statement of the rationale for the combination should accompany the programme specifications for each subject.

25 Where appropriate, brief factual explanations may also be provided of:

- curricular structures, options and pathways provided in the subject(s) being reviewed, including details of any applicable modular scheme;

- any relationship with a collaborating institution, for example if a programme is provided jointly, or is franchised.

Each explanation should not exceed 500 words in length.

Annex D - Programme Specifications

What are programme specifications?

1 In a programme specification a teaching team sets out clearly and concisely:

- the intended learning outcomes of the programme;

- the teaching and learning methods that enable learners to achieve these outcomes and the assessment methods used to demonstrate their achievement;

- the relationship of the programme and its study elements to the qualifications framework.

2 Programme specifications provide information to a range of stakeholders, including students, prospective students and employers. They also promote a professional dialogue within teaching teams and subject communities about how these outcomes are represented in academic standards and how teaching and assessment strategies enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated.

3 Programme specifications use the term 'outcomes' to explain learning intentions rather than the more traditional use of 'aims and objectives' because the concept of an outcome is more closely linked to the learning and assessment process.

Outcomes-based learning

4 Reduced to its simplest form, an outcomes-based approach to learning has three components:

- an explicit statement of learning intent expressed as outcomes that reflect aims and values;

- the process to enable the outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated (curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment and support methods);

- the criteria for judging achievement of the intended outcomes.

5 Programme specifications encourage academic staff to identify the outcomes from their programmes and present these as concise statements of what a *typical learner* will have learnt if s/he has satisfied the requirements for an award. The process of creating a programme specification also encourages academic staff to think critically about the way the outcomes are achieved. This requires careful and systematic analysis of the curriculum, teaching and assessment methods.

6 Programme specifications cannot by themselves explain the standards (of achievement or performance) that students will reach collectively or individually at different stages of a programme. Some of the ways in which performance or attainment can be conveyed include:

- level descriptors that describe the characteristics of learning expected at each stage of programme;

- general and specific assessment criteria that discriminate between differing achievement when student work is assessed;

- examples of assessed student work that embody the standards of learning being sought;

- transcripts that provide a summary record of learning and achievement;

- personal learning records created and maintained by students and providing evidence of, and commentary on, their own learning and achievement.

What do programme specifications describe?

7 In constructing programme specifications an assumption is made that a set of outcomes can be identified for any curriculum or learning experience. The more opportunities there are for choice within the curriculum the more difficult it may be to define the knowledge-based outcomes. However, other types of outcome are likely to be generic to a subject field regardless of what is actually studied.

8 Where a programme has been designed to integrate two or more subjects, with intended outcomes that reflect the integrated nature of study, a separate specification of the integrated programme is appropriate. Where subject elements are combined, as in a joint honours programme, a separate full programme specification may not be needed; but there should be a short statement of the rationale for the combination.

Information content and format

9 All programme specifications should include a set of core information that makes explicit the intended outcomes, in terms of knowledge and understanding, skills, and other attributes. · Programme specifications may include further information about, for example, learning support.

10 Institutions can create programme specifications in either template or open text format. A series of templates to aid construction is available on the Agency's web site.

Determining the outcomes

11 Determining the outcomes for a programme is an important institutional responsibility, but there are a number of sources of information that curriculum designers should refer to when developing outcome statements, such as:

- institutional policies on, for example, the general skills of communication, literacy, numeracy, the use of information technology, team working, career management skills or personal development planning;

- subject benchmark statements that represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in a subject;

- information provided by professional and statutory regulatory bodies on knowledge and skills that must be possessed by those wishing to proceed to a professional qualification;

- information about occupational standards in fields where this is relevant;

- institutional or national level descriptors.

12 Programme specifications should indicate the reference points that have been used in the development of a programme outcome statement.

13 Reviewers will wish to understand how any relevant subject benchmark statements have been used to inform the specification of programmes. However, outcomes for a programme should be determined through a deliberative process by the institution, they should not simply be copied from a subject benchmark statement. Rather, the benchmark statement should act as a point of reference against which the institution's own outcomes and processes can be reviewed and justified. Benchmark statements should promote professional dialogue about the educational outcomes of programmes between those responsible for designing, delivering, assessing and assuring programmes.

14 Ultimately it is the responsibility of institutions and teaching teams to decide and justify which outcomes will be fostered and to determine how such outcomes will be realised and assessed. The purpose of the programme specification is to make clear these decisions in a publicly accessible way. In areas where there is no relevant subject benchmark statement, other reference points, such as level descriptors for the qualifications framework, and the *Code of practice* on programme approval, monitoring and review, may be found helpful.

Programme specifications and the subject review process

15 Programme specifications should be annexed to an institution's self-evaluation document. In the context of the review process they provide a reference point for evaluation of curriculum design, the methods and strategies used to promote and support learning, and the relationship of programmes and their component units to the national qualifications framework.

16 Programme specifications should provide a concise overview of the programme. They will be underpinned by more detailed information that will be found in curriculum documents, module/unit specifications, staff and student handbooks, and course guides.

17 In time, programme specifications should become embedded in an institution's own curriculum planning, review and validation processes. Institutional documents relating to these processes will provide a good source of information on the deliberative processes that underpin the programme specification.

