Meeting expectations around academic quality

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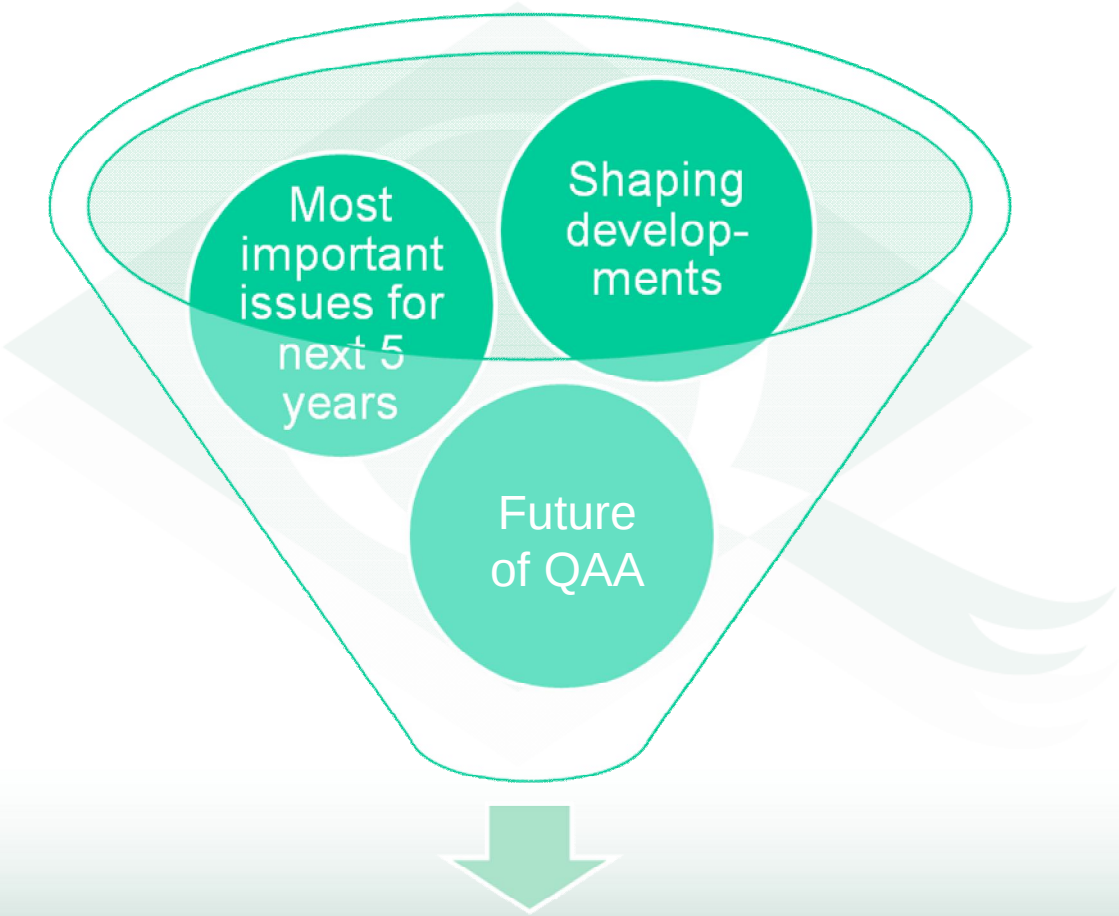
Maintaining Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

