SELF-EVALUATION**

Overview of provision

1 AIMS, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PROGRAMME DETAILS

1.1 *Aims (242 words)*

Understanding the structure and function of the mammalian body offers a major intellectual challenge, requires a range of skills, and has relevance within many spheres of human activity.

In this context, we aim to provide:

- 1.1.1 degree programmes that offer a high quality learning experience in an environment of internationally recognised research, in line with University policy, so as to expose students to recent advances in knowledge and techniques, particularly those represented in the research strengths of the Department;
- 1.1.2 a range of challenging learning opportunities within the modular teaching structure of the University, enabling students to develop their academic interests and potential;
- 1.1.3 encouragement to students to develop a knowledge base, cognitive abilities and transferable skills that will permit them to contribute effectively to biomedical research or other careers (whether or not related to their undergraduate programme) and to be well-placed to meet the needs of potential employers;
- 1.1.4 opportunities for students to develop the skills and enthusiasm required for lifelong learning;
- 1.1.5 a friendly, responsive and supportive departmental environment that is conducive to enthusiastic learning, high standards and good completion rates;
- 1.1.6 a stimulating opportunity for students from other departments in the University to study mammalian structure and function at a level appropriate to their needs;
- 1.1.7 support for our teaching staff in their career development, including the provision of feedback and peer advice;
- 1.1.8 departmental committee structures for the effective organisation of teaching, learning, assessment, review and quality assurance.

1.2 *Learning outcomes*

On successful completion of anyone of our programmes, students should have:

- 1.2.1 gained a knowledge and conceptual understanding of areas of biomedical science, based on programmes that provide initial broad frameworks followed by progressively increasing depth of study;
- 1.2.2 learnt how this knowledge and understanding can be applied to research;
- 1.2.3 developed a range of personal and transferable skills (e.g. critical ability, independence of thought, data handling and interpretation, computer literacy, information management, oral and written communication, teamwork) and had experience of applying them to varied situations;
- 1.2.4 learnt technical and intellectual skills necessary for the acquisition and analysis of data through laboratory work, and had direct experience of research (based on laboratory- or field-work);
- 1.2.5 developed their ability for critical, self-directed learning.

On successful completion of the following specific programmes, students should have obtained knowledge and understanding:

- 1.2.6 in Physiology (B. Sc. Hons), of the functions of cells, tissues and mammalian organs and systems, including integrative whole body physiology, culminating in detailed coverage of topics selected from cardiovascular physiology, cell motility, physiological genomic and aspects of central neuroscience (e.g. synaptic transmission, movement control and sensory physiology);
- 1.2.7 in Anatomical Science (B. Sc. Hons), of the organisation of cells, tissues and organs within the systems of the mammalian body, including comparative structural and functional aspects, leading to detailed coverage of selected topics in musculoskeletal science, neuroscience, or neuroendocrinology and reproduction. Additionally, Anatomical Science with Study in Industry (B. Sc. Hons - 4-year programme) provides experience in a modern industrial environment and in the industrial application of biomedical subjects;
- 1.2.8 in the recently-introduced programme in Neuroscience (B. Sc. Hons), of the organisation and function of cells, tissues and organs, with particular emphasis on the structure and function of the mammalian nervous system, leading to a detailed multidisciplinary coverage of selected topics in molecular neuroscience, synaptic transmission and plasticity, learning and memory, movement control, sensory processing (including hearing) and neuroendocrinology;
- 1.2.9 in Equine Science (B. Sc. Hons) of the organisation of cells, tissues and organs within the systems of the body, with emphasis on the horse and the scientific basis of equine management, leading to detailed coverage of the musculoskeletal and cardiovascular systems and other aspects (e.g. biomechanics and gait analysis) relevant to use of the horse in leisure industries.

Additionally, each of the above programmes includes appropriate generic topics (e.g. functional molecular biology, philosophy of science) and coverage of commonly used techniques in biomedical sciences. Information about the units provided by the Department to support the above programmes, and of the units contributing to these programmes that are provided by other University departments, is available in the appropriate handbooks (see also 'Numbers of students taking units provided by the Department' in the Appendix).

To help to achieve the outcomes in 1.2.1 - 1.2.9, all our programmes offer a learning experience that is intended to enable students to:

- 1.2.10 build upon their academic qualifications and potential at entry by progressively developing knowledge, skills and understanding, based on a broad and multidisciplinary approach;
- 1.2.11 study in fields in which they have most interest or talent by offering a choice of units within a flexible but coherent academic framework, so allowing students to broaden as well as deepen their educational experience;
- 1.2.12 benefit from exposure to selected areas of high level research through provision of level 3 units that exploit the research strengths and resources of the Departments;
- 1.2.13 undertake a final-year research project from the wide range offered by active research staff, whether within the Departments or made available through interdepartmental collaborations;

- 1.2.14 benefit from a curriculum in which the design and teaching are enhanced by the collective efforts of staff, students and central University services;
- 1.2.15 interact with staffs who are committed to teaching and learning within a research environment and who appreciate the importance of these activities in relation to their development and promotion;
- 1.2.16 have a manageable workload within University guidelines;
- 1.2.17 be provided with clear details of programme and unit objectives, content, academic requirements and assessment methods;
- 1.2.18 receive fair and appropriate assessment for progression' and grading, and feedback on individual progress;
- 1.2.19 have access to adequate academic support and resources;
- 1.2.20 have access to pastoral support and to be aware of specialist help that is available elsewhere within the University.

Additionally, the Department strives to ensure that:

- 1.2.21 level 1 and level2 units provide learning experiences that are appropriate, accessible, interesting and beneficial to students undertaking other programmes in cognate disciplines;
- 1.2.22 level 3 units provide suitable learning experiences for students from medical, veterinary and dental programmes to obtain a B. Sc. degree through intercalation, in addition to their professional qualifications;
- 1.2.23 we are guided by the University's Teaching and Learning Strategy and the associated Guidelines;
- 1.2.24 overall, we provide an environment that promotes a high quality learning experience.

1.3 Programme details

The following courses / programmes of study fall into the remit of the review:

Programme	Duration	Current student numbers *
BSc Hons Physiology	3 years	66
BSc Hons Anatomical Science	3 years	52
BSc Hons Anatomical Science with Study in Industry	4 years	2
BSc Neuroscience	3 years	7
BSc Equine Science	3 years	41

*All undergraduates spend only two thirds of their first year studying Anatomy and Physiology, the other third is spent studying another science subject. In the Anatomical Science with Study in Industry programme, students will spend their third year studying and working in an industrial placement.

2 STUDENTS, STAFF AND FACILITIES

2.1 Students

- 2.1.1 Honours student numbers are as shown in the table above. Student places in our level 1 and level 2 units number respectively: Anatomy (all units) 79 and 61; Physi010gy 124 and 45. Students on our level 3 units number: Anatomical Science - 22; Neuroscience - 7, Equine Science - 14 and Physiology - 21 (Annex 1.7). We also teach about 160 medical, 85 veterinary and 55 dental students in each of their first 2 years.
- 2.1.2 Details of our applicants are shown in Annex 1 (A 1.1-A 1.5). In 1999 the two Departments had 479 applicants for a total target of 45 places, and 53 were admitted (A 1.1). The majority of applicants have a state school background and these account for around 65% of our entrants (A 1.3); the corresponding figure for the University as a whole is 61 %. Over the last 5 years, about 70% of our applicants and 75% of our entrants have been female (A 1.4).
- 2.1.3 In the last five years there has been an overall upward trend in the average A-level score of our entrants (A 1.5). Our standard offers for entry in 2000 are BBB (Anatomical Science, Neuroscience and Physiology) and ABB (Equine Science). Most of our entrants have A-level Biology, with the other two subjects usually coming from Chemistry, Maths or Physics, although a number of entrants have one non-science A-level. Relatively few applicants have qualifications other than A-levels (Table A 1.2).
- 2.1.4 Averaged over the last five years, 77% of our final year students have graduated with at least a 2.1 honours degree (A 1.6). This compares with a figure of 65% for the whole Science Faculty. Of the students who entered our programmes in 1995, 1996 and 1997, only one was required to withdraw from the University as a result of examination failure (A 1.8).

2.2 Anatomy and Physiology Staff

- 2.2.1 Academic staffs are listed below with their responsibilities on our Science Faculty programmes. Abbreviations: HoD - Head of Department; L - Lecturer; P - Professor; R Reader; RF - Research Fellow; SL - Senior Lecturer; SRF - Senior Research Fellow; TF Teaching Fellow; TL - Temporary Lecturer; UO - Unit Organiser; part-time staff.

Name	Status (as at July 2000)	Year appointed	Teaching administration responsibilities from July 2000 <i>Membership of Committees from July 2000 {all Anatomy Unit Organisers are ex officio members of the Departmental Science Teaching Sub-Committee}</i>
Dr	SRF	1987	<i>Dept Management Comm, Dept Teaching Comm; Chair of Dept Sci Teach Sub-Comm</i>
Dr	L	1994	Dept Admissions Tutor
Prof	HoD	1974	Prog Director (Physiology); <i>Dept Management Comm, Dept Teaching Comm, Med School Management Group, Sci Fac Plan Comm</i>
Dr	L	1997	Assistant Dept Admiss Tutor, Preview Day Organiser
Dr	SL	1985	
Dr	L	1997	Prog Director (Equine Science); Dept Science Tutor; <i>Dept Teaching Comm, Dept Teaching Quality Sub-Comm, Sci Fac Undergrad Studies Comm, Sci Fac Progress Comm</i>
Prof	P (MRC)	1994	<i>Dept Management Comm</i>
Dr	RF/SL	1989/2000	
Dr	SL	2000	Deputy Dept Teaching & Learning Advisor; Dept Library Representative
Prof	P	1994	Postgrad Tutor
Dr (until July 2002)	SRF/R	1988/1996	<i>Chair of Dept Sci Teaching Sub-Comm; Dept Teaching Comm, Dept Teaching Quality Sub-Comm</i>
Dr (PA)	RF	1996	

2.2.2 Additional staff involved in teaching includes six medical demonstrators in temporary posts (up to twelve months) and one veterinary demonstrator. There are also 59 research staff (28 postdoctoral and 31 postgraduate) who contribute to the programmes (mainly as tutors or demonstrators). Lecturers from outside the Department are invited to give lectures in their specialized fields. The Department has a departmental general manager and six secretarial staff (three part-time). Five externally funded technical staff contributes to the running of final year projects.