18 The Agency publishes guidelines on programme specifications, which include examples.

Annex E - *Aide-memoire* for subject review

Introduction

1 This *aide-mémoire* consists of questions and prompts to assist academic reviewers. It may be used in:

- analysis of the self-evaluation prior to the review;

- collection of evidence during the review;

- preparation and compilation of the report of the review.

2 The *aide-mémoire* covers the main features of the review process, but it is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. The provider's self-evaluation, the statement of aims, and the intended outcomes of programmes may all raise issues peculiar to the provision under scrutiny.

3 Specific prompts for reviewers are set out under a series of headings. The process of review focuses on the setting of academic standards by the subject provider, their achievement by students, and the quality of the learning opportunities offered. Neither 'standards' nor 'quality' can be reviewed in isolation. They are inter-related and must be reviewed as such. The *aide-mémoire* provides questions and prompts about:

- aims and outcomes;

- curricula;

- assessment;

- enhancement;

- teaching and learning;

- student progression;

- learning resources.

4 The *aide-mémoire* should be read in conjunction with paragraphs 68 to 95 of the *Handbook*.

Subject review of standards and quality

5 The subject review process:

- accommodates a wide diversity of institutional mission and approaches to subjects;

- reflects the core academic processes of design, delivery, support, assessment and review of programmes of study;

- articulates with an institution's internal processes for the regulation of academic quality and standards.

6 Key points of reference for reviewers will include the relevant sections of the *Code of practice*, the qualifications framework, relevant subject benchmark statements, and the overall aims of the subject provider. Regard should also be had to the requirements of professional and statutory bodies in respect of programmes that they accredit.

7 The *aide-mémoire* is divided into seven sections (i-vii) that help to set the parameters for the review as a whole. Each section comprises:

- a set of questions, to gather information;

- the key issues for evaluation;

- an indication of likely sources of information;

- an indication of the types of activity likely to be undertaken during a review;

- the judgements that should be made.

Section i Aims and outcomes

Evaluation of the intended learning outcomes in relation to external reference points and to the broad aims of the provision

8 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *What are the intended learning outcomes for a programme?*

- *How do they relate to external reference points including relevant subject benchmark statements, the qualifications framework and any professional body requirements?*

- *How do they relate to the overall aims of the provision as stated by the subject provider?*

- *Are they appropriate to the aims?*

They should then evaluate the intended learning outcomes against relevant external reference points and against the aims of the provision as described in the self-evaluation.

Potential sources of information will include the self-evaluation (and its appended programme specifications), curricular documents, subject benchmark statements, and details of professional body requirements.
Review activities may include an analysis of programme content and benchmark statements, discussions with members of the teaching staff, and discussions with external examiners.

9 As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to judge:

- whether the intended learning outcomes are clearly stated;

- whether they reflect appropriately relevant benchmark statements, other external references, and the overall aims of the provision.

The means by which the subject provider designs curricula that permit achievement of the intended outcomes

10 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *How does the provider ensure that curriculum content enables students to achieve the intended learning outcomes?*

- *How does the provider ensure that the design and organisation of the curriculum is effective in promoting student learning and achievement of the intended learning outcomes?*

They should then evaluate the effectiveness of the way in which the subject provider plans, designs and approves the curricula.
Sources of information will include institutional curricular documents and curricular review and validation reports. Reviewers should seek to extract information about levels and modes of study, breadth and depth of study, inter- and multi-disciplinarity, coherence, flexibility and student choice, as well as the role of professional and/or statutory bodies where relevant.
Review activities will include discussions with members of the teaching teams, support staff and administrative staff, and discussions with students.
The section of the *Code of practice* dealing with programme approval, monitoring and review will provide an important point of reference, as will the section on Placement learning.

11 As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to judge the adequacy of procedures for ensuring that programmes are designed to enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.
The means by which the intended outcomes are communicated to students, staff and external examiners

12 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *How are the intended outcomes of a programme and its constituent parts communicated to staff, students and external examiners?*

- *Do the students know what is expected of them?*

They should then evaluate the way in which subject providers convey their expectations to staff, students and external examiners.
Sources of information will include programme or subject handbooks and curricular documents such as module or unit guides.
Review activities will include discussions with teaching teams, students and external examiners.
The main outcomes should be judgements on the adequacy of arrangements within the subject for communicating intended learning outcomes.

Section II Curricula

Evaluation of the means by which the subject provider creates the conditions for achievement of the intended learning outcomes

13 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *Do the design and content of the curricula encourage achievement of the intended learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, subject specific skills (including practical/professional skills), transferable skills, progression to employment and/or further study, and personal development?*

They should then evaluate the design and content of the curriculum for each programme in relation to its potential for enabling students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.
Sources of information will include subject or programme handbooks and curricular documents, such as module or unit guides, practical or placement handbooks, and further study and employment statistics.
Review activities will include evaluation of curricular documents and discussions with staff and students.
As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to judge whether the intended learning outcomes are adequately supported by the curricula.