26 May 2010

QAA

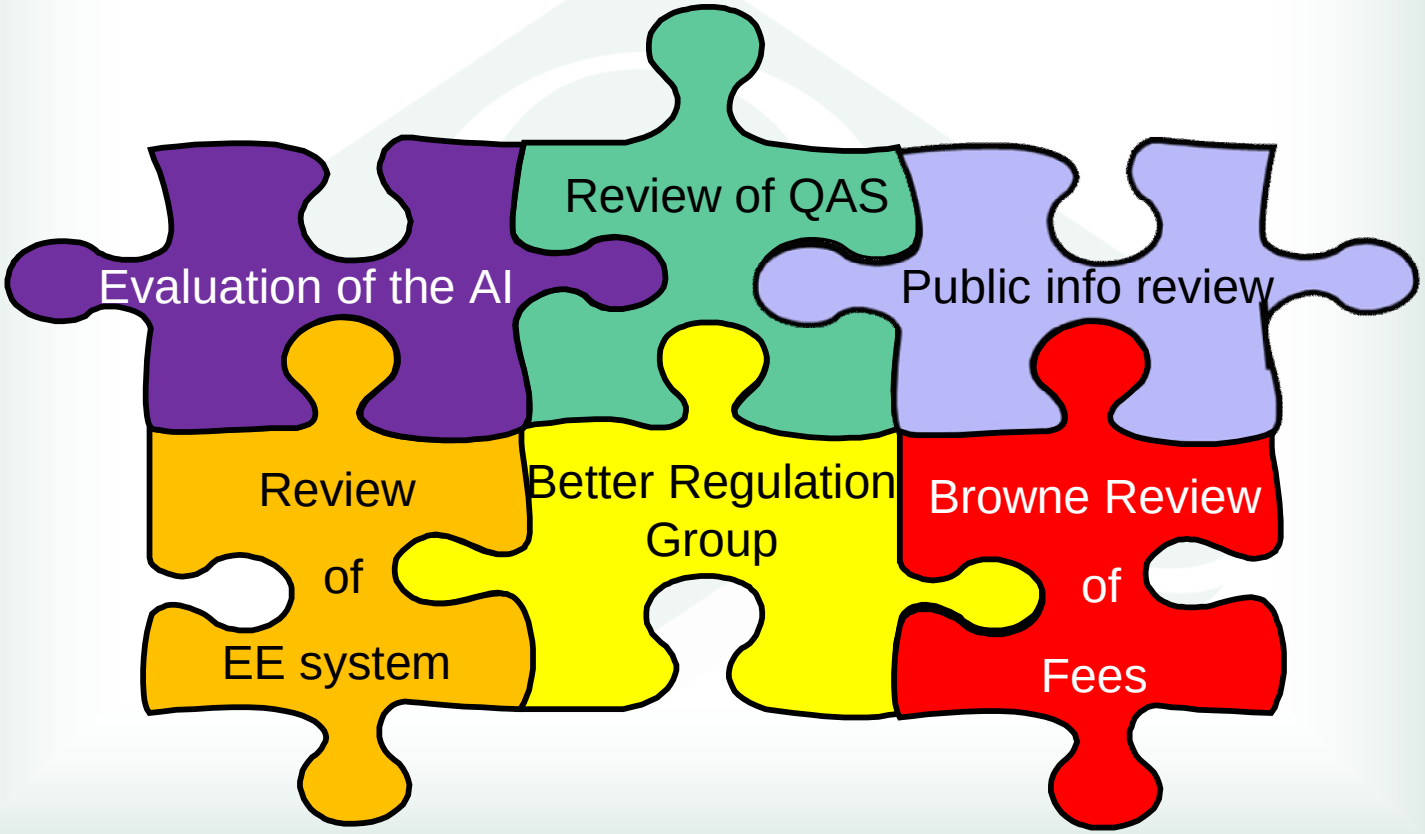
Introduction



Setting the scene…

- May
  - *Thematic enquiries*
- July
  - IUSS Select Committee report
- Oct
  - TQSE Sub Committee report
- Dec
  - *Higher Ambitions* Framework

The pieces of the jigsaw…



Review of the Quality Assurance System

1. Consultation on key principles & processes

2. Development of operational descriptor

Emerging points of interest…

- Greater flexibility in the method
- Greater public assurance that threshold standards are met
- A dual “core and thematic” approach
- More formal consideration of published information
- Clearer terms to describe judgements
- Universal use of student members in audit teams
- A greater concern for addressing public understanding of quality and standards

Evaluation of the Academic Infrastructure

- What should the primary purpose of the Academic Infrastructure be?

