

*Quality Audit  
of Uppsala  
University*

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**Quality Audit of Uppsala University**

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THE NATIONAL SWEDISH AGENCY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
Department of Evaluation and Quality Audit

Among the tasks devolving upon the National Agency for Higher Education is that of conducting quality audits for Swedish institutions of higher education. During the three-year period beginning in 1995/96, the quality enhancement programs of 36 universities and colleges will be audited. The National Agency audit of these quality enhancement programs and their implementation forms one aspect of governmental follow-up and evaluation of Swedish university and college operations.

The National Agency appoints individual visiting teams for each audit. Their evaluations are made on the basis of the university's own self-evaluation documents and a team visit to the university in question. A detailed description of the evaluative process and its practical implementation may be found in the Agency report *The National Quality Audit of Higher Education in Sweden* (National Swedish Agency for Higher Education Report Series 1996:10 R), including its appendices *Guidelines for Institutions* and *Auditors' Handbook*. [The Swedish version, with appendices, is available as *Högskoleverkets rapportserie 1995:1 R*.]

These audits are based on the principle that each institution of higher education is individually responsible for assuring quality throughout its operations and for finding appropriate and effective forms for its quality program. The purpose of the National Agency audit is to provide an impetus towards continual improvement and renewal in the operations of Swedish institutions of higher education. By doing so, the Agency seeks to help provide conditions that will enable Swedish universities and colleges to become internationally known and recognized for their commitment to quality.



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# I. The Chancellor's Evaluation

Uppsala University is the first major Swedish institution of higher education to have been the subject of a National Agency quality audit. Doubts have been raised about whether it is at all possible to carry out an overall evaluation of the quality program at a large and complex institution of higher education such as Uppsala University. For this reason, it is gratifying to note that the university and the audit team have in a distinguished manner accomplished the extensive and demanding tasks required of them: the self-evaluation and external evaluation, respectively, of quality enhancement at Uppsala University.

The evaluation by the audit team reveals that Uppsala University endeavors to maintain a program of coordinated quality enhancement appropriate for a professional, academic organization. The work thus started is characterized by great commitment throughout the university on the part of the great majority of those concerned and in the quality enhancement group that since autumn 1993 has steadily sought to promote and strengthen quality development at the university.

It is a challenging task indeed to conduct and coordinate the measures for quality enhancement and renewal at a large university with time-honored traditions and a diversified spectrum of activities ranging over seven faculties and schools. Uppsala University chose to employ a decentralized approach, with the greatest responsibility devolving to the level of the various faculties. Through its discussions, the central quality enhancement group has monitored and supported the faculties in their efforts. It should, however, be noted that by means of the reports of the quality enhancement group, good experiences and ideas are distributed throughout the entire university, thus helping all of its various schools and faculties. Such faculty-to-faculty actions should be still further encouraged as part of quality enhancement.

In their evaluation and report, the audit team retained this faculty-level approach, as it did not have the opportunity to make more detailed analyses of the impact and results at e.g. the departmental level. I assume that such analyses will be implemented in subsequent quality programs at the university,

and that even more than hitherto their emphasis will be upon the departmental level, as the programs are transformed into concrete actions.

The reflections of the audit team upon the organization of the university and its policymakers are also of interest. Allowing the faculty deans greater influence in the overall activities of the university would presumably facilitate the integration of *inter alia* the quality enhancement programs. Although requiring difficult decisions about priorities, a reduction in the number of departments could produce an organization with a considerably improved potential for the rector and other policymakers to work in close coordination with departmental chairs and their departments.

It is impossible to overemphasize the necessity of retaining an awareness of how to achieve active student participation at all levels. This is admittedly a problem that the majority of Swedish universities and colleges must wrestle with, but one that is probably more intractable at the large universities than at the colleges and smaller universities. As the audit team notes, it is important that student participation in decision-making bodies produces concrete results. Well-administered course evaluations are of course also a way of involving students in quality enhancement, but student faith in such evaluations will diminish if they do not lead to tangible results.

The audit team emphasizes that it is important for Uppsala University to systematize and further develop contacts with society at large. As a counterweight to other powerful influences, the university is responsible for disseminating ideas into society. Its responsibilities also include ensuring that it reflects important societal phenomena in its own activities and utilizes them in the best possible manner. Uppsala University has an extensive contact network for research and education, as well as contacts with prominent members of society. It is important that these contact be integrated into its enhancement and renewal programs, and deliberately formed into the basis for positive changes in university activities. Systematic comparisons with other universities or similar organizations should also provide further material for increased learning and self-government.

In its program, the quality enhancement group indicated that information technology and graduate education are among the priority areas for the university. As regards the former, I particularly wish to emphasize the group's commitment to integrating information technology into university activities.

The difficulties faced by graduate programs are probably even more obvious, above all in certain areas such as the humanities and social sciences. Recent evaluations indicate lengthy periods of study and many cases of uncompleted or abandoned studies. These problems are to be found at every university in Sweden. It is important that university quality enhancement programs take particular measures in this regard.

It is self-evident that other areas given priority by the university, such as equal opportunities for women and men, and internationalization, are further developed and integrated into the overall university mission.

In summary, Uppsala University is in a good position to benefit from both its own self-evaluation and the audit team report as it continues its strategic development of quality in its activities. I look forward to continuing this stimulating dialogue between Uppsala University and the National Agency for Higher Education.

Stig Hagström  
The Swedish University Chancellor

## 2. The Work of the Audit Team

### Introduction

As the oldest institution of higher education in Scandinavia, Uppsala University is the bearer of centuries-old academic traditions, thus giving rise to quite special conditions for its activities, not least when it seeks to enhance the quality in its educational and research tasks. Although these deep cultural roots ensure that it has been a participant in the international world of academe for centuries, they do not *per se* guarantee that education and research in Uppsala will live up to current demands. On the contrary, periods have occurred in the university's history where the links to past grandeur appear to have been a liability. The songs of fulsome praise heard in the past are often employed as a pitiless rod with which to scourge a present in sharp contrast to such ancestral glories. An institution based on learning is extraordinarily dependent upon those who bear it up at any given moment, and its good academic reputation may as a consequence easily be scattered to the winds.

As a given consequence of these universally acknowledged truths, it follows that cultivation of quality in education and research must never be allowed to flag. On the contrary, it must comprise the fundamental basis for all activity at the university, whose uniquely tenacious ability to survive confirms that this has nearly always been the case. Yet the fact that this aspect of quality is such a self-evident integral part of university life can at the same time be perceived as an argument against the marked public interest in recent years concerning matters of quality, particularly as regards undergraduate education. It would thus be surprising if the National Agency program for quality audits of universities and colleges were not regarded in various quarters as a superfluous measure. It can possibly also be perceived as a means of encouraging spectacular activities, instead of giving emphasis to the quality enhancement quietly and continually taking place in classrooms and seminars.

The audit team is well aware that there are good reasons for continually reexamining the forms for both the internal quality programs and the external evaluation of their direction. It is nevertheless with a feeling of great

pleasure that we accepted the singular honor of commencing the National Agency audit program with an evaluation of the quality enhancement program at Uppsala University, notwithstanding our awareness that this would be an extensive task, indeed. Uppsala University has good reason to cite its broad range of subjects, degree programs and research projects as its primary strength. Yet this same breadth creates particular difficulties for the evaluator, and it is thus evident that we cannot claim to provide an exhaustively accurate picture, after an all too brief reading period for the extensive background material and an intensive three-day visit (April 22-24, 1996). It is nonetheless equally evident that our ambition is to complement Uppsala University's own self-evaluation, based on our own experience and with the same candor that we encountered during our visit. We wish to thank all those who in one way or another helped to prepare and guide our visit for providing us with a most stimulating and educational exchange of collegial viewpoints.