2.2.3 Facilities

2.3.1 Because we have involvement in teaching on the three professional programmes in the Faculty of Medicine, we are able to draw on a wider range of learning resources, including staff, than would otherwise be available. About half of the staff contact time devoted to teaching is concerned with Science Faculty programmes.

2.3.2 The Department is located mainly within the School of Medical Sciences and the Pre-clinical Veterinary School. We also use the Equine Sports Medicine Centre at the Clinical Veterinary School, 14 miles south west of the city. Significant numbers of lectures and tutorials are held elsewhere within the University precinct, in order to match room size with class requirements throughout the University.

2.3.3 The 6 lecture theatres that we use are all equipped with black/white boards, OHPs and 35 mm slide projectors. Video equipment and computer screen projection is available on request and is a permanent facility in some theatres. Technical support is provided by dedicated AVA staff.

2.3.4 From October 2002, we will have two redeveloped teaching laboratories in the new Medical Sciences Teaching Wing in the former East Wing of Chemistry, with places for around 100 students and the capability to expand to around 120. The physiology

laboratory will be well equipped for work both on human subjects and on isolated animal preparations; the histology laboratory will have video facilities and modern microscopes. This redevelopment and the associated work in our existing teaching laboratories is inevitably causing some disruption to our current teaching, although we are striving to minimize this.

- 2.3.4 The human dissecting room has recently been moved to purpose-built accommodation adjacent to the animal dissecting room within the Pre-clinical Veterinary School, creating the new Comparative Morphology Centre. The recently built Equine Sports Medicine Centre is the site of Equine Science exercise practical.
- 2.3.6 Final year projects take place in the laboratories of research-active staff and are supported by high-quality research facilities and equipment. Research grants currently total £9.9m. Computer staff and mechanical/electronic workshop facilities are available to support staff and students. The University has extensive animal house facilities that primarily support research but also provide animals for practical classes and final year research projects.
- 2.3.7 The main library used by our students is the Medical Library in the School of Medical Sciences. This has seating for 271 students, holds over 123,600 volumes and receives around 600 paper journals. There are 12 other University libraries including the Arts and Social Sciences Library (which houses the Open Learning Centre) and libraries in the School of Biological Sciences and the Clinical Veterinary School. The full library catalogue is available on the internet (7.3.2) and over 3,000 journals are now available electronically; these can be accessed via any networked computer.
- 2.3.8 Students have access to networked computers and print facilities throughout the main precinct (some sites provide 24 hour access). There are around 60 PCs in various locations in the School of Medical Sciences and the Pre-clinical Veterinary School. From October 2002, 30 of these will be available in the IT suite in the new Medical Sciences Teaching Wing. An additional 9 PCs in the Medical Library are used to access networked internal and/or external databases. There is remote access to computing facilities from halls of residence via RESNET (7.4.1). Final year students often have access to computers within the research groups to which they are attached. All students have email addresses through which they can be contacted by the Department.
- 2.3.9 All students have the choice of living in a hall of residence in their first year, within 3 miles of the University precinct. In subsequent years, they mostly live in nearby privately rented flats or houses. They have access to common rooms during the working day, as well as to canteens and refectories providing hot and cold food. The Students' Union, with its wide range of recreational and support facilities, is about 10 minutes walk from the School of Medical Sciences, and extensive outdoor sports facilities are available some 3 miles away.
- 2.3.10 The University provides a number of central facilities. Academic support is provided by the Science Faculty Office, which co-ordinates modular teaching (1.1.2) and oversees student progress. More general/pastoral support is available from bodies

such as the Students' Health Service, the Student Counseling Service, the Chaplaincy and the Careers Advisory Service (1.2.14).

THE EVALUATION

3 CURRICULUM DESIGN, CONTENT AND REVIEW

- 3.1.1 Curriculum Design, Content, and Structure of Programmes Our graduates follow a wide range of careers (Annex 1: A 1.9-A1.11), so our curricula are designed to impart a varied balance of subject-specific knowledge (1.2.1) and transferable skills (1.2.3).
- 3.1.2. Our involvement in Medical Faculty teaching doubles our staff numbers, thereby increasing the range of expertise (2.4.1) available for designing and delivering our science programmes. Our programmes have specific aims and objectives different from those of the medical, dental and veterinary programmes; consequently all programmes are taught separately (7.1.2).
- 3.1.3. All our B. Sc. programmes (1.2.6-1.2.9) conform to the University's modular teaching structure (1.1.2; A2.1). Each student must earn 360 credit points (CPs) by successful completion of units to be eligible for the award of an honours degree (see Annex 2; handbooks).
- 3.1.4 Our programme structure enables students to pursue their academic talents and interests (1.2.11; A2.2.3), and also to interact and share knowledge with those studying other disciplines (1.1.6). In each of the first two years of our Anatomical Science and Physiology programmes, 40 CPs are prescribed and 80 CPs are chosen, usually within the Faculty of Science (1.1.2; A2.2). The Neuroscience and Equine Science programmes have more specialised objectives (1.2.8; 1.2.9), so 160 and 200 CPs respectively are prescribed over these two years. In the final year, students take a single 120 CP unit, but choice within units is maintained by dividing them into elements from which, or within which, a selection is made (see handbooks).
- 3.1.5 Units provided by other departments (A2.2.3) complement our own and provide a basis for a multidisciplinary approach (1.2.10) in the study of biomedical mechanisms and concepts. The modular approach allows students to broaden their experience (1.1.2), although their existing qualifications and timetabling aspects do impose some constraints on the units that may be taken.
- 3.1.6 Our programmes are designed for students whose entry qualifications span a range of subjects (1.2.10). Level 1 units provide a broad introduction using a systems-based approach. Level 2 units increase the intellectual challenge (1.2.10) by allowing study in greater depth in specified areas (1.2.1). They further develop practical and transferable skills (1.2.3) by expanding the range of learning activities (4.2.8). Level 1 and 2 units are also designed to be appropriate for students from other programmes (1.1.6; 1.2.21).

- 3.1.7 In order to extend their intellectual independence and confidence (1.1.4; 1.2.10), **final year students** are taken to the limits of current knowledge (1.2.1) within selected topics, and are exposed to scientific uncertainties and debate (1.2.2; 1.2.5). The multidisciplinary approach is developed, exploiting the varied expertise and backgrounds of staff in our research groups.
The final year also includes a research project, further developing experimental (1.2.2; 1.2.4; 1.2.5) and transferable (1.2.3) skills. There is some flexibility of choice within the final year units and, in the case of the Neuroscience programme (1.2.8), there are plans to increase this flexibility by allowing interchange between the final year units offered by the Department.
- 3.1.7 The programme structure within the Faculty (1.1.2) allows transfer between programmes (1.1.5; A 1.8; A2.1). Students who fail to make satisfactory progress within our honours programmes may transfer to an ordinary degree programme (5.2.6), often with provision for reinstatement if performance allows.
- 3.1.8 The final years of our programmes are available to, and are designed to be appropriate for, selected students intercalating from the dental, medical and veterinary programmes (1.1.6), providing additional multidisciplinary interaction arising from diversity of educational background (1.2.22).
- 3.1.9 Input from outside the university sector has been specifically sought where programmes are designed for particular careers (Equine Science and Anatomical Science with Study in Industry)

3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

- 3.2.1 We aim for a structured development of students' abilities so that they gain both knowledge and understanding within the biomedical fields covered, and personal and transferable skills. To this end, the first two years contain didactic lectures to develop the knowledge base (1.2.1; 1.2.10), plus tutorial work, practical and library projects that are designed both to encourage the transition from dependent to independent learning (1.2.5) and to develop cognitive skills. By the third year, students have developed the maturity and confidence (1.1.4) to benefit from a more interactive style of teaching, and from increased opportunities for independent, self-directed learning. They have developed enough academically to cope with the demands of a research project (1.2.2; 1.2.12; 1.2.13).
- 3.2.2 Our programmes are designed to enable progressive development of transferable skills (1.1.3; 1.1.4) including: written and oral communication; critical and analytical thinking; problem solving; information handling; numeracy; appreciation of health and safety issues; time management and prioritisation of work; basic computer skills and use of IT (1.2.2; 1.2.3; 1.2.5; 4.2.3; 4.2.4; 4.2.7-4.2.9). Other skills (manual dexterity, interpersonal skills and teamwork) are also encouraged.
- 3.2.3 The final-year research project provides a particularly valuable active learning experience (1.1.1; 1.2.5; 1.2.13). Students develop skills in experimental design, data collection and interpretation (1.2.4), critical evaluation of their own and others' data (1.2.2), and oral and written communication (1.2.3), in an environment that gives

close contact between students and research staff (1.2.24), helping them to form views on possible laboratory-based careers (1.1.3).

3.3 Curriculum review and innovation

- 3.3.1 Major innovations have been, and continue to be, implemented to keep our programmes up-to-date (1.2.24). This has benefited all years, but is especially important in the final year in which one of our aims is to illustrate to students how research techniques develop and how this affects scientific understanding (1.1.1). The active involvement of most teaching staff in research ensures that they keep abreast of the most recent developments in their field, and can update their teaching accordingly (1.2.15). The Departments also exploit opportunities to update or enhance the content of the final year units (7.1.4) arising from appointment of new staff and by the development of affiliations with other University departments, with the NHS and with industry (1.2.13).
- 3.3.2 For similar reasons, changes are made periodically to the content of level 1 and 2 units to reflect developments in the disciplines (1.1.1). Recent changes have involved the introduction of new elements (e.g. the molecular biology of ion channels, in level 2 Physiology) and the inclusion of additional lectures (e.g. synaptic specialisation and plasticity, in level 1 Anatomical Science).
- 3.3.3 Units in Anatomical Science and Equine Science have recently been reorganised to create 20 CP units that increase student choice by allowing more flexible combinations of units (1.2.11).
- 3.3.4 The introduction of new units and programmes has been driven by recognition of developments in scientific disciplines, as well as in career requirements. Examples are the Equine Science programme (1994), a Human Anatomy unit (1996) and the Anatomical Science with Study in Industry programme (1998). The new Neuroscience programme (2000) is designed to respond both to demand from students and to developments in an important area of knowledge; we shall continue to extend student options by capitalising on neuroscience research strengths in related departments.
- 3.3.5 Development of new teaching and learning methods and ideas is often initiated through informal discussion (8.1.3) but may also result from attendance of staff at scientific meetings. Innovation is encouraged by the departmental Teaching Committee (1.1.8), and by the opportunities for staff to attend University courses and departmental workshops (1.1.7; 8.3.5). The University offers grants for the development of innovative teaching projects (7.1.5).
- 3.3.6 We are progressively developing PC use in teaching and learning. This applies to general IT skills, to use in practical classes, and to computer-assisted learning. We recognise that we must continue to exploit IT developments.

