



CIRCULAR

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Subject	Publication of three revised Subject Benchmark Statements
Publication date	25 September 2015
Recipients	UK higher education providers; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; academic subject associations; employer representative organisations; the Higher Education Academy; organisations representing higher education's interests and providing academic support; higher education funding councils; Sector Skills Councils; awarding organisations; the National Union of Students
Of interest to	Staff involved in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes; academic support staff; staff involved in education and accreditation activities of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; employer organisations and their members; students and their representatives
Further information	Dr Tim Burton (Head of Standards, Quality and Enhancement), QAA: t.burton@qaa.ac.uk
Related documents	Subject Benchmark Statements: Languages, Cultures and Societies Linguistics Optometry

Dear colleague,

This letter announces the publication of the Subject Benchmark Statements for Languages, Cultures and Societies; Linguistics; and Optometry.

Subject Benchmark Statements set out what graduates in a particular subject are expected to know, do and understand at the end of their programme of study. They describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas and in respect of particular qualifications.

Subject Benchmark Statements sit within Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. They are used as reference points in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes. They do not represent a national curriculum in a subject or prescribe set approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation in programme design within a framework agreed by the subject community.

In order to ensure the continuing currency of Subject Benchmark Statements, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) initiates regular reviews of their content. Each Statement is reviewed by a group drawn from and acting on behalf of the subject community, in a process facilitated by QAA. Membership of the group includes higher education providers; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; and employers, as appropriate to the subject area. Feedback is also collected from students. Further information about the review process is available from www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standardsand-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements.

The draft version of these Subject Benchmark Statements was subject to public consultation as follows:

- Linguistics and Languages, Cultures and Societies - between March and May 2015
- Optometry - between January and March 2015.

QAA is grateful to all who responded to this consultation, the feedback from which was taken into account in producing the final versions.

We would be grateful if you would circulate this letter to your colleagues as appropriate, including heads of relevant academic schools/departments within higher education providers and those responsible for the recruitment of graduates.

If you would like further information relating to the Subject Benchmark Statements or the review process, please contact Dr Tim Burton (Head of Standards, Quality and Enhancement) at t.burton@qaa.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely



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Director of Quality Development



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