### **The Audit Team**

The audit team appointed by the National Agency consisted of the following members:

- Professor Inge Jonsson (Chair), Rector Emeritus of Stockholm University
- Birgit Erngren, Director-General of the Swedish National Board for Industrial and Technical Development (NUTEK)
- Professor Per-Olof Glantz, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Lund
- Ebba Jansson, Vice-Chairperson of the Swedish National Union of Students (SFS)
- Professor Sven Lindqvist, Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Göteborg University
- Anders Stenlåås (Secretary), Principle Administrative Officer, Faculty of Dentistry, University of Lund

Ola Román and Malin Östling were the National Agency liaison officers participating in the audit team meetings and the visit to the university.

### **Conducting the Audit**

The audit was begun on November 24, 1995, with a planning meeting with the university administration in Uppsala; the team Chair, Secretary and National Agency liaison officers participated in this meeting. The basic

guidelines for the audit and its time frame were determined, and preliminary material was provided to help orient the team.

When the audit team met in its entirety for the first time on March 25, 1996, the preliminary material and the university self-evaluation were distributed to all team members. This was also the first opportunity for them to examine the very extensive background material provided by Uppsala University (App. 1). During the meeting, a lively discussion took place concerning the frame for the evaluation and the opportunities for optimally utilizing the knowledge and experiences of the individual team members. In accordance with the general instructions of the National Agency, it was emphasized that the team should visit as colleagues and advisors, and that this aspect must be made explicit at all meetings with representatives for Uppsala University—the task of the audit team is neither that of a normal auditor nor of an examining committee.

During the meeting suggestions were forthcoming about collecting data during the visit, gathered into specific questions grouped into various categories that could be related to the follow-up criteria specified in the National Agency guidelines. The following categories were operationalized in various forms:

- the quality enhancement program—goals, strategy, strengths and weaknesses
- policymaking—interpretation and implementation
- administration—service and support
- undergraduates—commitment and opportunities for influence
- graduate program—relations to advisors and participation in their own education
- leadership at various levels—roles and opportunities
- quality program feedback—internal and external

The meeting also discussed the suggested program provided by the university. The team decided to follow the suggestion, apart from a few minor changes, which the university administration obligingly arranged.

The audit team met a second time on April 3, 1996, this time to compare impressions after thoroughly considering the self-evaluation, as well as to obtain background knowledge that was lacking.

On April 22-24 the time had come for the visit to Uppsala University (App.

2). The program was intensive, and the university guided them through it with great attention and skill. In addition to conducting introductory and concluding talks with university policymakers, the team met with representatives from the various faculties (or equivalents), teachers and students from the following faculties and units in the order shown:

- Faculty of Languages
- Faculty of History and Philosophy
- Faculty of Social Sciences
- Faculty of Theology
- Student Union, social counselors and student advisors
- Faculty of Pharmacy
- Faculty of Medicine
- Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences
- Division for Education and Teaching Professions
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Domestic Science
- University Library
- University Administration

In addition, there were opportunities to talk with the university Quality Group at lunch on the first day, as well as with faculty deans and other policymakers at the Rector's banquet that same evening.

All in all, the audit team gathered information and viewpoints from more than 100 people. The meetings with the abovementioned groups lasted some 90 minutes each, which allowed nearly a half-hour each for separate discussion with faculty deans (or the equivalent), teachers and students. This is of course a very tight schedule, and we are well aware that those we spoke with may feel that they were not given the chance to present a complete and balanced picture of their activities. It is nevertheless the considered opinion of the audit team that the informative value of these contacts, which covered all the various faculties and schools, can be regarded as satisfactory.

The team concluded their visit by presenting to the university administration their combined impressions of the Uppsala University quality program. At the team's fourth meeting, on May 14, a draft version of the team's report was discussed. Based on this discussion, a preliminary report was compiled and presented to the university on May 22; it was the basis for a final discussion and debate with the university administration and Quality Group on May 29.

## 3. The Quality Audit

### **Structure of the Quality Enhancement Program**

Policymakers at Uppsala University had been quick to realize that the transition to a new system for guidance and financing in the Swedish public sector to which (like nearly all Swedish institutions of higher education) they belonged would require improved follow-up and evaluation. Uppsala was thus well prepared to meet government demands for quality assurance, as expressed in the Commission on the Funding of Universities report *Kvalitet och dynamik* (Swedish Government Official Report SOU 1993:102) released in the autumn of 1993, and the resultant Parliamentary decision the following spring. The University Board had already created a central committee to head up work on quality and evaluation matters, with the University Rector appointing its members in a decision of October 1, 1993. The composition of this Quality Group reflects the university administration's judgement that quality issues should to the greatest extent possible be dealt with at the levels closest to daily activities, i.e. in the various faculties and departments. Each faculty or school had a representative (with the humanities having two, one for each of its subdivisions), as did the teacher training program; they were chosen in consultation with the faculty deans, with the Chair and two additional members (one of whom was a student) being chosen by the Rector after other consultations. In this manner, the Quality Group was both representative at the departmental level and well linked to faculty leadership. It would thus be able to provide a comprehensive network without being identical to the existing decision-making structure.

Under the leadership of Professor Lars Engwall, this centrally selected, yet representative Quality Group was in less than a month able to present a draft version of the quality enhancement program that was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science in November, and in the following month disseminated in printed form to the university faculties, departments, various support organs and the Student Union. Its intent was to mark the commencement of a process in which the combined experience and creativity of the entire university would be mobilized to consider issues of quality. After nearly a year's inventory and documentation of existing quality programs, and with the aid of a highly qualified international advisory

committee, the Quality Group presented the next report in a series that by February 1996 had swelled to seven publications. In its November 1994 report, *Uppsala måste bli ännu bättre!* ["Uppsala Must Become Even Better!"], the Quality Group specified seven areas that were to be given priority in its future work. Four of these specially selected areas—departmental self-evaluations, leadership at the departmental level, the situation for students, and the graduate student program—have hitherto been discussed in Quality Group publications. A report on internationalization is expected shortly. The remaining two areas are under consideration, with equality of opportunity (gender issues) currently being analyzed, while a plan for quality enhancement within the area of information technology has been presented to the Rector.

In its work, the Quality Group applies three principles:

- Quality issues should be regarded as a continual and long-term task, a natural aspect of university activities, and one leading to a number of minor changes rather than a few spectacular one-off measures. It is the long haul that is of greatest importance.
- Quality programs must have broad, well-anchored support in all personnel categories: researchers, teachers, administrators, support organs, and students
- Quality enhancement issues must as far as possible be separated from questions of availability and distribution of resources.

The work of the Quality Group has been accomplished in five phases:

1. A rapid inventory and development of quality enhancement programs (fall term 1993).
2. A more detailed inventory and the specification of seven prioritized areas (spring term 1994).
3. Follow-up of the detailed inventory and initiation of projects.
4. Cooperation with the individual faculties on the use of quality enhancement grants (fall term 1995).
5. Continued dialogue with the faculties and representatives for various personnel categories, as well as evaluation of the group's own work (spring term 1996).

