

CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGIES: QPCD IN THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews definitions and meanings attached to the key terms of this research – namely, 'quality promotion' and 'capacity development' – by examining a range of concepts, models, and terminologies that occur in relevant literature and documentary sources. The review takes some account of how terms are used in different substantive and spatial contexts, and also explores how ideas associated with the key terms have changed over time. The chapter chooses to deal with the term 'capacity development', basically, purely on the basis that there is a wider body of literature on this topic, than on quality promotion (material on quality promotion being relatively difficult to locate). Although procedurally the chapter deals with the two key terms separately, an important objective of this review of the literature is to determine the extent to which the terms are conceptually interrelated in a QA context; this is explicitly considered in the final section of the chapter. The final section also discusses the relevance of the findings of this chapter for the HEQC's conceptualisation of QPCD.

2.1 Capacity Development

2.1.1 Some Issues Associated with 'Capacity Development' as a Term

'Capacity development', as a key term of this research, presents a number of issues and challenges at the outset.

First, the topic of capacity development pervades a multitude of fields. Plumbing conceptual debates around capacity development across many fields entails the risk of losing focus on what capacity development means for quality assurance in higher education. Yet, when the literature of QA in higher education was searched for material on capacity development, it yielded almost nothing at all. To reconcile the problem of far too much capacity development material on the one hand and far too little that is sufficiently specific on higher education, on the other, the literature review took as its compass point the conceptual debates of the international development field – seemingly the core of such literature as is available, apparently the richest territory, and also the field that has given impetus to capacity development as a central feature of the development enterprise, including recently in the field of QA. The research has supplemented these debates with assorted capacity development perspectives found, for example, in the documents of funding organisations for research, and in writings about capacity development in such fields as environmental development and public health.

Second, there is the issue of choice in terminology between 'capacity development' and 'capacity building' (a third term, 'capacity enhancement' is also occasionally used, e.g. by the

World Bank). The research failed to pin down any very robust distinction between these terms, although it appears that capacity building is the older and still more widely used term, while capacity development has emerged more recently and is gradually superseding the earlier term. Its emergence tends to be linked to development models that see capacity as a cornerstone of sustainable development, and that focus on the *process* of capacity development, rather than purely its outcomes.³⁰ 'Capacity development' is the term of choice of the HEQC and this would seem appropriate for a QA environment in which transformation through social and economic development is the overarching framework. However, even an organisation such as Oxfam that views capacity building as 'an approach to development, not something separate from [development],³¹ routinely uses 'capacity building' as its key term. In what follows the terms are taken to be essentially interchangeable, although for its own purposes this report adopts 'capacity development' by preference.

Third, it is apparent that no completely satisfactory definition of capacity development currently exists for QA or for any other purposes, and that the concept is in fact one in a state of flux. While this dynamism is in one sense positive – there is continuous engagement with complex and emergent issues, it is also problematic from a practical and operational perspective:

Our lack of an adequate theory of capacity building reduces our own capacity to engage in the practice.³²

[Capacity building] includes everything that was covered by the different definitions of “institution building” and much more besides ... [We] would be wise to have no truck with the ... jargon of “capacity building” and to insist on using language and terms that have identifiable and precise meanings.³³

30 United Nations multilateral agencies distinguish in theory between *exogenous* processes of **capacity building**, that support *endogenous* processes of **capacity development** – but practical use of the terms often fails to measure up to this distinction. Whyte, A (2004). *Landscape Analysis of Donor Trends in International Development*. New York, Rockefeller Foundation. (Human and Institutional Capacity Building: A Rockefeller Foundation Series, Issue No 2.): 23.

31 Eade, D (1997). *Capacity-Building: An Approach to People-Centred Development*. Oxford: Oxfam (UK and Ireland): 24.

32 Community Development Resource Association (1995). 'Capacity Building: Myth or Reality?' (CDRA Annual Report 1994/95). In *Olive Organisational Development and Training (1996)*. Capacity Building: Two Views. Perspectives from a Donor and a Non-Governmental Organisation. Durban, Olive Information Service. (Avocado Series 01/96.): 12.

33 Moore, M (1995). 'Promoting Good Government by Supporting Institutional Development'. *IDS Bulletin*, Vol 26, No 2. Quoted in Eade 1997: 1.

Imprecision may also be problematic for political reasons. Thus in the international donor aid sphere, capacity development as an apparently neutral technical term may be 'used by donors to impose their viewpoints on organisations in the South and by recipients in the South to cover imprecise project applications and improve their possibilities of being eligible for funding'.³⁴ While the politics of international aid is not the direct concern of this research, this observation highlights a fourth issue associated with 'capacity development', namely, that the neutrality of the term may be questionable, or in other words that it may be associated with very different agendas in different contexts. Importantly, this suggests a possible trap for a QA agency – such as the HEQC – which seeks explicitly to link quality promotion (gaining buy-in to QA from a rational benefit perspective) with capacity development (which, without due care, may be perceived as agenda-driven).

2.1.2 Capacity Development: Conceptual Evolution and Convergence

Capacity development (or capacity building) as a concept has been part of development literature since the 1950s, 'with various twists and turns'³⁵ and spawning a range of associated terminologies, albeit often inexactly defined:

1. A first conceptual phase in the 1950s and 1960s focused on 'institution building', with minimal attention paid to the political or cultural context of such activities. (In later years, understanding of institution building has become more nuanced, acknowledging that institutions operate not only according to laws, rules and regulations, but also norms and customs.) The focus of institution building was on individual organisations: establishing public-sector organisations, designing functioning organisations, and transplanting models from the North.
2. A second conceptual phase in the late 1960s and early 1970s associated capacity building with 'institutional strengthening', mainly through improvement of the internal functioning of individual structures and organisations, and providing tools to improve performance. (Today it is generally recognised that equating institutions with organisations is limiting in a capacity-development context.)

34 Langthaler, M (2003). *Networking and Capacity Development in Developing Countries: Reflections after the Annual Conference of the European Association for International Education*. Vienna, Austrian Development Co-operation: 3.

35 Sagar, AD (2000). 'Capacity Development for the Environment: A View for the South, a View for the North'. *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment*, Vol 25: 377-439: 377.

