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REPORT 12

Committee for Academic Quality Procedures

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Edited by Paul Bacsich

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Editor's Introduction*

To establish and maintain an international reputation for excellence, e-Universities must offer the highest quality courses. The Committee for Academic Quality will set standards for the e-Universities programmes and learning services. Members of the Committee all have experience in setting up and enforcing robust quality standards for higher education.

(http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2001_0186)

We envisage that, as one of the terms of its licence and associated agreements, the holding company will require the operating company to constitute a Committee for Academic Quality. The holding company may also itself appoint advisers or expert panels from time to time to help meet its obligations to oversee the licence. The committee will, however, be a committee of the operating company, not of the holding company. This is because its role and activities are integral to the operations of the e-University, and it needs to work as part of the operating team, so that considerations of quality and standards infuse the company's day-to-day conduct, approach and methods, rather than being seen as something imposed from outside.

(http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlelets/2001/cl02_01.htm), paragraph 17)

.1 Overview

CAQ was one of the earliest parts of the e-University structure. It was first envisaged in paragraphs 61–67 of *Business model for the e-University: PricewaterhouseCoopers report*. HEFCE invited nominations for the Committee in a Circular Letter of 15 January 2001 (second quote above). DfES announced the members of CAQ on 29 March 2001 (first quote above). CAQ was “up and running” before UKeU was. This partly explains why the CAQ of 2004 was somewhat different from the CAQ of 2002 and indeed to the CAQ envisaged in 2000-01 – unlike most of the rest of the UKeU, it had had time to evolve in the light of experience.

This is one of the main reasons why CAQ can be regarded as a sound source of lessons for the HE community: not only did it have substantial intellectual effort going into its foundation (that situation was true of other parts of UKeU), but it also had been field-tested. A further reason for considering the experience as of value is that CAQ blended UKeU internal expertise with the experience of around 12 high-level members from HEIs involved in quality issues, and as CAQ members can attest, belonging to CAQ was definitely *not* just a question of popping along to a half-day meeting once or twice a year – a considerable amount of work was done around and between meetings.

Although UKeU is no more, there is still much going on in the way of collaborative provision of e-learning at a distance, both that delivered overseas from UK institutions and that delivered closer to home (but still off-campus) from UK consortia, including nowadays HE-FE consortia and provision of Foundation Degrees. The main international consortia of the early 2000s – Universitas 21, the Worldwide Universities Network and the Global Universities Alliance – are still active in e-learning, to varying extents; but they have been joined by the Interactive University (now spreading out from its base at Heriot-Watt) and a number of new consortia and structures:

* By Paul Bacsich.

one of these, the eChina Programme, was originally managed by UKeU under HEFCE funding, and another, the UK Healthcare Education Partnership, benefited from UKeU funding in its early phase but is now proceeding independently. Thus we believe that the material in this report will still be of great relevance.

.2 A Brief History

In 2000, CAQ was envisioned in the PWC report; and other studies drew attention to the need for a strong quality regime for the emerging e-University.

In early 2001, HEFCE consulted on CAQ and DfES announced the Terms of Reference and members. By late 2001, the Quality Standards Agreement was signed between e Learning and UKeU and the shadow CAQ had had its first meeting.

In 2002 and 2003, CAQ carried out a steadily increasing amount of business. By 2003, it became clear that CAQ would have to modify and streamline its procedures to take account of the volume of business, the limited time that its members could spend and the increasing expertise of UKeU staff in e-learning issues. New procedures were drafted in the late 2003 and early 2004 period by three drafting groups.

In February 2004, CAQ met and discussed, but did not finally ratify, the new procedures.

Meetings Diary

20 October 2001	Meeting 01 of CAQ (held the day after the License and Quality Standards Agreement were signed).
9 April 2002	Meeting 02/1 of CAQ. Among other items the CAQ received copies of the Overview Report on the "Impact of the Internet" market research and competitor studies commissioned by HEFCE.
13 June 2002	Meeting 02/2 of CAQ.
31 October 2002	Meeting 02/3 of CAQ.
5 February 2003	Meeting 03/1 of CAQ.
25 June 2003	Meeting 03/2 of CAQ. An Acting Chair was nominated due to the sudden death of the former Chair of CAQ.
8 October 2003	Meeting 03/3 of CAQ.
5 February 2004	Meeting 04 of CAQ (postponed from 4 December 2003). This turned out to be the last meeting of CAQ. (The next meeting had been planned for 17 May 2004 and a further one for October 2004.)

.3 The Overarching Monitoring Role of the QAA

QAA (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk>) is the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. Its strapline states: "We safeguard and help to improve the academic standards and quality of higher education in the UK."

The Committee for Academic Quality was designed to work within the QAA overarching monitoring function, but focussing on those areas, in particular e-learning, for which (at the time) QAA had not specified guidelines. The HEFCE Circular Letter of January 2001 put it as follows:

13. The QAA's central concern with the award of qualifications will relate to those HEIs that award qualifications for successful completion of programmes delivered through the e-University. As now, the QAA will consider how each HEI discharges that function and ensures appropriate standards for the qualifications it awards for e-University programmes, as part of standard institution-level review. The e-University will not itself be a subscriber to the QAA. The QAA has published non-mandatory guidelines on distance learning, but at present these have no formal status in QAA review programmes.

14. The QAA's subject review programme is focused on HE teaching programmes supported by public funds and delivered in the UK, and therefore will not apply to the great majority of e-University programmes. Where e-University programmes are publicly funded for UK students, the QAA's standard approach would apply to the awarding body and provider.

During most of the period of CAQ's existence, the QAA Guidelines on Distance Learning were contained in their report "Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning – March 1999", which predated the formation of even the UKeU concept and in which "e-learning" and similar terms were not mentioned at all – see http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/distancelearning/content_s.asp.

In its later phases, CAQ included a delegate from QAA who assisted with the redrafting of CAQ procedures; and one of the UKeU staff members was on the working party which revised the QAA 1999 guidelines for distance learning (referred to above). Thus it was to be expected that a two-way information flow took place. Certainly in January 2004, QAA published its Circular Letter CL 03/04 "Draft revised Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 2: Collaborative provision, flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)" which as the title specifically notes, did include e-learning (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/news/circularLetters/CL0304.asp>); and in September 2004 a revised Section 2 of the Code of Practice was published entitled "Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning) – September 2004" (<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section2/>).

This means that at the top level, there is a much clearer regulatory framework for e-learning. The detailed level is another matter, which is where we expect this report to be still useful.

.4 Other Quality and Validation Initiatives

This section describes activity at Universitas 21, the Global University Alliance and the Worldwide Universities Network. It does not attempt to review work of consortia

or projects outside the UK – for an up to date introduction to this area see for example the survey “Theory of Benchmarking for e-Learning: A Top-Level Literature Review” at <http://www.cs.mdx.ac.uk/news/Benchmark-theory.pdf>.

Universitas 21

Universitas 21 (<http://www.universitas21.com/>) describes itself as:

...an international network of leading research-intensive universities. Its purpose is to facilitate collaboration and cooperation between the member universities and to create entrepreneurial opportunities for them on a scale that none of them would be able to achieve operating independently or through traditional bilateral alliances.

The UK members of Universitas 21 are the Universities of Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Nottingham. Though set up on a basis of research collaboration and course exchange/student mobility, there was a strong undercurrent of e-learning. Having started a Global MBA in July 2003, which “currently enrolls students from more than fifteen countries around the world”, their e-learning activities appear to have lost some momentum in recent years.* Note in particular the recent remarks in the e-Bulletin of 8 April 2005 (<http://www.universitas21.com/news/ebulletin080405.pdf>):

4. Postponement of “e-learning in practice: a U21 e-learning conference”

It was with some regret that the U21 Secretariat had to postpone the U21 e-learning conference in February 2005, however we hope to have some news in the next few months of a re-scheduled date and location for the conference.

Notwithstanding this, Universitas 21 have set up a comprehensive quality monitoring arm for their e-learning courses, *U21pedagogica*. The following excerpts from the recent Universitas 21 brochure “Universitas 21: An International Network of Higher Education” published in October 2004 give a good description:†

To oversee the approval of Universitas 21 Globe’s programmes, the 16 licensing universities have established U21pedagogica – a wholly owned subsidiary of Universitas 21. U21pedagogica’s processes draw heavily upon the well-established internal quality assurance processes and expertise of the member institutions within the Universitas 21 network.

U21pedagogica is the sole provider of quality assurance services to Universitas 21 Global, including the review of new subjects and programmes, the assessment of existing subjects and programmes, and the evaluation of student outcomes, instructor effectiveness and the technology platform.

The Academic Standards Council (ASC) is U21pedagogica’s decision-making body for quality assurance matters. It receives recommendations from Programme Review Panels and, on this basis, decides whether or not a particular programme or subject should receive approval. Membership on the ASC consists of the U21pedagogica Board of Directors plus professors from Universitas 21 universities. The ASC is designed to be representative of, and to act on behalf of the U21 member universities. The objective is to assure that the Global academic

* Some argue that the e-learning was an angle on student mobility that did not gain wholehearted support from the membership. Universitas U21Global got under way with support from Thompson and from most but not all Universitas 21 members.

† The brochure is at <http://www.universitas21.com/about/Universitas%2021%20-%20A%20International%20Network%20of%20Higher%20Education.pdf>.

product is consistent in quality with the offerings of the respective U21 universities. Members of the ASC are all highly respected academics nominated by their individual institutions.

Programme Review Panels review both the programme and any subjects that will be available to students enrolled in that programme. Programme Review Panels may work with up to three expert Readers (from Universitas 21 universities and other quality institutions) who provide advice on subjects submitted U21pedagogica by Universitas 21 Global for review. Following review, the Panel prepares a confidential report, forwarding its comments and recommendation to the Academic Standards Council. The Panel also recommends on the certification of Subject Instructors. The Academic Standards Council, in turn, makes a decision on approval that is transmitted in a report to Universitas 21 Global.

There appears to be little other detailed information on the Web about U21pedagogica or its workings.

For further reading on the history of Universitas 21 and some current context, see Chapter Eight (Section 7.2) of the e-University Compendium, including footnotes (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/learningandteaching/eUniCompendium_chap08.doc).

Further information about the Universitas 21 MBA programme can be found at <http://www.u21global.com>. There it states that “a Masters in Information Systems Management will be launched in 2005”.

Global Universities Alliance

GUA, the Global Universities Alliance (<http://www.gua.com/>) describes itself as:

...committed to being the premier global provider of flexible, accessible, high quality university accredited education, driven by a philosophy of service to students, an investment in cutting edge technologies and extensive international reach and presence.

The UK members are the Universities of Derby and Glamorgan. The link from the home page to “Find Programs and Courses” leads to a search page. There one can discover that Derby offers a range of courses (around 20).

Regarding Quality Assurance processes for the GUA, the relevant Web page (<http://www.gua.com/gua/student%20benefits/10/>) notes only that “our members implement a series of rigorous quality assurance policies and procedures linked to international performance indicators and benchmarks”. There is a little more detail at a Web page of information on the so-called “Blended Delivery Model” of GUA (<http://www.gua.com/edcenters/partnership%20opportunities/30/>) where it states:

The GUA Programs consist of courses drawn from individual course supplier universities and colleges. Therefore quality assurance processes that are relevant to GUA Programs are:

- The GUA’s own guidelines for quality assurance associated with its programs, which attempt to provide a uniform framework across all programs offered in a center
- The quality assurance framework put in place by the individual suppliers, reflecting both their own internal requirements and those imposed by their national governmental and/or the suppliers’ local self-regulating systems

As all the course suppliers are members in good standing within their own national higher education systems, with well developed quality assurance processes for teaching. The major ad-

ditional value added by the GUA is to provide additional guidance regarding quality assurance in a distributed learning environment.

While this all seems in the right strategic vein, enquirers might be forgiven for wanting rather more detail.

GUA has had a rather interesting history and its members (including the active membership) have changed. To delve into its history and some current context, including what else is known about GUA quality procedures, readers should consult Chapter Eight (especially Section 3.3) of the e-University Compendium, including footnotes (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/learningandteaching/eUniCompendium_chap08.doc). It may be germane that the University of Glamorgan's Quality Handbook is online at <http://inet2.isd.glam.ac.uk/registry/QualityProcedures/QualityHandbook02.pdf>, and it contains an interesting Section T on pages 396–407 on “Process for the Approval of Delivery of Modules by Distributed Learning including e-Learning”.

Worldwide Universities Network

WUN, the Worldwide Universities Network (<http://www.wun.ac.uk>) describes itself as “an international alliance of leading higher-education institutions” where the “partners are working together to deliver graduate-level distributed learning” and will “enhance student choice and pedagogical effectiveness by sharing learning materials, pooling expertise and developing frameworks for quality assurance and accreditation”.

The UK members of WUN are (in alphabetical order) the Universities of Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, Southampton and York. Several of these were engaged in e-learning before UKeU started; two are involved in the HEFCE e-Learning Research Centre and several are delivering e-learning for the eChina project. In keeping with this strong focus on e-learning, WUN has an e-learning research plan, an e-learning portal (<http://www.wun.ac.uk/elearning/>), and a list of e-learning courses offered. WUN also has a Quality Assurance Group which has produced a fusion of CAQ procedures and its own entitled “Good practice guide for Approval of Distributed Learning Programmes including e Learning and Distance Learning” (<http://www.wun.ac.uk/elearning/papers/qaguidelines.doc>). Readers are strongly advised to consult this after reading the current Report.

.5 What is in this Report

This report consists of the following sections:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| This section | An overview and scene-setting by the Editor. (A kind of Section “nil”.) |
| Section 0 | A set of definitions needed to understand later sections (we start at 0 so that the three sections after Section 0 can have natural numbering). |
| Section 1 | Stage 1: Procurement and Planning. |
| Section 2 | Stage 2: Design and Development. |

- Section 3 Programme Evaluation: Audit and Review.
- Section 4 The earlier CAQ procedures (from 2002). Note that the 2004 procedures were never finally approved by CAQ and thus in our judgement the earlier material is still of interest.
- Section 5 Initial Membership and Terms of Reference of CAQ. (This paper dates from 2003 but reflects the situation in late 2001 when UKeU officially started and CAQ turned from shadow form into real.)
- Section 6 The legal framework for CAQ. (Relevant extracts from the License Agreement and the Quality Standards Agreement.)
- Section 7 The early views of HEFCE. (Annex D of the HEFCE Circular Letter of 15 January 2001.)
- Section 8 Pre-history of the concept. (How the issue of “quality” was treated in the PWC Report and other “e-University” studies for HEFCE in 2000.)

The main report is then followed by a number of Appendices which basically give examples of all the forms and report formats used in the CAQ processes.

Separate from but linked from this Report are three Annexes:

- Annex 1 License Agreement between e Learning and UKeU
- Annex 2 Quality Standards Agreement between e Learning and UKeU
- Annex 3 UKeU Policy and Standards: A Guide for HEIs.

.6 Miscellaneous Points

It should also be noted that two of the authors of the early HEFCE e-University studies came from backgrounds of involvement with “quality” processes.

- Professor Keith Baker, overseer and editor of some of the technical studies was a partner in SEEQUEL (Sustainable Environment for the Evaluation of Quality in eLearning), one of four projects awarded in the EU concentrating on quality in e-learning.
- Professor Robin Middlehurst, who contributed to the “Impact of the Internet” studies, came to Surrey in 1998 from the predecessor of QAA where she was director of the Quality Enhancement Group, responsible with her team for shaping national policy on quality and standards.