## **The Strategy for Quality Enhancement**

As noted above, the university administration had at an early stage launched a central survey of ongoing quality programs and planning for new initiatives.

It was in that context clearly specified that work on quality issues would primarily be conducted via the productive units and their immediate superiors, i.e. university departments and faculties. The purpose was both to integrate quality enhancement into their ordinary activities and to adjust it to the actual local conditions.

We regard this policy as a wise choice. If well implemented, it can encourage the sense that all employees share the responsibility for maintaining the university's good reputation and encourage students to help mold their own education. This derives from the insight that departments and faculties have their individual characteristics, characteristics that will determine their quality programs, as well. In all probability an attempt to apply a universal model to all the approximately 170 work units would have failed or at least have given rise to a great many problems of interpretation. A great deal of energy might then have been wasted on externals, and been of little help to a serious discussion of how to promote quality.

Acting in accordance with an experience-based respect for the heterogeneity of a large university should not, however, be confused with abdication from the mission of leading the university. On the contrary, active leadership in an academic context presupposes above all else the ability to develop convincing arguments and express them with vigor and clarity. Based on the material presented to us, we find that the university board and rector energetically sought to formulate overall goals, and during our visit we found no sign that this had aroused resistance at the departmental level. The basis for a strategic plan for the next quarter-century, developed by the rector and the deans of the faculties at the behest of the university board during the 1993-94 academic year, is admittedly relatively general, but it nevertheless gave the University Board reason to disavow further quantitative growth and to designate as particularly important certain areas, such as internationalization and a shift in emphasis towards the more demanding undergraduate degree programs.

The overall goals of the strategic plan—like those of the quality enhancement program—must be translated into operational language, in the form of concrete measures at the faculty and departmental level. In Uppsala, the Quality Group has encouraged such measures by means of its abovementioned series of publications, visits to faculties, allocation of grants to quality enhancement measures, and by initiating and implementing projects of its own.

In the following sections we will more specifically present our observations of quality enhancement measures at the various faculties, as based on their self-evaluations and what came up during our talks with faculty heads, department chairs, teachers and students. We then add a few comments on what the Quality Group indicated as priority areas and the results so far.

### **Faculty of Theology**

Like the Faculty of Law, this faculty consists of only one department, but it is divided into sections based on the eleven subjects in which doctoral degrees are granted. The faculty board is directly responsible for issues of quality, and the fact that no special quality group was created is seen as a consequence of the relatively small size of this faculty, together with the fact that the assistant dean is the faculty representative on the central Quality Group. Another explanation that could have been mentioned is the fact that students are represented on the faculty board's executive committee and are thus provided with an unusually good opportunity to affect how quality issues are dealt with.

In addition to the regular quality assurance in the form of repeated curriculum revisions, continual course evaluations and similar measures, the faculty notes that there are special projects in both undergraduate and graduate programs. During the present term, for example, they are concluding a two-year quality project led by an experienced consultant employed for the purpose. They also note their participation in an interfaculty course on Europe, together with teachers from the faculties of law, humanities and social sciences. Together with the faculty of history and philosophy, they are in the process of documenting how their graduate students experience the current doctoral program. The purpose is said to be to develop a more effective and coherent graduate program in religious studies. Here, statistics clearly indicate the need for such improvements: 200 registered graduate students, 21 scholarships, 5-10 dissertations per academic year.

This is a problem that this faculty shares with the humanities and social sciences, above all, and one that we shall subsequently return to. Other difficulties, however, are specific to this faculty: the economic situation until 1998 will be characterized by painful economy measures stemming from a ten percent budget deficit, which in turn indicates inadequacies in previous planning. In a situation with significant reductions in available resources,

quality programs are of redoubled relevance, and it is most satisfactory to note the current generation of faculty administrators are determined to meet these demands, *inter alia* through a certain redistribution of resources and increased cooperation among the various subject areas in religious studies.

At the same time, the self-evaluation clearly indicates that within the faculty views differ widely on what measures should be taken. The same engaging self-probing candor was to be seen in faculty representatives during their discussion with us concerning the worrisome work environment, which had been portrayed in somber colors in a report by an external consultant. We see no reason to delve further into the background of their current strain, since that has been the subject of intense public scrutiny for numerous years. We nonetheless judge it necessary—and appropriate—for the faculty leadership to receive strong backing from the Rector and administration in their quality program, which in our judgement is moving in the right direction, but is threatened by internal imbalances. A particularly worrying fact is the total lack of “new blood” posts, which starkly illustrates the need for a major restructuring in the near future. On the other hand, however, it may be noted that negative evaluations of the theological faculty were not forthcoming in our talks with representatives of the other faculties. On the contrary, a number expressed their appreciation of the theological faculty’s ethical issues courses open to students of all faculties. The time when quite a few were willing to drive the theologians out of the scientific community is clearly no more.

### **Faculty of Law**

The Faculty of Law also lacks a special quality group, with the executive committees for undergraduate and graduate education instead being responsible for quality issues. Unlike many other faculties, the Faculty of Law has systematically worked on quality enhancement in undergraduate education for more than a decade, that is, well before educational questions became a major priority. A thoroughly revised, and to some extent problem-oriented educational system was introduced in 1992, and the first class admitted should thus have completed the Master of Laws in Law program by the beginning of next year (1997). This means that a comprehensive evaluation is not yet possible, but our talks with the department chairperson and the director of studies indicate that the number of students who are completing the program has increased dramatically. The students we met felt

that the new educational system encouraged them to a deeper commitment to quality issues, and they seemed generally satisfied, with certain exceptions concerning the form of examinations and the selection process for graduate school fellowship posts. The faculty self-evaluation places its major emphasis on a description of how their quality program is organized. This is a step-by-step procedure, in which written student evaluations of each course and the course coordinator's report form the basis for departmental analyses by the Educational Committee. A few days of staff in-service training are organized every year, and the faculty allocates SEK 0.5-1.0 million annually to pedagogical projects.

All of the above seems well thought out, yet at the same time the university's central quality program seems only tangential here. Mention is made of goals such as holding educational seminars and encouraging teachers to acquire pedagogical training, but hitherto this appears to be ambitions rather than achieved projects. As regards external contacts with other universities and faculties, nothing more is stated than that the international exchange of students has increased in recent years. After their fifth term (i.e. near the end of Level 1, which consists of six terms of obligatory courses), slightly more than 100 students are eligible for studies abroad within the framework first provided by the Erasmus and Nordplus exchange programs (in Europe and Scandinavia, respectively) and by an agreement with the University of Minnesota.

This is of course excellent. Nevertheless we find it impossible to avoid the impression that the Faculty of Law would have much to gain from a more marked integration into the university. That this has not already occurred may be a consequence of the energy and interest drained off over a number of years by the reorganization of undergraduate education—an initiative and result indeed worthy of praise. But the relatively low level of research activity has probably also contributed to this impression of a closed world. Nor does this concern Uppsala alone. In order to enhance quality in this particular area, we consider it urgent that the Faculty of Law in a clearer manner find ways to enrich the diversity characteristic of this university. In an era when our concept of a society governed by law seems to be exposed to various forms of erosive threats, legal analysis and reflection should have much to give students and researchers in adjacent fields.

We have, however, also noted that in addition to its law degree program, the Faculty of Law offers students a number of independent, relatively short courses, and that their share of its offerings is growing. Similarly, during our visit we were informed of the recent creation of a faculty committee with representatives for various interests and external stakeholders. We would recommend that in future quality enhancement the Faculty further pursue such measures leading to greater openness to the rest of the university and to society at large.