4 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

4.1 Strategy

- 4.1.1 We endeavour to provide through the knowledge and skills of our staff: (i) a range of teaching and learning activities appropriate to the development of highly trained graduates (1.1.11.1.4); and (ii) clearly expressed assessment methods that enable us to measure student success in meeting objectives (1.2.17; 4.3). These activities and methods are outlined in student handbooks. We are guided by the **University's Teaching and Learning Strategy** and the associated **Guidelines** (1.2.23).
- 4.1.2 We exploit both Departments' **high research profiles**, and our involvement in Medical Faculty teaching to enhance our students' learning opportunities (1.2.24; 2.4.6; 7.1.2).
- 4.1.3 Most units are taught through a combination of **lectures, practical classes and tutorials**. Lectures (or seminars in the final year) form the basis of subject-specific teaching. Tutorials and seminars encourage student-centred learning and staff-student interaction for academic support (1.1.5; 1.2.19) and development (see 4.2.3). Practical classes have the primary aim of allowing students to learn experimental methods and transferable skills (1.2.3; 1.2.4), but also reinforce and extend subject specific knowledge and the translation of theory into practice.
- 4.1.4 Timetabling of lectures, tutorials and practicals (see handbooks) is arranged in a Faculty-wide system that allows our students access to **optional units** appropriate to their overall programmes, thereby encouraging the broadening of educational experience (1.2.11). Students on other programmes are similarly able to benefit from our units (1.1.6; 1.2.21; 1.2.22).
- 4.1.5 Our programmes progressively **encourage self-reliance** in learning and the development of intellectual independence, especially in the final year. Thus, in **level 3 units**, formal teaching is reduced, is less didactic, and extensive reading is expected. The topics become more specialised, so that specific areas of current biomedical research can be considered in detail (see handbooks). The range of topics reflects the research activities of the staff (1.2.12; 3.3.1).
- 4.1.6 In order that the programmes **respond to developments** in biomedical research and in teaching and learning (1.1.1), to changes in staff expertise (7.1.4), and to student feedback (8.3.2), Unit Organisers and lecturers regularly review their curricula (8.2.3). This is considered particularly important in relation to level 3 units: for instance, as a result of recruitment of new staff, we have been able to introduce physiological genomic and to develop cardiovascular and auditory topics in the final year. We have also recently introduced a Neuroscience programme (1.2.8; 7.1.4).
- 4.1.7 **Computer-assisted learning** (CAL) and internet resources currently have a minor formal role in our teaching activities, although computers are available and are widely used in other ways, including for data handling, word processing, email, and journal access (4.2.9; 6.2.1; 7.2.3). We intend to exploit the potential of CAL for interactive learning and self-assessment, and we have recently introduced computer-based

activities in endocrinology and neuroanatomy (Anatomical Science 2) and neurophysiology (Physiology 1).

- 4.1.8 Our programmes include both **formative and summative assessments**. These serve to support student learning, grade student performance, determine progression and provide both formal and informal feedback (1.2.18). The diversity of learning activities means that a variety of assessment types is employed (4.3.1 - 4.3.3).
- 4.1.9 Monitoring of student **workload** was previously informal. We have recently introduced a more structured way of obtaining feedback and will use this as appropriate to modify unit load (1.2.16).

4.2 Teaching and Learning Activities

- 4.2.1 These activities are designed to meet the **aims and objectives** of the programmes such that our graduates possess a knowledge and understanding of Physiology (1.2.6), Anatomical Science (1.2.7), Neuroscience (1.2.8) or Equine Science (1.2.9), together with transferable skills that are applicable not only within these disciplines but also elsewhere.
- 4.2.2 **Lectures** are an economical way of conveying subject-specific information to students, of engendering enthusiasm for the subject and of directing further study. Staff employ a range of visual aids and provide synopses and/or explanatory notes (often based on diagrams) and reading lists. Some teaching materials are made available to students via the web (intranet) (7.4.3).
- 4.2.3 **Tutorials** provide small group, student-centred teaching and allow clarification and elaboration of lecture material (3.2.1). They involve students in essay writing, group discussions and oral presentations, and give practice at data interpretation questions (1.2.3; 1.2.19). Level 1 and 2 students attend tutorials in groups of 6-11 every 2-3 weeks. Academic tutors are lecturers, medical demonstrators, research staff, or selected postgraduates (2.2.1; 2.3.1). To facilitate tutorial delivery, tutors are provided with guidelines (8.3.7; 8.3.8). Final year tutorials are held in groups of two (occasionally three) students with a member of academic staff (Physiology), or are replaced by discussion and periodic reviews during the seminar teaching (Anatomy).
- 4.2.3 **Practical classes** further develop subject-related knowledge and transferable skills (1.2.3; 1.2.4). They feature prominently at levels 1 and 2 (see handbooks) and attendance is mandatory (see Faculty Handbook). There are differences in the style of the practicals between the different programmes, reflecting their different objectives (4.2.5; 4.2.6). Teaching in the Human Anatomy unit is based primarily on practicals and tutorials in the dissecting room, and lectures are replaced by additional practical sessions.
- 4.2.4 Practical in Anatomical Science, Neuroscience, Equine Science and Human Anatomy units **extend anatomical knowledge** through gross examination of specimens (either prosected or dissected by students in the practical), encouraging an understanding of three-dimensional **structure in relation to function**. Some include histological material. Some level 2 practicals involve experimental material

(specimens, histology or data) to emphasise further how structure is related to function. Practical work is assessed through identification tests, vivas and write-ups.

- 4.2.5 Practicals in Physiology units mainly involve hands-on experimental work to demonstrate both **physiological principles and the design of experiments**. All require a brief hand-in and/or a detailed write-up to consolidate learning and to check progress. The work is guided by selfteaching worksheets and assessment exercises, and is designed to develop skills in data recording, analysis and interpretation. Some practicals extend over several weeks and their design is partly student-led to encourage initiative. Demonstrators, who have rehearsed the practicals (8.3.8), provide support.
- 4.2.6 The **final year research project (see handbooks and project booklets), done in pairs (occasionally singletons or triplets)**, is seen as crucial in contributing to the aims and objectives of our programmes (1.1.3; 1.2.2; 1.2.4; 1.2.12; 1.2.13). . It enables students to experience research in an area of their preference (see handbooks for selection procedures), and encourages initiative, self-reliance and originality (3.2.3). It also develops specialist laboratory and transferable skills (3.2.3) and promotes active learning in a dynamic research environment (1.1.1; 1.2.24). The high standard of the research projects is supported by the fact that in recent years over 30% have led to presentations at meetings and/or publications (7.5.3).
- 4.2.8 We view **library research** as an important means of developing a range of skills, e.g. assimilating and evaluating information, critical appraisal of research papers, organisation and time management, and presentation (1.1.4; 1.2.2; 1.2.5). Final year students undertake library-based assignments related to their research project and to teaching topics. The endpoint may be an extended essay, a talk, or a poster presentation. Level 2 students undertake a similar but simpler library-based project.
- 4.2.9 Students use **information technology (IT)** at all stages of their programmes. Practical classes often require the use of spreadsheets, graphics and statistical packages for data analysis and presentation; library projects and practical accounts encourage the use of word processing and demand it in some level 2 and all level 3 units. Time tabled IT instruction is given in the final years of both Departments. IT training also occurs in selected level 1 and 2 units.
- 4.2.10 As a result of the University's Participation Strategy, we are admitting a small number of students from diverse educational backgrounds. We provide a limited range of additional classes for these and any other students who think they would benefit from them. These courses are principally in mathematics (provided by the Mathematics Department), biological sciences (provided by the School of Biological Sciences) and chemistry (provided by the School of Chemistry). The teaching sessions are offered during the first year. Research shows an improvement in the results of students who have participated in these classes.

4.3 Assessment methods

- 4.3.1 We use a variety of different assessment procedures throughout the programmes, reflecting the range of teaching methods used. To help students determine their progress early in the programmes, **formative examinations** are held at the start of the Spring Term of year 1 and scripts are discussed in tutorials. Marks from these examinations contribute 15% towards the assessment of year 1.
- 4.3.2 In most level 1 and 2 units, 10-20% of the **summative assessment** marks are from **coursework** (mainly laboratory practicals and library-based projects). In Human Anatomy, coursework counts 40%, reflecting the large practical component (4.2.4) Feedback (including marks) is given on assessed coursework.
- 4.3.2 The remaining summative assessment marks in level 1 and level 2 units are obtained from **examinations**. Examinations require students to perform under time limitation, and without support material, though special conditions apply to students with particular difficulties e.g. dyslexia. Examinations are seen as an Efficient means to measure academic achievement and potential, especially in the first two years. To test both subject-based knowledge and critical skills, examination questions take different forms (e.g. short notes, essays, data interpretation and, at level 3, paper reviews). Students receive their marks in writing, with a summary of the cohort results so that they can judge their performance relative to their peer group.
- 4.3.3 Combined marks from all units taken in year 2 count 10% towards the **final degree classification**. This represents a balance between providing an incentive to second year students, whilst ensuring that the degree class mainly reflects performance in the final year when students have had a greater opportunity to work towards the learning outcomes set by their programme.
- 4.3.4 In level 3 units, the **research project** forms a significant component (25%) of the summative assessment. Since the project is used as both training and an assessment exercise, the Department has evolved guidelines concerning the input of project supervisors, and special marking procedures for the project assessment (see handbooks and guidelines for level 3 teachers).
- 4.3.5 The assessment in level 3 units may also include a **viva voce examination**, which can be important in borderline cases since it gives candidates a further opportunity to display their knowledge and understanding. The external examiner is always either present or consulted. The Department operates a 'no detriment' policy for these examinations, as endorsed by the external examiners.
- 4.3.7 **Examination papers** are reviewed by both internal and external examiners (8.2.4; 8.3.3) to ensure that individual questions are clear, fair, and discriminatory, and that the overall balance and coverage are appropriate. Skeleton answers are produced routinely (8.2.4). Scripts are marked anonymously according to **University guidelines** (see also 8.2.5), using pre-defined mark bands (see Faculty Handbook) and **internal guidelines**. At level 3 all work is either double-marked or is independently moderated. External examiners are expected to moderate marking (8.2.2) and to advise on difficult decisions.