14 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *Is there evidence that curricular content and design is informed by recent developments in techniques of teaching and learning, by current research and scholarship, and by any changes in relevant occupational or professional requirements?*

They should then evaluate whether the curriculum is adequately informed by such developments.
Sources of information will include subject or programme handbooks, validation or re-validation documents, and professional and/or statutory body accreditation reports.
Review activities will include discussions with staff and external examiners, discussions with professional and/or statutory bodies, and discussions with employers (where relevant and possible).
As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to assess the currency of the curricula.

Section III Assessment

Evaluation of the assessment process and the standard it demonstrates

15 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *Does the assessment process enable learners to demonstrate achievement of the intended outcomes?*

- *Are there criteria that enable internal and external examiners to distinguish between different categories of achievement?*

- *Can there be full confidence in the security and integrity of assessment procedures?*

- *Does the assessment strategy have an adequate formative function in developing student abilities?*

They should then evaluate whether the overall assessment process and the particular assessment instruments chosen are appropriate and effective.
Sources of information will include assessment criteria and guidance to markers, external examiners' reports and procedures for monitoring and recording achievement.
Review activities will include discussions with teaching teams, students and external examiners and the analysis of the methods for recording progress and achievement.
The sections of the *Code of practice* dealing with assessment of students and external examining will be important points of reference.
As a result of these activities, reviewers should be able to judge whether assessment processes can adequately measure achievement of the intended programme outcomes.

16 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *What evidence is there that the standards achieved by learners meet the minimum expectations for the award, as measured against relevant subject benchmarks and the qualifications framework?*

They should then evaluate whether student achievement meets such expectations.
Sources of information will include external examiners' reports, examination board minutes, and samples of student work.
Review activities will include discussions with teaching teams and external examiners, and observation of examination boards where possible.
Relevant subject benchmark statements and the level descriptors of the qualifications framework will be important points of reference.
As a result of these activities, reviewers should be able to judge whether appropriate standards are being achieved.

Section iv Enhancement

Evaluation of the institution's approaches to reviewing and improving the standards achieved

17 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *How does the subject provider review and seek to enhance standards?*

They should then evaluate the adequacy of the processes used.
Sources of information will include internal and external review documents, external examiners' reports, professional and/or statutory body accreditation reports, and examination board minutes.
Review activities will include analyses of information, practices and procedures, discussions with teaching teams and discussions with external examiners.
As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to assess the capacity of the subject provider to review and calibrate their standards, and to promote enhancement.

Section v Teaching and learning

Evaluation of the quality of the learning opportunities offered by the subject provider: the teaching delivered by staff and how it leads to learning by students

18 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *How effective is teaching in relation to curriculum content and programme aims?*

- *How effectively do staff draw upon their research, scholarship or professional activity to inform their teaching?*

- *How good are the materials provided to support learning?*

- *Is there effective engagement with and participation by students?*

- *Is the quality of teaching maintained and enhanced through effective staff development, peer review of teaching, integration of part-time and visiting staff, effective team teaching and induction and mentoring of new staff?*

- *Are there adequate numbers of appropriately qualified staff?*

- *Are there adequate numbers of placement opportunities to support students' learning?*

- *How effectively is learning facilitated in terms of student workloads?*

They should then evaluate the overall effectiveness of the teaching and learning activities; in particular:

- *the breadth, depth, pace and challenge of teaching;*

- *whether there is suitable variety of teaching methods;*

- *the effectiveness of the teaching of subject knowledge; and*

- *the effectiveness of the teaching of subject specific, transferable and practical skills.*

Sources of information will include student questionnaires, internal review documents, staff development documents, subject or programme handbooks, and academic staff appointment documents.

Review activities will include direct observation of teaching (where judged to be necessary by reviewers), discussions with staff, and discussions with students.

As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to make an overall judgement of the extent to which teaching and learning contributes to the achievement of the intended outcomes.

Section vi Student progression

Evaluation of the quality of the learning opportunities offered by the subject provider: student progression and academic support

19 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *Is there an appropriate overall strategy for academic support, including written guidance, which is consistent with the student profile and the overall aims of the provision?*

- *Are there effective arrangements for admission and induction which are generally understood by staff and applicants?*

- *How effectively is learning facilitated by academic guidance, feedback and supervisory arrangements?*

- *Are the arrangements for academic tutorial support clear and generally understood by staff and students?*

They should then evaluate whether the arrangements in place are effective in facilitating student progression towards successful completion of their programmes.

Sources of information will include subject or programme handbooks, student questionnaires, internal review documents, recruitment data, and progression data.

Review activities will include discussions with admissions staff, discussions with teaching staff, and discussions with students.

As a result of these activities, reviewers should be able to judge the effectiveness of the recruitment arrangements, the strategy for student support and the progression of students.

Section vii Learning resources

Evaluation of the quality of the learning opportunities offered by the subject provider: learning resources and their deployment

20 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *Is the collective expertise of the academic and placement staff suitable and available for effective delivery of the curricula, for the overall teaching, learning and assessment strategy, and for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes?*

- *Are appropriate staff development opportunities available?*

- *Is appropriate technical and administrative support available?*

They should then evaluate the effectiveness of the deployment of academic and support staff in support of the intended learning outcomes.

Sources of information will include staff CVs, internal review documents, external examiners' reports, and staff development documents.

Review activities may include direct observation of teaching (where carried out), discussions with teaching teams, and discussions with students. See Annex P.