### **Faculty of Medicine**

Like the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Medicine had already begun an ambitious program for transforming undergraduate education by the time the most recent wave of discussion and official examination of the quality of higher education reached its peak. This program was primarily led by the working committee for the restructuring of medical training (AOL) appointed in 1989 by the faculty undergraduate committee, the organ to which the faculty board had delegated responsibility for quality assurance and evaluation of undergraduate education. Equivalent committees also exist for graduate education and the further education of practising physicians. The overall responsibility for quality programs lies with the faculty board, which oversees its more than 45 different departments.

During our visit, the faculty quality program was characterized as “down to earth” and focused on concrete problems, while the centrally led quality enhancement program was perceived as more “philosophical”. We did not interpret this negatively, but on the contrary as an expression of appreciation for the stimulus of interdisciplinary contacts resulting from the activities of the Quality Group. In answer to a direct question as to whether the university Quality Group had affected the quality program in the faculty, however, the response was that this had occurred to only a small extent.

The reform of medical training sought to attain a number of clearly formulated goals: early contact with patients, integration, a certain degree of choice in course selection, and variation in educational approaches. This latter intention is to be realized *inter alia* through dialogue lectures and elements of problem-oriented learning, but it is emphasized that no single pedagogical method is to be considered as the universal panacea; instead, this choice is to be guided by needs and interests. We note this as proof of the

faculty's serious educational ambitions and its thoughtful, balanced attitude to pedagogical fashions. Considerable resources are allocated to educational development. A decision has been taken to create a faculty educational development unit with three posts, two of which are reserved as part-time posts for physicians; pedagogical seminars are regularly held for faculty staff; computer-assisted learning is being developed from the basis that the so-called "Mediatheque" provided some six years ago, when it was a pioneering effort on the Swedish scene; a large-scale project has been carried out to improve course evaluations; a coordinated evaluation is currently taking place for the cell biology units that comprise the lion's share of preclinical undergraduate training.

The faculty has also introduced a new system for the allocation of funds for undergraduate education, one that permits the individual department to receive more precise compensation for work it carries out, while simultaneously rewarding it for any educational renewal carried out along the lines specified by the undergraduate education committee. In addition, through a new agreement with the primary regional medical provider, the Uppsala County Council, the faculty has gained greater control of clinical educational resources. As regards research funding, however, there remain major difficulties in obtaining an adequate overall view of the total resources available from various funding bodies, a problem which has led *inter alia* to a disproportionately heavy administrative load on the deans of clinical units.

This is in no way unique to the faculty at Uppsala, but here it probably affects more people than at e.g. the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, since the latter has drastically reduced the number of its departments. During our visit it turned out that talks are currently being held on possible department mergers, but that the question has not been given high priority. We would nevertheless recommend that the faculty attempt to create department groups or other larger units that can be supplied with qualified administrators, so that the professional competence of the department chairs can be utilized in a more rational manner.

The students are represented in all working groups appointed by the AOL committee or the undergraduate education committee. The faculty provides financial support for the faculty student council, funding a half-time post for its chairperson to work on medical education issues. The head of the "Mediatheque" is also a student salaried by the faculty. We are convinced that

the faculty is, to quote their self-evaluation, desirous to “engage the students as a resource in the quality program”.

It is our overall judgement that the Faculty of Medicine has long been implementing well thought out and energetic measures to attain its goal of creating an attractive and modern Uppsala profile for medical training. It is still too early to compare its results with those of the other Swedish medical faculties, but among the tasks assigned to one of the physician-educationalists is that of making comparative follow-up studies. This may serve as proof that the Faculty of Medicine is prepared to follow through and expand the quality enhancement program that has already led to more intense teacher cooperation and increased student commitment.

### **Faculty of Pharmacy**

According to all concerned, when the erstwhile Pharmaceutical Institute became a faculty at Uppsala University, nearly thirty years ago, the change greatly stimulated both research and education. Moreover, for the Faculty of Pharmacy, the catchword of Uppsala being a national university is literally true, since it is the only faculty of its kind in Sweden. This is of course a privileged situation, not least at present, when the need for well-educated people in this field is both great and growing, but it also levies special demands on the desire and ability to integrate oneself into a larger research community than that directly linked to professional pharmaceutical training.

With its slightly more than one thousand undergraduates and some 150 doctoral students, the Faculty of Pharmacy considers itself as one of the best pharmaceutical schools in Europe, and can point to its membership in the so-called ULLA project—a federation of Uppsala, London, Leiden and Amsterdam which *inter alia* organizes joint researcher schools—in support of this claim. Yet the faculty has clearly not rested on the laurels of its first-rank achievements, but instead is conducting relatively extensive quality enhancement projects, which the faculty board has delegated to a special quality group. This has *inter alia* included pilot projects using problem-based learning in pharmacist’s training and pedagogical training for graduate advisors. During our visit on April 23, it was stated that two thirds of all advisors had already completed such a training course.

The pharmaceutical self-evaluation provides no precise details about student participation in quality enhancement programs, but during our discussions

it appeared that the faculty gives considerable emphasis to course evaluations. Written evaluations are regularly used after each course, and in addition at least some teachers set aside time for discussing the course structure and content with their students, so that any uncertainties or reasons for discontent can be resolved at once. We believe that such immediate links are of major importance for stimulating students into assuming greater responsibility for the quality of their own education.

Among its plans for the future, the faculty emphasized in its self-evaluation the approaching expansion of its undergraduate program. This will to some extent occur in connection with other universities and colleges. It is our understanding that the faculty has agreed to carry out contract teaching for the BSc level in pharmacy in the newly founded Södertörn University College as of the next academic year, and that the negotiations for this agreement were characterized by great willingness to accommodate them. They also mentioned a current project for developing a communications component in undergraduate education, in order to improve student ability to speak and write. This measure is supported both within the faculty and among potential employers of new graduates. Their experiences and requests are regularly investigated by a reference group created by the faculty board.

It is our judgement that the faculty leadership is fully committed to quality enhancement in its education and research, *inter alia* by establishing a coordinating function for the various graduate programs, and that it has shown a clear ability to organize its quality enhancement program so as to involve many faculty members in the responsibilities this involves. We see no reason for unease about potential threats to quality during the approaching phase of expansion. On the contrary, international cooperation under the ULLA program and collaboration, both within Uppsala University and externally, will all act to strengthen the guarantees offered by the high degree of quality awareness exhibited by this faculty.

### **Faculty of History and Philosophy**

The educational structure in the humanities and to some extent the social science faculty are radically different from the faculties discussed above: here, independent, relatively short courses are far more common than actual degree programs. The legacy from the old, much more inclusive Faculty of Philosophy, which quite appropriately was designated the “free” faculty,

appears with particular clarity in the faculty of history and philosophy: students are free to combine these courses in many different ways. Of the roughly 1500 full-time students in this faculty, the overwhelming majority are registered for the independent courses that these 13 different departments offer.