3. A third conceptual phase in the 1970s focused on 'development management' for delivery systems of public programmes, with a greater awareness of political and strategic issues than earlier models and a tendency to research neglected target groups.
4. A fourth conceptual phase in the 1980s highlighted 'institutional development', with a focus on organisational effectiveness as an outcome of the interaction between internal management and external environment, and emphasising links between sectoral and macro-policy issues, and the role of networks.
5. In the period since the late 1980s/early 1990s, all development organisations, whether multilateral or bilateral have subscribed to the philosophy that capacity building is central in attempts to attain sustainable development – this can be seen as marking a fifth conceptual phase. The conceptualisation of capacity development has nevertheless continued to shift. Thus, an initial focus on technical assistance programmes (notably, the World Bank's structural adjustment programmes) evolved into an increased preoccupation with human resource and professional development, while today the concept of capacity building tends to combine a focus on human capacities, organisational and managerial skills and institutional arrangements. In addition, attention is increasingly drawn to the fact that capacity development must be embedded in the social, economic and political environment in which programmes are being implemented.³⁶
6. Since the mid-1990s, in keeping with the rapid development of the knowledge society and knowledge economy, the international development community has sought to conceptualise and implement 'knowledge-based aid' and associated forms of capacity development, marking the sixth and most recent conceptual phase. The concept was first articulated by the World Bank in 1996 – when it declared its intention to be the 'knowledge bank' – and has subsequently taken shape in a variety of ways under the influence of a variety of contextual factors and new development discourses, and given the variable emphases of different agencies. Some broad features associated with the knowledge-based aid concept can be delineated. First, culture and context are acknowledged as critical factors in approaching development. Second, there is a greater emphasis on national ownership of development and development partnerships, on the participation of 'recipients' in development, and

36 Sources for numbered items 1-5: Sagar (2000: 377-383); Gunnarsson, C (2001). Capacity Building, Institutional Crisis and the Issue of Recurrent Costs. Almqvist and Wiksell, Stockholm. (Synthesis Report of the Expert Group on Development Issues, Department for International Development Co-operation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden.): 2-21; Eade (1997: 3-4); Whyte (2004: 13).

on the value of indigenous or existing knowledge and processes of mutual knowledge construction. Third, expanded knowledge needs are acknowledged and techniques of knowledge management are sought: within aid agencies, communities of practice, help desks, intranets and improved spaces for improved knowledge sharing are all used. Externally, responses include research co-operation, support to networks and portals, improved connectivity for Southern nations, e-learning and other forms of knowledge sharing that is digitised or uses information and communication technologies (ICTs). Fourth, in a knowledge-based aid environment, greater emphasis has been given to learning and capacity as part of a broader knowledge strategy, and there is a shift towards building knowledge and capacity at different levels (system, institutional, organisation, individual). As knowledge-based aid is a new concept, it cannot yet be fully evaluated, but there appear to be some question marks from a capacity-development perspective. Most critically, it is not clear that the rhetoric of mutual knowledge construction and the enhancement of existing knowledge are matched in practice; more traditional models of knowledge transfer by technical experts may still prevail in many quarters and run counter to real transformation. Moreover, it is questionable whether ICTs provide the best strategies for building capacity at institutional and individual levels, or are fully compatible with a growing emphasis on staff learning and internal capacity development. The durability of the knowledge-based aid concept remains to be seen, although 'its most positive future ... is likely to depend on the extent to which it moves further towards a reconceptualisation that connects it intimately with shared knowledge and capacity development [in the South]'.³⁷

The numbered points above have made it abundantly clear that the meanings of capacity development are not fixed. In a report such as this, an exhaustive catalogue of definitions is not much to the purpose, especially as many definitions need to be reframed for a direct application to QA. Nevertheless, there is a value in selecting and citing some definitions and models currently in use, especially in order to find convergent elements that may have application in a higher education QA environment. The definitions below are principally generic and drawn from multilateral international development organisations or initiatives, with one or two definitions from bilateral international development organisations, and one or two contextually specific definitions, thrown in for comparative purposes.

37 King, K and McGrath, S (2004). *Knowledge for Development? Comparing British, Japanese, Swedish and World Bank Aid*. Cape Town, HSRC Publications and London/New York, Zed Books: Chapter 8 and p.212; Singh, M (June 2004). 'Capacity Building in Quality Assurance: Political and Educational Challenges'. Paper presented at the Second Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education, 28-29 June 2004, UNESCO, Paris: 4-5; and Dobie, P (2002). 'Models for National Strategies: Building Capacity for Sustainable Development'. *Development Policy Journal*, Vol 1, Special Issue: Capacity for Sustainable Development: 1-18.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank generically define capacity development as 'the process by which individuals, organisations, institutions and societies develop the ability (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives'.³⁸ The UNDP approach specifies three cornerstones of effective capacity development: continuing learning and change, use and empowerment of individuals and organisations, and systematic approaches in devising strategies and programmes. It considers four key dimensions for capacity-development efforts: individuals, entities, interrelationships between entities, and the enabling environment.³⁹

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) adopted new guidelines for technical co-operation programmes in 1991. These included: long-term capacity building rather than short-term performance improvements; the importance of long-term institution building; advancing greater use of local expertise and existing structures; and encouraging broadened participation by the developing countries, acknowledging participation as an element of good governance, effectiveness and efficiency.⁴⁰ In 1999, the OECD-DAC stated that capacity development must be premised on 'ownership, choices and self-esteem'.⁴¹ In the more specific context of capacity development for the environment, the OECD-DAC has specified five interrelated components of effective capacity development:

- functions: strategic planning, effective decision-making, delegating responsibility and empowering individuals and groups, networking and collaborating, mediating and consensus building required to accomplish the task involved in environmental management;
- actors: individuals, formal organisations, informal institutions, networks of organisations that carry out the tasks necessary for environmental management;
- normative context: vision, values, organisational strategies, policies that shape capacity development for the environment;
- societal context: political, social, cultural, demographic, and geographic forces and conditions - at the global, regional, national, and local levels - to which any programme must respond; and
- resources: human, informational, financial, technological, and ecological inputs required to develop capacity for the environment.⁴²

40 Langthaler (2003: 3); Sagar (2000: 377-8).

41 Sagar (2000: 381).

42 Sagar (2000: 382).

43 Cited in Whyte (2004: 25).

44 Sagar (2000: 385-6).

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) was established as a consequence of a World Bank African Capacity Building Initiative document of 1991 and has therefore worked within the particular context of trying to identify critical institutional and policy factors for capacity development in a continent where failures to build capacity have been anecdotally ascribed to failures of governance. The ACBF defines capacity building as 'the process of transforming a nation's ability to effectively implement policies and programmes for sustainable development' and as being characterised by four elements in close interrelationship:

- restructuring the value systems of decision-makers (e.g. to appreciate the utility of analytic inputs);
- developing human capacity, with a focus on capacity formation (quantitative: increasing the supply of skills), and capacity enhancement (qualitative: deepening skills levels through the transfer of new ideas, techniques and systems);
- transforming institutional capacity: building new institutions and revitalising existing ones, with a focus on changing practices and procedures to encourage effective utilisation of resources; and
- modifying organisational structure, with a focus on strategy to develop human capacity.⁴³

Bilateral international development agencies display a variety of approaches to capacity development. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) sees its task as being to make sustainable development possible (so eliminating the need for development co-operation in the long run), and to use capacity development and institutional development as its principal methodologies. In its view, capacity development comes from the combined outcome of activities at three levels of intervention: development of the knowledge and competence of individuals; development of organisations or systems of organisations; and change and strengthening of institutional frameworks within which individuals and organisations operate. SIDA places a particular emphasis on capacity development as the *development of knowledge*, as distinct from the transfer of knowledge – i.e. active give and take between partners leading to creation of new knowledge. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has, like SIDA, developed an agency-wide approach to capacity development in the form of policies, operational tools and monitoring methods, and it views capacity development as an integral part of its programming strategy, while focusing its efforts largely at organisational level. In contrast to SIDA and CIDA, the UK Department for International Development

43 Wubneh, M (2003). 'Building Capacity in Africa: The Impact of Institutional, Policy and Resource Factors'. African Development Review, December 2003, Vol 15, Issue 2/3: 165-198: 169-170.

(DFID) has not conceptualised capacity development as an agency-wide strategy or methodology. Rather, it views capacity building as a suite of support activities in the context of particular projects, and is still debating the merits of individual, as opposed to institutional, capacity building. There is some evidence that the DFID model is still primarily based on knowledge transfer, although the empowerment of those whose capacities are being built is one of the agency's stated objectives. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) approach to capacity building is framed within the OECD-DAC approach, and frequently depends on traditional modalities of technical assistance. However, the JICA approach has always been distinguished by a commitment to local ownership, as well as to the value of sharing of experience (given that Japan itself was a recipient of aid 50 years ago and therefore offers proven models and systems as a basis for engagement with developing countries).⁴⁴

In a final context-specific example, the Global Forum for Health Research (Geneva, 2000) defined capacity building as 'the ability to define problems, set objectives and priorities, build sustainable institutions and organisations, and identify solutions to key national health problems.' Core concepts and principles for health research capacity building include: promotion of networks, alliances, collaboration and opportunities for action-oriented input; development of mutual trust and shared decision-making; national ownership; and an emphasis on translating research findings into policy and practice.⁴⁵

The definitions and models highlighted above are all of relatively recent date (from the fifth and sixth phases of conceptualising capacity development, as set out earlier in this section). As is therefore to be expected, there are convergent elements between these, which serve to delineate the intellectual context, which has served to shape the conceptualisation of capacity development in QA (i.e. conceptual processes of recent date, explored in more depth in Section 2.1.5). Key convergent elements are a focus on, and are concerned with:

- capacity development that builds both human and institutional abilities to 'think' (identify problems, set objectives, design strategies and solutions, analyse experience) and to 'act' (perform functions, acquire and apply skills and techniques, implement policies and programmes, change policy and practice);
- capacity development that is at least as much process-oriented as it is outcomes-oriented;
- capacity development that is informed by context-specific values and factors and

44 Whyte (2004: 45-46); King and McGrath (2004: Chapters 5, 6 & 7).

45 Reddy, P, Taylor, SE, and Sifunda, S (2002). 'Research Capacity Building and Collaboration Between South African and American Partners: The Adaptation of an Intervention Model for HIV/AIDS Prevention in Corrections Research'. *AIDS Education and Prevention*, 14, Supplement B: 92-102: 95-97.

- aims to secure the context as an enabling environment;
- capacity development that utilises effectively both new and existing capacity and resources (including human resources) and establishes mechanisms for sustainability;
- multi-level, multi-pronged capacity development;
- participation, ownership and empowerment as part of the process of capacity development and evidence of good governance in the process;
- networks, collaboration and consensus-building as modalities of capacity development; and
- capacity development that is strategic and problem-solving (as well as possibly policy-generating, and sometimes new-knowledge-creating) in orientation.

2.1.3 Some Recurring Themes in Discussions of Capacity Development

The literature on capacity development contains recurring themes. Some of these are selected below, in order to expand on issues so far broached in passing in seeking to pin down a contemporary conceptualisation of capacity development. The themes are presented in no particular order, and the relationships between some of them are circular. The intention is to highlight, at a high level, core ideas that can influence the development of approaches for QA capacity development in South African higher education.

2.1.3.1 *Paradigm Shifts and Scope*

Discussion under Section 2.1.2 has shown that conceptions of capacity development, and the way in which it links to development (e.g. as a support to, and separate from, development; or alternatively, as an approach to, and an integral part of, development) have evolved and are likely to continue to evolve, notwithstanding a substantial degree of convergence in current thinking. Unsurprisingly, a recurring theme of capacity-development literature is the notion that certain 'paradigm shifts' need to be achieved to boost the success of capacity-development efforts (and so overcome the limitations of past efforts). Reviewed critically, these urgings to adopt new paradigms seem largely to indicate a view on the part of those with experience of capacity development, that the scope of capacity development as a field of endeavour is greater than may have been thought when notions of capacity building were first formulated. Examples of some recommended paradigm shifts are listed below.