As a result of these activities reviewers should be able to judge whether there are appropriately qualified staff who are contributing effectively to achievement of the intended outcomes.

21 *Reviewers should ask:*

- *Is there an overall strategy for the deployment of learning resources?*

- *How effectively is learning facilitated in terms of the provision of resources?*

- *Is suitable teaching and learning accommodation available?*

- *Are the subject book and periodical stocks appropriate and accessible?*

- *Are suitable equipment and appropriate IT facilities available to learners?*

They should then evaluate the appropriateness of the learning resources available, and the effectiveness of their deployment.

Sources of information will include equipment lists, library stocks, and internal review documents.

Review activities will include direct observation of accommodation and equipment, discussions with staff, and discussions with students. See Annex P.

As a result of these activities, reviewers should be able to judge how effectively the learning resources are deployed in support of the intended outcomes.

Annex F - Subject review facilitator

Introduction

1 Each institution may nominate a member or members of staff (normally no more than three) to take on the role of facilitator, although there is no requirement to do so. The purpose of this is to provide effective liaison between the team of reviewers and the subject staff and to ensure that the team obtains accurate and comprehensive information about the educational provision and its institutional context. In due course, the experience gained by the facilitators in dealing with reviews in several departments should enable them to help subject providers prepare for review, disseminate good practice within the institution, and highlight areas for improvement identified by each review. Facilitators will be briefed for their role by the Agency.

2 Institutional staff who wish to act as facilitators should possess:

- thorough knowledge of the structure, policies, priorities, procedures and practices of their institution;

- extensive knowledge and experience of working in HE at a senior level;

- extensive experience of quality assurance procedures;

- knowledge and understanding of the Agency's review method;

- qualifications and experience in a subject area other than that being reviewed;

- an ability to maintain confidentiality.

It is also preferable that facilitators have either direct experience of teaching in HE or experience as a senior administrator in an HE institution.

3 If no facilitator is nominated by the institution, the liaison functions described in this annex will normally be taken on by a designated member of staff from the academic department under review.

Role of the facilitator

General matters

4 Organisation and management of the review is the responsibility of the review coordinator. Responsibility for ensuring that the review team is provided with appropriate evidence to allow it to reach its judgements lies primarily with the subject provider. The facilitator's role is to ensure that the channels of communication between the two work effectively. Discussions between the facilitator and review coordinator should ensure that the subject provider is aware of issues being addressed by the teams and the evidence needed to clarify them. It would be helpful if HE institutions could supply review coordinators with brief outlines of facilitators' previous experience and current institutional roles.

5 Throughout the course of a review, the facilitator helps the reviewers to come to a clear and accurate understanding of the structures, policies, priorities and procedures of the institution, and the nature of the provision under scrutiny. S/he may wish to bring additional information to the attention of the team and may seek to correct factual inaccuracy. It is for the reviewers however to decide how best to use the information provided. The facilitator is not a member of the team and will not make judgements about the provision.

6 The role requires the facilitator to observe objectively, to communicate clearly with the team and the subject provider, to respect the protocols on confidentiality outlined below, and to establish effective relationships with the review coordinator and the team, as well as with the subject staff. Facilitators should refrain from acting as advocates for the subject provision under review. However, they may legitimately:

- assist the institution in understanding issues of concern to reviewers;

- respond to requests for information and comment;

- draw the review team's attention to matters that may have been overlooked;

- identify the location of evidence;

- provide advice on institutional matters.

Activities preceding reviews
7 Institutions may find it helpful to involve facilitators fully in preparation for a subject review, including the initial meeting with the Agency to discuss the intensity of review. The facilitator with responsibility for a review should receive copies of all correspondence between the Agency and the institution, and should either attend the initial team meeting or be briefed about it by the review coordinator.

Activities during reviews

8 The extended pattern of review requires facilitators to fulfil three main functions in addition to the general liaison role outlined above. First, they should monitor the pattern of visits by academic reviewers. If it appears that there is a departure from the agreed pattern, the matter should be discussed immediately with the review coordinator.

9 Second, the facilitator should maintain regular telephone and/or email contact with the review coordinator to ensure that reviewers are receiving the information or documentation that they need, particularly for off-site analysis.

10 Third, facilitators may attend all the following:

- team meetings, except those in which judgements are being discussed by the team of reviewers;

- formal meetings held between the reviewers and the institution to investigate matters specific to standards and quality, except those with current and former students;

- 'progress' meetings held between the review coordinator and subject staff.

Confidentiality

11 Facilitators will observe the same conventions of confidentiality as subject specialist reviewers. In particular, no information gained during a review shall be used in a manner that allows individuals to be identified. Facilitators must exercise care when reporting back to subject staff to maintain the confidentiality of written material produced by reviewers for the initial team meeting, or at other times during the review. However, facilitators may make their own notes on team discussions in order to help subject staff understand the issues being addressed by reviewers. This can improve the effectiveness of a review, and contribute to the enhancement of standards and quality within the institution.