Several years ago the faculty instituted two quality and evaluation groups, one each for undergraduate and graduate education, respectively; they formulated *inter alia* the quality enhancement programs adopted in April 1994, which still guide faculty activities. The two groups have, however, recently been merged into one. In accordance with these programs a number of projects have been launched or already completed. The self-evaluation indicates that resources have primarily been funneled to the third- and fourth-term levels, and during our visit the dean of the faculty emphasized that the faculty's most pressing problem is the excessive time required to complete both these and the graduate level. At the same time the self-evaluation speaks of the resource that "the close research connection to education" provides for undergraduate education. We are uncertain about the actual implications of this. Would it not be possible to reduce the time required for third- and fourth-term studies if such students were to write their independent essays on precisely delineated areas within ongoing research projects under the immediate supervision of their advisors?

The difficulties of graduate education are to a great extent caused by the unsatisfactory financial situation, a point to which we shall return. But traditions within the field and other cultural factors doubtless also play an important role. The self-evaluation notes that it probably takes a longer time to educate scholars in the humanities than in other disciplines. This is a common, yet questionable assertion, one that is moreover in direct conflict with current regulations for graduate education in Sweden. No more than in any other field is there any absolute measure of what factual knowledge and scientific methodology a future researcher needs to master in the humanities. The difference probably consists primarily in the strength of tradition and degree of internationalization, respectively, or perhaps rather the degree of adjustment to Anglo-American norms. The massive nature of the older Swedish doctoral dissertations (*gradualavhandlingar*) remains—not least for graduate students in these areas—the desired norm, nearly thirty years after the introduction of the modern, more limited PhD, while above all in the natural sciences and medicine such dissertations serve as journeyman's work, a form of apprenticeship.

We are naturally aware that excessively drawn-out graduate programs are by no means a problem unique to the historical and philosophical faculty of Uppsala University. Nevertheless we regard it as our duty to consider this problem in this connection, since it is to a great extent relevant to quality enhancement. The quality of a research education must include the acquisition of deep knowledge and the ability to pose and answer interesting scientific problems, but also a reasonable probability of reaching this goal in the allotted time, if one applies all one's energy during an intensive period of work. We believe that the faculty should consider many of the interesting suggestions to be found in the university quality group publication about graduate education. Given the great need for new teachers with research qualifications that has arisen as we enter a phase of expansion in higher education it is highly relevant—and urgent—to sharply improve productivity throughout the humanities.

The faculty quality enhancement program must be regarded as ambitious. The extent to which it has been implemented is not clear to us, but numerous creative ideas are documented in our material, including an internal model for evaluation according to which teachers from one department evaluate another department. In our talks with department heads and teachers a variety of views appeared about the value and structure of the quality enhancement programs—everything from one demand that they should have begun by defining the concept of “quality” to praise for the increased awareness of educational responsibility that the mere discussion of quality enhancement produced. The meeting with student representatives produced a similarly mixed impression. The notorious difficulty of convincing students to become involved in course evaluations was seen as a consequence of a lack of feedback, and even if they seemed to be satisfied with teacher attitudes, criticism was aimed at “structural inertia”. On the other hand, however, we also noted that one student reported very positive experiences of an international exchange administered by the university.

Our overall judgement is that the faculty leadership is methodically and energetically working to implement the existing quality enhancement program. The self-evaluation indicates, however, that it is far too willing to allow the success of the program to hinge upon increased resources—at times it smacks of a budget request. We have also received the impression that the response at the departmental level varies. We therefore recommend that the faculty quality group intensify their efforts to stimulate quality enhancement at the departmental level.

## **Faculty of Languages**

In number of students and general educational structure, the Faculty of Languages agrees on the whole with the Faculty of History and Philosophy. This also applies to the organization of its quality program. During spring 1995 a program for quality enhancement was adopted, with two overall goals: to retain its breadth in languages education and to aim at continued high quality in education and research.

This can undoubtedly sound defensive and scarcely inclined to encourage changes. To a certain extent it is of course also a question of defending positions already attained. The broad variety of courses offered—the faculty offers teaching in 42 languages—is presented in the self-evaluation as both a source of pride and the cause of internal problems of balance. During our visit, the dean explained that solidarity with the smaller and resource-poor languages had hitherto been attainable within the faculty, but he also marked his unease about the scarcity of funds. A united action by the department chairs a little more than a year ago resulted in the university board granting an increase in the resources per FTE, something that was of course regarded positively, but still insufficient as an assurance of quality.

While the above can give the impression of being a budget request, the faculty self-evaluation fortunately also contains a series of measures intended to promote quality enhancement with the resources actually at their disposal. The faculty quality group mandate includes following up quality programs at the department level, i.e. the level where responsibility lies for both undergraduate and graduate education, as well as taking various more general initiatives. This group appears to have been very active and have succeeded in attaining the faculty board's goal of involving all departments in quality enhancement. For example, they have produced a document detailing what quality enhancement means in language education and how it may be achieved. In addition, the group has organized study days and pedagogical seminars. The faculty budget allocation for such activities has been significant.

The quality enhancement program indicates that external evaluation should occur, in order to complement internal quality assurance measures, and that this should be carried out by subject, at the initiative of the departments involved. One such evaluation was arranged during spring 1995 in English, together with its sister department in Lund. In other respects, the self-evaluation contains

almost no information about faculty contacts with the outside world. This is almost certainly a result of the self-evaluation's narrow focus on undergraduate education. In research areas, the faculty does exhibit increasing cooperation with other institutions, such as through a newly launched research cooperative effort with colleagues at Stockholm University, supported by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Fund.

The above could also have served as a complement to the little said about graduate education. The difficulties are the same as for the faculty of history and philosophy, but the number of PhDs granted even lower: according to admittedly uncertain statistics, there is barely one dissertation per research area per year. This means that the shortage of qualified candidates for assistant professorships and full chairs will be a severe one for some time to come. The quality group's work on guidelines for self-evaluation of departmental graduate programs thus appears urgent. The evaluation of graduate programs in the Faculty of Languages recently published by the National Agency admittedly shows that Uppsala is first among Swedish universities as regards the production of PhDs during the period 1984/85-1992/93, but the lead over Stockholm University is slight—and above all: the absolute numbers are insufficient within the majority of graduate programs in the Faculty of Languages.

We consider the quality enhancement program of the Faculty of Languages as being well anchored in its departments, not least thanks to the personal involvement of the faculty's representative on the university Quality Group. The self-evaluation glosses over neither current nor expected difficulties, instead indicating a determination to simultaneously maintain its breadth and enhance its quality, *inter alia* through increased collegial exchanges with equivalent departments at other universities. Our overall impression of its ambitions and general direction is a good one.

### **Faculty of Social Sciences**

With its more than 4000 FTEs, the Faculty of Social Sciences is the largest in Uppsala, a fact which nevertheless does not hinder it from seeking to expand its educational undertakings. The keen competition for places in its degree programs and independent courses in fact makes it almost impossible for a student to compose his/her own degree by freely choosing subjects. The faculty thus considers free choice to be a quality criterion, giving it a higher

priority than the University Board's decision not to seek to increase the number of students at the university.

In order to ensure a greater capacity to provide advisors at the third- and fourth-term levels, there has been a certain redistribution of funding, *inter alia* by a reduction in the degree program in economics. In other respects, if the suggestions for new degree programs that the faculty board has requested its departments to present are to be carried out, they will require additional funding. It is an excellent idea to be prepared for an increased-growth scenario, as well, and the self-evaluation bears the stamp of a firm commitment to change. Its primary thrust consists of plans and specifications of goals, but it also contains interesting facts about what has already been implemented.