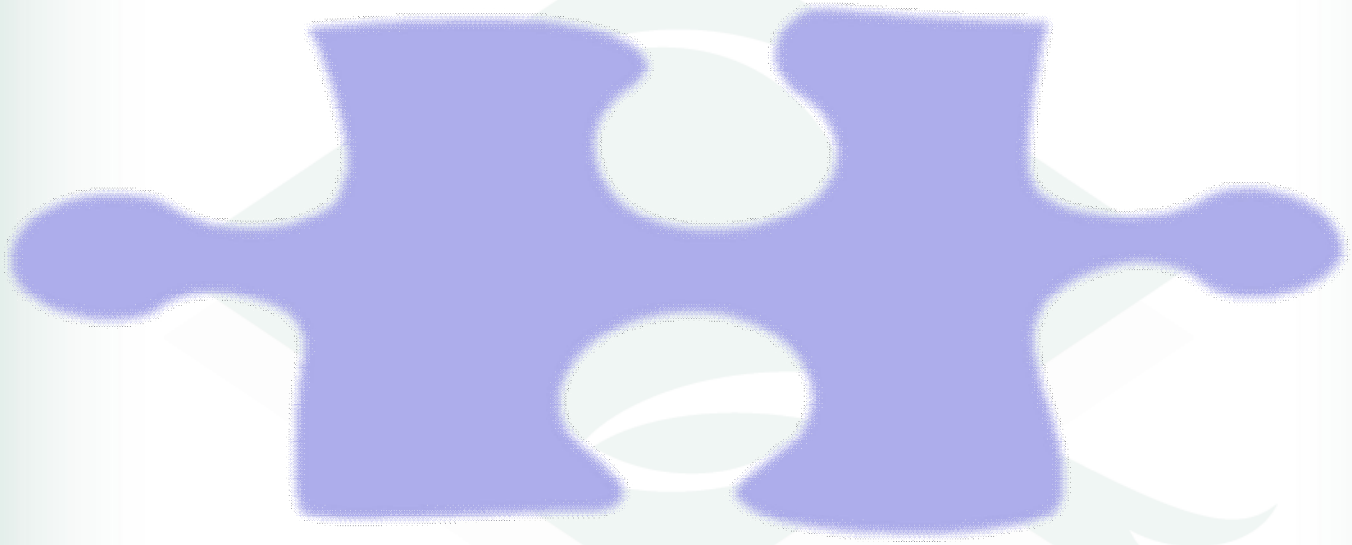
- Who should be the primary audience?

- Does the Academic Infrastructure provide an adequate basis for the comparison of academic standards between institutions and between different subjects?

Emerging points of interest…

- AI is valued and there is little appetite for radical reworking, although there is support for revising the language, structure, and understanding of the relationship of components.
- UK wide Steering Group should be introduced.
- Set of overarching principles for the AI should be considered to which all HE providers should adhere.
- Clarification of which components require compliance and which are guidance.
- Changes must be mindful of current economic climate.
- Some support for name change but also recognition that term ‘AI’ is just becoming embedded.

Review of Public Information



1. QAA to become more public-facing
2. What information should institutions make available?

Review of External Examining

- Launched jointly by UUK and GuildHE
- Due to report by end of 2010
- QAA involved and linking with other, related activity

Better Regulation Group

- Successor to HERRG
- Chaired by Sir Graeme Catto
- Regulation should be appropriate and proportionate

The Fees Review

- Widening participation
- Affordability for students and the taxpayer
- Simplification of the system of support

QAA - The future

Focus on the student

1. Student ‘centredness’
2. Using new methods of communication (QAAtv, Podcasts)
3. The concept of service

The concept of service…

Investigating complaints

Causes for Concern…

‘any policy, procedure or action implemented, or omitted, by a higher or further education institution in England, which appears likely to jeopardise the institution’s capacity to assure the academic standards and quality of any of its HE programmes and/or awards.’

Becoming more public facing

- The concept of service
- New methods of communication
- Review of existing communication methods and language

New methods of communication

What students want

Student Sounding Board

- Graduate Employability
- Average spend per head
- Retention Rates
- Learning and teaching style
- Student/Staff ratio
- Probable academic content
- Student satisfaction rates

Similar to findings of

- National Student Forum
- NUS Student experience survey
- HEPISG
- Research commissioned from Oakleigh consulting & the Institute of Education Policy Research (Staffs)

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