Annex G - Subject review teams

Team composition

1 Each review team reflects the nature and scope of the provision in the subject to be reviewed, with regard to the nature of the institution. The number of academic reviewers in each team reflects the size, range and complexity of the education provided. As far as possible, the Agency matches the collective expertise of the team with the broad specialisms of the subject provision. Using its register of reviewers and the criteria for composing teams outlined below, the Agency will propose a subject review team to an institution before the review starts. Account is taken of conflicts of interest declared by academic reviewers. If a review is combined with activity of a professional or statutory body, the requirements of that body will also be considered.

Professional and statutory regulatory bodies and workforce development confederations who work with the Agency will be invited to nominate candidates for selection as reviewers. The agency will include in each team at least one reviewer who has been nominated by the professional statutory or regulatory body for each field of practice covered by the review and one person who has been nominated by a workforce development confederation. A person nominated by a confederation which is in a partnership arrangement with the institution under review will be treated as having a conflict of interest for the purposes of that review.

2 Institutions are invited to comment on the composition of teams and to confirm their agreement in writing to the Agency within four weeks of notification, having had regard to the views of placement providers. Any concerns about the suitability of reviewers should be discussed with Agency officers as soon as possible after notification and, if not resolved satisfactorily, put in writing to the Agency.

3 The main criterion used by the Agency for determining the number of reviewers required for a particular team is the size of the provision described in the 'scope and preference' returns provided by institutions. Accordingly, as an approximate guide, review teams will comprise:

- three subject specialists and a review coordinator for all provision of between 30 and 250 FTE students;

- four subject specialists and a review coordinator for 250-500 FTE students;

- five subject specialists and a review coordinator for 500-1,000 FTE students;

- six subject specialists and a review coordinator for 1,000+ FTE students.

4 Teams will not normally have fewer than three specialist reviewers. Very large and/or complex reviews may require more reviewers than shown above.

Team function for subject review
General matters

5 Subject specialist reviewers focus their attention on the subject and only address institutional matters when they have a direct bearing on the student learning process. It is, however, important that review coordinators ensure that matters related to institutional function which come to their team's attention are reported, thereby making them available to the reviewers who carry out institutional review. For example, subject reviewers might collect information relevant to institutional practices on external examining when considering assessment practices in relation to a subject.

6 Subject specialist reviewers assume a collective responsibility for gathering and verifying evidence in relation to academic standards, but may concentrate individually on specific matters in relation to the quality of learning opportunities. All judgements are, however, made collectively. For the benefit of other team members, subject specialists may be asked by the review coordinator to produce brief written commentaries based on the self-evaluation and the evidence gathered during the review. These commentaries should make full reference to the aims of the subject provider and identify matters for which additional evidence is required. They will inform the team's priorities, the balance of activities undertaken and the collective judgements made.

Team meetings
7 At the first meeting of the team consideration will be given to the:

- self-evaluation and any other documentation supplied by the institution prior to the review;

- scope and nature of the provision and identification of the main matters for review and judgement;

- role of the facilitator from the institution in relation to conduct of the review;

- allocation of individual responsibilities among members of the team;

- likely activities, both on- and off-site, required for the review;

- likely pattern of visits to the subject provider.

8 The initial team meeting can take place either at the institution or elsewhere, but it should be followed as soon as feasible by a meeting with the subject provider, at which the team discusses the intended pattern of review with the staff of the institution. The team and the subject provider can then discuss the likely arrangements for visits to the institution and identify any internal quality assurance 'events' which might usefully be observed. The meeting also allows an opportunity for the institutional representatives, if they wish, to make a brief presentation on the provision to be reviewed, and to inform the team of any developments since the self-evaluation was written. If appropriate, student representatives may participate in this meeting.

Team visits

9 The review coordinator must also confirm the intended pattern of the review with the Agency, so that the Agency can monitor whether it complies with the indication already given to the institution about the intensity of scrutiny required to review its provision. If a team of reviewers decides that it needs more or less time for a review than that broadly agreed between the Agency and the institution, the reasons for this must be discussed with the Agency.

10 Reviewers may visit the institution at any time during the academic year of the review, but always by mutual agreement with the subject provider and within the overall number of reviewer days allocated by the Agency. This may involve the team visiting together, as for the initial meeting with the subject provider, or it may involve two or more reviewers visiting for specific observations or meetings. Review teams should not, however, arrange for individual subject specialist reviewers to visit subject providers alone. See Annex P.

11 Each review will include a number of meetings between members of the institution and reviewers to consider the various aspects of provision related to standards and quality. The review coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the team considers the accumulating evidence and comes to conclusions.

12 Telephone or email contacts between the team and the institution may be used to request information or to give notice of issues which the reviewers might wish to explore.

13 All reviewers will be expected to identify, share, consider and evaluate evidence related to the programmes under scrutiny. Reviewers should keep notes of all meetings with staff and students, their observations, and comments on students' work and its assessment. Circulation of these notes within the team will help develop a collective evidence base on which the judgements can be made. Reviewers will be expected to evaluate how the accumulating evidence compares with the evidence provided by the subject provider in the self-evaluation, and to test the strength of the evidence adduced to support the judgements. Discussion of the emerging judgements must involve the whole review team.