Quality enhancement in this faculty has been led by a special quality group, with the vice-dean as its chair. It had already begun its activities by fall 1993 and thus was created at roughly the same time as the university's central Quality Group. During its first two years, attention was concentrated on undergraduate education, with departmental directors of studies as the main target group, and here a number of activities can be mentioned: a goals document was produced for undergraduate education, competence-raising measures were taken for teachers in the IT-field, conferences were held at course centers, *inter alia* to consider problems at the third- and fourth-term levels. During the current academic year its activities have primarily centered on graduate education.

The faculty was thus relatively quick to react to the impulses deriving from the advocates of the new resources allocation system. We are less certain as to whether the active response of the faculty leadership evoked sufficient response among its departments. During our visit we received the impression that the role of the faculty appeared unclear for certain teachers, and one labeled the quality enhancement program "wool-gathering". On the other hand, many felt that cooperation within the faculty had been stimulated by the quality enhancement program. The practical measures for raising the quality and status of teaching— pedagogical courses, seminars concerning educational issues, and the like—appear to have been appreciated.

The most striking aspect of the self-evaluation is perhaps its silence on the subject of external contacts, with the exception of the program to provide

professorial-chair links to newly-started graduate programs at the University College of Örebro and Dalarna University College. The planned research schools in the faculty are clearly intended to be interdisciplinary, but the extent to which they are also to be open to graduate students from neighboring faculties is not specified. Nor did our talks with teachers and students give rise to anything that indicated an expanded cooperation *extra muros*. The representative for the Department of Political Science admittedly presented a valuable initiative, that of inviting PhDs back to the department to find out how useful they experienced their education as being, but that remains within the framework of their own subject. It is difficult for us to avoid the impression that the Faculty of Social Sciences neither obtains any major benefits from the multiplicity and breadth of Uppsala University nor is prepared to give priority to its own contributions thereto.

In spite of the existence of an ambitious program for quality enhancement and a functioning organization to implement it, it is our judgement that the faculty could attain much more by being more open to the university as a whole. We also regard it as important that teachers and students be stimulated to greater participation in quality enhancement. Might it not be possible for the Quality Group to organize critical seminars that considered the current cult of quality as a social phenomenon, and utilize such a problematization to sound the alarm?

### **Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences**

In its inclusion of a small institute of engineering among its six subdivisions, the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences is unique in Sweden. Its undergraduate programs have almost doubled in size in the last five years, and the faculty board has appointed a formidable series of working groups to develop its many degree programs. Among them is to be found a group responsible for quality enhancement at the undergraduate level.

In its self-evaluation, this faculty has placed much greater emphasis on its international contacts than the other faculties. This is in itself not unusual in such connections, since the natural sciences are those that most clearly operate in a global context. But here there is also a special reason, namely the fact that the far-reaching reshaping of the faculty prepared for in the so-called BOT project was to a great extent inspired by the observations and suggestions of international evaluators.

The acronym BOT arose from the Swedish form of “Savings and Reallocations in the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences”—the word *bot* implying either “mending one’s ways” or “cure, remedy”. Its work began in March 1995, yet in less than a year, it led to a decision whose equal is not easily to be found in any Swedish university. In brief, it implies that a 15 percent savings is to be carried out during a three-year period. Of the savings, 5 percent will be used for renewal. The project was organized around two “shadow faculties” at Caltech and Cambridge, which were chosen by the faculty’s advisors and evaluators at these universities. The subdivisions of the faculty were assigned the task of producing self-evaluations and their own suggestions for savings, and these were then passed on to the advisory groups. Their reactions are documented in the final suggestion presented by the faculty dean and vice-dean, after personal discussions with the advisors in November. The resultant document is unusually forthright in its statements.

We are impressed by the firm commitment and actions of the faculty and subdivision leadership, but perhaps even more by the candor and insight that clearly permeated the entire BOT process. Talks during our visit indicate to us that the suggestions did not lead to intractable conflicts, but at a minimum were acceptable even to the departments that were most sharply attacked and subjected to the harshest measures. We do not hesitate to designate the BOT project approach and implementation as exemplary. We nevertheless emphasize that the consequences for undergraduate education cannot as yet be fully seen.

In comparison with this project, the other quality enhancement programs in this faculty appear minor, but such a view would be a mistake. Course evaluations regularly take place after each course and even a few post-PhD evaluations after several years of working experience, together with plans to increase this form of quality assurance. A questionnaire has been carried out to investigate student interest in non-core degree programs, with positive results. The faculty notes that it is considering the opportunities for utilizing Uppsala University’s unique breadth for such educational forms as a quality enhancement for future answers. There can be no question that the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences has obtained imposing results in its quality enhancement programs, nor that major tasks still remain. The BOT project has by no means solved all quality problems, as may easily be seen by reading its final report. But the faculty has put itself in an excellent position for future quality enhancement.

## **Division for Education and Teaching Professions (ILU)**

In a 1995 evaluation of compulsory school (i.e. 1-9) teacher education published as National Agency report 1996:1 R the Uppsala University School for Teacher Training (ILU) is to some extent characterized in negative terms: the longstanding tension between the traditional Swedish teacher training culture and that of academically-oriented subject studies at the university has not been removed; a poor “developmental climate” prevails there, with sharp conflicts between the various subject groups; demands made on students are far too low.

However, this biting criticism is ameliorated by the fact that the departmental center for didactics has become a useful resource, and that major efforts have in recent years been made to upgrade teacher competence. Our visit to ILU confirmed the existence of a mixture of fundamental difficulties and impressive ambitions to improve matters. The Chair of the Teacher Training Board, who is a member of the Deans’ Council by virtue of this position, expressed satisfaction at their increased contacts with the subject-oriented departments of the University—including the Department of Education. Concrete discussions are now being held about introducing a doctorate in subject theory with a didactic orientation, and it was stated that they planned to create teaching posts jointly financed by ILU and the relevant subject departments.

ILU has appointed a quality enhancement group that in the operational plan for the present academic year has been assigned responsibility for developing quality plans for all degree programs and course areas at ILU. During our visit, however, one director of studies noted that this local quality group had hitherto been relatively passive, possibly while waiting for the central quality enhancement planning to produce clear directives. The relevant information for deciding the true state of matters is not available to us, but we nevertheless wish to note the risk that central initiative can be used to legitimate passivity at lower levels. The university Quality Group should thus place considerable emphasis on feedback from the various faculties and schools, in order to react swiftly if quality enhancement should falter in one unit or another.

During our visit, the student representatives were the most scathing in their criticism of their fellow students for their nearly total lack of involvement in the workings of the school. They had only good words to say about the

subject departments and the university in general, but were the more critical about ILU's "unprofessional" administration, particularly as regards scheduling. They did, however, note that matters had sharply improved recently.

Teacher training is notoriously problematic throughout Sweden, according to the 1995 national evaluation. While admittedly only a meager consolation, one may nevertheless note that it actually appears to be an international phenomenon, as the chair of our audit team was able to note in a very recently completed evaluation of the Universität-Gesamthochschule Siegen in Germany, under the aegis of a program established by the European Conference of University Rectors (CRE). The research links of teacher training are seen as weak at ILU, as well. Our findings indicate, however, that the school administration is well aware of the weaknesses in its degree program and has set in motion important quality-enhancing initiatives. A good example is the FOKUS project, a network that links key persons at a number of high schools in Central Sweden with Uppsala University. Another is the collegial evaluation carried out in conjunction with the University College of Karlstad. Our overall judgement is thus that the administration of ILU has begun an active quality enhancement program that deserves strong support from the university, so that its ambitious plans may be realized.