For more details on them and their work for HEFCE see the e-University Compendium (<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/euniversity/>).

.7 Provenance and Production Issues

A Note on Provenance

The CAQ documents were found in the UKeU electronic archive. There is not a complete set there, but it was enough for the purposes here. A copy of the Quality Standards Agreement was also found in the archive also, but in order to guarantee their provenance, final versions of the Quality Standards Agreement, and also the License Agreement, were supplied by Beachcroft Wansbroughs, the UKeU's lawyers (<http://www.bwlaw.co.uk>), to whom thanks are due.

Production Notes

Due to the age of the documents here, there are particular inconsistencies over the name for UKeU. The organisation started as being called "the e-University", "the Operating Company" or "OpCo"; then evolved to its full official name of "UK eUniversities Worldwide Limited", with a semi-official abbreviation to "UKeU" (as used on the Web site); but there are legal documents which use the short name "eUniversities", and even the usage "UKeUniversities" is found (e.g. in CAQ documents). Indeed the original name "e-University" took a long time to fade away.

There are similar but much less well known issues with the name of the Holding Company. Its full name is "e Learning Holding Company Limited", with a short name "e Learning"; but some documents refer to it as "eLearning" (without the space) and early documents (written before it was formally set up) refer to it as "HoldCo".

This document contains large selections of legal material. For consistency, we have slightly modified the formatting (in particular, there is only a single space after a full stop and the page margins and type face have been changed) but we have not changed any spelling or structure. Where this gives rise to oddities, they are footnoted. Those who want to see the legal material in its original glory are referred to Annexes 1 and 2 to this Report.

This document also contains a mass of reports with different provenance. To facilitate referral to these, we have modified the running heads to reflect the title of each report.

There are also some issues with footnoting. None of the reports originally used footnotes, so that there was no need to transform these to endnotes, as is normal practice. Consequently, in some sections where formatting considerations make it impossible to use footnotes, endnotes have been used instead and placed at the end of the section.

.8 The Authors

With respect to authorship of documents, the approach to editing the UKeU Reports follows both the law and general HEFCE guidelines on IPR and moral rights (the right of paternity and the right of integrity). In general terms this means that the editors assume that authors explicitly named (or strongly implied) as authors of the original documents will wish to assert their rights to be named as authors on the versions here provided that they are happy that their work is treated "with respect".

For more details on the background to our approach see HEFCE publication 2003/08 “Intellectual property rights in e-Learning programmes” (February 2003, http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2003/03_08.htm) and the “Intellectual Property Rights” briefing at <http://www.jisclegal.ac.uk/ipr/IntellectualProperty.htm> on the JISC Legal Information Service.

There are particular problems when assigning and asserting authorship over documents which were on the whole collaboratively authored by members of a Committee. The situation is made more complicated by our general approach whereby we do not on the whole give names of individuals involved with any aspect of UKeU – therefore we cannot just name the members of CAQ en masse (even though the information is public and a diligent person could generate relevant lists for relevant periods without much difficulty). Having consulted with key individuals concerned with CAQ and all putative authors of these particular reports, and reviewed both the explicit Document History and internal Properties of each relevant document, we are using the following approach to the listing of authors for the main documents authored by CAQ.

Section 1 (Stage 1: Procurement and Planning, CAQ 04/03): *David Unwin and Kel Fidler, with assistance from Madeleine Atkins and Elizabeth Heaps*

Section 2 (Stage 2: Design and Development, CAQ 04/04): *David Unwin and another author, with assistance from Phil Jones, Bob Fryer and Kel Fidler*

Section 3 (Programme Evaluation: Audit and Review, CAQ 04/05): *Kel Fidler and David Unwin, with assistance from John Slater, David Buckingham and Paul Bacsich*

Section 4 (Policy and Standards, CAQ 02/16): *John Slater, with assistance from other members of CAQ.*

Section 5 (Membership and Terms of Reference of CAQ, CAQ 03/20): *David Unwin.*

All other documents authored by CAQ in this Report are deemed to be team efforts.

Given the complexity of the authorship, we hope that authors will bear with us when only the briefest summary of the authorship is put in our running heads.

.9 A Comment by the Reviewer*

CAQ seems to have had an interesting challenge resolving the inherent tension between the UKeU role as a commissioner of programmes and guardian of its own brand values, and the UKeU role as a provider of services to the institutions in the delivery of their programmes (that are subject to the oversight of QAA). In many of the early QAA international audit reports a common theme was insufficient control of institutions over the actions of delivery partners –an area in which UK institutions have tightened up considerably.

* By Keith Williams. (All UKeU Reports went out to independent review. Where a reviewer made significant comments that we and they wish to put on record, they may make them in this subsection.)

The information on *U21pedagogica* was interesting but it would have been fascinating to read more detail, since it probably wrestles with similar problems to those that CAQ did, but with the added complexity of its participating institutions coming from differing national backgrounds.

The legal arrangements between e Learning and UKeU seem to have been largely based on building and protection of brand. While being good solid commercial contracts, it was interesting that there was little acknowledgement of the value that universities attach to their own brand and standards, and no reference to other relevant UK brands (such as Education UK or BBC).

There might have been an unwitting impression given in Chapters 1–3 that CAQ was nearing the end of its development phase. However in Chapter 4 and Annex 3 the point was clearly made that there are some areas of service provision in e-learning in which most UK universities have little or no experience. I would have expected in time further CAQ procedural development to take place to propose appropriate standards or service levels for universities to sign up to.*

The overall view that comes through is that the CAQ was caught in the middle of the set of complex relationships between universities and UKeU on issues associated with markets, pedagogic design, project management and programme delivery. It is the last of these in which it should *in the longer term* have had most to offer to the sector – but there was no longer term.

The above views are based on the paperwork provided in this comprehensive report, including (in the appendices) the various forms used. However, it was hard to judge the value of the various forms used without seeing actual examples, even being mindful of the restrictions imposed on the editors for reasons of HEI confidentiality. Perhaps some further generic exemplar information can be made available in a later round of material.

* By this we assume that the reviewer is thinking of US reports such as “Quality on the Line” and similar EU-financed studies in refining what is meant by “quality” in e-learning. It is likely that the HEFCE-inspired work on benchmarking e-learning will have something to contribute here. (Editor.)

0. Definitions (from CAQ 04/03, 04/04 and 04/05)*

CAQ is the Committee for Academic Quality of UKeU. This committee is responsible for monitoring and reviewing all aspects of Quality Assurance and Control of the UKeU.

Content is the academic material that will form the basis of a UKeU presentation. It may not be in a form immediately suitable for mounting on a virtual learning platform.

Course is a collection of learning and teaching material together with assessment that leads to the award of Credit.

HEI is a **Higher Education Institution**, typically, but not always, of University status. It includes Colleges in the University sector.

Learning Programmes Director is the staff member at UKeU responsible for managing the procurement and development of products, including appropriate quality assurance, and reporting to CAQ.

Learning Programme Evaluation Summaries are documents presented to CAQ that summarise the HEI and student experience of a course.

Learning Programmes Manager is the member of staff at UKeU assigned to any specific product, responsible for management of the entire product life cycle.

Learning Project Manager is the member of staff at UKeU assigned to help the development team bring a product to market. In contrast to the Learning Programme Manager, projects begin during Stage 1 and are signed off when the product is brought to market.

Learning Technologists are members of staff at UKeU with expertise in the pedagogic design of eLearning programmes and its realisation in the UKeU Learning Environment.

Presentation refers to a specific, single delivery of a **Learning Programme** or **Course** by UKeU.

Procurement relates to the identification of suitable content for a UKeU course or programme

Product is the generic term used for a Programme, Course or other product of UKeU.

Programme, or more specifically **Learning Programme**, is a collection of Courses with credit that permits the awarding of a Qualification (e.g. MA, MSc etc.)

A Programme Review is a document that describes the state of a programme being developed and delivered by UKeU. They are developed and up-dated at Monthly

* These definitions have been consolidated from the three main CAQ procedural documents.

UKeU programme review meetings at which all programmes are reported by Learning Programme Managers, Learning Technologists, Project Managers and marketing staff using a standard format and a “traffic light” system with defined criteria for setting as *Green*, *Amber* and *Red*. Each programme at any time has a status of **Green*** (i.e. progress is satisfactory), **Amber** (for some reason progress is not yet fully satisfactory, but the problem is not seen to be critical), or **Red** (there are concerns that are sufficient to halt the progress).

Programme Review Meetings are monthly meetings of all the operational units in UK eUniversities at which **Programme Reviews** are updated.

Project plans use a standard methodology and tools to show how a course will be developed and brought to market. The plans show how the design and production lead to a programme that allows students to meet the intended learning outcomes.

Proposers are agencies, typically, though not always a Higher Education Institute (University, University College, College in the University Sector) that have suggested a partnership with UKeU to develop and deliver a course.

Public Good products are materials associated with initiatives defined to be less commercial than standard programmes and for which there are other considerations in determining the viability of the product.[†]

QAA is the **Quality Assurance Agency** for Higher Education (see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>).[‡]

Quality Questionnaire is a formal instrument that summarises the progress of a course cohort, completed by the partner HEI and UKeU for each programme cohort

Student Exit Questionnaires are survey instruments that attempt to gauge student reactions to the delivery of a course.

Techno-Pedagogic Review (TPR) is a comprehensive assessment of the capabilities of a proposer to produce the stated products. It is conducted by UKeU staff, usually one or more Learning Technologists.

* Those with colour displays or colour printers will note that from now on the traffic lights are usually colour-coded.

† The main Public Good courses were those procured under HEFCE Circular 08/02 “eUniversity: Invitation to bid for additional student places to meet public service objectives” of 26 March 2002 (http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlets/2002/cl08_02.htm). However, the eChina programme and even the HEFCE e-Learning Research Centre were also Public Good products. The whole Public Good area was tied up with thorny questions of “State Aid” issues, which are fortunately out of scope for this Report.

‡ For more on QAA see Section .3 of this Report.

1. Stage 1: Procurement and Planning (CAQ 04/03)*

1.1 Purpose

UKeU Courses and Programmes are developed according to a Plan–Do–Audit&Review cycle. As the terms suggest, these relate to the Planning phase of the activity, which includes content procurement (Plan); the Design, Development and Presentation phase of the UKeU material (Do); and the Evaluation of performance and proposal for corrective action (Audit and Review). The outcomes of the Review then feed into the Planning process, and the cycle repeats. These activities are summarised in three stages:

- 1) Procurement and Planning
- 2) Design and Development†
- 3) Evaluation (Audit and Review).

This section explains the Procedure adopted in the First Stage: Procurement and Planning.

1.2 Scope

This Procedure should be applied to all the UKeU presentations: Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Continuing Professional Development (both Credit-bearing and Award-bearing), and Public Good.

1.3 References

A number of documents are relevant to this procedure:‡

- 1) New Product Proposal Form (see §1.5.1).§
- 2) Programme Specification (see §1.5.1).**

* It should be noted that this report is technically a draft. It was not approved by the relevant CAQ meeting; indeed there was considerable discussion of the need for further modifications.

† It is interesting that Presentation is downplayed. This is probably because CAQ was much less involved in oversight of the Presentation sub-phase.

‡ It is not entirely clear why all these documents are relevant, since several should have been superseded, as more than one CAQ member pointed out.

§ There seem to have been a number of iterations of pro-formas for New Product Proposal and Programme Specification. No pro-formas were supplied as an annex or appendix to this or related papers and there is as yet no definitive information on which pro-formas were used when. One particular example (taken from a CAQ briefing document for HEIs) is supplied as Appendix H to this Report.

** See previous footnote.

- 3) Companion Procedures for other aspects of the course development process:
 - Procedure 002: Design and Development*
 - Procedure 003: Evaluation (Audit and Review).†
- 4) The Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee of Academic Quality (CAQ), which may be found in Document CAQ 03/20.‡
- 5) eUniversity (Shadow) Committee for Academic Quality 2001/1 and 2001/2.§
- 6) CAQ and its workings, CAQ 2001/16.**
- 7) UKeU, Quality Standards Agreement (QSA), Schedules 1 & 2.††

1.4 Definitions

[These have been moved to Section 0 of this Report.]

1.5 Procedure

1.5.1 New Products

New products will be based on material that may be either unsolicited or solicited from a provider or proposer. Indeed, in some cases the material may be commissioned by, or on behalf of, UKeU. New Product Proposals shall be communicated to UKeU through completion of a Proposal Form, and a Programme Specification that attends to e-learning issues, together with supporting information.

The **Learning Programmes Director** has overall responsibility for the initial processing of New Product Proposals, as follows:

Standing of Proposer

There must be evidence of the good standing of the Proposer. Such evidence is to be found in QAA Institutional Reports, in QAA Subject Reviews, in Professional Body Accreditation, in appropriate League Tables, and so forth. The **Learning Programmes Director** must be able to defend the decision to develop a business relationship with the Proposer.

* See Section 2 of this Report.

† See Section 3 of this Report.

‡ See Section 5 of this Report.

§ These papers are not in the UKeU electronic archives and do not seem to be necessary for this Report.

** See Section 4 of this Report.

†† See Section 7 and Annex 2.

QA Status of Proposal

The **Learning Programmes Director** shall establish the Quality Assurance status of the proposal, having particular regard to workload, level, balance, directed/student-centred learning, relevance, formative/summative assessment, and any other appropriate factors. Such status may be established in various ways:

- 1) Through the reports of a Programme Approval process at the Proposer's institution (where such process exists).
- 2) By attending a Programme Approval event at the Proposer's institution.
- 3) By other equivalent QA process.
- 4) By examination of the institution's own programme approval process documentation, with special reference to its provisions for eLearning developments.

Academic Review

Notwithstanding the outcome of the above, the **Learning Programmes Director** shall seek assessments of the academic content of a proposal from two appropriately qualified, independent, peer referees.* The referees shall be provided with copies of the **Techno-Pedagogic Review**. The **Learning Programmes Director** shall establish a panel of such referees, with appropriate remuneration, for this purpose. **Senior Referees** shall be retained to resolve conflicts that may arise from conflicting reports from the two referees.

On occasions that the proposal is already cast in an e-learning format, the **Learning Programmes Director** shall ensure that the referees have appropriate experience.

The conclusion of these assessment reports shall be reported to CAQ.

Techno-Pedagogic Review

A TPR shall be conducted by staff of UKeU[†] in order to provide a comprehensive assessment of the capabilities of a proposer to produce the stated products and that the technical resource demands of the academic programme have been correctly dimensioned. The TPR will be signed off by the Learning Programmes Director, supplied as part of the product information to academic referees, and these actions reported to CAQ.

* See Appendix A for the "Academic Referee's Report" draft format. (This was the first – but unnumbered – appendix to CAQ 04/03.)

† Normally by Learning Technologists. See Appendix B for the "Techno-Pedagogic Review" draft format. (This was the second – but unnumbered – appendix to CAQ 04/03.)

Market Analysis

The UKeU **Internal Marketing Team** shall establish that a market exists for the new product, having regard to volume, competitor activity, lifetime, etc. The conclusion of the review shall be reported to CAQ.

Business Plan

A Business Plan shall be developed by the proposer in collaboration with UKeU, indicating the income, expenditure and cash flows over the anticipated lifetime of the product. This Business Plan must be signed off by the Learning Programmes Director as satisfactory to UKeU, and these actions reported to CAQ.

CAQ Report

The **CAQ** is responsible for ensuring that all areas of this Procedure have been complied with.