14 Draft summaries written by reviewers during the course of a review will focus on the evaluation of evidence related to their particular responsibilities, as agreed by the team at the commencement of the review. Summaries should be analytical rather than descriptive and should refer to sources of information as well as to direct observations. Any written evaluation should summarise the relevant strengths and weaknesses of the provision and, overall, should underpin the judgements made. A final meeting of the reviewers will be used to review any additional evidence, to agree the particular strengths and weaknesses in relation to both standards and quality, to finalise the judgements, and to determine precisely what is to be reported.

Reports

15 The review coordinator produces the first draft of the report immediately after completion of the review, drawing on the self-evaluation and on the summaries prepared by academic reviewers. This draft is then checked by reviewers for factual accuracy and affords an opportunity for further comment before the report is despatched to the institution. As the reports provide the main feedback about reviews to institutions, it is particularly important that teams check their accuracy carefully.

16 The published reports are the main documented outcomes of the subject review process. Publication should take place within 20 weeks from the end of a review. Reports should be characterised by succinct, accurate writing and a clear, consistent style. The evidence base must be sound, and must be recorded accurately by reviewers.

Practical arrangements for subject reviewers

17 Practical arrangements made by the Agency for reviewers include:

- hotel accommodation, where this is required;

- travel and subsistence reimbursement;

- administrative support.

18 Reviewers will need to have access to computer facilities suitable for word processing. Reviewers with personal computers that are compatible with the Agency's equipment may compile and transfer written summaries electronically. Reviewers must conform to procedures described in the IT guidelines supplied to them by the Agency, as these are designed to protect against damage and computer viruses.

Annex H - Documentation (including student work) for subject review

Institutional documents

1 Apart from the self-evaluation, academic reviewers will not normally expect documents to be prepared especially for review. Subject providers should direct reviewers, in the self-evaluation and/or by means of a separate list, to the availability and relevance of documents which might assist them to test and verify the statements made in the self-evaluation or which are relevant to the judgements they will make.

2 The following documents will be required in advance of the review:

- the self-evaluation, with the programme specifications annexed;

- relevant prospectuses;

- a location map.

3 The availability and relevance of further documentation will discussed at the initial meeting with the subject provider. As the review progresses, reviewers may ask for further documentation. The following documents will be relevant to the review:

- subject or programme handbooks;

- curricular documents, module or unit guides; .

- subject or programme monitoring reports, including those from external sources such as professional and/or statutory bodies, if these are available;

- student questionnaire data;

- external examiners' reports for the previous three years;

- student intake and progression data for the previous three years.

- placement documentation.

The following documents may also be relevant, but this list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive:

- minutes of relevant meetings, including examination boards;

- equipment lists;

- practical or placement handbooks;

- programme approval, validation and re-validation documents;

- further study and employment statistics (student destinations);

- academic staffing list and short profiles (indicating main teaching and research interests and any administrative responsibilities).

- Relevant reports from professional statutory and regulatory bodies, clinical governance reports and workforce development confederations.

Reviewers will not necessarily ask for copies of documents. They may prefer to read the documents during the course of a visit. Documents can be provided in electronic form by mutual agreement between the subject provider and the review team.
There is no requirement or expectation that documents will be assembled in a 'base room' for the use of reviewers. If reviewers wish to see a document, they will ask for it. Because review takes place over an extended period, immediate availability of every document that might be requested is not necessary.

Student work

4 Reviewers will expect to see a sample of student work. The range and nature of student work to be made available to the reviewers will be discussed at the initial meeting. Reviewers will look at student work to evaluate whether:

- student achievement matches the intended outcomes of the programme(s);

- assessment is designed appropriately to measure achievement of the intended learning outcomes;

- the assessment instruments provide an adequate basis for discriminating between different categories of attainment;

- the actual outcomes of programmes meet the minimum expectations for the award.

Reviewers will not duplicate or 'second-guess' the work of external examiners. As such, reviewers will not normally expect to see work which is currently under consideration by external examiners.

5 Academic reviewers will need to see a broad sample of student work that demonstrates use of the full range of assessment instruments deployed in both formative and summative assessments. To enable them to gain a full understanding of the assessment strategy, reviewers will need to see marking guides or other assessment criteria, and any guidance on providing feedback to students through assessment. They will use external examiners' reports to triangulate with their own observations of work from each level/year of study, samples of work from core modules and specialist options and from a representative range of attainment. Samples of work may include, for example:

- coursework of various types;

- practical, laboratory or workshop notebooks;

- projects and/or dissertations;

- examination scripts.

- Placement diaries.

6 Reviewers should record the evidence derived from such scrutiny of student work using the standard *Student work and assessment pro forma* provided by the Agency for this purpose.

Annex I - Observation of teaching

General arrangements

1 Arrangements for the review of the teaching carried out by subject providers will vary to reflect the nature and scope of the provision. The circumstances in which direct observation of teaching is likely to be appropriate are set out in paragraph 70 of the *Handbook*. Academic reviewers may not need to make direct observations of teaching where a subject provider can demonstrate that it has evidence of good quality delivery, and where observations of student work indicate student achievement in line with the intended learning outcomes.