### **The University Library (UUB)**

By virtue of its position as the largest and oldest university library in Sweden, UUB looms large as a prestigious cultural institution. Among its many national tasks may be mentioned its function as head library for the humanities. For the university's own teaching and research, UUB comprises a resource whose importance cannot be sufficiently emphasized.

Like other university libraries, UUB has during recent years faced economic difficulties caused by budget cuts exacerbated by increasing acquisition costs. At the same time it can point to an ongoing increase in book loans and purchases of monographs, which indicates successful productivity increases and support from the university administration.

Since 1994, quality enhancement measures have been carried out *inter alia* by a committee created to review resource allocations. In this committee,

library representatives have worked together with representatives for the various faculties and the student union. This year responsibility for quality enhancement is to be transferred to a special working group. We consider this to be an appropriate solution, not least because it should imply an enlarged mandate: quality enhancement must be implementable even in times of shrinking resources.

We have noted that the library administration has tried in various ways to make UUB better able to serve the requirements and wishes of its users, *inter alia* by sending questionnaires to students and researchers. This is clearly not a simple task, as the library has many stakeholder and user categories to consider. To improve the quality of undergraduate education, we nonetheless recommend that UUB intensify its efforts to utilize new technical solutions, while simultaneously completing its program of decentralizing, so that the library effectively can help introduce work methods that are more problem-oriented and that encourage greater student activity.

## **The Administration**

The new resource allocation system has generally speaking resulted in greater demands on Swedish university and college administrations, particularly as regards economic administration and internal auditing. Like other universities, Uppsala has chosen to allow a major part of the administrative responsibility to devolve to the individual departments. This reform was implemented after extensive preparations in project form, where representatives for the central Quality Group and departments were involved. During the current academic year not less than five projects were launched after decisions by the University Board.

We obtained the distinct impression that the central administration is implementing well thought out and energetic measures for improving its competence as a staff and service organ for Uppsala University. Its quality enhancement program meshes well with the areas given priority by the central Quality Group, and this bodes well for an ongoing dynamic relation between university activities and the administration. In the future, the most important area of reform appears to be improvement of the administrative quality at departmental level. As already noted, and as will be discussed further below, we find it appropriate that this should be carried out in connection with a major reduction in the overall number of departments.

## 4. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations

The university self-evaluation discusses a number of interesting aspects that we are unable to consider in this brief document. Instead, we will limit ourselves to a few points that we consider particularly salient. Beyond these, however, we also wish to add further reflections on matters we sought there in vain.

This latter category includes university relations to stakeholders other than teachers and students in the Uppsala area. Contacts with business and industry are admittedly to be found here and there in the document, and our talks have revealed that they have been established in many ways, but we have not discovered any evidence for the existence of a well considered policy for external relations. We are of course aware that Uppsala University is one of the almost obligatory stops for diplomats and visiting heads of state, but it is not such ad-hoc glories we are referring to. Nor are we seeking the expansion of a system with liaison officers or other professional mediators. What we found missing in the self-evaluation might rather be designated an attitude to the world *extra muros*.

It is in itself natural that quality programs hitherto have laid emphasis on the educational mission of the university, with its self-evaluation being molded accordingly. In a future-oriented perspective, however, the way university relations are developed to society at large must be regarded as a quality factor of great weight. For the sake of clarity, it should be emphasized that not for a moment are we envisioning a university in full obedience to external demands. The university must remain a sovereign determiner of its educational content, nor would we permit the freedom of research to be called into question. We instead recommend that Uppsala University in the future systematize and cultivate such contacts with society as can enable it to listen to as yet vaguely articulated educational needs and discover such possibilities before others succeed in exploiting them. Not least for a university whose traditions stretch back for centuries, it is important to demonstrate openness and initiative in a situation where higher education—and its costs—has become a matter of relevance to the majority of the Swedish population.

Ultimately this responsibility must rest upon university departments and their individual teachers, but it is the task of the policymaking organs to determine the general direction and provide the requisite support. Quality enhancement at Uppsala University has now entered the phase where good suggestions must be turned into living praxis. It is generally acknowledged that this is the most critical phase of quality enhancement, and we would therefore argue that the Quality Group should concentrate its efforts on closely monitoring events at the departmental level. Not least important is the task of spreading knowledge about experiences gained and finding good examples. We think that in this respect external input should be given greater weight than what the self-evaluation appears to suggest.

Student activity in quality enhancement recurs at numerous points in the self-evaluation, occasionally in problematized form. Above, we have cited quite a few critical statements by student representatives about their fellow students' lack of interest in such participation. Given how eagerly a previous generation of students fought for increased student influence, it can seem remarkable, or even dispiriting, to note the relative indifference of the current student population. Of course, this situation is not restricted to Uppsala, nor have we found anything indicating that those responsible for quality have given up. On the contrary, the various quality group publications are suffused with a genuine desire to engage students in this work, and we have been able to note the same eagerness during our visit, admittedly at different levels of intensity. Much of this student indifference may well be explained by their failure to see any concrete results stemming from having representatives on all the various decision-making bodies, or from the routine course evaluations. We believe that departments need to test new forms that can provide direct feedback to students. In the current atmosphere, students will probably value more highly whatever happens in their immediate environment than more abstract rights at a distance—although this should not be taken as denigration of the catalogue of student rights published by the Uppsala student union and endorsed by the self-evaluation as an asset.

We regard the graduate program as the most problematic aspect of the university's mission in society. The long periods of studies evidenced in the graduate programs of certain faculties have already been noted as a serious quality problem. To a large extent this is linked to the difficulties in financing doctoral studies. In our opinion it is wrong to accept students in a graduate program without enabling them to obtain some form of financial support

within a reasonable period of time. Many faculties currently report hundreds of registered doctoral students, while simultaneously counting the scholarships and posts available to them as two score or less. We recommend a considerable tightening of admission policies and a greater degree of graduate student activity as a condition for remaining in the program. We have been impressed by the number of interesting and occasionally unconventional suggestions for improvements, as presented by the Quality Group in its document on the graduate program. It is a revealing fact that this publication in the group's series has given rise to a much livelier debate than any other. Here the group's quality enhancement has clearly entered a minefield—all the more reason to continue clearing away the mines!

Among the Quality Group's priority areas, information technology is among those treated relatively summarily. We assume that this does not reflect a low status, since the university IT program appears to be well conceived and praiseworthy. We nevertheless wish to emphasize the importance of major university support to ensure that it is quickly achieved.

There then remain the many and knotty questions concerning academic policy. We have noted that the policymaking functions were closely examined during the present academic year, *inter alia* in a comprehensive review from the Rector's Office (clearly bearing the stamp of his personality), and a report from a commission appointed by the University Board. At Uppsala University a collegial form of leadership still reigns, which means that regardless of how the top administrative posts are formally appointed, their position is that of *primi inter pares*. Whether the accent falls on the *prima/primus* or on the *pares* has depended—and still depends—on personal authority and ambition. The enormous growth of the University and society's growing demands for efficiency and a social statement of account have nonetheless led to the top administrative posts more and more becoming full-time occupations, and thus well underway towards professionalization. At the same time, the ongoing specialization of science and the internal development of departmental cultures increasingly limit the various ways to steer the university as a whole and create a clear profile. Thus, from their already high level centrifugal forces are rapidly gaining in strength.