Each of the above areas in the above subsections will at any time have a status of **Green** (i.e. outcome is satisfactory), **Amber** (outcome not yet fully satisfactory), or **Red** (outcome not yet achieved, or outcome unsatisfactory).

Where difficulties occur, movement from Red to Green will result from interaction between the **Learning Programmes Director** and UKeU staff with the Proposer.

At meetings of the CAQ, the **Learning Programmes Director** will arrange for a summary of New Product proposals to be considered by the committee, annotated according to the colour coding system. Only Programmes attracting the **Green** light under all categories may proceed to the next stage of development. The **Learning Programmes Director** shall be prepared to answer questions referring to any of the categories referred to above.

In order to expedite the process, proposals achieving **Green** light status may in exceptional circumstances be considered by the Chair of CAQ between meetings, and a report made under Chair's Action at the next CAQ meeting.

1.5.2 Existing Products

Procedure 003* is concerned with the Audit and Review of UKeU Programmes. The Review process may lead to recommendations for corrective action as part of the UKeU policy of continuous improvement. These recommendations will fall within the province of this Procedure when the actions required necessitate reconsideration of any of the areas above. Upon completion of those considerations, a report should be made to CAQ according to the above topics.

* See Section 3 of this Report.

1.6 Documentation and Outcome of Procedure

A Learning Programme Summary Review results from this procedure and shall be reported to CAQ. Supporting documentation shall include a programme specification, Techno-Pedagogic Review, two academic referee reports, market analysis and business plan.*

* The top-level introduction to this Summary Review was the “Learning Programme Summary Report to CAQ”. A draft format for this is in Appendix C (the third unnumbered appendix to CAQ 04/03).

2. Stage 2: Design and Development (CAQ 04/04)

2.1 Purpose

UKeU Courses and Programmes are developed according to a Plan–Do–Audit&Review cycle. As the terms suggest, these relate to the Planning phase of the activity, which includes content procurement (Plan); the Design, Development and Presentation of the UK eUniversities material (Do); and the Evaluation of performance and proposal for corrective action (Audit and Review). The outcomes of the Review then feed into the Planning process, and the cycle repeats. These activities are summarised in three stages:

- 1) Procurement and Planning
- 2) Design and Development
- 3) Evaluation (Audit and Review).

This document explains the Procedure adopted in the Second Stage: Design and Development.

2.2 Scope

This Procedure should be applied to all the UKeU presentations: Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Continuing Professional Development (both Credit-bearing and Award-bearing), and Public Good.

2.3 References

A number of documents are relevant to this procedure:*

- 1) Companion Procedures for other aspects of the course development process:
 - Procedure 001: Procurement and Planning
 - Procedure 003: Evaluation (Audit and Review)
- 2) Outputs from Stage 1 Procurement and Planning:
 - Programme Specification, provided by the proposer using the current approved UKeU template
 - Endorsed Summary Report to CAQ
 - Techno-Pedagogic Review

* See the footnotes to the corresponding material in Section 1 of this Report.

- Academic Reviews.

2.4 Definitions

[These have been moved to Section 0 of this Report.]

2.5 Inputs

The Procedure here is predicated on satisfactory completion of Stage 1, through Procedure 001. This has regard to the:

- 1) Standing of the Proposer
- 2) QA Status of the proposal
- 3) Academic Review
- 4) Techno-Pedagogic Review
- 5) Market Analysis
- 6) Business Plan.

This procedure shall formally commence on satisfactory completion of Stage 1 (which will have been approved by CAQ, or in extreme circumstances by the Chair on behalf of CAQ); and it ends on the day that the programme goes ‘live’.

2.6 Procedure

CAQ shall monitor the operation of the project implementation process within UKeU. CAQ shall intervene where there is clear, reported evidence that a project development is failing, thereby requiring approval from CAQ of agreement to adjustments in any or all of the following project parameters: objectives, resources, and timeframe. This monitoring shall be by means of a Project Plan and by Programme Reviews.

2.6.1 Project Plan

UKeU’s Learning Programmes Unit* shall develop a **Project Plan** for the design and development, using Microsoft Project™ (or equivalent software approved by the Learning Programmes Director), showing provision for built-in monitoring, preferably and, if appropriate, linked to a staged payment for rights to the Proposer.

The Plan shall be prepared and agreed between UKeU’s Learning Programmes Unit and the Proposer, with the staff responsible and accountable for its delivery identified by both parties. This element shall be identified and incorporated into the Project

* One of the quirks of UKeU organisation was that there was never any agreed nomenclature for the groups within UKeU. The word “unit” was little used.

Plan, which shall also reflect a realistic evaluation of the Proposer's starting capability in the area of e-learning. It will also show how the design and production will lead to a programme that allows students to meet the intended learning outcomes.

An agreed report of progress against the project plan shall be copied to nominated members of the CAQ for monitoring and approval. Typically, this will involve two or three CAQ members per programme. If, between CAQ meetings, urgent action is warranted this shall involve consultation with the Chair of CAQ.

In some circumstances, the design will be assisted by the development within UKeU of small "demonstrator" systems based on an initial sample of materials.

2.6.2 Programme Review

The Learning Programmes Director shall provide CAQ with a summary of the programme reviews for all programmes in development by UKeU.

Each programme at any time shall have a status of **Green** (i.e. progress is satisfactory), **Amber** (for some reason progress is not yet fully satisfactory, but the problem is not seen to be critical), or **Red** (there are concerns that are sufficient to halt the progress).

Where, at a **Programme Review Meeting** a programme is determined to have traffic light status **Red** a fuller report shall be communicated to nominated members of the CAQ for advice and, if necessary, appropriate action. Typically, this will involve two or three CAQ members per programme. If more urgent action is warranted this shall involve consultation with the Chair of CAQ. Where difficulties occur, movement back from **Red** to **Amber** or **Green** will result from interaction between the **Learning Programmes Director**, other UKeU staff and the Proposer.

In order to expedite the process, proposals re-achieving **Green** light status may in exceptional circumstances be considered by the Chair of CAQ between meetings, and a report made under Chair's Action at the next CAQ meeting

2.6.3 Reporting

The CAQ is responsible for ensuring that all areas of this Procedure have been complied with. At meetings of the CAQ, the **Learning Programmes Director** shall provide:

- 1) A summary of programmes in development for consideration by the Committee, each annotated according to the traffic light colour coding system. Only Programmes coded **Green** under all quality-related categories may proceed to the next stage of development.
- 2) Detailed reports on all programmes coded **Red**, at any time during the intervals between meetings of the CAQ.
- 3) The **Learning Programmes Director** shall be prepared to answer questions from CAQ referring to any of the procedures and documents referred to above.

2.7 Documentation

The following documents result from these procedures:

- 1) Learning programmes summary reviews
- 2) Learning programme project plans
- 3) Learning programme updates.*

* See Appendix D for the “Learning Programme Update” draft format (originally an unnumbered appendix to CAQ 04/04).

3. Stage 3: Audit and Review (Programme Evaluation, CAQ 04/05)

3.1 Purpose

UKeU Courses and Programmes are developed according to a Plan–Do–Audit&Review cycle. As the terms suggest, these relate to the Planning phase of the activity, which includes content procurement (Plan); the Design, Development and Presentation of the UKeU material (Do); and the Evaluation of performance and proposal for corrective action (Audit and Review). The outcomes of the Review then feed into the Planning process, and the cycle repeats. These activities are summarised in three stages:

- 1) Procurement and Planning
- 2) Design and Development
- 3) Evaluation (Audit and Review).

This document explains the Procedure adopted in the Third Stage: Evaluation (Audit and Review).

3.2 Scope

This Procedure should be applied to all UKeU **courses**: Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Continuing Professional Development (both Credit-bearing and Award-bearing), and **Public Good**.

3.3 References

A number of documents are relevant to this procedure: *

- 1) Companion Procedures for other aspects of the course development process:
 - Procedure 001: Procurement and Planning
 - Procedure 002: Design and Development.
- 2) The Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee of Academic Quality (CAQ), which may be found in Document CAQ 03/20.
- 3) eUniversity (Shadow) Committee for Academic Quality 2001/1 and 2001/2.
- 4) CAQ and its workings, CAQ 2001/16.

* See the footnotes to the corresponding material in Section 1 of this Report.

- 5) UKeU, Quality Standards Agreement (QSA), Schedules 1 & 2.

3.4 Definitions

[These have been moved to Section 0 of this Report.]

3.5 Procedure

3.5.1 Aims of the Procedure

CAQ monitoring ensures that courses provided under a UKeU banner do not bring UK Higher Education into disrepute as a result of poor standards or quality, and that, over time, courses show continuous improvement and quality enhancement.

To achieve this, procedures shall be in place:

- 1) To identify and report problems which have occurred during course delivery.
- 2) To supplement and check for consistency between the various data available on delivery and cohort experience.
- 3) To provide a basis for decisions on quality and standards.
- 4) To support the identification by the Proposer, with the help of UKeU, of actions necessary to improve quality by addressing any problems that occurred. This will include identifying responsibility for the action.
- 5) To support the Plan–Do–Audit&Review cycle by ensuring that appropriate action lists are produced and subsequently acted on.

3.5.2 Responsibilities

Responsibility for all aspects of academic quality and its assurance shall be with the Proposer which shall use its own procedures as much as possible. Each Proposer shall report to UKeU noting any problems that occurred (and the date) and suggesting remedies.

If the Proposer does not have a sufficiently robust process, responsibility for the procedure shall rest entirely with UKeU.

UKeU shall help the Proposer by producing and analysing standard monitoring data, including UKeU-administered student feedback data.*

* There are several interesting and still relevant CAQ papers about monitoring which it is hoped to publish in a later round; but the topic is out of scope for this Report.

3.5.3 Process

Delivery Problems

Events of immediate worry during delivery shall be handled by the Proposer with reference to UKeU if something goes badly wrong, or if data from the platform or complaints indicate that there is such a possibility. In such circumstances, the assigned **Learning Programme Manager** shall seek an immediate meeting with the Proposer to identify the problem and actions arising. This shall be recorded by the Learning Programmes Director and subsequently reported, normally through the main process below. If there are reasons for major action at this time because of a breakdown in process, the action will be approved by the Chair of the CAQ or his/her representative. A note of these events shall appear in the annual report of the course. If there are subject-specific issues, then a relevant reviewer will normally be appointed to advise.

Annual Evaluations

Each presentation of a course cohort shall be evaluated and a summary of the results, together with any resulting action plans, reported to CAQ by the **Learning Programmes Director**. CAQ, or a monitoring sub-body* will receive the reports, seeking further information and review or audit only where there are strong prima facie reasons for concern. In these cases it shall have access to primary sources and involve subject and technical experts.

1) Questions to the Proposer

A questionnaire that covers all aspects of course delivery and the internal quality assurance process shall be administered to the Proposer (see Appendix E).† The questionnaire shall be completed after the award meeting for the course has taken place and may involve assistance from the assigned Learning Programmes Manager.

For products and courses extending beyond a year, a questionnaire shall be completed for each year and/or cohort. For a modular scheme, a Proposer shall normally complete one questionnaire for each module offered, but can, if agreed with UKeU, choose to clump them together if there is little variation.

Should the Proposer answer affirmatively, as a result of its own QA, then, in the absence of any contrary evidence, it will be accepted by UKeU. Contrary evidence might come from:

- Student feedback/complaints/exit survey
- Recruitment, progression, and completion data
- UKeU own monitoring data

* Under the framework that set up CAQ, it is allowed to create sub-committees – see Clause 15 of Schedule 1 to the Quality Standards Agreement. Two subcommittees existed for some months.

† Originally Annex A of CAQ 04/05.

- Review documentation
- External examiner comments
- Reports from marketing agents
- Tutor monitoring/feedback data
- QAA and other external agency reports.

Should the Proposer answer negatively, then more detail will be requested by the Learning Programme Director, and actions agreed with UKeU reported to CAQ.

UKeU's Learning Programmes Director shall also answer a short standard set of questions for each course to help provide the triangulation (see Appendix E).

2) Student Exit Questionnaires

As well as on-course surveys, UKeU shall administer an exit survey of students using the UKeU platform if relevant. Some attempt will be made by both UKeU and the Proposer to ensure that a good response rate, better than, say 40%, is obtained and failure so to do will itself be a cause for concern to CAQ. Appendix F* lists a possible instrument.

Reporting

UKeU's Learning Programmes Director shall complete a Summary Report on the programme (Appendix G)[†] using traffic light reporting for each of the above (5.3.2). A **Green** shall indicate that the outcome is satisfactory, **Amber** that it gives some cause for concern, and **Red** that it is unsatisfactory. Any **Amber** or **Red** codings shall be explained, either on the report or in a separate addendum and shall have attached a plan for remedial action.

Presented with this evidence, CAQ shall take one of three actions:

- 1) It will accept that the presentation is repeated without any further changes.
- 2) It will accept that it proceed with the specified changes.
- 3) In extreme cases, it will seek further information, possibly instituting a review involving subject-based or technical expertise and the disclosure of basic documents.

3.6 Documentation

The following documents result from these procedures:

* Originally Annex B of CAQ 04/05.

† Originally Annex C of CAQ 04/05.

- 1) A completed **Quality Questionnaire** for each programme cohort
- 2) Completed **Student Exit Questionnaires** for each programme cohort
- 3) A Learning Programme Evaluation Summary.

4. CAQ Procedures 2002: Policy and Standards (CAQ 02/16)

[This material has been included since the “final” CAQ procedures discussed in 2004 were still in draft form and because (as they note) they assume a lot of background knowledge for their complete understanding. The paper that follows, originally entitled “eUniversity Policy and Standards: A guide for readers” was produced in June 2002 to provide an overview especially to newcomers of the CAQ quality management system for UKeU. (An earlier version of this paper was produced as CAQ 02/10.)

CAQ also produced other even more general papers on UKeU but none of these are included here – although one is included as Annex 1 to Report 01 “UKeU Overview”.]

4.1 Introduction

This document* supplements the guidance document “Programme Approval: a guide for HEIs”, which should be read alongside it.† It provides a checklist against which the reviewer can gauge a proposal.

A reviewer will be appointed by the CAQ and reports through a subgroup of it. The reviewer will typically be expert in the subject area of the proposal, and will have been recommended through an academic process.

The reasons for a UKeU quality procedure, distinct from that of the HEI, are outlined in that guide. The UKeU need not get involved where the HEI has perfectly adequate procedures and must not take responsibility for routine QA matters. Rather it must ensure that the HEI covers areas that are necessary to ensure efficient e-delivery, and that measures are in place to avoid UKeU, and thereby UK HE as a whole, coming into disrepute as a result of inadequate monitoring or escalation procedures, or poor production or modification.

Inevitably therefore the procedures and areas are a mixture of the technical (indeed some is just good computer science) and academic. To assist the reviewer, UKeU will make a number of technical experts available, either directly or through brokerage. These could be IT, standards, pedagogic, or administrative. These can be accessed through the Learning Programmes Manager (LPM) assigned to the course whose role is to help ensure the overall success of the programme, facilitating as necessary.

UKeU is committed to high quality delivery of high quality learning opportunities. The agreed approach is to rely on the institutional procedures as far as possible and not to replicate work done by either the Institution or the QAA. Accordingly, we need to establish a list of areas where we would expect institutions to have policies and standards.

* In other words, CAQ 02/16. Note also that CAQ 02/16 supersedes an earlier CAQ document, CAQ 02/10 of April 2002.

† See Annex 3 of this Report 11 for that material.