- **A shift from technical and analytical tools that support professional skills development, to systems-oriented change approaches** that develop and co-ordinate human and institutional competencies, and that facilitate problem-solving,

skills utilisation, policy relevance, and new knowledge creation as outcomes. The following is a good example of the kind of invocations that appear in the literature:

Success now depends on our ability to marry knowledge and execution. This means supporting new types of training configurations. It means linking training to the broader goal of building organisations and institutions that are well-managed [*sic*], strategic and stable. It means strengthening organisations that are flexible and nimble enough to adapt to new technologies, changing political conditions and market opportunities. And it means connecting the dots across institutions for mutual reinforcement.⁴⁶

- **A shift from using one or two approaches within a single project to using a suite of different modalities within the same programme.** As one example, modalities used by international donors to build professional competencies span the following: use of advisers and consultants; training programmes, ranging from degree programmes to training of trainers; workshops, meetings and conferences; study tours; twinning arrangements; centres of excellence; networks; research, including collaborative research; awards, scholarships, fellowships, and internships; libraries, resource centres and field stations; equipment, infrastructure, and connectivity; benchmarking; and publications.⁴⁷
- **A shift in focus from the tangible to the intangible elements of capacity development, grounded in a developmental reading of capacity needs.** While many capacity development initiatives (and especially those that target the organisational level) focus on tangible resource needs, skills audits and the like, there is an argument to be made that, as change processes are ambiguous and complex, capacity development primarily demands:

... constant self-reflection, reflection on practice, if practice is to be improved. It demands the exercise of facilitation skills which are labelled “soft” but which are the most difficult, demanding, and challenging skills to master – observation and listening skills, the ability to ask the right question, the holding of ambiguity, uncertainty, and contradiction, the ability to draw enthusiasm out of exhaustion and cynicism, overcoming resistance to change, empathy ... In other words, it demands developmental skills, and although we talk a lot about the

46 Pitcoff, W (2004). Investing in People: Building the Capacity of Community Development, Training and Social Enterprise Practitioners. New York, Rockefeller Foundation. (Human and Institutional Capacity Building: A Rockefeller Foundation Series, Issue No 1.): 5-6.

47 Whyte (2004: 28).

development of capacity we tend to concentrate on the delivery of “product”. In short, we do not practise what the situation demands.⁴⁸

This particular analysis argues that capacity development requires capability (on the part of the developing agency) to read the developmental phase of those organisations whose capacity is being built, against an established background theory and with a deep understanding of development.

2.1.3.2 *Power and Dependency*

The capacity development literature is marbled with references to dynamics of power and dependency in capacity development. Sometimes the issues are closely addressed (especially in texts that analyse North-South relations);⁴⁹ sometimes the issues are tacitly present as if they are so much part of the field that they need not be explicitly surfaced. The conceptual evolution of capacity development from institution building following Northern models, to co-construction of knowledge between development partners, provides the best evidence that dynamics of power and dependency have played themselves out often enough, and with sufficient failures and negative consequences to require new strategies. The sharpest lessons of all have perhaps been afforded by experience in Africa, where realisation has come that unilateral capacity-building solutions have had no long-term impact⁵⁰ and that 'donors may be undermining capacities as fast as they are building them'⁵¹. Experiences such as these have plainly demonstrated that capacity development must take account of: contextual relevance and appropriateness, indigenous and existing knowledge, partnership and participation, and sustainability and innovation.

In a nutshell, the objective of capacity development must be independence, or interdependence, and not dependence. Capacity development initiatives will almost certainly fail if they are thrust upon 'recipients', if they focus on short-term responses and outcomes, or if resources and access are closely guarded by the capacity-building agency. Instead capacity development should be based on processes that incorporate critical self-reflection, action learning and mutual learning; that focus on long-term solutions; and that

48 Kaplan, A (2000). 'Capacity Building: Shifting the Paradigms of Practice'. *Development in Practice*, Vol 10, Nos 3 & 4, August 2000: 517-525: 521.

49 See for example: Hall, A (2002). 'Innovation Systems and Capacity Development: an Agenda for North-South Research Collaboration'. *International Journal of Technology Management and Sustainable Development*, 2002, Vol 1 Issue 3: 146-152.

50 Wubneh (2003: 166-167).

51 Whyte (2004: 8).

demonstrate willingness on the part of capacity-building agencies to relinquish control.⁵²

2.1.3.3 *The Role of Networks*

Consistent with the emerging emphasis on partnership, participation, co-constructed knowledge and new knowledge, the role of networks and collaboration is a recurring theme in contemporary capacity development. It is apparent that networks exist in different forms: as forums, as organisations, as 'inter-organisations', as institutions without much organisational structure, and as virtual arrangements utilising ICTs. Networking projects may, over time, build up a successful track record and become institutionalised in their own right.

Generally speaking, networks are viewed in the literature as cost-effective where capacity and demand is widely dispersed and where no single institution is likely to reach critical mass in terms of needed capacity. However, the real utility of networks for capacity development would seem to be accessed only where they are underpinned by a well-conceived strategy. Accordingly, the literature yields very different opinions on networks. Some are cautious, suggesting that networks constitute capacity development only in the broadest sense. As one example:

The value of networks – whether it be in the form of professional associations or informal networking among peers – is ambiguous. Some feel that the peer-to-peer learning fostered by these groups is highly effective, while others say that the time and costs associated with participating in such networks is simply not worth it.⁵³

For others – especially, as might be anticipated, from a research capacity development perspective – networks are critical components of innovation systems, as 'evolving systems of actors' engage in research and the application of research findings. Conceptualised as systems for innovation, networks provide a framework, among other things, to explore patterns of partnership; to reveal and manage the contexts that govern relationships; to understand innovation as a social process of learning; and to think of capacity development in a systems sense.⁵⁴

2.1.3.4 *Multiple Levels and Modalities of Capacity Development*

References have already been made to the fact that contemporary conceptualisations of

52 CDRA (1995: 16-18).

53 Pitcoff (2004: 13).

54 Hall (2002: 148).

capacity development emphasise the need for interventions at multiple levels and using a wide range of modalities. The limitations of more singular approaches are frequently cited in the literature. Thus, for example, critiques of capacity development that focuses too closely at the individual level include that: human capital is not a fixed asset; that human capital is sometimes not a broad enough tool to effect change; and that human capital can drain resources.⁵⁵ From another angle, capacity development approaches that emphasise training are criticised because they may tend to perpetuate top-down modes of knowledge transfer, as well as because they may rely on a single delivery model of capacity development that is not effective in all situations. Where training is selected as an appropriate mode, then it is emphasised that a nuanced approach is needed. For example: training needs to be designed as part of a systematic and planned programme, with built-in support and evaluation processes;⁵⁶ and cohorts for group training should be carefully selected in order to match skills levels or interests.⁵⁷

The general emphasis in the literature is therefore on capacity-development strategies, approaches and modalities that work in various kinds of combination. However, the literature occasionally warns of dangers inherent in the development of very complex approaches. It is pointed out, for example, that first-generation ACBF initiatives suffered from 'problems of over-design' as they tried to integrate multiple components in single projects without leveraging central capacities (e.g. policy analysis, research, training and dissemination).⁵⁸ The implication is that specific kinds of internal expertise and capacity need to be built and deployed appropriately, if external capacity development is to be effective.