The administration for Uppsala University clearly seeks to achieve an intermediate position, where the requisite decentralization of responsibility

for teaching and research is balanced by a unified administration and clear demarcation of the rector's role as the principal university representative. It is our impression that this effort has on the whole been successful, although that does not imply that the leadership functions of the university are carried out in accordance with a pattern clear to all. The faculties are relatively independent, but we have found numerous signs that their mission vis-à-vis their departments is unclear. Faculty deans and department chairs are all appointed by the rector, and thus represent the university administration, but are simultaneously the spokesmen/-women for their respective organs vis-à-vis that same administration, the deans most clearly so, as they are elected by the faculty before being appointed by the rector. This role play is admittedly not lacking in complications. For an outside observer it may well appear incomprehensible that it works at all. Nor would it, if it could not rely on Uppsala's strong anchor in living tradition and a deep loyalty to the university as a concept, or perhaps even a way of life.

It is of course unfeasible for the rector frequently to meet with the more than 150 department heads, even if we are convinced that frequent personal meetings would greatly promote cohesion in the university. The rector's contacts with university activities are primarily via the faculty deans, at the regular and relatively frequent Deans' Councils. Such an organ, which has been introduced at numerous institutions of higher education, necessarily lacks formal decision-making power, but can play an important role in the exchange of information and discussion of key issues. The Quality Group has suggested that the deans should collectively be assigned a clearly defined responsibility for the university as a whole, and we find this a matter well worth considering. We are not, however, convinced that this will suffice as a strengthening of academic leadership. This entire question should, in our opinion, be the object of thorough discussion, beginning with comparative studies in Sweden and abroad. It would appear that at the moment Uppsala University is in a particularly favorable position to begin such a discussion. We find it of crucial importance that the initiative should come from the universities themselves.

The ability of the rector to maintain frequent personal contact with the department chairs appointed by him/her would of course increase if the number of departments could be reduced. The Quality Group has proposed such a reduction, and numerous faculty representatives have expressed a similar opinion. However, the University has hesitated at the thought of

setting in motion a process that is notoriously difficult to carry out and whose result is uncertain. Given that both qualitative and administrative arguments may be brought to bear in support of merging smaller departments into larger units, we nevertheless recommend an active merger program for the relevant faculties. In this connection we wish to emphasize that in our discussions the competence of the university administration was never called into question. Together with the increased demands administrative matters will make on departments, not least in the financial area, this attitude should be an indication that the time is ripe for a rationalization of university structure at the departmental level. By creating fewer, and thus larger units, it would be possible to afford more qualified administrative personnel, which in turn would create conditions permitting a well-functioning leadership in academic matters.

As we approach the end of our quality audit at Uppsala University, it is with great relief that we conclude it is not our task to decide whether the songs of praise echoing down the corridors of time are still relevant—if indeed, they ever have been so. What we have been asked to evaluate is not a quality level or ranking; instead, it is the process that Uppsala University is carrying out in order to obtain improvements in above all its undergraduate education, and the actual opportunities for creating change within the framework of the resources presently available. We have found that quality enhancement in its current form got off to a flying start in 1993 and at the central level has been pursued with great energy and determination along wisely selected lines of action. We have also found that all faculties and the School of Teacher Training have been able to present their own measures and plans, even if their achievements in this direction vary. In sum, we arrive at the general conclusion that quality enhancement at Uppsala University is marked by a high level of ambition and is on the whole moving in an appropriate direction.

In accordance with our directives, we wish in conclusion to recommend that Uppsala University particularly consider the following problem areas in their future quality enhancement programs:

- university relations to society at large
- departmental implementation of the centrally determined quality enhancement program
- systematic distribution of experiences within (and without) the university, particularly with reference to successful examples

- the need for increased measures to promote student participation in quality enhancement
- programs to improve graduate programs in accordance with the suggestions of the Quality Group
- strong support for the implementation of the IT program
- the need for in-depth discussions of academic leadership, based on comparative studies in Sweden and abroad
- the need for measures that will merge smaller departments into larger units that can be provided with more sophisticated administrative resources

# Appendix I

## **Written material submitted to the Audit Team**

(Except where so indicated, all material is in Swedish.)

- General information about Uppsala University
  1. University catalogue
  2. Course catalogue
  3. University regulations
  4. Annual report for the academic year 1994/95
  5. Operational plan 1995/96
  6. Triennial budget request for the fiscal years 1997-1999
  7. Uppsala University at the beginning of the year 2000. Basis for a strategic plan.
  
- Publications of the Quality Group
  8. Quality Enhancement Program for Uppsala University
  9. Uppsala Must Become Even Better!
  10. The Leadership of University Departments
  11. Self-evaluation: What Good Will It Do?
  12. Student Involvement in Quality Enhancement
  13. Our Changing Graduate Programs
  14. The Development of Information Technology in the University
  15. A Swedish Approach to Quality in Education. The Case of Uppsala. [In English]
  16. Quality Enhancement at Uppsala University [Self-evaluation report]
  
- Basis for describing the process at the faculty or equivalent level
  17. The Quality Group
  18. The Unit for Educational Development
  19. The Human Resources Unit
  20. The Faculty of Theology
  21. The Faculty of Law
  22. The Faculty of Medicine
  23. The Faculty of Pharmacy

24. The Faculty of History and Philosophy
25. The Faculty of Languages
26. The Faculty of Social Sciences
27. The Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences
28. The School of Teacher Training
29. The University Library
30. The University Administration
31. Areas given priority

# Appendix 2

## **Program for the Audit Team Visit to Uppsala University**

### ***Monday, April 22***

8 am - 8:15	Trip from hotel to HSC (Humanities - Social Science Center)
8:15 - 8:30	Official welcome by the Rector
8:30 - 9:45	Faculty of Languages
9:45 - 10 am	Morning coffee
10 am - 11:15	Faculty of History and Philosophy
11:15 - 12:30	Faculty of Social Sciences
12:30 - 12:45	Walk to Södermanland-Nerike student house
12:45 - 2 pm	Lunch with the Quality Group at the Södermanland-Nerike student house
2 pm - 3:15	Faculty of Theology
3:15 - 3:45	Afternoon coffee
3:45 - 5 pm	Student union, social counselors and student advisors
7 pm	Rector's banquet

### ***Tuesday, April 23***

8:30 - 9 am	Trip from hotel to BMC (Biomedical Center)
9 am - 10:30	Faculty of Pharmacy
10:30 - 11 am	Morning coffee
11 am - 12:30	Faculty of Medicine
12:30 - 2 pm	Lunch with representatives for the Faculty of Medicine

2 pm - 3 pm	Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences
3 pm - 3:30	Afternoon coffee
3:30 - 4:30	Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences
5 pm - 5:30	Return trip to the hotel
5:30 on	At the disposal of the audit team

### **Wednesday, April 24**

8:30 - 9 am	Trip from the hotel to ILU (School of Teacher Training)
9 am - 10:30	School for Teacher Training, including morning coffee
10:30 - 11 am	Trip from ILU to Juridicum (the law complex)
11 am - 12:15	Faculty of Law
12:15 - 12:30	Walk to the Department of Home Economics
12:30 - 2 pm	Lunch and discussions at the Department of Home Economics
2 pm - 2:15	Walk to Carolina Rediviva (the University Library)
2:15 - 3:15	The University Library
3:15 - 3:30	Walk to the Administration buildings
3:30 - 4:45	The University Administration, including afternoon coffee
4:45 - 6 pm	Concluding discussions with University officials