We would also expect them to have associated reporting and exception reporting standards. In addition HEIs will need to be prepared to share with our Monitoring and Research Committee* the results of these processes.

Where standards are lacking or considered inadequate, our role will be one of working with the institution, putting them in touch with other institutions and national bodies such as ILTHE,† to encourage the transfer and development within the institution of the relevant standards. The role of UKeU is to broker to enable HEIs to address the areas that need to be addressed. There is no intention of using the CAQ as a way of stopping courses.

Inevitably there are some areas where many universities will not yet have complete processes. The most likely ones are in topics that are new to them such as standards for delivery of distance learning materials to students, remote tutor monitoring, and technology standards. Some others will be unused to the concept of administrative aspects of their operation adhering to service levels and to open reporting. It is likely that we will have to work harder in these areas and rely in part on those HEIs with greater experience of distance learning and with a service culture.

Standards are put on both parties. Thus some of the standards will be for the platform and that will usually be the responsibility of UKeU.

What follows is a draft of the list of areas that we would expect to be covered. It relies on documents received from CAQ members and others. It will need further work and refinement to produce something similar to the Teaching Quality procedures document of an HEI, but *at section heading level only*. This will then be used as a checklist by those in subject committees looking at specific proposals.

One way of approaching the proposal, approval and production sections is to for the university to offer to the reviewer its quality procedures, perhaps with an index or map to the items listed. The reviewer can then readily and quickly assess the areas in need of attention or clarification and engage in dialogue or brokering to reach a conclusion.

In the case of annual monitoring, a possible way forward is for the UKeU course monitor to talk through the report with the course team at a suitable meeting. Again, further actions will be identified on both parties.

Reviewers will also have available the result of the HEI filling in the UKeU template at the proposal stage. This will include costs as well as much of the material required internally. (Costing of courses is in its infancy in many UK HEIs.)* Specifically covered will be:

* One of the two main subcommittees of CAQ.

† Now part of the Higher Education Academy (<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk>).

‡ At the time of writing, information on UK HE-related sites pertaining to costs of e-learning is not held systematically. For an introduction to the topic see the reports “The hidden costs of networked learning – the impact of a costing framework on educational practice” (<http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane99/papers/bacsichash.pdf>) and “Model for Evaluating the Institutional Costs and Benefits of

- How the proposal interacts with existing UKeU learning objects (at all granularities).
- Timescale of proposals including launch date and any lead times/criticalities /dependencies, cohorted/push-and-go/free* and cohort size information.
- Any key persons associated with the course and their continuing availability: any other special features (USPs).†
- Contact details.
- Method of ensuring appropriate staff are available in a timely manner.
- Realistic sizing of staff resource needed for production and delivery.
- The platform to be used and the sizing of the use.
- Accreditation proposed.
- Specification of tutor role/skills/knowledge and proposal as to how to acquire them.
- Tutor and other deliverer training materials required.
- Taster materials for students; “am I ready for” material requirements.
- Need for any pre-test materials to see whether student can matriculate.
- Methods, potential organizations/people to undertake, and costs of design, production and delivery including licenses for support material and tutor costs (including assessment costs).
- Any requirement for investment of capital by the UKeU.
- Marketing requirements as perceived by the HEI.
- Statement of ownership of Intellectual Property.
- Process for clearing third party rights.
- Statement on reusability and at what granularity.
- Proposed uptake and where it is proposed to offer the learning leading to a five year cost flow projection.

ICT Initiatives in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education” (ALT-J 2003, Volume 11 (2), http://www.predict.strath.ac.uk/projects/insight/documents/cb_paper.pdf).

* At the time this paper was written, a lot of jargon swirled round e-university circles. We think that “push-and-go” refers to a model of starting a course as soon as a cohort of minimum size has been formed. Google is silent on the matter.

† Unique Selling Propositions.

- Criteria for discontinuation and timescale and costs for disposal of students in progress.

The following areas will need to be looked at using an appropriate checklist.

4.2 Course/Module/Object Proposal and First Stage Approval

Internal Review Process

We should understand the nature and purpose of the internal review system. We should be looking for at least:

- Clearly defined title and brief description
- Clearly defined procedure involving review and response and formal approval
- Evidence of need, plus market analysis (this may have to come from UKeU)
- Rationale (Aims and Objectives etc)
- Outcomes of system
- Justified sizing in terms of credits and level
- Matriculation criteria: pre-requisites and co-requisites
- Learning outcomes identified and weighted
- Clear map to learning hours
- Transferable skills identified
- Assessments matched to learning outcomes
- Pedagogic model including methods of delivery, with any alternatives for cultural minorities and learners with disability
- Resources identified for both production and delivery, including those from outside the HEI
- Statement of any supporting material required and its medium and any licensing and related issues
- Tutorial model and sizing identified
- Feedback methodology
- Granularity of availability
- Awards for which the pieces can count for general and specific credit

- Lifespan and evaluation, review and update strategy
- Content (optional but inevitable with HEIs).

UKeU Procedures and Responsiveness (Targets on UKeU)

- Timescale on which UKeU will respond
- Selection and preparation of referees/reviewers
- Nature of UKeU response and feedback
- Resubmission criteria/timescales
- Time to produce draft contract
- Time to start the production process including appointment of monitor.

This examination and dialogue leads to first stage approval.

4.3 Course Production

Course Design

- Methodology and pedagogy: usually with some sort of tree-structured presentation
- Conformance to standards/templates (HEI or UKeU)
- Assessment design with criteria for success
- In agreement with proposal (e.g. in study hours) or loop
- Storyboard and “flow”: this should cover each learning object (oblet – for instance a piece of self directed Web-based learning, a threaded discussion, or the submission of an assignment) stating what it requires (for instance HTML pages with Shockwave plug-in or threaded discussion tool with access to a supporting third party website and a piece of posted material).

The actual design is another approval point in the CAQ process. Design will include aspects of the remaining sections in course production as well as the whole of this section. Design approval can be done for relatively small pieces.

*Technology**

- It is assumed that the “objects” in the design (e.g. a piece of assessment, threaded discussion etc.) will map onto those available on the platform. If the platform is the UKeU platform and this is not the case, then there will need to be some negotiation and this will be flagged. The platform will thus help enforce the UKeU standards. If the UKeU platform is not used then the support will nevertheless need to be assured.
- It is assumed that all that is required of the student is Internet connectivity and a browser that is either Netscape or Explorer, in version 4.0 or later in both cases.
- Otherwise it is assumed that the platform and production conform the Shareable Courseware Object Reference Module(SCORM). at an appropriate release (currently still 1.1). Note that this may not be fully possible and that development is ongoing. At the very least all development should support the SCORM API.
- SCORM currently includes the LOM from IEEE (and IMS metadata) and ARIADNE for metadata (description of the course). This is converging with others such as the Dublin Core and seems likely to be a genuine universal standard that we will adopt. It is however still volatile.
- The UKeU framework will lead to shared vocabularies and taxonomies on those using its platform and others. As far as possible these will interwork with others.
- Bindings for exchange/search and storage will be built up over time.
- Authentication and authorization/encryption services will be built into the platform as a set of available tools in line with emerging standard work. Sparta will be an allowable alternative as will others on own platforms.
- These tools will allow types of people and individuals to have different read/write/comment privileges in for instance threaded discussions.
- IMS LIP will be considered for learner profiles but no decision is yet made.
- Content management will be provided to standards as appropriate.
- The IMS Question and Test Interoperability (QTI) standard is now well established and will be adopted. A significant range of assessment oblets will be provided, perhaps by incorporation of some COTS package.[†]

* Those of a non-technical disposition may find this subsection on “Technology” heavy going. Others will know already to surf to <http://www.imsglobal.org>, <http://www.ieee.org> and <http://www.cetis.ac.uk>. No more will be said.

[†] COTS stands for “Commercial Off The Shelf”. The MCQ package from WebMCQ (now MCQ International) was chosen for this role. For more on the company see <http://www.webmcq.com/>.

- For resource discovery, the standard situation is still too volatile to have a clear view but this may change.
- For Enterprise work and interchange of data, flat file standards will initially be devised to allow interworking with HEI systems. They may also be used internally if an administrative module has been acquired on a “best of breed” basis.
- Usage logging, and audit trails, with time and date etc, will be available together with tools to allow their complex manipulation – for instance of a threaded discussion. This, for instance, will enable tutor and learner monitoring.
- Transcript/progress files will be supported.

Learning Materials

- Libraries of presentational frames in UKeU formats will be built up and made available on top of the platform.
- Preferred usages in HTML/XHTML will be drawn up to match the frames.
- Links from pages to other parts of the system will be supported (e.g. to a threaded discussion or email with an interface to be defined).
- Tutor training documentation and guides must be built into the process and linked appropriately.*

Culture and Disability, Markets

- At each stage it will be possible to access an alternative oblet or page or equivalent by means of a flag on either the type of learner, individual learner or the device or line speed.(e.g. slow lines cannot deliver video). Exploitation of this will be up to the producer.
- Presentational forms suitable for some cultures will eventually build up. In the meantime a guide will be produced (colours etc.).
- The UKeU system (portal etc) will have been tested with respect to these concerns.
- Separate views may also be needed to address particular markets (e.g. corporates or regions requiring different datasets, case studies or assessments).

Other Materials

- Method of access
-

* Tutor training material was created and it is hoped to release this in some future round.

- How does linkage with the materials work?
- If distributed on CD, DVD or paper then arrangements and timing for these
- Restrictions on licenses and what to do about them
- Any problems with accessibility to be identified
- Any involvement of a library needs to be assessed for risk
- Change control: if not in the hands of the HEI how will the main material be kept in line?

Assessment

- How is each learning outcome assessed?
- Are the methods/weights appropriate?
- Are the methods available on the platform?
- Authentication paradigm.
- Costs of assessment.
- Training/preparation for assessors
- Method of ensuring that assessors assess to comparable standards
- Deadlines/longstops for submission/ return
- Any requirement for physical exams needs to be identified and permissions obtained and invigilating/ venue organizing agencies identified
- Any alternative assessments for the same learning outcomes thus permitting learners with an impairment to demonstrate the outcome.

Validation and Testing

- How will basic QA be performed on the materials including links to third party materials?
- Editorial policy on production
- Testing strategy and its interaction with change control
- What will be done with legacy versions for resits etc.
- What conventions will be followed in layout and links

- How does the HEI external interact with the material and the performances?

The third CAQ point of approval is of the final material prior to its use. This will normally be done on a module by nodule basis.

4.4 Course Delivery

Matriculation and Enrolment

- Are the prerequisites clearly articulated in a form that allows students to be identified clearly in all territories and admitted in principle in at least 90% of cases?
- Are there targets for admitting a student, responding to a query, dealing with a problem, matriculation, assignment to a tutor etc?
- Have appropriate marketing materials been provided to agreed standards including a suitable online course description?
- Online student handbook to a UKeU template incorporating UKeU supplied materials.

Technology

- Standards for availability
- 7x24 support
- Backup and disaster recovery
- Security
- Essentially Sun technical standards
- Remedial action/escalation procedures.

Approval of Suitability of Local Partners

- Method of approval of partners for the various functions (these might include some of tutor provision, assessment support, local accreditation, distribution of materials, trouble shooting)
- Targets for time taken to approve a tutor etc.
- Monitoring of performance
- Remedial action taken if needed.

Tutor Responsiveness

- Time to respond to requests from students
- Accuracy of response
- Intelligibility of response
- Usefulness of response
- Knowledge and understanding of the technology and its use
- Remedial action and trigger for it.

Tutor Preparation and Updating

- In e-tutoring
- In the specific platform
- In the subject material
- In the supporting material
- In the subject generally.

Assessment

- Timing
- Extensions
- Autofeedback/dummy submission procedures if relevant
- Performance of students
- Deadline reminders/ procedures
- Monitoring of markers
- Training and updating for assessors
- Identification and handling of rogue markers
- Appropriate use of tools for marking
- Reminding markers of deadlines
- Return of work to students

- Quality of feedback
- Aggregation
- Grading/Borderline handling
- Alternative assessments
- Discretionary procedures
- Appeals.

Assignment of Credit

- Clearly defined procedures
- Deadlines
- Appeals
- Special circumstances.

Administration

- Procedures for acceptance, change of status, withdrawal etc.
- Procedures for recording assessment results
- Financial handling procedures
- Service levels for responsiveness
- Handling student queries
- Statistical analyses.

Interchange of Data

- Use of standard fields for student, assessment and financial data
- Any special requirements
- Clear deadlines for events.

Change Control

- Clear procedures for all changes to the system including interactions with LAS and LMS*
- Handling of changes to course material, regular and exceptional, e.g. when a mistake is found
- Version control procedures
- Handling run-off students on old versions.

Reporting and Escalation

- Clear procedures for monitoring service levels from tutors, partners, own staff, platform, administrative functionality in all facets of the above sections during delivery.
- Methods of obtaining and responding to student feedback
- A method of liaison with other stakeholders such as corporate customers, UKeU etc.
- Timeliness of analysis of data
- Procedures to be followed when standards or service levels are not met
- Reporting on the outcomes of such procedures.

4.5 Granting of Awards

APL/APEL (if Relevant)

- Clear procedures based on best practice in the sector
- Authentication and security
- Service levels for time taken to accredit learning for general and special credit at a given level.

Procedures

- Clearly articulated rules for an award, intelligible to the student, based on a credit system in line with current best practice

* Learning Administration System and Learning Management System.

- Methods for handling concessionary evidence
- Handling of any associated permissions, e.g. informing a professional body
- Appeals
- Service levels for making an award.

Administration

- Handling of relevant learner records
- Dispatch of any paper certificates etc.
- Handling of appeals
- DP considerations
- Reporting to stakeholders.

Each year a review of the monitoring report will be discussed between the HEI and UKeU and any agreed changes will be approved and reported to the CAQ structure. It will cover the delivery. The granting of awards will have its own separate process and QA, if relevant.

5. Membership and Terms of Reference of CAQ (CAQ 03/20)

Background

CAQ was originally constituted by HEFCE in 2001 as a “shadow” committee with original terms and conditions laid down in a series of documents as “eUniversity (shadow) Committee for Academic Quality” (CAQ/2001/1, CAQ/2001//2) and, most importantly, “CAQ and its workings” (CAQ 2001/6). The “Quality Standards Agreement” (QSA), Schedules 1 and 2 define most of the processes. A copy of the QSA is available on request and will be supplied to new committee members as they join.*

Composition

The above sets the composition as “no fewer than nine and not more than 15 appointed by UKeU, subject to the approval of e Learning” (the Holding Company). Officers of UKeU and e Learning are present by invitation. Appointments are for not less than two or more than five years, and members are to be chosen for their “expertise, experience and reputation in matters falling within the Committee’s remit”. One of the committee is designated Chair by UKeU, subject to the approval of e Learning. (My view[†] is that this should also be signed off, at least informally, by the Committee.)

Expectations

Collectively, these documents outline what is expected of the CAQ, but, in general, they do not state is or was required of the individual members. They are specific about the role of UKeU’s Learning Programmes Director who is responsible for:

- Preparation of papers
- Follow up of requests
- Organization of the actual servicing.

They are also specific about the Chair’s Duties, which, in addition to chairing meetings includes the right to receive notice of, attend and speak at meeting of UKeU’s members or Boards of Directors.

For the committee at large, the key phrase in CAQ 01/6 is “The CAQ can be thought of as having many tasks in common with a university Learning and Teaching Committee in both procedure formulation and monitoring areas”.

It is anticipated that the CAQ as a whole will:

* See Section 6 and Annex 2.