2.1.3.5 *Means, Process and End*

A distinction has already been made between early conceptions of capacity building as outcomes-oriented, and contemporary conceptions of capacity development as process-oriented (Section 2.1.1). The literature suggests that, under a contemporary view, capacity development can quite conceivably be means, process and end at the same time – i.e. constitute a mix of initiatives.

- Where capacity development is conceived as a means to an end, initiatives may focus on strengthening an organisation to perform or implement specified activities.

55 Pitcoff (2004: 12).

56 Brews, A (1994). *The Capacity Building Debate*. Durban, Olive Information Service. (Avocado Series 01/94): 12.

57 *Op.cit.*, 14.

58 Wubneh (2003: 180).

- Where capacity development is conceived as a process, initiatives may focus on processes of leadership and adaptation; reflection and search for greater coherence in theory or practice; debate, relationship building, conflict resolution or developing the ability to deal with differences.
- Where capacity development is conceived as an end, initiatives may focus on strengthening individuals', or organisations', ability to fulfil defined objectives, or on strengthening organisations or systems for mission fulfilment.⁵⁹

2.1.4 A Summing-up on Capacity Development

As a summing-up on contemporary notions of good practice in capacity development, the following 'default principles' – adapted from principles identified by the UNDP⁶⁰ – are useful, especially when read in combination with the convergent conceptual elements identified at the end of Section 2.1.2 –

1. Capacity development is a long-term process and cannot be rushed.
2. The value system of participants in capacity-development efforts must be respected, and their self-esteem fostered.
3. For capacity development to occur, knowledge cannot be transferred but needs to be acquired. It is important to scan knowledge both locally and globally, and to reinvent locally as needed.
4. Capacity development requires a challenging of mindsets and power differentials (remembering that capacity development is not power-neutral and challenging mindsets and vested interests is difficult).
5. Capacity development requires reflection and action to support sustainable capacity outcomes. Given that capacity is at the core of development, any course of action needs to promote this end.
6. Positive incentives, aligned with the objectives of capacity development, need to be established. These are likely to include governance systems that respect fundamental rights.
7. The inputs of the capacity development agency need to be integrated into the priorities, processes and systems of the capacity development partner; and where partner systems are not strong enough, they should be reformed and strengthened, not bypassed.
8. The focus should be on building existing capacities, rather than creating new ones.

⁵⁹ Eade (1997: 34-35).

⁶⁰ Adapted from: Lopes, C and Theisohn, T (2003). 'Ownership, Leadership and Transformation: Can We Do Better for Capacity Development?' Earthscan 2003. New York, UNDP. Cited in Whyte 2004: 74.

9. Engagement must be sustained under difficult circumstances: the weaker the capacity the greater the need.
10. Capacity development programmes must remain accountable to ultimate beneficiaries; and development should be anchored firmly in stakeholder participation and pressure for an inclusive accountability system should be maintained.

2.1.5 Capacity Development in Quality Assurance in Higher Education

This discussion of capacity development indicated at the outset (Section 2.1.1) that a useful literature of capacity development in QA in higher education could not be located by the research. From the perspective of policy and research, the field is a new one (this may be more or less true of practice, which is more fully explored in Chapter 3).

For the present, the most systematic effort to define, or give shape to, capacity development in QA in higher education is occurring under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications was launched as part of UNESCO's mission to respond to emerging ethical challenges and dilemmas for higher education, as a result of globalisation. The First Global Forum (October 2004) proposed an action plan for implementation by UNESCO focusing on roles of standard setting, capacity building and providing clearing-house functions. The Second Global Forum (June 2004), aimed to set the basis for a strategy for capacity building and partnerships. It considered regional developments in revising recognition conventions; noted progress in the elaboration of UNESCO/OECD guidelines on quality in cross-border provision of higher education; and initiated a needs assessment of capacity building efforts in the regions. This began to formulate prerequisites for efficient capacity building in QA in higher education. Although these factors were identified in the specific context of regional/national quality/QA systems, they include desirable features of capacity development already encountered in this report: inclusive stakeholder participation, long-term processes to assure sustainability, multi-level strategies and initiatives, networks and collaborations, and so on.⁶¹

At the Second Global Forum, at least one attempt (specified as a 'work-in-progress') was

61 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (2004). UNESCO's Capacity Building Activities in Qualifications Recognition, Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Towards a Coherent Framework. (UNESCO-OECD Guidelines on Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education: Drafting Meeting 3, Paris, 17-18 January 2005.)

made to give conceptual content to the notion of capacity development in QA in higher education: this contribution was made by the HEQC's own executive leadership. As the only example of its kind located by this research, it is worth quoting in full. Key ideas in this conceptualisation are highlighted below, and evince an emphasis on stakeholder participation and inclusive processes, and contextualised development and application of knowledge. In its citing of a 'maximalist objective in capacity development' as the ability to develop and implement locally-relevant QA knowledge and strategies, this conceptualisation rests on the importance of leveraging new QA knowledge and practice for particular circumstances. Such an objective requires a (contemporary) approach to capacity development that harnesses, mobilises and develops existing capacities for 'step change' in the short term (as technical skills are acquired and utilised), and sustainable system development in the longer run (as reflective practice occurs and is supported).

Capacity development in quality assurance in higher education encompasses a **philosophical approach, a set of objectives, strategies, techniques and procedures, and a programme of activities** which must lead to the **enhanced ability of a range of role-players and stakeholders to act in order to facilitate, support, develop, increase and monitor quality in their respective spheres of operation** in higher education. The role-players and stakeholders could include governments and government departments, national quality assurance and accreditation agencies, higher education institutions, a range of individuals, (e.g. deans or quality assurance co-ordinators at institutions or in faculties, and constituencies (e.g. students), national and regional higher education associations with a focus on quality, professional associations, etc. The **enhanced ability to act is based on the acquisition of relevant information, knowledge and understandings, and the development of capacities and skills to respond creatively and strategically to particular contextual challenges in ways that make a demonstrable difference to the quality of provision.** Becoming well versed in quality assurance techniques would be an important capacity development gain. **Becoming able to develop and implement locally relevant quality assurance knowledge and strategies is the decisive maximalist objective in capacity development.**⁶²

2.1.6 Quality Enhancement and Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Although capacity development in QA in higher education receives very little attention in

⁶² Singh (June 2004: 6). [Emphasis added].

the literature, the concept of quality enhancement (QE) has been elaborated to some degree.