- 4.3.8 Staff and the external examiners may raise questions about assessment methods both when reviewing question papers and at departmental examiners' meetings. Students can express their views on assessment methods through Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings (8.2.3). **Assessment procedures and results** are considered by teaching staff when units and programmes are reviewed (8.2.3; 8.3.3).

5. THE QUALITY OF STUDENTS, TAKING ACCOUNT OF RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS, STUDENT PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

5.1 Student Profile

- 5.1.1 We are able to fill our programmes with **good-quality students** with high potential. For the last three years, applications have exceeded places available by about ten times (A 1.1), and our entrants have good qualifications (1.2.9; A 1.5).
- 5.1.2 **Entry conditions** are considered annually, based on the preceding admissions process (see 6.1.2; A 1.1). Typical offers for entry in 2000 are BBB for Physiology, Anatomical Science and Neuroscience, and ABB for Equine Science. The few applicants with non-standard entry qualifications are considered on their merits.

5.2 Admissions and induction arrangements

- 5.2.1 Admissions arrangements follow University guidelines and are aimed at selecting high calibre students while also broadening access. Information about programmes and career options is disseminated through the **University Undergraduate Prospectus, web sites, University Preview Days, and Departmental Open Days** (1.2.17). We also participate in the Sutton **Trust** and **Millennium Summer School** schemes, which are residential courses designed both to enable pupils of under-represented schools to experience the University environment, and to encourage their applications. We have developed links with local schools and provide half-day sessions in which sixth form pupils undertake short physiology practical. We have also (run sixth form workshops in association with the Physiological Society.
- 5.2.2 Physiology, Anatomical Science and Neuroscience candidates are offered places (usually conditional) on the basis of their UCAS forms (1.2.10). Equine Science applicants, and any potentially suitable candidates for other programmes who have atypical aspects to their applications (e.g relating to their qualifications) are interviewed. In line with University policy, candidates without standard A-levels or equivalent, but who show potential at interview, are viewed positively.
- 5.2.3 **Open Days** are held during the Spring Term for candidates who have received offers, and for those we have decided to interview. Candidates meet existing students and have an opportunity to talk with staff.
- 5.2.4 Information about programmes and units is given out at the Open Days, and further details are sent out after places are confirmed in August. New students are asked to make a provisional choice of their first year unit options before they arrive in October, but they only make their final decision after they have had an opportunity for consultation with staff and existing students. The opportunity to change options

(1.2.11) is kept open for as long as possible, usually up to four weeks after registration.

- 5.2.5 New students are helped to adjust to University life and to become familiar with their departments by activities including talks, social events and tours, arranged as part of the **University Introductory Week**. Arrangements were updated following recommendations from the 1997 Departmental Review.

5.3 Progression and Completion

- 5.3.1 **Performance is monitored** at several times during the programmes (1.2.18), to enable students to assess their own progress, to establish whether they are experiencing problems, and to ensure that they are suitably equipped to proceed to the next year of study (4.3.1 4.3.3).
- 5.3.2 Files are maintained for all students, on paper and on registered computers, and can be accessed by authorized users. **Records** contain information such as units taken, attendance, marks for coursework and examinations, and tutors' reports. The University is reviewing its policies in this area in light of the revised Data Protection Act.
- 5.3.3 **Progress in years 1 and 2** is monitored by tutorial work, practical work and library projects, by formative progress examinations (taken during week 11 of the first year) and by summative examinations at the end of both years. In the final year, progress in the experimental project (4.3.5) is monitored regularly by the supervisor and Unit Organiser, and by performance in essays and/or oral presentations related to the project; progress in taught work is monitored by library projects, essays and, in Physiology, by tutorial work.
- 5.3.4 **Problems** identified by poor attendance or unsatisfactory submission of work (6.2.5), or during student contact with departmental staff, are reported to the relevant Unit Organisers and, if necessary, to the departmental representative on Faculty Progress Committee in case issues need to be raised at Faculty level. The Departmental Science Tutor, pastoral tutors, and Unit Organisers in other departments are alerted when appropriate.
- 5.3.5 Sections 4 and 5 of the **Faculty Standing Orders** govern student progress from one curriculum year to the next. Individual cases are considered by the Faculty Progress Committee and Science Board. This allows the exchange of information about students between departments, facilitates consistency of approach and standards, and provides a forum for dissemination of experience and good practice.
- 5.3.5 The few students who fail to proceed in their original programme (A 1.8) may, on the recommendation of Faculty Progress Committee, transfer to the **ordinary degree programme** (Y100, see Faculty Handbook), which is supervised by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies in discussion with the Department. Such students are offered a choice of routes of progression, either in a less demanding programme or in a programme that leaves open the possibility of reinstatement to honours, subject to an

improvement in the standard of their work. They thus benefit from additional supervision and from having an achievable goal.

- 5.3.6 **The flexibility of the programme** structure within the Science Faculty contributes to student progress by enabling those who are unhappy with their programme to transfer easily to another at the end of the first or second year. Students are encouraged to discuss potential moves with their tutor and with both old and new Unit Organisers before deciding to transfer.
- 5.3.8 Candidates from the Medical Faculty who apply to **intercalate** one of our final year units are considered by the Departments and by the Medical and Science Faculty Offices (1.2.22). Those who are accepted have a good academic record, are highly motivated and usually achieve well, rarely obtaining less than an upper second class degree.

5.3 Student Achievement.

- 5.4.1 **A high level of success** is achieved by students on our programmes. Over the last 5 years all of our students who entered the final year gained honours degrees, with 77% gaining at least upper second class degrees (A 1.6). All of the small number of ordinary degree (Y100) students who entered our final year during that period were promoted back to an honours degree (A 1.8).
- 5.4.2 The quality of the Departments' graduates is confirmed by external examiners.
- 5.4.3 Students distinguishing themselves in examinations are commended by the Dean of Science and may be considered for **University Scholarships** at the end of year 2. The Departments offer **five annual prizes** to reward different aspects of student achievement.
- 5.4.4 The **employment records** of our graduates, based on the last 5 years, are given in A 1.9-A 1.11. Across the three programmes for which there are sufficient data, 94-98% obtained employment, 28-43% within the field of biomedical sciences. A substantial number (17-50%) of our graduates decide either to undertake a higher degree or to enter a professional training programme.

6. THE EXTENT AND USE OF STUDENT FEEDBACK, QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE

Student feedback is sought and acted upon as part of the general quality management procedures in the Department, Faculty and University. This section begins with a summary of those procedures, then deals with the specifics of student feedback.

6.1 General Quality Management

- 6.1.1 Quality management is effected within the Departments, and is overseen through University and Faculty procedures. The Departments operate within the University's **Teaching and Learning Strategy** and the Guidelines for its implementation (1.2.23). **Faculty Quality Assurance Teams** make regular visits to Departments to review

specific aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, including evaluating the extent and use of student feedback. The Faculty of Science **Undergraduate Studies Committee** whose membership includes student representation, considers academic matters relating to all science programmes, while the progress of individual students is reviewed by its **Progress Committee**. All new units and programmes are submitted for approval to the appropriate **Faculty Board** and then to the New Programmes Group of the **University Education Committee**, whose members include student sabbatical officers.

- 6.1.2 An important feature of our management of teaching quality is the hierarchical structure of **Departmental committees** by which we oversee and co-ordinate teaching in our diverse programmes (1.1.8). The Student/Staff liaison committee is a key feature of this structure.
- 6.1.3 To sum up, the following are the general quality assurance mechanisms that operate within the Department, most of which are influenced by student feedback:

Summary of mechanisms within the Department

Program me level	Committees of Unit Organizers; Staff-Student Liaison Committees; Away days
Unit level	Examination paper drafting meetings; unit meetings; student questionnaires and/or formal verbal feedback sessions with students; Staff-Student Liaison Committees review
Individual level	Informal student feedback via tutors, practical class demonstrators and Unit Organizers

6.2 Student feedback - qualitative methods

We operate in an ethos of always seeking to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning we provide. Qualitative student feedback is an important component of enhancing quality in the Department.

Qualitative student feedback is obtained in two ways:

- Through discussion at the student/staff liaison committee
- At student feedback forums at the end of each year

6.2.1 Student/staff liaison committee

This committee meets twice a term. One representative of each student year group from each programme is invited to attend the committee and is invited to raise issues arising from any student concern, academic or pastoral. To encourage students to articulate their points of view, we ensure that this committee is small and that students are not outnumbered by staff.

We discourage students from raising issues concerning individual members of staff in the public forum of this committee. Instead, they are asked to take matters of this kind to their personal tutor, who is then able to raise them with the head of department.

Minutes of the committee are published on the departmental web site, with copies put on notice boards, so that all students are aware of action taken in response to their concerns. Examples of issues resolved recently through the student/staff committee are as follows.

We have changed the deadlines for submission of coursework at level 1 in response to student feedback that these were a) too closely grouped and b) too near the end of year examinations. At the last student/staff liaison committee, students said that this had improved their ability to organise their time effectively and to meet deadlines.

Another concern raised at the student/staff committee was that final year students were finding it difficult to loan copies of core texts near examination time. To remedy this, we have reduced the loan period to two days, and retained a reference copy of all core texts in the library, so that students who are waiting for a loan copy can still refer to the text in the library during working hours.

6.2.2 End of year student forums

This is a relatively recent development. Using the advice of an external consultant, we have introduced end of year student discussions to gain wide-ranging qualitative feedback. We invite the whole year group of students on a particular programme to meet and discuss their learning experience overall during the year.

This is an excellent opportunity for us to learn about students' perceptions and to act on their suggestions for improvement. We have found that group discussions of this kind encourage constructive student feedback, with balanced views emerging. Students have good ideas about how to improve all aspects of their learning experience, from the use of different assessment methods to ensuring that all students participate actively in group tutorials and we have found them very useful.