[†] This is the author of CAQ 03/20 speaking.

- Define procedures for programme acceptance, approval, and review.
- Define any standards to which programmes must conform.
- Apply the procedures and standards to programmes as they are developed.
- Ensure the definition of service levels for programmes during delivery in, for instance, responsiveness of tutorial support.
- Define any standards for the platform and related performance.
- Define the procedures and collect statistics for monitoring and research purposes.
- Consider and report on monitoring data.
- Define actions as a result for further investigation and report.

In view of the current review of our QA process, this may need to be changed; but for the moment, it follows that the basic roles of any individual member are:

- To attend meetings. The schedule makes non-attendance at meetings (no matter how many) for a continuous period of more than 12 months grounds for dismissal.*
- To assist with any or all of the above.

In addition, provision is made for sub-committees to be set up as appropriate to further the Committee's work; thus we should add:

- Individual members should be prepared to administer and serve on subcommittees as appropriate. It was originally proposed that there would be subcommittees for Policy and Standards, Monitoring and Research and four related to specific clusters of learning programmes in Business, Health, IT and Other.

Meetings

The Quality Standards Agreement mandates that CAQ meets not less than three times each year and more if the committee thinks fit. There is a set of fairly standard committee protocols defined in the QSA, Schedule 1.[†]

* The word "dismissal" may sound severe to some but this policy is increasingly the case in committees of agencies such as JISC.

[†] See Subsection 6.2.

Remuneration

All reasonable out-of-pocket expenses are reclaimed using a Travel Claim form available from the PA to the Learning Programmes Director.*

Initially, the CAQ was remunerated by an annual flat fee of £1200. To act as an incentive to attend, UKeU in 2002 changed this to a £450 day rate. This has the disadvantage that it does not reward work done out of committee. CAQ would like to suggest a mixed system to start with effective from the next financial year in April 2004:

- 1) Annual honorarium for membership: £450
- 2) Day attendance: £200.†

Each day claim should be supported by an appropriate invoice. Members should do likewise for the annual honorarium.

* CAQ was set up to be part of UKeU (not e Learning) and thus all CAQ members were in a financial sense consultants to UKeU from whom the fees and expenses were paid. This arrangement also implied that all IPR of CAQ resided in UKeU except for the IPR initially generated by HEFCE when they first set up CAQ.

† These rates were set by those well aware of HEFCE guidelines and are in line with what is paid for similar HEFCE-type work.

6. The Legal Framework for CAQ (the License and the Quality Standards Agreement)*

84. In its quality assurance role, HoldCo held the licences through which UKeU could deliver HE courses from particular Universities and theoretically could withdraw such a licence if required. Along with the Committee for Academic Quality which HoldCo set up, this hold on licences gave it effective control over quality assurance.

“UK e-University”, House of Commons Education and Skills Committee,
(<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmmeduski/205/205.pdf>)

[As the above quote notes, the legal framework for CAQ is derived from (1) the License Agreement between e Learning and UKeU, which specifies that “there shall be a CAQ” and provides overall rules, and (2) the Quality Standards Agreement between e Learning and UKeU, which specifies the workings of CAQ in much more detail. These are excerpted below.]

6.1 License Agreement Excerpts on CAQ

[Section 4 is first quoted in full.]

4. QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE

4.1 eUniversities[†] shall ensure that:

4.1.1 the Licensed Services at all times conform to and comply with the Quality Standards Agreement;

4.1.2 the Licensed Services are performed by appropriately experienced qualified and trained personnel with all due skill care and diligence; and

4.1.3 eUniversities shall discharge its obligations in relation to the Licensed Services with all due skill care and diligence.

4.2 Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Quality Standards Agreement shall include provision for:

4.2.1 eUniversities to establish a Committee for Academic Quality;

4.2.2 the membership and method of appointment of members of the Committee for Academic Quality, including the right of e Learning to approve such membership;

* There is an interesting question as to where the IPR resides in these two documents. We have taken the pragmatic decision that the IPR was held by e Learning, at least for the purposes of setting a running head for this section.

† The phrase “eUniversities” was used as the short-form name of the company whose full name was “UK eUniversities Worldwide Limited” in legal documents of the 2001 era. The abbreviation “UKeU” was not in use at that time.

- 4.2.3 the role, responsibilities and activities of the Committee for Academic Quality and its relationship to any other applicable quality assurance requirements;
- 4.2.4 the Committee for Academic Quality to specify the standards to be met by programmes and services before they are offered by eUniversities, which standards shall be adopted by eUniversities and subject to the approval of e Learning;
- 4.2.5 ensuring that the Committee for Academic Quality can carry out its responsibilities efficiently and effectively and that no alternative means for assuring quality are established by eUniversities, and for the avoidance of doubt the Committee for Academic Quality shall provide quality assurance services whether or not any other quality standards imposed by any third party might apply but eUniversities may take account of any other such standards which may be relevant;
- 4.2.6 eUniversities to provide to e Learning an annual report on the discharge of its responsibilities, together with such supplementary information or other reports as e Learning may from time to time reasonably require.
- 4.3 Nothing in this Agreement shall affect eUniversities' ability to carry out activities other than the Licensed Services, but for the avoidance of doubt eUniversities may not carry out such activities under the e Learning Marks and eUniversities shall not associate such activities with the Licensed Services or carry out any such activity which does or is likely to reduce the goodwill associated with the e Learning Marks.

[Now follow some excerpts from Section 10.]

10. TERM AND TERMINATION

- 10.1 This Agreement shall come into force on the Commencement Date and shall remain in full force and effect until terminated pursuant to this Clause 10.
- 10.2 Subject to Clause 10.4 and 10.5, either party (the "Initiating Party") may terminate this Agreement with immediate effect by written notice to the other party (the "Other Party") on or at any time after the occurrence of an event specified in Clause 10.3 in relation to the Other Party.
- 10.3 The events are:
 - 10.3.1 the Other Party being in material breach of any of its obligations under this Agreement and, if the breach is capable of remedy, failing to remedy the breach within 60 days starting on the day after receipt of written notice from the Initiating Party giving full details of the breach and requiring the Other Party to remedy or procure the remedy of the breach and stating that a failure to remedy the breach may give rise to a termination under this clause; for the purpose of this clause a breach is capable of remedy if time is not of the essence in performance of the obligation and if the party in breach can comply with the obligation within the 60 day period;

[Subclauses 10.3.2–10.3.5 inclusive are omitted].

- 10.4 Where the alleged breach under clause 10.3.1 is a failure to adhere to the Quality Standards, e Learning shall give eUniversities not less than six weeks notice in writing specifying the failure in question and requiring eUniversities to draw up an effective action plan to prevent such a failure in the future. If eUniversities fails to draw up such an action plan, or having drawn up such an action plan fails to implement it timeously* and effectively, such a failure shall be a breach of this Agreement, but, without prejudice to any other remedy which may be available, a failure to adhere to the Quality Standards shall not otherwise give rise to a right to terminate this Agreement.

6.2 The Quality Standards Agreement

[Excerpts from the QSA Main Text.]

2. PRINCIPAL OBLIGATIONS

- 2.1 In consideration of the obligations entered into under this and the Licence Agreement, the parties shall have the following principal obligations:
- 2.1.1 eUniversities shall establish and maintain the Committee.
- 2.1.2 The Committee shall carry out the functions ascribed to it under this Agreement.
- 2.1.3 Save where the Committee has failed to observe Schedule 3 eUniversities shall act in accordance with the decisions of the Committee as to whether any programme or service has satisfied the Quality Standards given under this Agreement, and shall give reasons to the Committee and to e Learning when it does not so act.
- 2.1.4 e Learning shall carry out the functions ascribed to it under this Agreement.
- 2.2 In this Agreement any reference to an obligation or function of the Committee shall include an obligation on the part of eUniversities to ensure that the Committee is able to and does carry out the obligation or function in question.
- ### *3. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMITTEE*
- 3.1 The Committee shall be established within three months of the Commencement Date.

* The word “timeously” is an adverb of Scottish origin which has crept into English law. It means “in good time; sufficiently early”. It is less urgent than “promptly”.

- 3.2 The constitution of the Committee shall be as set out in Schedule 1. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by eUniversities subject to the prior written approval of e Learning, given or withheld in its reasonably exercised discretion.
- 3.3 eUniversities and e Learning will use their best endeavours to ensure that the members of the Committee shall be suitably experienced and skilled having regard to the functions of the Committee under this Agreement.
- 3.4 Members of the Committee shall serve in accordance with the terms and conditions of their appointment, which shall be determined by eUniversities subject to the confirmation of e Learning in its reasonably exercised discretion. Members of the Committee shall be appointed for not less than two and not more than five year terms, and shall be eligible for reappointment. Members of the Committee shall only be liable to be removed from the Committee before the expiry of their term of appointment for such causes as may be stated in the terms and conditions of their appointment, which causes, for the avoidance of doubt, shall be subject to the approval of e Learning. Any such removal shall be at the instigation of eUniversities and subject to the approval of e Learning which shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed.
- 3.5 All of the expenses of establishing and running the Committee, including the reasonable remuneration of the members of the Committee, shall be borne by eUniversities. eUniversities shall provide whatever facilities are reasonably requested by the Committee for the exercise of its functions.
- 3.6 The Chair of the Committee shall have the right to receive notice of, to attend and speak at, but not to vote at meetings of eUniversities' members or Board of Directors or any committee of the Board of Directors of eUniversities. The Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Learning Programmes of eUniversities shall have the right to attend meetings of the Committee.

4. *FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE*

- 4.1 Subject to eUniversities observing the provisions of clause 3.5 above the Committee shall carry out the functions set out in Schedule 2.
- 4.2 In carrying out the functions set out in Schedule 2 the Committee shall observe the standards set out in Schedule 3.

5. *EUNIVERSITIES' RESPONSIBILITIES*

- 5.1 eUniversities shall ensure that the Licensed Services are certified by the Committee as complying with the Quality Standards and shall not provide any Licensed Services which are not so certified.
- 5.2 eUniversities shall cooperate with the Committee in its discharge of the functions set out in Schedule 2.

6. *E LEARNING'S RIGHTS*

- 6.1 The Committee shall draw up Quality Standards for the Licensed Services, which shall be subject to the approvals of e Learning and eUniversities. The Committee shall draw up protocols which the Committee shall follow in determining whether the Licensed Services comply with the Quality Standards, and shall submit the Quality protocols to e Learning and to eUniversities for their approval. No Quality Standards or protocols shall be valid or used if e Learning or eUniversities (acting promptly) notifies the Committee that they are not adequate.
- 6.2 The protocols referred to in clause 6.1 above shall, so far as reasonably possible, provide for the Committee to evaluate and approve Licensed Services and proposals for Licensed Services in stages and/or conditionally or in principle, so that the Committee may express an opinion on any Licensed Service or proposal for a Licensed Service, on which eUniversities may rely, in advance of eUniversities incurring the majority of the costs of creating a new Licensed Service.
- 6.3 Save in the case of manifest error or unreasonableness and without prejudice to clause 2.1.3 e Learning shall accept any determination of the Committee reached when carrying out its functions under Schedule 2.
- 6.4 The Committee shall submit an annual report to eUniversities on its functions, detailing in particular the Quality Standards applied, the operation of the protocols referred to in clause 6.1 above, and the judgements reached by the Committee during the preceding year, which report shall also be submitted to e Learning. The report shall include details of any instance where eUniversities did not act in accordance with the decisions of the Committee given under this Agreement, and shall give the reasons eUniversities chose not to do so. e Learning shall be entitled to satisfy itself that the Quality Standards and the protocols which it has approved have been applied by the Committee.

Schedule 1: CAQ Constitution

The constitution of the Committee shall be as follows:

Composition

1. The Committee shall consist of no fewer than nine and no more than fifteen members. Members of the Committee shall be appointed by eUniversities, subject to the approval of eLearning.* Members of the Committee shall be chosen for their expertise, experience and reputation in matters falling within the Committee's remit. At least two thirds of the members of the Committee shall be drawn from the members of eLearning ("HEI members").

* This, and the same one three lines lower, is a rare example of a typo in such agreements. Of course, "eLearning" should read "e Learning".

2. Members of the Committee shall serve in accordance with the terms and conditions of their appointment, which shall be determined by eUniversities subject to the confirmation of e Learning in its reasonably exercised discretion. Members of the Committee shall be appointed for not less than two and not more than five year terms, and shall be eligible for reappointment.
3. A member of the Committee shall immediately cease to be a member if:
 - 3.1 he is declared bankrupt or makes any arrangement or composition with his creditors generally;
 - 3.2 he becomes of unsound mind or is similarly incapable of fulfilling the role of member
 - 3.3 without prior permission, he fails to attend any meeting of the Committee or of any of its subcommittees for a continuous period in excess of six months.
 - 3.4 he resigns by written notice delivered to eUniversities.
4. Members shall otherwise only be liable to be removed from the Committee before the expiry of their term of appointment for such causes as may be stated in the terms and conditions of their appointment, which causes shall be subject to the approval of e Learning. Any such removal shall also be subject to the approval of e Learning which shall not be unreasonably withheld or delayed.
5. One of the members of the Committee shall be designated the Chair of the committee by eUniversities (subject to the approval of e Learning). The Chair of the Committee shall nominate one or more members of the Committee to be deputy chairs.
6. The Committee may appoint assessors to assist it with the discharge of any of its functions. Assessors shall have an advisory role only.

Meetings

7. The Committee shall meet together at least three times a year (and more frequently as it thinks fit) for the dispatch of business and may adjourn and regulate its meetings as it thinks fit.*
8. The Chair of the Committee may, and on receipt of written requests from not less than one third of the members of the Committee shall, convene a meeting of the Committee in addition to any meetings scheduled by the Committee itself under paragraph 7 above on giving members not less than three weeks notice in writing. A member of the Committee who is absent from the United Kingdom shall only be entitled to receive notice of any meeting if he has provided the Chair of the Committee with an address for service within the United Kingdom.

* The committee diary establishes that this happened (see subsection .2 of the Introduction).

9. No meeting of the Committee shall be quorate unless half of the members of the Committee are in attendance and half of the members in attendance are HEI members. A member shall be treated as being in attendance notwithstanding that he is not physically present if he is in communication with the meeting by voice of video communication link provided that that link is so arranged that it is possible for the member to hear and be heard by, or as the case may be see and be seen by, each other person participating in the meeting, and the term “meeting” shall be construed accordingly.
10. The chair of the Committee shall preside at meetings of the committee, or in his absence any deputy chair shall so preside, but if the chair and any deputy chairs are absent from or unwilling to preside over any meeting then the members present shall choose one from their number to preside over that meeting.
11. Questions arising at any meeting shall be resolved by discussion and consensus wherever possible, but if this is not possible then the question will be decided by a majority of votes, each member present having one vote. In the even of an equality of votes the chair shall not have a second or casting vote and the resolution shall not be passed.
12. A resolution in writing signed by all of the members of the Committee entitled to receive notice of a meeting of the Committee shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Committee duly convened and constituted.
13. All acts done bona fide by any meeting of the Committee or any person acting on the Committee’s behalf shall be valid and effectual notwithstanding the fact that it may later be discovered that there was some defect in the appointment or continuance in office of any member of the Committee or that the transmission of notice of the meeting given to any member or members entitled to receive notice failed for any reason outside the control and knowledge of the person giving notice.
14. The Committee shall cause proper minutes to be made of all proceedings of the Committee, and such minutes, if signed by the chair of the meeting in question, shall be sufficient evidence of the matters stated therein.

