



Consultation on revised Subject Benchmark Statements: Online survey questions

QAA is formally consulting on new versions of 12 Subject Benchmark Statements that have recently been reviewed by advisory groups drawn from the higher education sector, subject associations, PSRBs and employer representatives.

This consultation will close at **Wednesday 2 November 2022 at 6pm**. QAA, in coordination with the advisory groups, will consider the responses and publish the revised Statements in Spring 2023.

This document details the questions being asked in the online consultation survey and is intended to help you prepare your answers. **However, responses must be submitted via the online survey for the relevant Statement.**

[Consultation documents and links to the online survey](#) for each Statement are available on the QAA website.

Information about you

Q1 Your name:

Q2 Your provider/organisation: **BAM**

Q2a Are you responding to the consultation as:

- an individual
- on behalf of your provider/organisation **YES**

Q3 Which of the following best describes your role?

- Student/prospective student
- Student/course representative/elected officer
- Students' union or other representative body staff
- Graduate
- Higher education staff (non-academic)
- Higher education staff (academic)
- Higher education staff (quality)
- Higher education sector body **YES**
- PSRB
- Employer

Other (please specify)

Q4 Email address if happy to discuss response further:

About the Subject Benchmark Statement

Question 5

Overall, does the revised Subject Benchmark Statement continue to define the nature of the subject area and the academic standards expected of graduates?

Yes

No

Comments:

The revised Subject Benchmark Statements do, on the whole, define the nature of the subject area of Business and Management as well as the academic standards expected. However, there are some areas of omission.

- *The new benchmarks give the reader the appearance that they have been written from the traditional paradigm of learning whereas for the current context of 'grand challenges' a paradigm of Mode 2 knowledge and of expansive learning would be more appropriate and indeed, is fiercely urgent and necessary*
- *Learning within the discipline is positioned through these new Statements in what can be described as a delivery mindset foregrounding individual knowledge "acquisition" rather than learning that can be described as processual and social - "as participation". In consequence the focus is upon the acquisition of knowledge of Business and Management and of subject-specific and generic skills rather than upon changing behaviours and re/crafting learners' identities*
 - *"Excellence" at undergraduate level does not capture the capabilities of our graduates to challenge assumptions and question the status quo. These capabilities are though integral if Business and Management graduates are to make a positive contribution to contemporary society where what is needed to deal with complexity and rate of change is currently unknown.*
 - *"Excellence" at postgraduate level does not capture the capabilities of our graduates to challenge assumptions and question the status quo. These capabilities are though integral if Business and Management graduates are to make a positive contribution to contemporary society where what is needed to deal with complexity and rate of change is currently unknown.*
- *The underpinning assumption throughout the statements is that institutions should provide for - rather than students be supported in - the process of co-production and of helping themselves while concurrently developing necessary graduate knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes*
- *The cross-cutting themes, while it is commendable that these are included, are positioned as separate from the discipline rather than being embedded within and integral to the discipline, and the capabilities documented within are not then explicitly embedded within the statements themselves*

Question 6

Does the information in the introductory sections successfully describe the context, characteristics and purpose of the subject?

Yes

No

Comments:

The revised Subject Benchmark Statements acknowledge the place and role of the Business and Management discipline within the wider economic, environmental and social contexts. However,

- The Statements do not fully take account of the distinction between Business and Management as an academic subject and Business and Management as a vocational subject, and the tensions that emerge as a result of this distinction.*
- The suggestion is that institutions should be ensuring sufficient flexibility to ensure the needs of the multiple stakeholders are met (p.10). However, this does not take account of the external constraints of for example, OfS / CMA etc.*
- Employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship are positioned separately through this section of the documentation. However, this separation is problematic especially as firms seek to secure employees that are internally enterprising and entrepreneurial.*
- For the postgraduate statements, while recognition is made of the diverse types of PGT programmes within the discipline of Business and Management, the typology (Table 3) doesn't acknowledge the considerable growth of a fifth type – of generalist Masters study undertaken by learners that already hold a generalist Business and Management degree.*

Question 7

Does the section on benchmark standards adequately cover the skills expected of a graduate in the subject area?

Yes

No

Comments:

While on the whole, the anticipated skills are evident within the revised Subject Benchmark Statements, some omissions are apparent.

- It might be expected that, as indicated under question 5, "Excellent" would encompass learners' capabilities to challenge assumptions and question the status quo. Such capabilities are central to the co-production of the new knowledge and to meeting the complex demands they will face.*
- It is not clear why "evidence of an independent approach to learning" lies under "critical perspectives" and conflating them risks omission of the significance of developing our graduates (UG and PGT) as independent / autonomous learners being enabled for life-long, self-initiating learners and as critical thinkers*

- *For the postgraduate statements it might be expected that criticality would be embedded through the K*U, application and values (pp.24-25)*

Question 8

Do the sections on learning and teaching, content and assessment provide an appropriate indication of these aspects of the subject area?

Yes

No

Comments:

While on the whole, the statements do take account of the range of approaches to effective learning and teaching and assessment within the discipline of Business and Management. However, some critical points to note:

- *The term “delivery” is used throughout. Such terminology assumes an acquisitional approach to learning in which transfer dominates rather than learning being enabled and knowledge co-produced*
- *The methods of learning and teaching do not explicitly refer to the increasingly popular experiential or authentic learning (although we acknowledge that authentic assessment is noted)*
- *Recognition is rightly made of the importance of inclusive assessment. However, assumptions are made over how this is understood especially given that the approaches to assessment documented are fairly conventional approaches, so not clear how these are explicitly inclusive*
- *For the postgraduate Statements there are apparently inconsistencies through the documentation between expectations of description (questionably demonstrating Level 7) and statements of criticality*

Question 9

Do the sections on Education for Sustainable Development, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, Accessibility and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion clearly express the needs of the subject and students in relation to these areas?

Yes

No

Comments:

It is reassuring to see these cross-cutting themes explicit within the revised Subject Benchmark Statements. However,

- *They are positioned as separate from the discipline rather than being embedded within and the capabilities documented within are not then explicitly embedded within the statements themselves*

- *There is a growth in questioning of the SDGs due to their underpinning neoliberal assumptions that economic growth is good. Should we not with our discipline be starting to question that economic growth can increase and that sustainable economic growth is possible let alone automatically good?*

Questions 10-13

Some consultations include subject-specific questions here. Please check the relevant survey for the Subject Benchmark Statement you are responding to if you wish to draft your consultation response here.

Final question

Please use this space to add any further observations relating to the revised Subject Benchmark Statement not covered in the questions above.

The revised Subject Benchmark Statements, while acknowledging the contemporary cross-cutting themes, are still harbouring a world of business and management that no-longer exists. As a result, they may serve to constrain and cripple the discipline for another decade at a time when the discipline should be raising its game, recognising the contemporary diversity of students studying within it and enabling them to learn in new ways and generate new knowledge for an uncertain but certainly challenging future.

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