A student is elected to produce notes of each forum. These notes are agreed with the facilitator of the discussion (who may not be the programme organiser(s)). The notes are then discussed by the student/staff liaison committee and also taken into account by the course team when undertaking the annual review of programmes. Examples will be provided for scrutiny by the review team.

6.3 Student feedback - quantitative methods

6.3.1 Quantitative student feedback is mainly obtained through the use of end of module and end of programme questionnaires. We use a standard questionnaire for obtaining module feedback and aim to sample about half our modules each year. This gives us regular feedback on the quality of the modules without inducing questionnaire fatigue in the students. The end of year forums (see 6.2.2 above) enable us to pick up any major issues in modules that have not been sampled by questionnaire in anyone year.

6.3.2 Summaries of the results of unit questionnaires are posted on the departmental web site, on notice boards and/or group emailed to students with an indication of departmental responses or actions. Comments are passed to individual lecturers and tutors to enable good practice to be reinforced and for problems to be recognised and

addressed (e.g. through peer review, 8.3.5). Unit Organisers (in consultation with the Teaching Committee and/or the Head of Department as appropriate) are responsible for checking the outcome of any altered practices.

- 6.3.3 The Faculty has recently purchased an optical mark reader that enables us to process standard student feedback forms, providing quantitative feedback more efficiently than previously. This is proving very helpful and enables an analysis of feedback on each module to be prepared. The analysis is sent to the unit organiser and to all staff who teach on the module.
- 6.3.4 The Departmental Teaching Committee considers an analysis of questionnaire feedback at the last meeting of the year. In consultation with the head of department, it may then make changes to practice, or request special peer observation for colleagues who consistently receive less than satisfactory student feedback. This not only enables those staff to be offered support and training but also provides a method of triangulating student feedback to enable the head of department to make a balanced judgment about the performance of such staff.

7. Postgraduate Studies

7.1 Research degrees

- 7.1.1 We recruit PhD students annually. They normally register initially for a Master's degree and are then upgraded at the end of their first year. They are usually funded through the Medical Research Council or Science and Engineering Research Council. Most postgraduates have a first class or upper second-class degree in Anatomical Science or Physiology; occasionally they enter with first degrees in other subjects such as Zoology or Biochemistry.
- 7.1.2 Both the University and the Research Councils have guidelines for completion rates. Most research students obtain their PhD within four years. We have mechanisms for monitoring progress and, if necessary, students may be granted suspension or extension of studies. This enables them to complete their degree whilst working, or resolving financial or other personal problems.

7.2 Research methods training

All our research students are required to undertake research methods training. This is organised at Faculty level and is an accredited module. Students are not permitted to graduate until they have successfully completed the research methods module, since this is a requirement of most of the Research Councils who are providing student grants.

7.3 Training in teaching

All research students involved in teaching undergraduates receive a basic training in teaching and learning methods, provided by the School of Education. If they wish, they may take additional sessions towards an accredited module. This is particularly useful for those hoping to enter academic posts in universities. In addition to the

training, all research students involved in teaching have a departmental mentor, who takes responsibility for supporting the student in all teaching and learning related activities.

7.4 Supervision and research facilities

- 7.4.1 Research students are assigned a supervisor at registration. Staff are not permitted to supervise more than five research students at anyone time, and often take fewer, depending on their teaching and administrative commitments. The number of staff with doctorates who are currently available to act as supervisors is limiting the number of research students we can accommodate. This has a corresponding effect on research income and facilities. We are actively seeking ways in which to increase research student numbers, for example, by shared supervisory arrangements with another regional university.
- 7.4.2 Research facilities are dependent upon academic staff being successful in obtaining research grants, which normally include an element of equipment and other materials. At present, facilities are adequate, but we will need to review our provision should we be successful in recruiting larger numbers of research students.

8. Peer observation

- 8.1 In line with University guidance, the Department operates a peer observation system. This works as follows.
- 8.2 Each member of staff is paired with another member of staff, usually at a different stage in his or her career development. Both staff observe one another's teaching (at least once a year, preferably once a term). They also meet to discuss learning, teaching and assessment methods and new developments in the subject. Each completes an observation report on the other, which is discussed at a private meeting between them.
- 8.3 At the end of each academic year, the observer is required to notify the Chair of the Departmental Teaching Committee that he or she has completed at least one observation with his or her partner and submits the observation report separately to the Head of Department. This enables the Chair of the Teaching Committee to monitor that all observations are taking place, keeping the actual report confidential to the pairs of staff and the Head of Department.
- 8.4 The observation report is used by the Head of Department and member of staff in the annual staff appraisal interview so that it can be taken into account in the discussion. It is through this mechanism that staff training needs are identified and good practice shared. Good practice identified by the Head of Department in this way is described in an annual report considered by the Departmental Teaching Committee and posted on the departmental web site for all staff to use.

9. Skills development

- 9.1 Student skills development is embedded in our curriculum design and in the learning, teaching and assessment methods we use. For reference, see sections 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 4.2.3, 4.2.4 and 4.2.8 above.
- 9.2 The main emphasis on skills development is at levels 1 and 2. We introduce skills training incrementally, providing guidance to students on how they can improve. For example, all students first gain practice in making presentations in their first year, in an informal and unassessed situation. They receive peer and staff feedback and have other opportunities to practice in their second year. As a result, by the time they make their final year presentation of the research project, which is summatively assessed, they are normally confident and have the necessary skills.
- 9.3 As a result of recent internal developments and our newly appointed deputy Teaching and Learning Advisor, we decided to document in more detail the skills acquired by our students and the relevant assessment methods. The attached Appendix shows in which module skills are developed. The key on the last page shows how they are assessed.

10. Academic Guidance and Counselling

- 10.1 **Help and guidance** is readily available from staff (1.1.5) and from other accessible sources. Course details and information on academic support are contained in unit and programme handbooks, and on intranet sites (1.2.17). Day to day arrangements are communicated through staff announcements in teaching sessions, email (all new students are automatically assigned an email address) and/or notice boards. Lecturers recommend textbooks and other learning aids as appropriate.
- 10.2 A central point of contact for all questions relating to each unit is provided by the **Unit Organiser**, who has defined terms of reference relating to students, the curriculum and assessment. Email addresses of Unit Organisers are provided to students, and details for all staff are on the intranet.
- 10.3 Students are given regular **academic tutorials** (1.2.19). These occur in all three years. Tutors help to resolve problems arising from lectures, reading and practical classes, provide guidance with development of study and examination skills, and are able to become familiar with their tutees and monitor their progress. Students on the ordinary degree programme (Y100: see 5.2.6) receive additional support and guidance from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies of the Faculty.
- 10.4.1 Students receive guidance on how to improve the quality of their work in the form of written and verbal feedback on coursework (1.2.18; 4.3.2).
- 10.5 We have recently instigated mechanisms in an attempt to catch at an early stage those students who fail to attend laboratory classes and tutorials, or who submit poor coursework (5.2.3). Problems are referred to Unit Organisers and representatives on the Science Faculty Progress Committee (5.2.4). Problems concerning students from other programmes who take our units are dealt with by the most appropriate means

(from seeing the student directly through to alerting the Faculty Progress Committee). Reciprocal arrangements are made by other departments.

- 10.6 Some academic problems are overcome by exploiting the flexibility in our programmes. Students are advised concerning the particular units they may take and are allowed to change units if this is felt to be in their best interest.
- 10.7 To help students plan their second year, a session is arranged to discuss the various unit options with staff and with senior students.
- 10.8 There are professional bodies (e.g. Anatomical, Endocrinology and Physiological Societies) that support research-related learning activities within our programmes. Students occasionally give presentations at their meetings.
- 10.9 Most personal tutors also have a pastoral support role. They have a mix of students from all three years, which promotes contact between students in different years. Students who wish to do so, can readily change their tutor (1.1.5). Although the system has shown itself capable of assisting students who experience difficulties, the Department has had some problems in identifying the level of contact that is desirable, and ensuring that this is achieved. Our procedures are kept under review.
- 10.10 Tutors are provided with **written guidelines** that include a list of **support services within the University** (1.2.14). They are encouraged to help students find whatever additional support or advice is required (1.1.5; 1.2.20). Female as well as male members of staff are available to provide support. Where students need professional guidance on personal problems, academic staff encourage them to consult the University's Counselling Service. Discussions between students and members of the Counselling Service are strictly confidential.
- 10.11 In addition to encouraging students to see their tutors, we encourage them (verbally and by departmental literature) to feel free to approach any member of their department (academic staff or otherwise). Our programmes benefit from administrative and technical staff who support teaching activities (2.2.2; 2.3.2). Administrative staff have important roles in quality management and student support (1.1.5). Technical staff underpins teaching delivered in all our class laboratories and provide an important input to level 3 research projects. The Department has access to well-equipped mechanical and electronics workshops, and to computer support, all of which give priority to teaching work.
- 10.12 We recognise that University and departmental web sites are important sources of academic guidance for current and prospective students to access teaching-related and other information, and we are actively developing and updating them. For example, some lecturers are exploring web-based delivery of teaching support material (where appropriate) and are taking advice from the University's **Learning Technology Support Service** and the **Learning** and Teaching Support Network in this respect. We increasingly use the intranet to distribute unit handbooks, timetables and lecture synopses.

- 10.13 The library has a well-developed web site. The intranet provides access to over 3,000 electronic journals and to the new university library catalogue (Aleph). The latter increases the opportunity for both students and staff to check on availability of texts. Students are given guidance on how to use library facilities at the beginning of their programme. Reading lists, supported by advice from individual tutors, ensure they have appropriate academic guidance on the range of materials they need to access in order to gain sufficient breadth of knowledge in their programme.
- 10.14 Library and departmental staff co-operate in schemes that maximize the availability of books to students. Each Department purchases books for the Medical Library within an independent budget (2.4.7) Bids for book purchases are prioritized at departmental level, with teaching texts taking precedence over research texts. Demand is currently satisfied by the budget available. Students can also obtain material via interlibrary loans and can undertake library database searches, for which training is provided by departmental and library staff.