Delegation

15. The Committee may delegate any of its functions to subcommittees established pursuant to a resolution of the Committee. Such subcommittees shall consist of such persons as the Committee thinks fit, provided that at least half of the members of any subcommittee shall be members of the Committee. Any subcommittee so formed shall conform to all regulations imposed upon it by the Committee, and to the provisions of this Schedule applied (*mutatis mutandis*) to the subcommittee as they apply to the Committee, but shall otherwise be free to regulate its own procedure as it thinks fit. The acts and proceedings of any subcommittee shall be fully reported to the Committee.

Amendment

16. This schedule may be amended by resolution of two thirds of the members of the Committee entitled to receive notice of any meeting of the Committee, provided that no such amendment shall have effect unless approved in writing by e Learning.

Schedule 2: CAQ Functions

The functions of the Committee are:

1. To draw up and (subject to approval by e Learning and eUniversities under clause 6.1 above) publish Quality Standards for the Licensed Services. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Quality Standards may include without limitation standards for programme syllabus, admission criteria, admission procedures, content, presentation, pedagogical methodologies, student support, tutorial support, standards of academic achievement, record keeping, assessment methods, and learning outcomes.
2. To draw up, in accordance with clause 6, and publish protocols criteria and procedures under which any programme or service which it is proposed should form part of the Licensed Services shall be considered for certification by the Committee as complying with the Quality Standards.
3. To* consider and advise on the academic development strategy for eUniversities which eUniversities shall have prepared as part of its overall business plan. The strategy shall be adopted by eUniversities after consultation with e Learning. The strategy shall consider the overall balance of the Licensed Services being provided by eUniversities, in terms of the range of subjects, levels and methods of study, and how it should be developed over a five year period in pursuance of the objectives of the eUniversities and in accordance with the terms of the Licence Agreement.
4. To consider any programme or service or proposal for any programme or service submitted to it by eUniversities for certification as complying with the Quality Standards, to consider such certification in accordance with the criteria and procedures which it has published in that regard, and to certify those programmes and services which do meet the Quality Standards for the stated lifetime of that programme or service. In accordance with clause 6, such certification may be given in stages and/or conditionally or in principle.
5. To advise eUniversities on the reasons for the failure of any programme or service to comply with the Quality Standards

* This was originally “to” but we have “invisibly mended” that typo, despite our usual policy on legal documents, on the grounds that it is not germane to the sense of the document.

6. To keep Quality Standards under review and (subject approval by e Learning and eUniversities under clause 6.1 above and on appropriate notice) to revise and update Quality Standards as the Committee thinks fit, and to reconsider and reassess any programmes or services certified as having met the Quality Standards in their earlier form once the lifetime of those programmes or services in that form has expired. The introduction of revised and updated Quality Standards shall have due regard to any need to plan for and introduce changes to the Licensed Services as a result, and no revision of the Quality Standards shall have retrospective effect.
7. To keep quality protocols under review and (subject to approval by e Learning and eUniversities under clause 6.1 above and on appropriate notice) to revise and update quality protocols as the Committee thinks fit. The introduction of revised and updated quality protocols shall have due regard to any need to plan for and introduce changes to the Licensed Services as a result, and no revision of the quality protocols shall have retrospective effect.
8. To advise eUniversities as it may request or as seems desirable to the Committee on matters relating to the Quality Standards.
9. To draw up and publish a timetable for review of those programmes or services certified as complying with the Quality Standards, and criteria and procedures which will apply to such reviews.
10. To carry out reviews under paragraph 9 above, to continue to certify those programmes or services which continue to comply with the Quality Standards, and to cease to certify those programmes which do not.
11. To collect and to monitor data relating to the quality of the Licensed Services as e Learning may request of the eUniversities, and to supply the eUniversities with such data to transmit to e Learning.
12. To make such reports to e Learning via the eUniversities as e Learning may from time to time request from the eUniversities, including a report not less than once each year on the exercise by the Committee of its functions under this Schedule whether requested or not, and to carry out such investigations and to make such recommendations on matters connected with its functions under this Schedule as e Learning may from time to time require of the eUniversities.
13. To carry out such other functions as the parties may from time to time agree in writing.

Schedule 3: CAQ Standards of Behaviour

In exercising its functions under Schedule 2 the Committee shall adhere to the following standards:

1. **Quality:** The Committee shall reflect and contribute to the high quality and standards generally accepted in the United Kingdom higher education sector and shall do nothing to the detriment of the reputation of that sector.

2. **Probity:** The Committee shall act in accordance with the highest standards of probity and integrity in public life.
3. **Independence:** The Committee shall have regard only to relevant matters in carrying out its functions.
4. **Inclusiveness:** The Committee shall consider the interests of all stakeholders in exercising its functions, including eUniversities and its shareholders, actual and prospective students, the higher education community, and actual and prospective employers of students.
5. **Responsiveness:** The Committee shall conduct itself in a businesslike manner and shall not unnecessarily delay in the exercise of any of its functions.
6. **Academic Freedoms:** The Committee shall respect, uphold and promote academic freedom and shall have due regard to the need for scholars, students and others to be free to put forward unpopular ideas and to challenge received wisdom.*
7. **Transparency:** The Committee shall be able to demonstrate its adherence to these standards and shall conduct its affairs in as open and transparent a fashion as possible.†

* This is one of the few intrusions of academic values into a basically commercial operation.

† Standards of transparency are increasing as time goes on. The NHS University had open board meetings with public agendas, papers and minutes, with a minimum of closed sessions. CAQ meetings were not open and its documents not public; however, its general documents were circulated to many HEIs.

7. The Early Views of HEFCE (Circular Letter 02/01)

[The following material in this section is taken verbatim from HEFCE Circular Letter 02/01 Annex A (see http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/circlelets/2001/cl02_01a.htm). It is reproduced here, with the permission of HEFCE, so that this Report is self-contained.

The language used is slightly different from the legal material since this Annex was written in early 2001 – in particular, at that time the name “UK eUniversities Worldwide Limited” had not yet been invented and the interim name used for what became UKeU was “the e-University”. Thus for simplicity and consistency with the legal agreements (License and Quality Standards Agreement) in this Report we have replaced “the e-University” by “eUniversities” in the text below.

Note that the material in this Annex never had any legal force as such – of course much of it was incorporated into the Quality Standards Agreement later.]

The Role and Remit of the Committee for Academic Quality

1. The role of the committee is to ensure that:

- a. The learning and teaching quality and standards of eUniversities are fully consistent with those expected of the best of UK higher education.
- b. eUniversities’ programmes make the best use of e-learning technologies to provide learners and other customers of eUniversities with learning experiences that are excellent in terms of fitness for purpose, and meet their learning objectives.
- c. eUniversities’ activities thereby maintain and enhance UK higher education’s global reputation.
- d. Those who award qualifications are assured of the quality of the materials and delivery of learning secured by eUniversities.
- e. Those who provide learning programmes, materials and other services are assured of the quality of the operations to which they contribute.

2. e-Learning has the potential to enhance the richness and reach of higher education. However, much e-learning currently provided does not meet learners’ hopes and expectations as well as it could, because it does not fully exploit the opportunities of the medium. The quality of technological transmission can also be disappointing. eUniversities aims to be a leader in the design and delivery of high quality e-learning. Its approach to setting and monitoring quality and standards must reflect this.

3. eUniversities aims to create and broker new markets. e-Learning is likely to appeal to different types of learners from those attracted to campus-based provision. We expect that it will attract global corporate and overseas customers. These learners may require different types of learning, with particular emphasis on professional and post-graduate courses leading to qualifications, as well as learning for personal interest or as components of training which does not lead to a qualification. Again, eUniversi-

ties' quality and standards processes must be appropriate to this range of learners with different expectations and objectives.

4. As discussed further below, eUniversities will not, at least initially, award qualifications in its own right. Its quality and standards processes will therefore need to respect the roles and responsibilities of organisations which do award qualifications.

5. eUniversities' processes should be rigorous, but also speedy to reflect the nature and requirements of e-learning.

The Remit of the Committee

6. The members of the committee will be appointed by eUniversities.* But the terms of the licence will require those appointments to be made in consultation with, and with the approval of, e Learning.† This reflects the committee's significance in ensuring that eUniversities' operations conform with the terms of the licence and associated agreements. The staff who support the committee will be employees of eUniversities, and the committee will report on a day to day basis to the board of eUniversities. However, the committee will also be required to provide an annual report direct to the board of e Learning, on how it has fulfilled its role in discharging the terms of the licence.

7. The remit of the committee will be:

- a. To determine the academic standards to be adopted by eUniversities, and advise on the technological and service standards in so far as they directly relate to the learning objectives and the quality of the students' learning experience.
- b. To determine the procedures for approving, and then oversee the approval of:
 - i. Learning materials and access to other learning resources.
 - ii. Support services related to learning objectives including:
 - tutorial support, either on-line or face to face, when this is secured by eUniversities to complement learning materials
 - 'navigation' and other advisory services for students
 - examinations and other student assessment services that are provided by eUniversities (for example, e-based systems or physical locations to support examinations), as a service to whichever HE institution awards the qualification.
- c. To determine the standards for testing, monitoring and evaluating the learning experience (while recognising that the committee is not the awarding body, and that it will be for the awarding body to determine the forms of assessment appropriate to the award of its qualification).

* The original phrasing here was "the operating company".

† The original phrasing was "the holding company".

- d. To advise on the learning and teaching aspects of eUniversities' strategy.
- e. To appoint specialist advisers and expert panels as necessary to assist it in its work.
- f. To oversee the work of eUniversities staff servicing the committee and the executive functions within their remit.
- g. To prepare an initial report on the standards and procedures that the committee intends to adopt for approval by e Learning, and an annual report on its operations thereafter for transmission to e Learning, as the primary means of safeguarding the terms of eUniversities' licence.

8. We recognise that UK HEIs already have extensive internal procedures for assuring the quality and standards of existing programmes, and that it is essential not to duplicate quality assurance procedures that have already been sufficiently applied. At the same time, it cannot be assumed that procedures designed to secure quality and standards in campus-based, traditional HE programmes will suit e-learning programmes and services. All programmes and services delivered through eUniversities must be excellent in their fitness for purpose. The committee will need to consider how far it can derive the necessary assurance from HEIs that they already have suitable procedures in place, and the nature of any consequent exemptions that might be offered. At the other end of the scale, the procedures for approving quality and standards need to provide full assurance where materials and services are offered for approval by bodies other than UK HEIs – both overseas HEIs and non-HE organisations such as companies providing training materials.

Awarding Qualifications

9. As noted above, eUniversities will not award qualifications in its own right, but draw on the qualification awarding powers of existing HEIs.

10. Where an HEI provides most or all of the content and supporting services of a programme, the presumption is that it would also award the qualification on successful completion. But this may not always be so. There may be cases where an HEI provides much or all of the content, but does not wish to take on the wider role involved in awarding the qualification as well. We also expect that, over time, programmes could be constructed from an increasing range of modules drawn from various HEIs, with a range of supporting services also drawn from various HEIs, so that there is no one institution with primary ownership of the programme.*

11. One further role of the Committee for Academic Quality will therefore be to consider the options for a university, or perhaps a small number of universities, to award qualifications where the originating HEI does not wish to do so, or where there is no primary originator. That would in some respects be similar to the validation function carried out now by a number of universities for courses in other institutions. The role would suit a university which already has extensive experience of validating modular

* In the short life of UKeU, this modality did not have time to evolve very far.

programmes, and so is familiar with methods for identifying the credit value of different modules, and securing suitable progression and coherence through the assembly of modules into programmes which represent a high quality academic experience for students. The student navigators would then work closely with that university, within a pre-agreed framework. They would advise students on appropriate module combinations, and put forward proposals to the university for modular programmes for individual students or groups of students, which the university would be invited to accredit.*

Relationship to the work of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)

12. The committee's role is internal to eUniversities, carrying out functions which are in many respects analogous to those of a senate or academic board within a traditional university, although translated to the requirements of e-learning.

13. The QAA's central concern with the award of qualifications will relate to those HEIs that award qualifications for successful completion of programmes delivered through eUniversities. As now, the QAA will consider how each HEI discharges that function and ensures appropriate standards for the qualifications it awards for eUniversities' programmes, as part of standard institution-level review. eUniversities will not itself be a subscriber to the QAA. The QAA has published non-mandatory guidelines on distance learning, but at present these have no formal status in QAA review programmes.†

14. The QAA's subject review programme is focused on HE teaching programmes supported by public funds and delivered in the UK, and therefore will not apply to the

* Within UKeU and CAQ circles, there were discussions about who might take on the role of "accreditor of last resort" – a phrase which was later felt to be "unfortunate" (even though it is used in the accreditation literature) and replaced by "preferred accreditor". This debate seems to have left no trace on the Web, or in CAQ papers in the electronic archive. However, in the UKeU electronic archive, there a briefing note of April 2002 to HEIs noting that "Responding to market requirements for flexibility to take bespoke combinations, we are looking to have Preferred Accreditors of Last Resort which would agree to determine credit values and acceptable combinations of different modules from different providers" and a typically cryptic allusion to this issue appeared in the standard UKeU presentation to HEIs in that era. Little internally seems to have been done to bring this about – indeed, elsewhere it is noted in July 2002 that UKeU "will consider arranging an Accreditor of Last Resort (e.g. [name given]) but there is no urgency." Having said that, there were at least two notes of meetings with universities and consortia on this topic.

In the UK outside UKeU, it was widely rumoured that one particular large university with prior experience in the area might take on this role. Interestingly, the concept may now be catching on with Foundation Degrees.

In Europe, this topic also raises interesting points for HEIs in the European Higher Education Area where credit mobility across national boundaries is desirable but remains a contentious issue. For recent information on this see the Web site of the May 2005 Bergen meeting on the Bologna process (<http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no>).

† These are the "Guidelines on the quality assurance of distance learning – March 1999" at <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeofpractice/distancelearning/contents.asp>. They have now been replaced by a new Section 2 of the "Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education", entitled "Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning) – September 2004" – for full details see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section2/>.

great majority of eUniversities programmes.* Where eUniversities programmes are publicly funded for UK students, the QAA's standard approach would apply to the awarding body and provider.

15. Two of the key principles of the QAA's new quality assurance framework to be introduced from January 2002 are that it will draw as far as possible on evidence generated by each HEI's own internal procedures, and that the intensity of QAA scrutiny will be related to the institution's track record and the confidence which can be placed in those internal procedures. The Committee for Academic Quality is the key mechanism through which that confidence will be achieved in relation to e-University programmes. The QAA expects to view eUniversities as a collaborative partner of the institution that awards the qualification. It will be for the awarding institution to satisfy itself that the quality and standards of programmes are consistent with the award of its qualifications, including satisfying itself that the precepts of the QAA code of practice on collaborative provision are being met.

* It is not clear whether this sentence was a prediction or an opinion. In fact, most eUniversities programmes were available (even if not actively sold) to students in the UK, and some were funded under "Public Good" rules. The working assumption within UKeU seems to have been that QAA precepts would apply to all such, not only the public good ones.

