



COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING



World Bank Joint Client-Staff Learning Seminar on Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education



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Quality assurance for open, distance and eLearning: Issues for developing countries



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COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

PERSPECTIVES ON
DISTANCE EDUCATION

Towards a
Culture of Quality

Badri N. Koul and Asba Kanwar, Editors

QUALITY

“Fitness for purpose
at minimum cost
to society”

Fitness for purpose

???

???

at minimum cost

to society

Nottingham's New University

In Nottingham, that dismal town
where I went to school and college
they've built a new university
for a new dispensation of knowledge

Built it most grand and cakeily
out of the noble loot
derived from shrewd cash chemistry
by good Sir Jesse Boot

D. H. Lawrence



CHALLENGES

Age Participation Rates (APRs)

~50% in richer countries

<10% in poorer countries

CHALLENGES

Age Participation Rates (APRs)

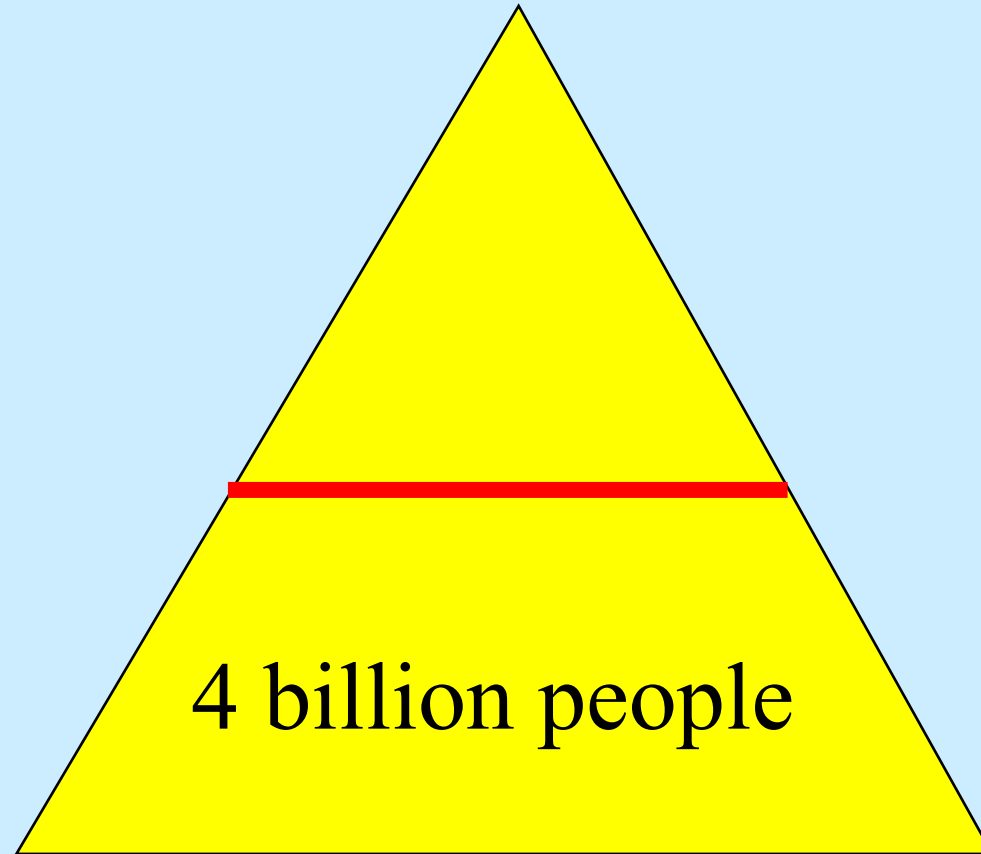
~50% in richer countries

<10% in poorer countries

More young students

+ Life Long Learning (L3)

THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC PYRAMID



Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More private, for-profits

Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More private, for-profits
- More distance learning

Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More private, for-profits
- More distance learning
- More cross-border education

Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More private, for-profits

*International Finance Corporation of
the World Bank doing a good job ✓✓*

Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More private, for-profits

They must:

Make a profit, and therefore...

Attract students, and therefore...

Offer useful programmes.

at minimum cost
to society??