Under a broad conception, enhancement refers to change resulting in improvement, and QE in higher education is especially about 'making things better' in core functions. Teaching and learning tend to receive particular attention as focuses of QE, although research and service are appropriate focuses also. Improvement typically proceeds from an evaluation of a *status quo*, and is supported as conditions for change are created, and as purposeful change processes are implemented. In the context of QA, QE may be associated with regulatory and/or developmental processes, and may accordingly be promoted for compliance/accountability and/or for developmental purposes:

QE associated with QA is integral to the regulation of quality and standards and is essentially driven by the public and professional accountability imperative. The primary way of achieving enhancement is through self-review and subsequent action often within prescribed frameworks [...] It often involves peer review and discussion with peers and increasingly benchmarking against information contained in codes, guidelines, policies and subject benchmark statements. [...] QE associated with development, innovation and experimentation takes place all the time at all levels of the HE system. It fulfils a deep need for individuals, teams, departments and institutions to creatively exploit new opportunities or solve problems, to learn from existing good practice or to experiment with entirely new practice. It fosters a complementary set of behaviours and actions to that promoted by QA.⁶³

QE is conceived as a complex process and as a continuous goal:

At a basic level, enhancement of quality involves examining what one is doing and as a consequence, making explicit aims, objectives and outcomes. At the next level, enhancement may involve making incremental changes [...] At the third level, quality enhancement will involve doing things in new ways. The most radical forms of quality enhancement are those, which involve transformational changes, which call for a complete re-examination, re-conceptualisation and re-direction of existing practice.⁶⁴

63 Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre (September 2002). Principles to Promote Quality Enhancement. Available at <http://www.heacademy/quality> (accessed 11 April 2005): 2.

64 Middlehurst R (1997). 'Enhancing Quality'. In Coffield, F and Williamson, J. Repositioning Higher Education. Oxford, Society for Research in Higher Education and Oxford University. Cited in LTSN-ILTHE-HESDA Creative Thinking Group Understanding Quality Enhancement. (Working Paper No 2). Available at <http://www.heacademy/quality> (accessed 11 April 2005): 7.

Thus, QE is seen as incorporating a dimension of innovation, where innovation is explicitly associated with the purpose of improvement. In addition, this innovation proceeds in the first instance from an evaluation of existing practice, meaning that QE is about effective utilisation of pre-existing knowledge and prior experience in a system.

For the purposes of this research, the key point about quality enhancement is that it constitutes improvement on existing capacity. While its end goals of continuous improvement and innovation are compatible with capacity development's end goals (e.g. sustainable development, building upon existing knowledge, creating new knowledge), the starting point is different. Essentially, QE initiates change for improvement against some baseline capacity that already exists; capacity development begins with an awareness of an existing 'deficit' in the form of undeveloped, underdeveloped, latent or untapped capacity.

2.2 Quality Promotion

The literature on concepts and models for quality promotion, or even for advocacy more broadly, appears to be extremely slender and – as in the case of capacity development – very little of it is dedicated to the higher education field. This brief discussion nevertheless begins with higher education, from a perspective that has become familiar in this literature review (international development).

The World Declaration on Higher Education (1998)⁶⁵ can be read as providing a broad framework for what quality promotion in higher education should involve. The Declaration acknowledges that if higher education is to meet its social obligations to develop and deliver quality, then the effort to do so must involve not only governments and higher education institutions, but also all stakeholders. Thus, one might derive from the Declaration, as a first conceptual principle, that if a higher education ethos of quality is to be institutionalised, it must be promoted through appropriate framework policy, through the mission statements of institutions, and also through the contributions to both of stakeholders who must co-define the meaning of quality.

The Declaration frames its articles exclusively in terms of quality enhancement (i.e. change for improvement against some baseline of quality that already exists), rather than quality development (i.e. development of capacity to deliver quality in higher education, where such capacity has not already been accessed). Nevertheless, the Declaration is clear on the need to establish independent national bodies that can define internationally comparative

65 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1998). World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action. (Adopted by the World Conference on Higher Education, 9 October 1998.) The discussion that follows draws particularly on Articles 11, 12, 13, 15 and 17.

standards of quality, duly contextualised regionally, nationally and institutionally. As a second conceptual principle, then, the promotion of quality in higher education requires some dedicated agency, whose task it is to implement initiatives that will render notions of quality relevant to a particular higher education system.

The Declaration advocates quality as a multidimensional construct, which must be delivered through a multiple focus on all higher education's functions and activities: teaching and academic programmes; research and scholarship; services to the community and the academic environment; staffing and staff development; students and student development; buildings, facilities and equipment; ICTs; higher education management and financing; sharing knowledge and know-how across borders and continents; and partnerships and alliances amongst stakeholders as a prime matrix for higher education renewal. A third conceptual principle, which therefore emerges is that quality promotion is a complex activity that must draw in multiple role players, perspectives and relationships. Although the Declaration goes no further, one might infer that quality promotion will therefore entail the need for consistent messages, appropriately tailored for a variety of audiences (advocacy of a particular idea of quality, and dissemination of that idea through a range of media), and that some process of intellectual enquiry must underpin these activities to ensure that messages have meaningful impact and sustain their relevance for target groups.

The World Declaration, which may be interpreted as promoting quality in these terms, is itself an outcome of a changing environment for higher education since the 1980s. In this period, as economic activities have globalised and as higher education itself has expanded, higher education has come under pressure to deliver and assure quality at a nationally comparable and internationally acceptable standard. During the 1990s, many countries initiated national QA mechanisms and agencies with related QP functions, and this has cascaded in turn into the establishment of 'quality promotion units' in higher education institutions around the world. Against this background, the reason for a scarcity of conceptual literature with respect to QP in higher education needs to be hypothesised. First, the conceptualisation of QA in national systems may have been informed first and foremost by concerns of accountability, so that QP was 'thinly' conceived as a means to the implementation of quality controls. Second, the experience of implementing national QA systems is relatively new: after some years, an intellectual re-evaluation of QP may well be beginning, but these processes have not yet translated into substantial research and published findings. (The validity of these hypotheses may become more apparent in a consideration of QP aspects of national QA systems, undertaken in Chapter 3.)