2 However effectively a subject provider might define the intended learning outcomes for students and the curricular content suitable for their delivery, if the teaching is poor or if there are restricted learning opportunities, the overall student experience will be poor. Using evidence related to curricular content and indirect evidence related to teaching, such as student feedback and internal peer review, academic reviewers should attempt to evaluate the breadth, depth, pace and challenge of curricular delivery. They should ascertain whether there is a suitable variety of teaching methods, whether intellectual knowledge and skills are transmitted effectively, and whether practical knowledge and skills are imparted in subjects where they are relevant. If sufficient evidence is not available to allow a reliable evaluation to be made, reviewers should use direct observation, carried out according to the protocol below.

Protocol for direct observation of teaching

3 When direct observation of teaching takes place, the reviewer will meet the member of staff responsible for the teaching session before it commences in order to introduce her/himself, to discuss the overall objectives for the session, and to determine how students are intended to benefit from it. Understanding the precise purpose of a teaching session is essential. For example, a lecture delivered for the express purpose of transmitting information will be structured differently from one designed to elicit student participation or stimulate extensive further reading. Reviewers should not make comments during a lecture, seminar or tutorial, and should not be intrusive or engage directly in the activity. For sessions lasting more than one hour, a suitable period of observation may be agreed beforehand. The institution may also make arrangements for the observation of placements and other off-site activities.

4 Whenever academic reviewers observe teaching, a standard *Teaching observation note* should be completed. These are supplied by the Agency. In making judgements about individual teaching sessions, reviewers must provide oral feedback to members of staff, even if this requires a later appointment to be made. Oral feedback is confidential to the member of staff and should be given privately. Its purpose is to offer constructive comment rather than to prescribe preferred practice. Reviewers must also preserve the anonymity of the staff observed teaching in all written reports and in discussions with other staff of the institution.

5 On occasion, students engaged in learning activities in practical sessions or during independent learning sessions may be asked by reviewers to talk about their learning experiences and how the activity being observed fits into their wider programme of study. As with other observations, reviewers should endeavour to meet with the relevant member of staff to ascertain the intended learning outcomes of the session and should provide feedback wherever possible. It is also important that reviewers seek agreement from the member of staff in relation to their discussions with students.

Judgements

6 All judgements by reviewers about the quality of teaching and learning opportunities offered to students should be made against the broad aims of the subject provider and the intended learning outcomes set to bring about achievement of those aims.

Observation of teaching on a placement – See Annex P.

Annex J - Agenda for meeting with students

Introduction

1 Meetings with students enable reviewers to establish student views on the issues being considered. These meetings provide an opportunity not only to hear the direct views of those present, but also to establish more generally whether there are effective arrangements for student feedback and representation.

2 The meeting is normally chaired by the review coordinator, who will introduce the subject specialist reviewers and provide a brief summary of the review method. S/he will outline the purpose of the meeting and will emphasise the importance of transparency of the review process. The dialogue with students will normally start with a question to establish on what basis the students were selected to attend the meeting.

3 The subject review facilitator should not attend this meeting. Throughout the meeting, students should be given opportunities to raise points not covered by the agenda.

General matters in relation to quality and standards

- How are student views sought?

- Are students represented on committees? If so, what is their role?

- Are student views influential? Can they provide examples?

- Did students make a contribution to the self-evaluation?

The curriculum and intended learning outcomes

- Are students made aware of the intended learning outcomes by programme specifications or other means?

- What is the match between the expectations of students, the intended learning outcomes and the curricular content?

- Does the curricular content encourage the development of knowledge and skills?

- What is its relevance to further study and prospective employment?

- Are timetables and workloads appropriate?

- What opportunities are there for practical and vocational experience?

- What were the opportunities for placement learning?

- How effective were these opportunities in addressing the intended learning outcomes?

Assessment and achievement

- Do students understand the criteria for assessment and the methods employed?

- Is assessment formative as well as summative?

- What feedback is there? Is it prompt and effective?

- In their experience, have the intended learning outcomes been achieved?

- Do academic staff discuss student achievement with students?

- Are further study and career aspirations likely to be satisfied?

Teaching and learning

- Is the range of teaching and learning methods appropriate for delivering the curriculum?

- How do students perceive the quality of the teaching?

- Is there effective support and guidance for independent study?

- Was effective support provided during placement learning?

Student progression and support

- What admission and induction procedures are in operation?

- What are the arrangements for academic support?

- Do these arrangements extend to work experience, placements, study abroad and other off-site experiences?

- What skills are acquired? Do they enhance employability?

- Do students receive effective support?

Learning resources and their deployment

- How good are the library services in terms of opening hours, access, user support, availability of books and journals?

- What IT support is there? Are opening hours, access, user support and availability of work stations and software appropriate?

- Are there suitable programme-specific materials?

- Are the accommodation and equipment adequate?