In Conclusion

We are encouraged by the quality of our student intake. We continue to modify and diversify the teaching experience, and to introduce procedures designed both to pre-empt problems and to optimize the quality of the learning and teaching experience. We are proud of the achievements of our students and of the standard of our graduate output.

APPENDIX TO ANNEX F

Statistical Indicators

Throughout this section the UCAS codes may be used to represent the programmes. These are Physiology (B 100), Anatomical Science (B 140), Neuroscience (B 172), Equine Science (D220) and Ordinary (YI00).

Applications and entries (A 1.1-A 1.5)

Entry Year	1995			1996			1997			1998			1999		
Programme	B100	B140	D220	B100	B140	D220	B100	B140	D220	B100	B140	D220	B100	B140	D220
Applications	217	214	293	199	160	223	197	139	216	202	126	153	173	124	182
Offers	179	94	32	152	117	56	151	94	64	163	85	47	96	82	35
Target	19	10	15	19	10	15	19	10	15	19	10	15	16	9	20
Entrants	21	15	15	20	18	15	24	11	13	27	11	12	15	20	18
Standard offer	BCC	BCC	BBB	BCC	BCC	ABB	BCC	BCC	ABB	BCC	BCC	ABB	BBC*	BCC	ABB

Table A1.1: Applications, entry numbers and standard offers for our programmes over the last 5 years. *Grades quoted in University prospectus for B100 entry in 1999; in practice, the standard offer was raised to BBB in an attempt to keep within the target entry for that year. The change in numbers of applications between 1995 and 1996 reflects a change in UCAS practice. (Source: University Admissions Office).

Entry Year	1996						1997					
Programme	B100		B140		D220		B100		B140		D220	
	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F
ALAS	181	18	145	16	150	16	181	25	122	11	132	10
SCE	1	0	0	0	7	0	2	0	3	0	10	0
BTEC(H)	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	18	0
BTEC (L)	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
Degree	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Int. Bacc.	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Access	3	0	1	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	3	1
Other	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
GNVQ	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0
None	4	0	2	0	5	0	3	0	1	0	5	0
Entry Year	1998						1999					
Programme	B100		B140		D220		B100		B140		D220	
	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F	A	F
ALAS	190	31	113	13	114	13	163	14	110	21	134	13
SCE	1	0	0	0	10	1	0	0	2	1	14	1
BTEC (H)	1	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
BTEC (L)	3	0	0	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	11	1
Degree	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Int. Bacc.	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
Access	1	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
GNVQ	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
None	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

Table AI.2: Applications and fulfilled acceptances by entry qualification. A = applicants, F = students who fulfilled our criteria and accepted our offers. (Source: UCAS management statistics). Apparent discrepancies between these data and those in table A 1.1 reflect differences in census dates and late decisions by applicants resulting in incomplete UCAS entry qualification data.

Quality Assurance Handbook – Sri Lanka - July 2002

APPENDIX TO ANNEX F

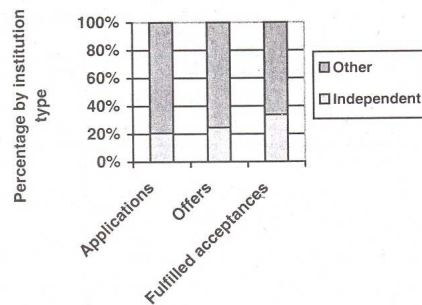


Chart A1.3: Educational background

Percentages of applications, offers and fulfilled acceptances by institution type (independent schools versus other institutions). Data are for all programmes over the entry years 1996-1999.

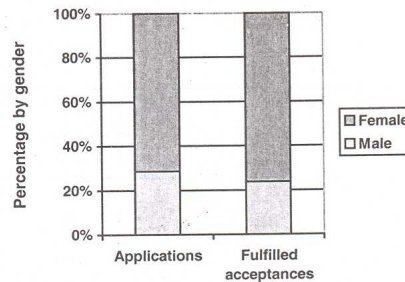


Chart A1.4: Gender

Percentage applications and fulfilled acceptances by gender for all programmes over the entry years 1995-1999. The high proportion of female applicants reflects the national situation in the life sciences.

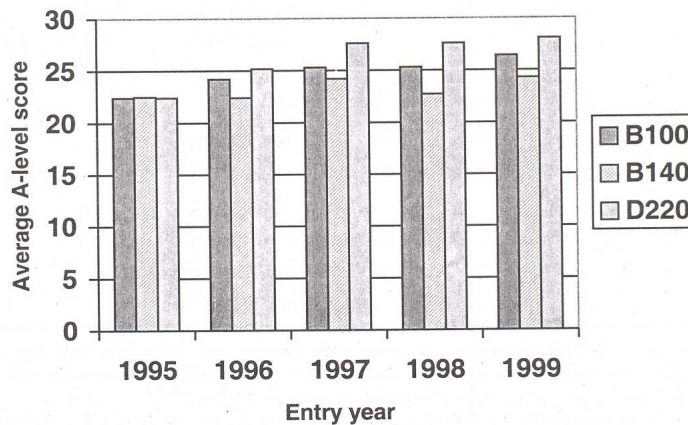


Chart A1.5: Average A-level entry scores by year of entry for Physiology (B100), Anatomical Science (B140) and Equine Science (D220). The data presented correspond to those students initially registering on our programmes and so do not include students who intercalate from the medical, dental or veterinary programmes.

APPENDIX TO ANNEX F

Degree clarifications

Programme Year of graduation	B 100, Physiology					B140, Anatomical Science					D220, Eq Sci	
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1998	1999
1	4	2	2	0	3	4	0	4	5	5	5	1
2.1	17	22	17	12	12	9	9	12	24	16	7	12
2.2	5	6	5	6	8	7	6	5	6	4	1	1
3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ordinary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table A1.6: Degree results for the last five years. Note that the Equine Science programme was introduced in 1995 so only two cohorts of students have graduated.

Numbers of students taking units provided by the Department

Unit	Unit Code	1995/6	1996n	1997/8	1998/9	1999/00
Anatomical Science 1	ANAT 10100	84	96	61	72	79
Anatomical Science 2	ANAT 20100	38	35	29	22	27
Human Anatomy 2	ANA T 20200	12	16	17	15	14
Equine Science 2	ANA T 20300	-	12	16	13	10
Equine Health and Husbandry 2	ANA T 20400	-	12	16	13	10
Anatomical Science 3	ANAT 30100	15	21	35	25	22
Equine Science 3	ANA T 30200	-	-	13	15	14
Medical Physics 3A	ANAT 30300	-	-	4	4	-
Physiology 1	PHY 10100	123	129	136	144	124
Physiology 2	PHY 20100	47	79	55	65	45
Physiology 3	PHY 30100	30	24	18	24	21
Neuroscience 3	ANA T 30300	-	-	-	-	7

Table A1.7: Numbers of students taking units provided by the Department of Anatomy and Physiology. The data presented include all students who have been registered at any time during the academic year. A number of 20 CP units have recently been introduced and we expect them to come on stream in 2000/2001. Student numbers for units at levels 1 and 2 include students taking the unit as an option and so may be higher than numbers for final year units that are taken only by our own Honours students plus those intercalating from the Faculty of Medicine.

APPENDIX TO ANNEX F

Student progress

		Physiology (B 100)					Anatomical Science (BI40)					Equine Science (D220)				
		Student cohort					Student cohort					Student cohort				
		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Y e a r 1	Year 1 entry	21	20	24	29 ^c	16 ^d	15	18	11	11	20	15	15	13	12	18
	Transfer out	-1 ^a	-3	-3	-1		0	-4 ^f	-1	0		-2	0	-1	-2	
	Withdraw	-2	-1	-1	-2		-1	-1	0	0		-1	-2	-1	-1	
	Repeat /Fail	0	0	-1	0		0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	
	Progress	18	16	19	26		14	13	10	11		12	13	11	9	
	Transfer in	3*	2	3	3		5*	0	1	0		0	4	2	0	
	Year 2 entry	21	18	22	29		19	13	11	11		12	17	13	9	
Y e a r 2	Transfer out	-7	-1	-4			-1	-1	0			0	0	0		
	Withdraw	0	0	1			0	0	0			0	-2	0		
	Repeat / Fail	0	0	0			-1	0	0			0	0	0		
	Progress	14	17	17			17	12	11			12	15	13		
	Transfer in	0	3	0			6	2'	3			0	0	0		
	Intercalate	4	4	4			12	11	15			1	0	1		
Y e a r 3	Year 3 entry	18	24	1			35	25	29			13	15	14		
	Transfer out	0	0				0	0	-7 ^e			0	-1			
	Illness	0	-1 ^b				0	0				0	0			
	Fail	0	0				0	G				0	0			
	Graduate	18	23				35	25				13	14			
	'Drop out' rate (%)	7	7				5	3				7	21			

Table A1.8: Progression of students on our programmes. Transfers in and out show numbers changing programmes within the University; they may include some students who move into the ordinary degree (Y100) programme or back from the Y 100 programme into an honours programme (not necessarily their original one). Withdraw indicates students who have voluntarily left the University (some of whom may have transferred to another university). Fail indicates students who have failed and been required to leave. Repeat indicates students who (e.g. through illness) were allowed to retake the year. 'Drop out' rate

indicates the number of students who either withdrew or failed at some stage of their programme, expressed as a percentage of the first year intake plus transfers in.

- * includes one student retaking the year
 - ^a student who transferred to and remained within the Y100 programme; he graduated with an ordinary degree (with the Department of Biology)
 - ^b student who intercalated from the Medical Faculty and has since returned to the dental programme
 - ^c includes one student who transferred in at the start of the year and one student repeating their first year
 - ^d includes one student who transferred in at the start of the year
 - ^e these students have now transferred to the new Neuroscience (BI72) programme
 - ^f includes two students who transferred to the Y100 programme and later returned to B140; both gained an honours degree

APPENDIX TO ANNEX F

First career destinations (A1.9-A1.11)

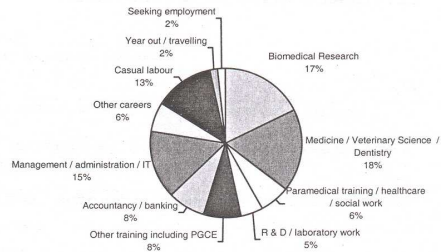


Chart A1.9: Career destinations for Anatomical Science graduates over the last 5 years (data for 91% of graduates).

