

A Practical Approach to implementing Quality Management in Higher Education

A Discussion Document prepared by the EPC Working Party on Quality Assurance

Dr J D T Tannock (University of Bristol)

Dr S E Burge (Lancaster University)

Foreword

In March 1992 the Engineering Professors' Conference produced its fourth Occasional Paper (EPC4), "Quality Assurance in Higher Education". This laid down the principles of a Quality Systems Specification for universities and other Higher Education Institutions, based on quality assurance principles derived in part from industrial and commercial practice, of which the report's two main authors have considerable personal knowledge and expertise.

Following the institution of academic audit and teaching quality assessment, a number of members expressed an interest in the application of these principles at a departmental or subject based level, rather than the institution wide approach adopted in EPC4. The EPC (since the Conference's merger with the Committee for Engineering in Polytechnics now called the Engineering Professors' Council) therefore decided to invite Dr Burge and Dr Tannock, in collaboration with Professor Kel Fidler (Professor of Electronics and Pro- Vice Chancellor, University of York) to write a follow-up paper describing their own experiences in implementing such quality systems. The EPC is also pursuing discussions with HEFCE, seeking to advance the application of these principles within the Teaching Quality Assessment exercise itself, and will continue to work towards this hoped for outcome.

The Committee is very grateful to all who contributed to the production of this Occasional Paper and to the departments concerned for allowing others to benefit from their experiences.

Professor R F Boucher

Chairman of the Engineering Professors' Council

The HEFCE welcomes this EPC initiative of encouraging internalised Quality Assurance procedures and the beneficial effects that this could have in increasing the effectiveness of the TQA exercise.

Dr Paul M Clark

Director, Quality Assessment Division, HEFCE

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