Annex K - Schedule for subject review 2000-2006

Subject	Period during which subject will be reviewed
Librarianship & Information Management*	2000-2003
Economics*	2000-2003
Politics & International Relations*	2000-2003
Classics & Ancient History*	2000-2003
Archaeology*	2000-2003
Philosophy*	2000-2003
Theology & Religious Studies*	2000-2003
Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism*	2000-2003
Business & Management Studies*	2000-2003
Education Studies*	2000-2003
Social Policy & Administration & Social Work	2000-2003
Sociology & Anthropology	2000-2003
English	2000-2003
Engineering	2000-2003
Geography	2000-2003
Earth, Environmental Sciences & Environmental Studies	2000-2003
Architecture, Architectural Technology & Landscape Architecture	2000-2003

Computing	2000-2003
Law	2000-2003
Accountancy	2000-2003
History	2000-2003
Medicine	2003-2006
Dentistry	2003-2006
Veterinary Medicine	2003-2006
Biosciences	2003-2006
*Subjects Allied to Medicine**	2003-2006
*Nursing & Midwifery**	2003-2006
Physics & Astronomy	2003-2006
Chemistry	2003-2006
Psychology	2003-2006
·Agriculture, Forestry, Agricultural & Food Sciences	2003-2006
Materials	2003-2006
Building & Surveying	2003-2006
Town & Country Planning	2003-2006
Mathematics, Statistics & Operational Research	2003-2006
Linguistics	2003-2006
Area Studies	2003-2006
Languages & Related Studies	2003-2006
Communications, Media, Film & Television Studies	2003-2006
Art & Design	2003-2006
Dance, Drama & Performance Arts	2003-2006
Music	2003-2006

* To be reviewed in England and Northern Ireland during 2000-2001 using the former subject review method. (TO BE EXPLAINED)

** Schedule subject to agreement with the NHS and other funding bodies. These subjects may be reviewed earlier in England.

* See Annex Q for provision covered.

Annex L - Guidelines for producing self-evaluation documents for institutional review

Introduction

1 An institution's self-evaluation is the principal reference document considered by an academic review team undertaking an institutional review. It will be produced once every six years, in preparation for the six-year review. It will not be required for the interim appraisal meeting. The document describes briefly, analyses in some depth, and comments upon, the effectiveness of the way the institution discharges its responsibility for academic standards and quality. The document should refer to the findings of subject reviews and any implications of these for the effectiveness of the institution's overall management of quality and standards. The self-evaluation should also indicate how the institution has responded to the expectations of the precepts contained in the Agency's *Code of practice on the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*. Preparation of the self-evaluation should be undertaken in the light of the objectives, outcomes and scope of institutional review, which are summarised in the following three sections.

Purpose of the self-evaluation.

2 The Agency's review asks each institution:

i to demonstrate that It is discharging effectively its responsibility for the standard of all awards granted in its name, and for the quality of the education provided by it to enable students to achieve that standard;

ii to confirm and demonstrate that the ways in which it assures academic standards and quality reflect the expectations contained in the precepts of the Agency's *Code of practice*.

3 The self-evaluation provides the main opportunity for the institution to set out its considered answers to these questions, and it is largely upon this document that a view of its effectiveness as an awarding body will be based in the first instance. Because of this the institution should ensure that the self-evaluation is an accurate and verifiable statement of the true state of affairs and is not used as an opportunity to make exaggerated claims that will cause the review team to doubt the reliability of the institution's view of itself.

4 Where an institution is in the process of making changes to aspects of its systems or procedures at the time of the review, evidence may not yet be available to illustrate the effectiveness of the new procedures. Where this is the case, the institution is encouraged to address in its self-evaluation the way in which it is managing the process of change.

Nature of the self-evaluation

5 At the heart of the review team's enquiries is the way in which the institution acts as an awarding body. The self-evaluation will need to reflect this. The 'awarding body function' is not simply a question of the soundness of the administrative procedures the institution follows when awarding degrees and other qualifications (although it does include this). It is a wider matter that reflects the institution's role as a member of the UK's higher education community, charged with a public responsibility for granting nationally (and internationally) recognised academic awards in a coherent and consistent manner. How policies and procedures are decided, how they meet the expectations of the higher education sector as a whole (through, for example, use of the qualifications framework, subject benchmark statements and the *Code of practice*), their specific contribution to securing academic standards and quality, and their effectiveness in achieving their objectives, provide a major focus for institutional review. The extent to which these matters are dealt with cogently and candidly in the institution's self-evaluation will be an important contributory factor in the review team's ability to judge how far the Agency can have confidence in the institution as an effective awarding body.

6 The self-evaluation should include reflections on the outcomes of subject reviews. These reports provide valuable audit trails to test the efficacy of the application of institutional policies within departments and other units. The self-evaluation should analyse the effectiveness of, rather than merely describe, an institution's quality assurance policies and processes, although some description will be necessary to enable the review team to understand the context in which policies are enacted. If the document does not contain careful and accurate analysis, the review team may ask for a longer visit, so that it can undertake its own fuller enquiries. Where an institution expresses a view that it is satisfied with the effectiveness of its processes, the evidence upon which this view is based should be made clear in the self-evaluation.

7 Some institutions - those without the necessary powers do not have the responsibilities of degree-awarding bodies. Nonetheless, they have similar obligations to meet the requirements of the institution for whose awards their students are registered and may, in addition, award their own certificates and diplomas. As effective partners in collaborative activities they will be committed to ensuring that the academic standards and quality of provision of their students' awards and programmes are safeguarded as much by their own actions as through the formal responsibilities of the awarding institution. The self-evaluation will provide an opportunity for these institutions to show that they are aware of their informal as well as formal responsibilities and can demonstrate their commitment to ensuring academic standards and quality.

Scope of the self-evaluation