8. Pre-History of the CAQ and the License (2000)*

Committee for Academic Quality

The original PWC Report *Business model for the e-University* describes what was to become the CAQ in paragraphs 61–67. The italics are ours:

61. All the above criteria would be underpinned by the e-U's insistence on excellence for all products and services which it made available. It would not be the source of materials which would provide the assurance of excellence, but rather the fact that they had been subject to an e-U check in a way which was globally recognised as ensuring excellence. In fact, we suggest that any source organisation (HEI, public or private), or a group of individuals, should be able to use the e-U's platform to provide modules (or services) as long as they satisfied the design criteria and this requirement for excellence – whether or not they were products in which the e-U had an investment stake.
62. To achieve widespread recognition of excellence, the e-U needs to have a process which would be nationally and internationally recognised as providing such a guarantee. We suggest that national recognition would best be achieved through a *process designed and operated by a limited number of individuals selected on the basis of a national reputation for their experience and expertise in all aspects of teaching and learning*. For the international recognition, we suggest that each such individuals should also have the backing of their own university which, in turn, should have a global reputation for excellence in its own right – excellence again defined widely as before.
63. We suggest that *universities should be invited to nominate individuals who satisfy the above criteria to form a committee for academic quality*. In making nomination(s), each university would need to agree that, if its nominee(s) were accepted, it would lend its name to support the process for excellence that the committee subsequently designed. By being 'associate brands', these would help the initial credibility of the e-U brand itself. We trust that this would only be needed in the first few years until the e-U had established its own reputation for excellence; the committee for academic quality would then evolve into a committee of the e-U itself.
64. *The task of the committee for academic quality would be to design and then operate the mechanisms to assure excellence for each module*. The process would need to be speedy: it will already take some while to develop new modules, and further delays should be minimised.
65. As the e-U concept is not an electronic version of a conventional university, *the committee for academic quality would need to develop a quality assurance process for the learning modules based on a new paradigm*. We would expect the main approach to be to quality assure the process used by suppliers themselves when developing the modules – for which the committee might define a quality management process. For example, the committee might require evidence of active contributions from subject, pedagogical and learning technology specialists. We outline a possible approach to this in Annex 2.
66. In addition to specifying an active quality management process for the production of modules, the committee for academic quality would conduct a peer review check of the final product. This could be done by means of a small expert panel set up for each product, reporting to the committee, and consisting of, say, five people chosen for their appropriate expertise (along the lines of the RAE expert panels, but including the full range of appropriate expertise, not only in the subject matter). This final review would be elec-

* This is a gloss by Paul Bacsich, written in June 2005, on the PWC material from October 2000.

tronic and should take no more than 2-3 weeks. Subsequent evaluation of the pedagogical effectiveness of learning programmes (and modules) in practice could only follow from longitudinal data on their use and results, and from student feedback. The e-U might commission work to help with such evaluation.

67. In summary, we think that excellence can only be achieved with coherence if there are strong central guidelines; without such guidelines, there is a risk of degenerating into chaos. To achieve sufficient coherence, we think the e-U should specify the design criteria within which potential modules would need to be developed, covering the above points. That is: all courses and programmes would be structured into smaller modules, each of which would be subsequently available for incorporation into other learning routes; as much interactive tutorial support as possible should be incorporated within the module design; each module should be assessable, with an indication of the ways in which assessments could be made; modules should be designed so that they could be received electronically by the learner and with a technological compatibility set by the e-U's definition of its learning environment.

Some further reading on the early history of the “quality” issue can be found in the e-University Compendium Volume 1. In particular Chapter One has an overview (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/learningandteaching/eUniCompendium_chap01.doc):

Chapter 3 has a very useful subsection, 7.4 “Methods for Assuring Quality”, in terms of various options for the e-University (in terms of whether or not it could award its own degrees) with good references to additional reading. This subsection draws heavily on US experience which certainly at the time of writing that report, and arguably even now, is in advance of UK procedures – as was noted in chapter 2 on quality and the role of the QAA.

However, the QAA has now issued a consultative draft (January 2004) on “Collaborative provision, and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning)”¹. In this context reference should also be made to the magisterial report “Quality Assurance & Borderless Higher Education: finding pathways through the maze” by Robin Middlehurst and Carolyn Campbell, assistant director (international) at QAA. “This report provides an authoritative overview of the problems and issues raised in relation to quality assurance in an increasingly borderless terrain. A mapping of the myriad of existing and developing quality assurance activities is provided and emerging trends identified.”²

Chapter 8 points out in its “conclusions” section 7 that “the significantly different approaches to accreditation issues taken by GUA, USQ and U21 point to a critical issue for the UK e-University” and has a useful discussion of the issues. Chapter 12 on University of Maryland University College has a whole subsection (3.4) on the accreditation issues around UMUC.

The License

The PWC Report also covers the more general issue of how the License is supposed to operate.

133. The terms of the licence and related legal documents will require very careful drafting and preparation. They will need to strike a balance to ensure that the HE sector's objectives are met whilst not hampering the operating company's ability to act in a dynamic way, responding quickly and effectively to market forces. The licence will need to cover issues such as the establishment, role and operation of the *committee for academic quality*, representation of the holding company in the operating company, how the company should address its non-commercial objectives and dispute resolution. Details on operational strategy should not be covered in the licence...

134. The duration of the licence will also need to be decided. Again a balance needs to be struck between, on the one hand, ensuring that the process of awarding and renewal of the licence has a real meaning and, on the other, setting a term which is sufficiently attractive

to partners to commit investment to the venture. We suggest that a licence period of between 10 and 20 years should achieve this.

135. The success of the structure depends substantially on the effectiveness of the licence. It needs to satisfy the holding company as to its control over the name and UK HE brand, whilst leaving enough operational flexibility to be attractive to the private sector at the operating level.*

136. In order to support the board and to take care of the administration of the company, the holding company may need some limited administrative support, perhaps one or two staff, but the company infrastructure and costs should be minimal. Such administrative support could be provided from within the operating company.†

Notes

[These were original footnotes in the text.]

¹ See <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/public/COP/cprovis/draft/contents.htm>.

² The quotation is taken from <http://www.obhe.ac.uk/products/reports/>. The actual OBHE report is Issue 17, August 2003, at <http://www.obhe.ac.uk/products/reports/pdf/August2003.pdf> (for subscribers).

* This paragraph from the PWC Report seems to ignore the existence of the Education UK brand (<http://www.educationuk.org>) that was established in January 2000 via the British Council as part of the Prime Minister's Initiative to recruit students "to" the UK. (For the history of this brand, readers should consult <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ecs/brand/history/>.) Note that the creation of the Education UK brand was based on the "Brand Report" done as early as September 1999 – see <http://www.britishcouncil.org/ecs/brand/report199909/index.htm>.) Some would argue that UKeU should have reached an early accommodation with this relatively well established brand identity and leveraged on it – the "to" in the phrase "recruiting students to the UK" could have been interpreted in an "e" sense, or (later thinking) a blended or "1+2" sense.

† In fact, the Holding Company appointed its own Secretary and did not rely on UKeU support, but otherwise its costs were kept minimal.

Appendix A: Academic Referee's Report (from CAQ 04/03)

Programme title:

Institution:

Reviewer:

The questions in this review guide have been chosen to help us with our decision to develop this proposal. Not all of the questions will apply to every programme and so please ignore those that are obviously irrelevant. We would be grateful if you would answer the others as fully as possible, giving reasons for your views.

Although the intention is that you concentrate on the academic standing of the proposal in Section (a), we at UKeU conduct our own 'techno-pedagogic review', in which we assess the practical and teaching capabilities of the proposers to develop their proposal into an eLearning offering. This is attached.

We will not inform the institution of your name without your specific permission. Unless we hear to the contrary, we assume you do not object to your comments being passed on anonymously, in full, in part, or in edited form.

Proposal Review

There is no set format for your review, but it would be useful if you could ensure that you answer the questions given in each of the Sections (a)–(d). In every case, please justify your answer.

a) Academic Standing

- 1) Is the programme title appropriate?
- 2) Is the rationale convincing?
- 3) Are the learning outcomes identified sufficiently clearly?
- 4) Is the delivery method proposed appropriate?
- 5) Is the arrangement of topics logical and appropriate to the target market?
- 6) Are there any obvious omissions? What are they?
- 7) Is the synopsis full enough for you to feel reasonably confident of your assessment of its potential?

8) Does the institution have a good track record in this field?

b) Academic Competition

9) Can you estimate the size of the potential market? Is it expanding or contracting?

10) Do you agree with the proposer's market assessment for this programme? Are the student number projections realistic?

11) Are there any competing programmes in this area known to you?

12) Does this programme offer significant advantages or differences over these competing programmes? What are they?

c) Format and Delivery

13) Are the outcomes clear and logical in terms of credits, levels, and learning hours?

14) Is the proposed quality assurance regime adequate?

15) Are the proposed progression routes realistic?

16) Can you comment on any proposed delivery or other collaborative partners?

17) Are the resources identified for both production and delivery, including those from outside the HEI, appropriate to deliver this programme?

18) Do you feel the supporting material that will be provided is appropriate?

19) Is the proposed tutorial model appropriate to the subject and target audience?

20) Are the proposed development costs realistic?

21) Does the assessment strategy match the learning outcomes, subject matter, and the proposed delivery method?

22) Is the proposed reviewing and updating strategy appropriate?

d) Conclusion

23) Taking everything into consideration do you recommend that we should develop this programme?

24) Are there any changes you would recommend?

Appendix B: Techno-Pedagogic Review (from CAQ 04/03)

IN CONFIDENCE

Institution									
Course:									
Proposed go-live date									
Reviewer:									
<i>Date of review</i>									
<i>RECOMMENDATION</i> <small>(proceed, revise)</small>									
	Primary Question	Prompt	HEI response						
1	What information source(s) is this review based on?	Information Source	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Interview</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Document</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self Assessment</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Interview		Document		Self Assessment	
Interview									
Document									
Self Assessment									
2	Has the development plan been discussed with a learning technologist or Programme Project manager?								
3	Is the course based on a currently delivered course or is it entirely new?	If it is based upon a current course what is the relationship the new has with the old?							
4	What are the minimum entry requirements to the course?	Academic							
		Experience							
		Language							
5	Does the course enjoy the support of the institution?	Institutionally supported?							
		Part of institutional plans?							
6	Is the course being developed with a partner?	On what basis will consortia partnerships operate and for how long?							

7	Does the course offer membership to a professional body or a professional qualification?	Are the professional bodies part of the course planning/ validation?		
8	What model of e-pedagogy does the proposal appear to conform to?			
9	What is the course structure?	Linear credit or self-contained modules		
		Credits		
		Level		
10	Summarise the overall course structure	Programme specification		
11	How is student-tutor communication managed?	Communication methods, email, conferencing etc		
		Group size?		
		Indicative activities	Discussion forums	
			Presentations	
			Group activities	
Support requirements				
12	What is the approach to content development? i.e. will some of the programme go live whilst other modules are under development?			

13	What is the proposed mix of media in the course?	Record the form and formats proposed		
		List the approximate proportions of each media type	Audiographic	
			Video	
			Text	
			Diagram/Pictorial	
			Etc	
Comments				
14	Is there a requirement for work-based training?	Yes		
		No		
15		If yes, how this will be managed?		
16	What types of formative assessment are suggested?	MCQ		
		Assignment		
		Presentation		
		Group work		
		Examination (how managed?)		
		Other		
17	What types of summative assessment are suggested?	MCQ		
		Assignment		
		Presentation		
		Group work		
		Examination (how managed?)		
		Other		
18	How is the "content" to be sourced?	External		
		Internal		
19	Is there a development partnership with a content development company?	Who, and on what terms?		
20	What percentage of the content already exists?			
21	What percentage of the course content will be updated each year?			
22	Are there course elements that will need frequent update?			

23	How much staff time is needed to develop the course? What is the basis of these estimates?	Developer	
		Tutor	
		Education specialists	
		Librarian and Professional	
		Administrators	
		Other	
24	How much staff time is needed to run the course? What is the basis of these estimates?	Developer	
		Tutor	
		Education specialists	
		Librarian and Professional	
		Administrators	
		Other	
25	How much staff time is needed to maintain the course? What is the basis of these estimates?	Developer	
		Tutor	
		Education specialists	
		Librarian and Professional	
		Administrators	
		Other	
26	Is appropriate staff development in place? (e.g. tutor training)		
27	Are the proposers aware of the QAA <i>Guidance on Distance Learning</i> ?		
28	How and when will institutional accreditation/validation take place?		
29	Has a project development plan been submitted?	Yes	
		No	
30	What are the 5 major risks to programme delivery? How can these be managed and by whom?		

31	Have rights issues (IPR/copyright; patient consent; materials generated by students) been considered?		
32	Reviewers concerns and comments for attention Academic Reviewer and for reporting		

Appendix C: Learning Programme Summary Report to CAQ (from CAQ 04/03)

REPORT TO CAQ		Ref:	Date:			
Product title:						
Product type:						
Proposer:			Contact:			
FACTOR	EVIDENCE	Signed off by:	DATE	STATUS		
				✓	✓	✓
Standing of Proposer						
QA Status of Proposal						
Academic Review						
Techno-Pedagogic Review						
Market Analysis						
Business Plan						
COMMENT FOR CAQ FROM LEARNING PROGRAMMES			DATE	SIGNATURE		
APPROVAL						
Approval by CAQ:						
Approval by Chair's Action:						

Appendix D: Learning Programme Update (from CAQ 04/04)

LEARNING PROGRAMME UPDATE (Report to CAQ)		Ref:	
Proposer:			
Project Plan			Date
Issue			Date
Proposed Action/Actions taken and result			
APPROVAL			DATE
Approval by CAQ:			
Approval by Chair's Action:			

Appendix E: CAQ Quality Questionnaire (from CAQ 04/05)

This questionnaire is to be completed for each cohort (instance, presentation) taking a UKeU¹ award. Sections 1 and 2 require some basic data and some fields can be filled in by UKeU on behalf of the Proposer. All subsequent sections merely require *Yes/No* responses.

Section 1 Basic Data

- 1) Proposer.....
- 2) Name of award.....
- 3) Cohort start date.....
- 4) Cohort finish date.....
- 5) Date of award meeting.....
- 6) Number admitted to presentation.....
- 7) Number starting presentation.....
- 8) Number completing presentation
- 9) Number of Home and EU FTEs² generated by the presentation.....
- 10) Number of overseas FTEs generated by the presentation

Section 2 Overall Judgement

For an explanation of the expectation of the scope and coverage of the processes of annual monitoring and periodic review, refer to QAA's Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 7, in particular precepts 7 and 8 and their associated guidance.

- 11) What was the date of the last report of annual monitoring of this programme?.....
- 12) What was the date of the last report of periodic review that included this programme?
- 13) What was the date of the last report of any external review that included this programme?

14) Indicate any particular strengths of the programme emerging from the monitoring and/or internal or external review, including those emerging from the reports of the external examiner(s) and from student evaluation of the presentation

.....

15) Indicate any weaknesses of the programme emerging from the monitoring and/or internal or external review, including those emerging from the reports of the external examiner(s) and from student evaluation of the presentation

.....