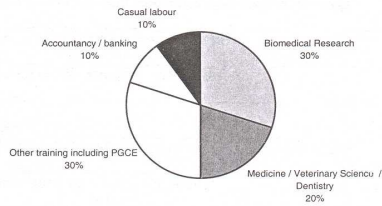


Chart A1.10: Career destinations for Equine Science graduates (data for 83% of graduates).

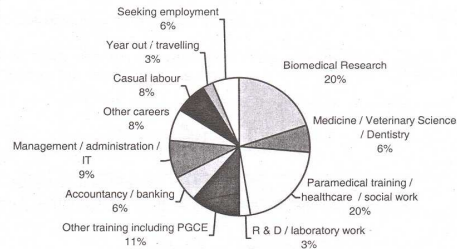


Chart A1.11: Career destinations for Physiology graduates over the last 5 years (data for 81% of graduates).

ANNEX G

Subject Review: Anatomy and Physiology REVIEWERS' SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Monday 4th Septemb

Tuesday 5th December

13.00 onwards	Team arrives at base room	Base room (MS - D7a)
15.30 - 16.30	Brief orientation tour of the departments for all the team	N/A
16.45 -17.00	Formal meeting with Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Dean and departmental staff	VS L T2
17.00 - 17.45	Informal meeting with all departmental staff, with refreshments	VS SCR

08.30	Head and Deputy Head of Department meet Review Chair	MS - E37
11.00 - 12.45	Curriculum Design, Content and Review and Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods combined core aspect meeting	RFH 2.12
13.00 - 14.00	Review team meet selection of students over a buffet lunch	VS SCR
14.00 - 14.45	Extent and Use of Student Feedback core aspect meeting	QB - VC's room
15.00 - 15.30	Quality of Students core aspect meeting	MS - C46
18.00	Meeting with graduates and employers	VS SCR

Wednesday 6th December

08.30	Head and Deputy Head of Department meet Review Chair	MS - E37
10.00 - 10.30	Peer observation core aspect meeting	MS - C46
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch with postgraduate research students	VS - SCR
14.00 -14.45	Postgraduate Studies core aspect meeting	RFH - 2.13
15.00 - 15.45	Academic Guidance and Counselling core aspect meeting	RFH - 2.12
16.00 - 16.45	Skills Development core aspect meeting	RFH - 2.12
17.00 onwards	Review team meet departmental staff to discuss any issues either the team or the department wishes to raise	MS - C46

Thursday 7th December

08.30	Head of Department meets with Review Chair	MS - E37
16.00 - 16.30	Feedback meeting (Review team, V-C, Deputy V-C, Registrar, Dean, Chairman of Medical Sciences and all departmental staff)	VS - L T1

VS - Veterinary Science

MS - Medical Sciences

RFH - Royal Fort House

QB - Queen's Building

Guidance on preparing a Subject Review report

The review chair co-ordinates the writing of the report, with each subject specialist providing draft material for the aspects for which he or she has taken lead responsibility.

The report is normally **about 10 sides long**.

The report begins with a **summary of the purposes and aims of the subject review process** (1 side) This section outlines the main principles of subject review, lists the aspects of provision under review, describes the peer review process and provides details of how reports are published.

The **second section of the report gives a brief history of the university**, including current student numbers, **and describes the department or school providing the education** being reviewed. There is list of the programmes or courses being reviewed, together with details of the student numbers enrolled on the programmes.

The **third section reproduces the aims and learning outcomes provided by the department** or school in its self-evaluation. The length of this section therefore depends on the extent of the department or school's aims and learning outcomes.

Section four summarises the overall judgment arising from the review, the different judgments that can be made and their implications, as outlined below.

The **main body of the report consists of five or six sides** (sometimes more depending on the complexity of provision), summarising the findings of the team in each of the eight aspects and giving an aspect judgment at the end of each section.. This part of the report should:

- Clearly highlight the strengths and good practice found by the reviewers in each aspect
- Clearly describe any weaknesses identified by the team
- **In all aspects**, refer to the evidence that exists to support the team's judgments, using examples of the team's findings

Finally, there should be a concluding section that summarises the judgments in each aspect, lists the examples of good practice found and explicitly describes the nature of any weaknesses identified.

Subject review reports should be written in a clear, direct style, using short sentences. Statements should be unambiguous and any suggestions for improvement should be written so as to enable the departmental or school staff to understand how they might be implemented.

Every effort should be made by the review chair to ensure that all statements in the report are factually accurate and can be supported by evidence, wherever possible with more than one example.

ANNEX I

Note on peer observation for subject reviewers

Institution	Subject	Module/course unit
Name of reviewer	Length of session in hours and minutes	Length of observation in hours and minutes
Level and/or year of study	Full time or part-time students?	Number of students (approximately)
Type of session, e.g. lecture, laboratory, tutorial, seminar	Topic	Composition of student group

Please summarise the intended learning outcomes for this session, as provided by the lecturer running it (these should include all types of learning outcome, e.g. knowledge and understanding, intellectual and analytical skills, personal/transferable skills)

Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the session

Prompts	Strengths	Weaknesses
Clarity of learning outcomes		
Planning and organization of the session		
Teaching/learning approach and methods		
Delivery and pace		
Content (currency, accuracy, relevance, use of examples, level, match to student needs)		
Student participation		
Use of accommodation and learning resources		
Other comments		

Please summarise the session's overall quality, taking account of the intended learning outcomes

ANNEX J

STUDENT WORK: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION FORM

For use by Subject Reviewers in evaluating samples of student work

General Information

Name of university	Subject area
Name of reviewer	Title of the module

Details of student work sample

Number of pieces of work sampled	Type of work, e.g. essay, coursework, lab report
Is the sample representative, i.e. what percentage of the student cohort is involved and how do their marks compare with the rest of the cohort?	
Is the assessment used formatively or summatively?	
What is the topic and at what level of study is it? (e.g. level1/first year, etc)	

Comments on the strengths and weaknesses of students' achievements in relation to the intended learning outcomes:

Please consider the following	Strengths	Weaknesses
Evidence of student preparation		
Knowledge and understanding		
Analytical skills		
Key skills (e.g. communication, numeracy, ICT)		
Subject-specific skills (including practical and professional skills)		

Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of assessment in relation to the intended learning outcomes:

Assessment	Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Design</p> <p>Clarity of the task</p> <p>Match of assessment method to learning outcomes</p> <p>Appropriateness to level of study and student profile</p>		
<p>Criteria</p> <p>Appropriateness, clarity and implementation of assessment criteria</p>		
<p>Marking</p> <p>Consistency of marking</p> <p>Evidence of internal moderation</p>		
<p>Feedback</p> <p>Quality of feedback, in relation to the type of assessment (Le. formative or summative)</p>		

Please summarise the overall quality of student achievement and assessment in relation to the learning outcomes

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ANNEX K

Sri Lanka: Quality Assurance in Higher Education

REVIEWER PROFILE

Introduction

This 'profile' describes the attributes and characteristics looked for in individuals who are appointed to serve as reviewers in the national quality assurance arrangements in higher education.

Reviewers have a key role to play in institutional review and subject review. They personify the commitment to peer review. Their qualities as individuals and the coherence and effectiveness of review teams are vital to the success and credibility of an external review process. Informed, constructive and perceptive reviewers are extremely persuasive ambassadors for the process within and beyond higher education.

This profile covers all reviewers, both institutional and subject reviewers. It sets out a number of attributes and features common to both and some requirements particular to each role.

- 1 All applicants will be considered on the basis of their ability to meet the specifications outlined below. The Committee for Quality Assurance monitors the performance of all reviewers, using feedback from review visits.
- 2 There are two types of reviewer:
 - subject specialist reviewers, with current teaching experience in the discipline concerned, or experience of relevant professional or occupational practice;
 - institutional reviewers, who hold, or have recently held, senior management positions in higher education institutions.

Individuals may be appointed as subject reviewers, or as institutional reviewers or to serve in both capacities.

Individuals may be appointed as review chairs, to lead review teams. They will normally have experience of subject and/or institutional review, together with extensive experience of quality assurance and national involvement in higher education.

Qualities required in all reviewers

- 3 Effective reviewers will possess the following qualities:
 - demonstrable commitment to the principles of quality assurance in HE;
 - demonstrable commitment to the purpose of external quality assurance of higher education in Sri Lanka
 - an enquiring disposition;

- powers of analysis and sound judgment;
 - personal authority and presence
 - ability to act as an effective team member;
 - good individual time management skills
 - experience of chairing meetings;
 - ability to make appropriate judgments in the context of complex institutions different from their own;
 - experience of organisation and management, particularly in relation to teaching and learning matters;
 - high standard of oral and written communication, preferably with experience of writing formal reports to published deadlines.
- 4 In addition, reviewers are expected to have a clear knowledge and understanding of the review process, a reasonable acquaintance with all national guidance on quality assurance matters, and a detailed working knowledge of aspects of quality assurance in higher education.

Recruitment, training and role of subject reviewers

- 5 Subject reviewers are normally nominated by institutions or other organisations. Reviewers are recruited and trained to ensure that they are capable of carrying out their duties effectively. In particular, reviewers should:
- possess the knowledge and skills set out in detail below .
 - have successfully completed the training programme
 - be available for an agreed number of reviews
- 6 Training of reviewers is carried out on behalf of the Committee for Quality Assurance by means of two-day residential courses.
- 7 The Committee will make available a register of subject specialist reviewers and make this available to all institutions. The primary purpose of the register is to show, for each reviewer, the main areas of teaching and learning that s/he is qualified to review. As far as possible, the Committee ensures that the combined experience and expertise of the reviewers on its register reflects the range of the provision on offer across the HE sector.
- 8 The key purpose of acting as a subject specialist reviewer is to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of standards in higher education by reporting on the standards and quality of the academic programmes scrutinized during subject reviews. Subject specialist reviewers are expected to agree their individual timetables of activity with the review chair, with a view to making the most effective contribution to the review. The responsibilities of reviewers include:
- reading and analysing the self-evaluation prepared by the institution and any other documentation sent in advance of a review
 - participating in visits to the subject provider in order to gather, share, test and verify evidence observation of teaching .

- making judgments on the academic standards achieved and the quality of the learning opportunities provided
- contributing to and commenting on the compilation of the report of the review.