Conceptualisation of quality promotion in fields other than higher education is also somewhat meagre. This research explored two avenues in order to acquire insights of value

to higher education. The first avenue is the Total Quality Management (TQM) movement in business and organisations. (TQM has had some impact on the conceptualisation of QMS in higher education institutions.) The second avenue is quality promotion in health services. (This sector must fulfil public and social roles as higher education must, and has its own established QA tradition.)

TQM⁶⁶ has been highly significant in business, spawning a host of improvement initiatives that share its basic principles, such as business process engineering, business excellence, performance excellence, lean thinking, just-in-time production techniques, six sigma programmes, and so on. In its details, TQM is about management processes and disciplines, and statistical control methods, to eliminate variation in production processes, and so to achieve lower cost, improved productivity, and quality improvements in a final product that will exceed customer expectations. As such, TQM's relevance to this discussion may appear largely tangential. However, TQM has made some important conceptual contributions that can be seen as constituting a relevant quality promotion model:

- TQM rests on a particular philosophy of quality, namely that the management of quality should focus on institutionalising a culture of quality and continuous improvement in all processes of production, rather than on inspection of quality in the final product or service. Thus, it can be said that TQM's starting point for advocating quality is a particular definition of what quality is, and a clear objective for focusing on quality (continuous improvement over the long term).
- TQM aims to engage every member of an enterprise to participate in, and take responsibility for, quality and continuous improvement. TQM therefore seems to regard the promotion of quality as necessary across all layers of those involved in the production of quality. Moreover, TQM envisages the achievement of quality as the outcome of a systems approach.
- TQM believes that quality must be customer-driven, rather than organisation-driven. The promotion of quality therefore requires the gathering of information from customers, and the ongoing modification of services and processes to meet those needs as well as possible.
- TQM relates quality to a focus on the satisfaction of end-customers, but also to the quality expectations of intermediate, or internal service recipients. TQM thus

66 This evaluation has been synthesised from the researcher's review of a wide variety of TQM internet sites, in the absence of identified peer-reviewed journal articles dealing with the quality promotional aspects of TQM. See for example, <http://improve.org/tqm/html>, <http://www.isixsigma.com/me/tqm>, <http://hrzone.com/topics/tqm>, <http://www.theworkingmanager.com>, etc.

appears to advocate quality as a 'chain' of benefits, and hence to provide a rational case as well as incentives for a focus on quality.

- TQM requires systematic forms of support, measurement and monitoring. TQM therefore appears to conceptualise quality promotion as requiring concrete processes of engagement, data collection and other forms of enquiry, feedback, evaluation and adjustment.

The health services sector has a long tradition of QA, as it has sought to provide objective evidence that public funds are being well spent in identifying opportunities for service improvement; and in facilitating innovation in health care delivery. Alongside QA mechanisms, concepts and models for quality promotion in health services (as well as models for health promotion, as a separate concept) have emerged. These tend to converge around the following components:

- having in place an agreed philosophy and vision of health, based on sound theoretical principles and a sense of direction and coherence;
- securing strategic leadership and motivated, skilled staff in health services/hospitals;
- basing health service provision on assessed need, with planned approaches and defined methods for quality;
- constructing partnerships for quality delivery in health services;
- encouraging consumer participation and reflection in giving content to quality in health services;
- conducting initiatives to collect, analyse and disseminate information on quality of health services; and
- using information to effect quality improvements on the ground, as well as to reorient key decision makers.⁶⁷

2.2.1 A Summing-up on Quality Promotion

This attempt to establish the conceptual elements of quality promotion, drawing on higher education and other sectors, has highlighted the following features:

- The promotion of quality is associated with the objectives of institutionalising an ethos or culture of quality in a system, and of continuously improving quality.
- The philosophy or idea of quality that is being advocated is always particularised and contextualised (quality cannot be promoted in the abstract).

⁶⁷ Kemm, J (1999). The Links Between Quality and Health Promotion. Paper prepared for Health Promoting Hospitals, an international network initiated by the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe.

- Effective quality promotion requires some defined form of agency, i.e. concrete structures, processes and initiatives.
- Quality promotion involves defining and making accessible certain techniques for quality improvement.
- Quality promotion is a managed process, but is also designed to elicit bottom-up knowledge and perspectives on how quality can be improved, and to encourage participation and involvement in quality improvement.
- Quality promotion is accompanied by enquiry into the actual quality of delivery, and the intention is to act upon feedback or to use feedback as a springboard for further quality improvement.

2.3 The Interrelationship of QP and CD in a Quality Assurance Context

This literature review has aimed to highlight conceptual aspects of quality promotion and capacity development, in order to apply these in the context of QA in higher education. It has, in the process, contended with some limitations: terms that tend to be loosely applied, patchy literature, tenuous links between identified source material and the target of the enquiry. Despite these limitations, some key observations can be made.

First, QP and CD have different conceptual histories. Conceptualisation of QP has apparently not travelled very far as yet, although of course it may evolve. Perhaps there is little need to elaborate much beyond the key concept that, if quality is to be attained, institutionalised and improved, then ways must be found to make people aware of what quality is (or is advocated to be), and to become involved or immersed in its achievement. In contrast, the conceptualisation of CD has gone through many phases, especially under the impetus of development organisations grappling with particular agendas and confronting particular circumstances and reactions. As a consequence, CD concepts are time-bound and no definitive conceptualisation is possible. For the moment, however, contemporary thinking about CD appears to have converged very usefully around some key concepts.

Second, therefore, it is possible in the cases of both QP and CD to isolate some core conceptual principles in current thinking. Effective QP is seen as involving: advocacy of a *particular* idea of quality; objectives of institutionalised quality culture and continuous quality improvement; concrete interventions and engagement to support continuous quality improvement (disseminating ideas and techniques, instituting data collection, eliciting and responding to feedback); systemic approaches and inclusive processes and perspectives. Effective CD is seen as involving: building both human and institutional abilities for reflection and action, to ensure sustainable capacity outcomes; multi-level, multi-pronged initiatives for impact; long-term processes for sustainability; value-based processes to match objectives to context; participative processes to access existing and

complementary sources of knowledge, to encourage ownership and to shift power dynamics; and reflective processes to support new knowledge, innovation and reinvention in context.