16) In the light of the outcomes of annual monitoring and/or periodic or external review, are you able to confirm that the academic standard of the award to which this programme leads satisfies the qualification descriptor of the level of the award as defined in the “*Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*” or in the “*Framework for higher education qualifications in Scotland*” as appropriate? Y/N

17) In the light of the outcomes of annual monitoring and/or periodic or external review, are you able to confirm that the academic quality of this course satisfies your institution’s criteria for acceptable quality of provision for a programme leading to an award of the institution? Y/N

Section 3 Advertising and Recruitment

18) The institution has satisfied itself that the course was fairly and accurately advertised by UKeU Y/N

19) There were no upheld complaints about misinformation on any professional exemptions or qualifications, or licenses to practice associated with the course Y/N

20) Recruitment and admission processes were open and fair Y/N

21) There were no major difficulties with recruitment and admission Y/N

22) Students met the entry requirements specified for the programme Y/N

Section 4 Organisation and Administration

23) The flow of data between UKeU and the Proposer did not compromise the smooth running of the presentation Y/N

- 24) There were no difficulties in informing students of any changes to schedules, deadlines, tutors etc taking part during the presentation Y/N
- 25) The award meeting had the appropriate information for its needs Y/N

Section 5 Delivery of Learning

- 26) Entry standards were appropriate Y/N
- 27) Student induction materials were timely, accurate and useful Y/N
- 28) The materials for the course were fully available when required Y/N
- 29) The materials are up-to-date and remain relevant Y/N
- 30) Non tutorial support and advice was made available to students Y/N

Section 6 Platforms and Environments Used on the Course

- 31) All platforms used in delivery conformed to the UKeU service levels laid down for availability, serviceability and reliability Y/N
- 32) The platforms/environments supported the successful delivery of all the learning objects in the presentation Y/N
- 33) There were no substantial upheld complaints from the students about the platform performance Y/N
- 34) The platforms delivered the reports and other administrative data needed for the smooth running of the presentation Y/N

Section 7 Tutor Performance

- 35) All tutors were appropriately prepared for their work Y/N
- 36) Feedback on tutors was sought and was positive for each tutor Y/N
- 37) Feedback from tutors on the working of the presentation was sought Y/N
- 38) Feedback from tutors identified no serious problems Y/N
- 39) Feedback from students on tutors was acted on Y/N

Section 8 Assessment

- 40) Assessments for the presentation as delivered were in line with the learning outcomes and their relative weightings Y/N

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 41) Assessments were conducted fairly, with any off-line markers identified and appropriately handled | Y/N |
| 42) Assessments showed no bias between tutorial groups | Y/N |
| 43) There was no evidence of substantial plagiarism or cheating | Y/N |
| 44) There were no successful appeals against assessments | Y/N |
| 45) A formal minuted meeting, attended by external(s), decided on the award of credit and overall awards for the presentation or programme | Y/N |
| 46) The meeting was conducted in accordance with the quality procedures of the awarding agency | Y/N |

Section 9 External Examiner's Report:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 47) The external examiner reported that the award was fair and raised no matters of significant concern | Y/N |
| 48) The external examiner reported that standards were in line with those elsewhere | Y/N |
| 49) The external examiner reported that student performance was in line with that in comparable awards | Y/N |
| 50) The external examiner was happy for the programme to continue in its present form for a further cohort | Y/N |

Section 10 Student Feedback

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 51) Student feedback was analysed and acted on | Y/N |
| 52) The CAQ/UKeU terminal/exit questionnaire was administered and achieved a response rate of at least 70% of the cohort starting the presentation | Y/N |

Section 11 Standards and Access

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 53) The learning objects in the course showed no bias that would infringe the Equal Opportunity policy of the Proposer | Y/N |
| 54) Alternative learning objects needed were appropriately available for students with disability | Y/N |
| 55) The materials of the course comply with W3C Web Accessibility Guidelines Priority 1 and Priority 2 | Y/N |

- 56) The materials of the course comply with W3C Web Accessibility Guidelines Priority 3 (see <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>) Y/N
- 57) There have been no disputes about ownership of materials in the course or legality of use in any territories Y/N
- 58) Escalation procedures, within the HEI or at UKeU, were not triggered during the delivery of the presentation Y/N
- 59) There have been no adverse comments in any relevant internal or external review by an accrediting body or professional body Y/N

Section 12 Previous Action Plans/Initial Audit Plans

If there has been a previous cohort there will be an action plan arising on which this section is based. Otherwise there will have been actions arising from the initial review of procedures undertaken as part of getting the course initially approved. The actions to be addressed will be entered by UKeU before dispatching the questionnaire, along with some of the base data.

- 60) Action 1 for previous plan:
- 61) The action was taken as agreed Y/N
- 62) The action was successful in addressing the problem Y/N

Additional Questions for UKeU

- 1) There was no need for substantive intervention during the running of the presentation Y/N
- 2) There is nothing in the UKeU reports that indicates concern Y/N
- 3) The progression/ retention data are in line with UKeU expectations Y/N
- 4) The flow of data between the Proposer and UKeU was essentially timely and did not compromise the smooth running of the presentation Y/N
- 5) Recruitment and retention is not viewed by UKeU as a problem in this or immediately following cohorts Y/N
- 6) There are no reports or websites (including TQI) that lead to causes of concern Y/N
- 7) There is no evidence of poor tutor performance, not covered in their report Y/N
- 8) There is no evidence for problems in delivery of the e-learning, not covered in their report Y/N

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 9) The platforms used in delivery met appropriate standards. | Y/N |
| 10) The local agents are happy with this course and can advertise and support it appropriately | Y/N |
| 11) The final meeting with the Proposer ran smoothly and identified an action plan that is acceptable to UKeU | Y/N |
| 12) The responses from the Proposer to the questionnaire are consistent with all the information available to UKeU | Y/N |
| 13) The CAQ exit questionnaire has been administered and got a return rate in excess of 70% | Y/N |
| 14) The results of the exit questionnaire are appended | Y/N |
| 15) There are no concerns about the marketing of this course | Y/N |
| 16) There are no areas of conflict between the Proposer and UKeU local agents | Y/N |
| 17) All items of previous cohorts' action lists have been addressed in this delivery | Y/N |

Notes (not part of original form)

¹ In the original version the phrase "UKeUniversities" was used. This has no official status thus has been replaced by the phrase "UKeU" used in the majority of UKeU documents.

² FTEs = Full Time Equivalent (student numbers).

Appendix F: Student Exit Questionnaire (from CAQ 04/05)

This questionnaire asks for your views about a number of aspects of the teaching, assessment, and support provided on your recent UKeU course. Please answer the questions in terms of the course as a whole. (By **course**, we mean the totality of your studies. Please try to reflect your **general** experience of the course, rather than that on specific pieces of it.

For each statement, show whether you agree or disagree by putting an x in the **one** box which best reflects your personal view.

1 Means that you definitely agree	4 Means that you mostly disagree
2 Means that you mostly agree	5 Means that you definitely disagree
3 Means that you are neutral; or cannot give a definite answer	n/a Statement does not apply

Advertising and Recruitment

	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
The advertising of the course was fair and accurate	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Any professional exemptions or qualifications, or licences to practice associated with the course were clear to me	<input type="checkbox"/>					
It was clear which parts of the course were part of the programme supplied by the UK HE Institution, and which were optional	<input type="checkbox"/>					
It was clear what award I would get and who would award it	<input type="checkbox"/>					
It was clear what payments were required and when	<input type="checkbox"/>					

The assessment on my course/workload

There was a good mix of types of assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The criteria to be used in marking were clear in advance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Assessment arrangements and marking were fair	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Assessment tasks were bunched towards the end of a module/course	<input type="checkbox"/>					
There was too much work to get through	<input type="checkbox"/>					
It was clear what standard was required in assessed work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
How my final grade was calculated was clear	<input type="checkbox"/>					
There was far too much reading to do	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Knowledge and skills

I feel confident in the subject knowledge I acquired	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course developed my problem solving skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course sharpened my analytic skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course helped me develop my ability to work in a team	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course improved my communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course helped me develop the ability to manage my own work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course helped me to present myself with confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>					
As a result of the course, I feel confident in tackling unfamiliar problems	<input type="checkbox"/>					
There were sufficient opportunities to apply the theoretical knowledge I acquired to practical situations	<input type="checkbox"/>					

Course organisation and management						
	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
The course was well-organised and ran smoothly	<input type="checkbox"/>					
A document explaining what was in the course was available early in the course.	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I had no reason to complain about anything	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course enabled me to pursue my academic interests	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I was kept informed of any changes in an efficient timely fashion	<input type="checkbox"/>					
It was clear what I had to do if something went wrong	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I was always handled efficiently and with courtesy	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Tutors/Support and advice						
I received helpful feedback from tutors about my progress on the course	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I had detailed feedback on my work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I found other students helped me understand the course	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I got prompt feedback to my questions/ work	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I was happy with the overall tutorial environment	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My tutor seemed to understand my problems	<input type="checkbox"/>					
My tutor seemed to understand the course very well	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Over the course as a whole, I received sufficient support and advice with my studies	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Course/resources						
Course materials (paper based and online) were useful	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I had no difficulty in getting access to the course	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Tutors prepared their teaching thoroughly	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The course was intellectually stimulating	<input type="checkbox"/>					
The materials were well prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I made connections between different parts of the course as it proceeded	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of the course	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Overall, I feel the course was a good investment	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I would recommend the course to a friend	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Looking back on the experience, what do you consider to have been the best and the worst aspects?						
Best:						
Worst:						

Appendix G: Learning Programme Presentation Evaluation Summary (from CAQ 04/05)

REPORT TO CAQ		Ref:	Date:			
Product title:						
Product type:						
			Contact:			
FACTOR	ISSUES	Signed off by:	DATE	STATUS		
				✓	✓	✓
Basic Data						
Overall Judgment						
Advertising and Recruitment						
Organisation and Administration						
Delivery of e-Learning						
Platform and Environments used on the presentation						
Tutor Performance						
Assessments						

External Examiner's Report						
Student Feedback						
Standards and Access						
Previous Action Plans?						
UKeU comments						
Student Exit Questionnaires and response rate?						
Issues arising from Exit Questionnaires for CAQ attention						
Action Plans						
APPROVAL						
Approval by CAQ:						
Approval by Chair's Action:						

Appendix H: Initial Proposal Template (from CAQ 02/21)

Partnership Proposal

Institutions and contact details

Lead Institution:
Other Institutions:

Primary Contact:

Address:

Tel:

E-mail:

Fax:

**Support from institutions – to be signed by the
head of the lead institution or her/his authorised representative**

Authorisation signature:

Name (print):

Position in institution:

Date:

Outline of Partnership Proposals

Programme: Summarise the educational aims, pedagogic methods, and content coverage in up to 2500 words. Indicate any third party supporting resources required.

Level and name of Programme: Include qualification aims and credit rating. (For collaborative bids, state which institution will award final qualifications.)

Start date: For recruitment of first students.

Other Collaborative Partners (if appropriate): Indicate what roles each partner will have in contributing to the collaboration and is it an existing consortium? (Partners need not necessarily be UK HEIs.)

Demand for the Programme: Provide any evidence to support the likely student numbers.

Programme differentiation: Highlight positioning in relation to competitors in the UK and around the world. Include any named individuals who are key to this.

Costings: Summarise briefly your view of development and delivery costs of the programmes indicating the development investments required from the eUniversities.

Technical specification (if appropriate): Summarise the extent and nature of e-learning of any of the course that currently exists.

Appendix I: Annual Report of CAQ to e Learning, 2002–03

This is an edited version of the non-confidential parts of CAQ 03/15. As usual all names of individuals are omitted and no specific information about HEIs is given.

Composition

The Committee was established under terms defined in the License and related Quality Standards Agreement (QSA).*

[names of members omitted]

Committee members are remunerated by UKeU on a per-attendance basis and the Chair attracts an honorarium. To date meetings have been held three times in each academic year (October, February and June).

Currently UKeU is reviewing the composition of the Committee in relationship to the attendance desiderata mandated by the Quality Standards Agreement.

It is with enormous regret that we record the sudden and untimely death of the first Chair of the Committee.

Quality Standards Applied

In its first full year of operation the Committee has overseen the application of standards and a quality assurance process summarised in CAQ/02/18 *Programme approval*. This has not been easy.

Operation of the Protocols

First stage approval using external referees before contract has proved controversial. Institutions argue that this replicates their existing processes that are in turn audited by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), gives a risk of ‘double jeopardy’, and can greatly slow the progress to contract. Referees have not been easy to find and, by and large, their reports have been less than satisfactory. In an attempt to streamline this process, HEIs have been asked to nominate referees, to provide copies of their QA Process documents and, if ready, proof that proposed programmes have been correctly validated by each HEI’s own internal processes.

Similarly, in practice it has proved impossible to separate *Design* from *Production Approval*. As yet we have insufficient experience on which to assess the suggested *Monitoring* and *Evaluation* stages. Many of the difficulties have been the result of the suggested direct involvement, in an *executive* capacity, of CAQ members, or of sub-committees of the same. This is a role for which the committee is not well constituted.

* See Section 6 of this Report.

These difficulties have been recognised. At CAQ on 5 February 2003 minor revisions to the process were suggested and on 25 June 2003 three sub-committees were established to develop a revised process. This will pay regard to the need to concentrate on the eLearning aspects of the offerings, will not duplicate individual HEI's own processes, and will comply with the published recommendations of the QAA in its *Code of Practice* (most obviously, the section on *Collaborative Provision*) and the *Guidelines on Distance Learning*.*

An unanticipated difficulty that CAQ has yet to resolve lies with learning programmes such as those selected jointly with HEFCE under the Public Good initiative, those under the HEFCE eChina initiative, or those that already exist and are being delivered by HEIs but which are being taken into partnership with UKeU, for which no obvious need for further first stage quality assurance exists. Similar problems exist in the application of the process to CPD and similar short programmes developed by HEIs but accredited by some professional institution.

Liaison with QAA has been maintained by a QAA member's membership of CAQ and by a UKeU senior manager's membership of a QAA Expert Panel working on revisions of both the above *Code* and *Guidelines*.

Judgements reached by the Committee

[table of 16 courses from 12 HEIs or consortia omitted]

The above Table lists the existing contracted programmes and contracted autumn launch programmes that have been formally presented to CAQ. Remaining contracted programmes will be reviewed by CAQ at its meeting on 8 October 2003. There are some undesirable gaps in this, where UKeU has contracted subject to subsequent CAQ approval. Programmes from three more institutions are being processed, with the hope that this is completed in time for the 8 October 2003 meeting.

Other Issues

In keeping with its planned functions (Schedule 2 of the QSA), CAQ has undertaken other work related to quality standards.

a) Review of Programme Delivery

CAQ/03/08 *Initial Student Reactions to the UKeU Learning Environment on one course* (25 June 2003) dealt with the results of an early questionnaire survey of students following one course. Mixed reactions, from 'very good' to 'bad' were reported, with most adverse comment relating to the forum facilities provided in UKeU's Learning Environment.† It was also reported that feedback at the 'oblet' level has been less useful, partly because of its voluntary nature but also because of faults in imple-

* The outcomes of this process are described in Sections 1 to 3 of this Report.

† The forum facilities were based on the Jive product. There were strong opinions among experts outside UKeU that Jive had less functionality than the products it was supposed to replace.

mentation. These are being addressed. CAQ agreed that alternative forms and levels feedback are necessary.

b) Pedagogic Review of UKeU's Learning Environment

Over the year CAQ has maintained a small expert panel, chaired by a senior e-learning expert, to provide a structured pedagogic review of the UKeU platform. Two meetings have been held, with useful feedback on the UKeU Learning Environment being obtained. The full report of the panel is available.*

c) Building Capacity

A repeated concern has been the evident difficulty that proposers find in developing programme specifications for e-learning and then managing any resulting development.† Together with a lack of capacity in the system in instructional design, these form major blockages in the development of partnerships. CAQ has suggested that UKeU should try to give HEIs more help at the programme specification stage, possibly by workshops on how to develop a proposal and manage it to completion.

* This is out of scope for Reports 01–12.

† This problem was uncovered by UKeU but is not specific to it. The HEFCE e-Learning Strategy aims to address this problem, among others.