The Committee not only tries to ensure that the particular experience of individual reviewers is relevant to the reviews they undertake, but that, over time, each reviewer works in a variety of teams scrutinizing a range of institutions.

- 9 Subject specialists review and evaluate the self-evaluation provided for the subject, with particular emphasis on curricular contents and their suitability for achieving the programme outcomes.
- 10 Subject specialists review and evaluate the assessment processes designed for the programmes and determine whether they are suitable to assess programme outcomes as stated in the programme specifications.
- 11 Subject specialists judge the overall standards for subjects and the procedures associated with their maintenance and enhancement. These judgments are based on the evaluation of subject documents and student work, and the observation of teaching.
- 12 Subject specialists review and evaluate overall student achievement, including progression to employment; the contribution made to student achievement by the quality of teaching; opportunities for learning; academic support intended to ensure effective progression of students; and learning resources and their deployment (including staffing).
- 13 Finally, subject specialists contribute to the compilation of a report to the Committee. Each subject specialist will be expected to prepare material for the various sections of the report and may be expected to contribute to the writing.

Knowledge and skills required of subject reviewers

- 14 To carry out the role outlined above, for each review subject specialists will need to demonstrate:

Experience, knowledge and understanding of HE

- experience of providing teaching and learning in higher education or, in the case of industrially- or professionally-based reviewers, familiarity with higher education teaching and learning
- familiarity with arrangements for student support (academic and personal)
- experience of assessment (and preferably external examining)
- knowledge of the quality assurance processes employed by institutions providing higher education

Knowledge and understanding within the subject area

- knowledge of national standards or reference points in the subject area
- familiarity with the subject matter of the self-evaluation
- familiarity with comparable programmes and standards of awards in other institutions
- understanding of external examiners' reports and internal documentation
- understanding of programme entry requirements and ability to interpret progression statistics for each stage of the programmes, including withdrawal, transfer and failure rates
- understanding of programme learning outcomes
- familiarity with graduate employment statistics

Skills

- ability to conduct meetings and interviews with staff
- ability to conduct meetings with current and former groups of students
- ability to write succinctly and coherently
- ability to meet exacting timescales and deadlines
- ability to work effectively as a member of a team

Recruitment, training and role of institutional reviewers

- 15 During their period of appointment, reviewers will be asked to undertake a specific number of reviews. The Committee for Quality Assurance cannot guarantee to offer a particular number of reviews during their appointment
- 16 A training programme is provided by the Committee, which includes an opportunity to observe part of an review in progress
- 17 The responsibilities of reviewers include:
 - reading and analysing self-evaluations prepared by institutions and any other documentation sent in advance of review visits
 - participating in briefing meetings
 - participating in visits to institutions in order to gather, share, test and verify evidence
 - making judgements on institutions' management of academic standards and quality, and other key university responsibilities identified as within the terms of reference of review .
 - contributing to the review report
 - attending reviewers' briefing and training meetings

Knowledge and skills required of institutional reviewers

- 18 Selection is undertaken by the Committee with the intention of ensuring that reviewers:
- are knowledgeable about HE institutions and educational practice
 - have wide experience of academic management and quality assurance
 - can readily assimilate a large amount of disparate information
 - can analyze and make reliable judgments about complex arrangements
 - can hold discussions at a high level about strategic and operational approaches
 - have personal credibility with senior managers and heads of HE institutions
 - can work to deadlines

The attached matrix shows the personal qualities and attributes required in both subject and institutional reviewers

Review secretaries

- 19 Reviews will require particular administrative support, which may be provided by an review secretary. A typical review secretary might be a university administrator or other member of staff currently or recently involved in higher education, with at least three years' experience of academic administration, including committee support. Nominations of persons willing to act as review secretaries are invited, from time to time, from heads of administration in higher education institutions. Supporting a review activity as secretary is often seen as a valuable staff development opportunity.

Review Chairs

The following outlines the role and attributes of review chairs

Recruitment, training and role of review chairs

Review chairs may be seconded from institutions or independent consultancies. All must possess extensive experience of HE and of the assurance of standards and quality. They will be expected to perform a number of duties, of which managing reviews and writing reports are the major responsibilities. They may also be involved in editing reports and training reviewers.

Wherever possible, review chairs will receive the same training as that provided for reviewers. They may also be required to attend workshops and conferences arranged by the Committee for Quality Assurance.

Reviews take place throughout the academic year and are variable in length. Review chairs will need to organise their time, and to reach agreement with their teams of reviewers, about the pattern of review activities in such a way as to ensure effective use of the time available.

The review chair is responsible for maintaining an overview of the range and balance of review activities in either institutional or subject review, and for helping the reviewers to apportion their time effectively. The achievement of an appropriate balance between the various activities requires planning in advance of, and co-ordination throughout, the review.

Above all, the review chair must enable the team to develop a robust evidence base on which to make judgments.

Knowledge and skills required of review chairs

In order to carry out their role, review chairs will need to demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding of HE:

- recent knowledge and understanding of current issues;
- awareness of current teaching methods and curricula;
- knowledge and understanding of the assurance of standards and quality; experience of liaison with senior management and staff at other levels;

Skills:

- ability to manage small teams (with experience either in HE or in industry); ability to work within tight timescales and to strict deadlines;
- ability to lead a team of experts;
- ability to communicate effectively in face-to-face interaction;
- ability to produce clear and succinct reports to time; experience of word processing.

The essential qualities outlined above might be reinforced by experience of a wide range of teaching in HE and by experience of programme accreditation by professional or statutory bodies, programme approval or validation events, or internal reviews.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEWERS						
SUBJECT REVIEW	An enquiring disposition, combined with: a positive attitude; analytical ability; sound judgment	Knowledge and understanding of academic standards, in higher education, in Sri Lanka and internationally	Wide experience of academic management	Experience of corporate and financial planning in higher education	Ability to assimilate a large amount of disparate information	Familiarity with the needs and aspirations of society at large
	Experience of interdisciplinary activities	Tact, diplomacy, objectivity, respect for others and the ability to convey critical comment without antagonism	Ability to make appropriate judgments about complex institutions other than their own	Flexibility, openness to new trends and developments in higher education, with innovative ideas	Knowledge of careers guidance and familiarity with graduate destination Issues	Experience in extension and community activities
	Experience of assessing students, and as wide a range of assessment methods as possible	Teaching experience in one or more academic subjects in higher education	Academic credibility and personal authority	Ability and experience in chairing meetings and accurate note-taking	Prior experience of quality assurance, including knowledge of national acts and policies	A good understanding of the socio-economic conditions of the region
	Up to date and in-depth knowledge and understanding in at least one academic subject	Experience of curriculum design and development and awareness of employment requirements	Experience of organisation and management in relation to learning and teaching	A high standard of verbal and written communication, preferably with report-writing experience	Conversant in at least two official languages	Familiarity with the self-evaluation and other documents submitted by the university being reviewed
	Professional standing and/or industrial experience where appropriate	Membership of the relevant Subject Committee to be established by the UGC	Experience and understanding of student support and counselling activities	Ability to understand and interpret a wide range of information, including statistical data, qualitative and quantitative	Ability to work as an effective and reliable team member	Good individual time management skills, including the ability to meet deadlines
	Knowledge of student entry criteria, entry qualifications and secondary education	Credible track record in research and supervision of research students	Appreciation of the need for balance between intellectual development and acquisition of personal skills	Appreciation and experience of a wide range of teaching, learning and assessment methods	Experience of external examining, including understanding of external examiners' reports	Personal integrity and high ethical standards, combined with emotional intelligence

<p>Notes</p> <p>This annex shows the main skills and attributes required by institutional and subject reviewers.</p> <p>The shaded boxes indicate personal qualities that are shared by both groups.</p> <p>The top half of the matrix shows attributes that are most important for institutional review, the lower half those that are most relevant to subject review.</p> <p>The attributes closest to the shaded boxes in each category are likely to be shared by both types of reviewer.</p> <p>Those furthest away from the shaded boxes are most relevant to the individual reviewer type.</p>

Proposed Timetable for Institutional Reviews (IR) 2003- 2005

Year	2003				2004				2005			
Quarter	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q	1 st Q	2 nd Q	3 rd Q	4 th Q
University												
PDN	✓											
CMB		✓										
SJP			✓									
MRT				✓								
OUSL					✓							
JFN						✓						
RHN							✓					
EUSL								✓				
RUSL									✓			
SEUSL										✓		
SUSL											✓	
WUSL												✓
KLN												

PROPOSED TIMETABLE FOR SUBJECT REVIEWS (SR) – 2003–2007

Faculty University	Agric. /Agric. and Plantation Mgt.	Arch.	Arts/Arts And Culture	Business Studies and Finance	Com. and Mgt. studies	Dental Science	Education	Eng.	Hum/Hum and Social Science	Info. Tech	Law	Mgt. studies and Com./ Mgt. and Finance	Medicine	Science/ Natural Science/ App. Science	So. Sciences/ So. Sciences and Languages	Vet.Science/ Livestock , Fisheries and Nutrition
PDN	343 443 542		323 423 524 624			434 533		342 442 543					413 516 616	343 433 532		533
CMB			342 443 543				422 522					411 511	333 433 534 634	412 512 612		
SJP			413 513 612									342 442 542	323 423 524 624	342 442 542		
MRT		341 441 541						332 432 533 633		52?						
OUSL								312 422 521	321 421					432 523 623		
JFN	322 422 522		333 433 533 634										333 423 523 633	312 432 532		
RHN	312 422 522		332 432 532										343 443 543 643	422 522 622		
EUSL	311 421 511		432 532 633											321 422 522		
RUSL	421 521 622								411 521					431 531		
SEUSL			411 532											641		
SUSL	431 531 631			521 621										621 721	531 631	
WUSL	541 641 741													441 542 642		631 731
KLN					321 421 521				342 443 543				313 416 515	423 523 622	444 544	

In the above table the first digit of the entry corresponds to the last digit of the year in which the review will take place while the second digit of the entry indicates the particular quarter of that year. The third digit refers to the number of departments in the respective Faculty of the corresponding University which will be reviewed in the indicated quarter. For example, 343, the entry in the 1st column and the 1st row indicates that 3 departments of the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Peradeniya will be reviewed in the 4th quarter of the year 2003.