Third, while there are some distinctive conceptual elements, these tend to be buttressed by shared – or strongly related – elements in the conceptualisation of QP and CD. The most significant conceptual overlaps would seem to be that the effective promotion of quality and the effective development of capacity each require: a conceptual underpinning that is value-based and contextualised (i.e. with respect to the way in which quality, or the objectives of capacity development, are defined); interventions which are multi-level and multidimensional and engage whole systems; associated mechanisms and processes which are participative and empowering; and a focus on outcomes that are self-renewing (continuous improvement, sustainable development).

Table 1 sets out both the 'most distinctive' and the shared/related conceptual elements of QP and CD, for comparison.

Table 1: QP and CD – Distinctive and Shared Elements of Contemporary Conceptualisation

| | Quality Promotion | | Capacity Development | |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <i>Most Distinctive Concepts</i> | <i>Shared/ Related Concepts</i> | | <i>Most Distinctive Concepts</i> |
| Objective | Institutionalisation of quality culture | Continuous improvement | Sustainable development | Building human and institutional abilities for action and reflection |
| Focus | Advocacy | Systemic and multi-level | Systems-oriented, multi-level and multi-pronged | Development |
| Approach | Involving all levels and actors in quality improvement | Advocating a particularised, contextualised philosophy of quality Disseminating quality improvement techniques Eliciting feedback (from customers and those involved in production of quality) Instituting concrete processes of engagement (e.g. data collection, enquiry, feedback, evaluation and adjustment) for further quality improvement | Setting CD objectives that are contextualised and value-based (in terms of the context and values of development partners) Transferring knowledge/facilitating knowledge acquisition Accessing existing knowledge and reinventing knowledge in context Developing ability for, and encouraging, reflection and analysis to support knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation and innovation | Co-constructing knowledge |
| Process | | Inclusive and empowering processes to involve all relevant parties in the production of quality Continuous processes | Participative and empowering processes to access existing and complementary sources of knowledge, and to develop ownership Long-term processes that establish mechanisms for sustainability | |

The existence of significant shared conceptual elements leads to observations that are of relevance specifically for the conceptualisation of QP and CD in QA in higher education.

Given that a strong conceptual link exists between continuous improvement (quality renewal as the desired outcome of QP) and sustainable development (capacity renewal as the desired outcome of CD), then in the context of QA in higher education, QP and CD

provide fully compatible opportunities for higher education renewal (or transformation, in the South African higher education environment).⁶⁸ This is true whether CD aims to build capacity for the delivery of quality *per se*, or whether it aims to build capacity for QA. In the latter case, the desired outcome is the self-regulation of quality, in itself a form of sustainable development.

Moreover, it seems that the shared conceptual elements of QP and CD provide a firm basis for well-integrated frameworks, programmes and activities to establish and entrench QA systems, by facilitating simultaneously institutionalisation of quality culture, and development of QA and QM knowledge and capacity. An acceptance of QP and CD as conceptually-integrated approaches with aligned objectives (while also incorporating some distinctive origins and emphases), seems a more rewarding approach than any attempt to parse the concepts and pursue their objectives in ways that may not capitalise on available synergies and complementarities. Because QP and CD share so many conceptual elements, it is difficult to envisage associated activities along a continuum, or even in terms of a clear progression over time. Although logic might suggest that the promotion of quality or QA would precede the development of capacity for quality or QA, this could only be true – if at all – when a QA system is very new. Given the shared elements identified here, it would rather seem that QP and CD elements of a QA system would need to be developed and sustained concurrently. Although this review of concepts and terminologies in the literature has not involved a searching focus on modalities and methodologies, the shared conceptual elements of QP and CD provide some indications as to where QP and CD initiatives in QA in higher education might usefully consolidate (e.g. forums for the sharing and eliciting of information, and to facilitate reflection on practice; networks as bases of knowledge partnership and innovation; research to evaluate quality improvement needs and to identify opportunities for improvement; and so on).

Finally, it is necessary to consider briefly the relationship between the findings of this chapter and the HEQC's conceptualisation of QPCD, as illustrated in Draft QPCD Framework #5 (see Section 1.3).

Notably, many of the framework's conceptual emphases are consistent with conceptual emphases of QP and CD as they have emerged in this analysis (e.g. continuous improvement, institutionalisation of quality ethos, sustainable capacity for QA, context-specific and value-based QPCD approaches, multi-level and multi-dimensional programme focus, participative and partnership QPCD approaches, orientation of QPCD

68 The same applies for a higher education QA approach that combines QP and QE, given QE's end goals of continuous improvement and improvement-led innovation.

programme around the fostering of reflective practice, new knowledge and innovation). In addition, the draft framework advances an understanding of QP and CD as interrelated concepts. While it highlights distinctive aspects of the two in its conceptualisation, it generally⁶⁹ portrays them as complementary and mutually reinforcing. In sum, the draft framework appears to be well synchronised with contemporary conceptualisation of QP and CD. To that extent, it can be considered a creature of its time and is presumably well poised, even in its draft form, to track and adapt to future conceptual developments. In fact, given the relatively weak conceptualisation of QP and CD in the specific context of QA in higher education, the framework has an opportunity to contribute to, and influence, a fuller understanding of QPCD purposes and approaches in its field.

Development of the framework could possibly encompass attention to some of the more detailed issues that have emerged from this research, where these are judged by the HEQC to be sufficiently striking. Some examples are selected here for illustrative purposes:

- The research has pointed out the risk that the rhetoric of mutual knowledge construction may fail to materialise in reality. The framework places value on co-construction of knowledge by selecting a QPCD approach that is 'participative', 'dynamic' and 'critical'.⁷⁰ The framework may wish to detail more concretely ways in which mutual knowledge construction is to be facilitated and supported.
- The research has highlighted that independence (or interdependence) is an ideal outcome of CD initiatives. This is consistent with the HEQC's goal of a self-regulating QA system.⁷¹ There may be an opportunity to profile this aspect of the QPCD framework more sharply, especially as a means of underlining the 'rational benefit case' for a QPCD programme.
- The research has noted the importance of new knowledge generation through QPCD approaches, and has touched here and there on the potential of reflective processes to generate new policy or reorient decision-makers. The framework may have an opportunity to make more explicit the systemic benefits that can be envisaged as flowing from a QPCD programme.

69 Draft QPCD Framework #5 does, however, try to divide initiatives into distinctly QP and CD initiatives, and encounters some difficulties. See: Draft QPCD Framework #5: 11.

70 See Section 1.3, item 14.

71 See Section 1.3, item 3.