All education
yields a blend of
public and private
benefits

Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More distance learning

**Quality assurance for open, distance and
eLearning:
Issues for developing countries**

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eLearning:
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Open learning =

removal of barriers

**Quality assurance for open, distance and
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Issues for developing countries**

Open learning =

removal of barriers

Distance learning =

separation of learner & institution

**Quality assurance for open, distance and
eLearning:
Issues for developing countries**

Distance learning ~ Open learning

**Quality assurance for open, distance and
eLearning:
Issues for developing countries**

Open learning =

removal of barriers

Distance learning =

separation of learner & institution

eLearning =

at a computer screen

**Quality assurance for open, distance and
eLearning:
Issues for developing countries**

Open learning =

removal of barriers

Distance learning =

separation of learner & institution

eLearning =

at a computer screen (Pure eLearning)

**Quality assurance for open, distance and
eLearning:
Issues for developing countries**

eLearning = (sexier) distance learning

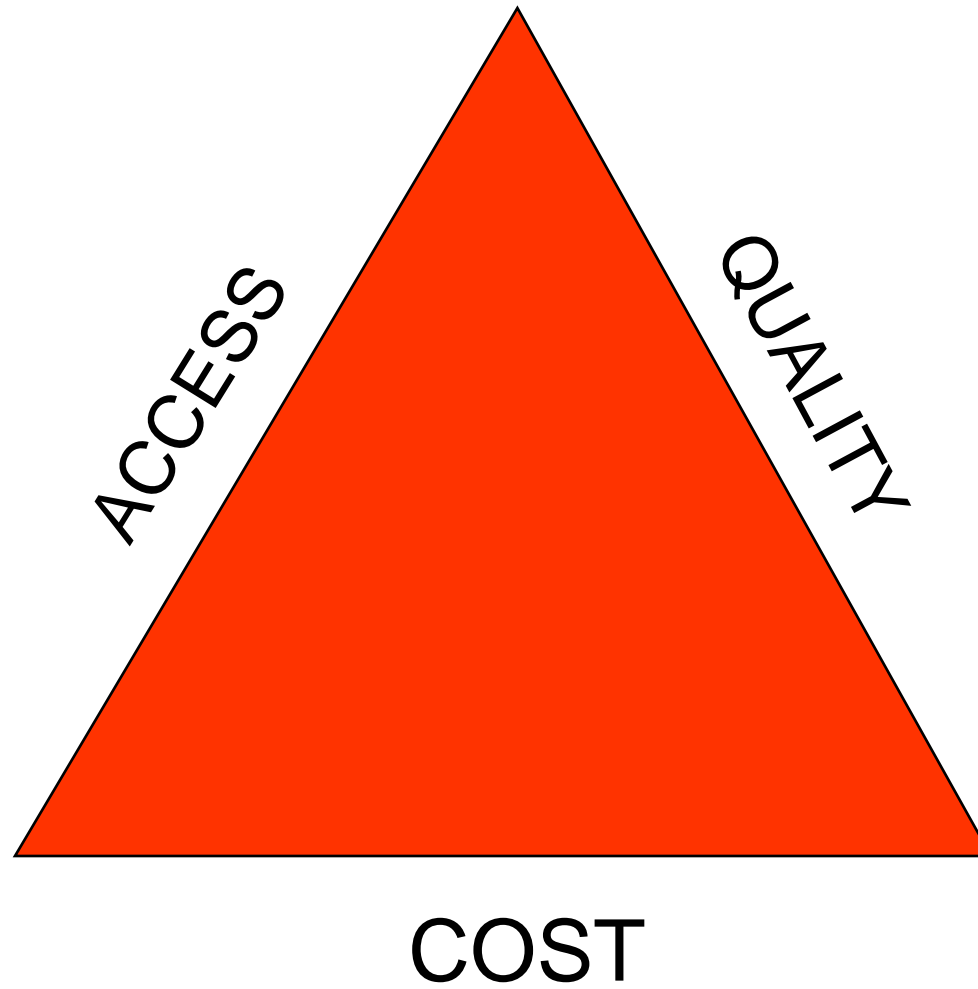
**Quality assurance for open, distance and
eLearning:
Issues for developing countries**

distance learning

QUALITY

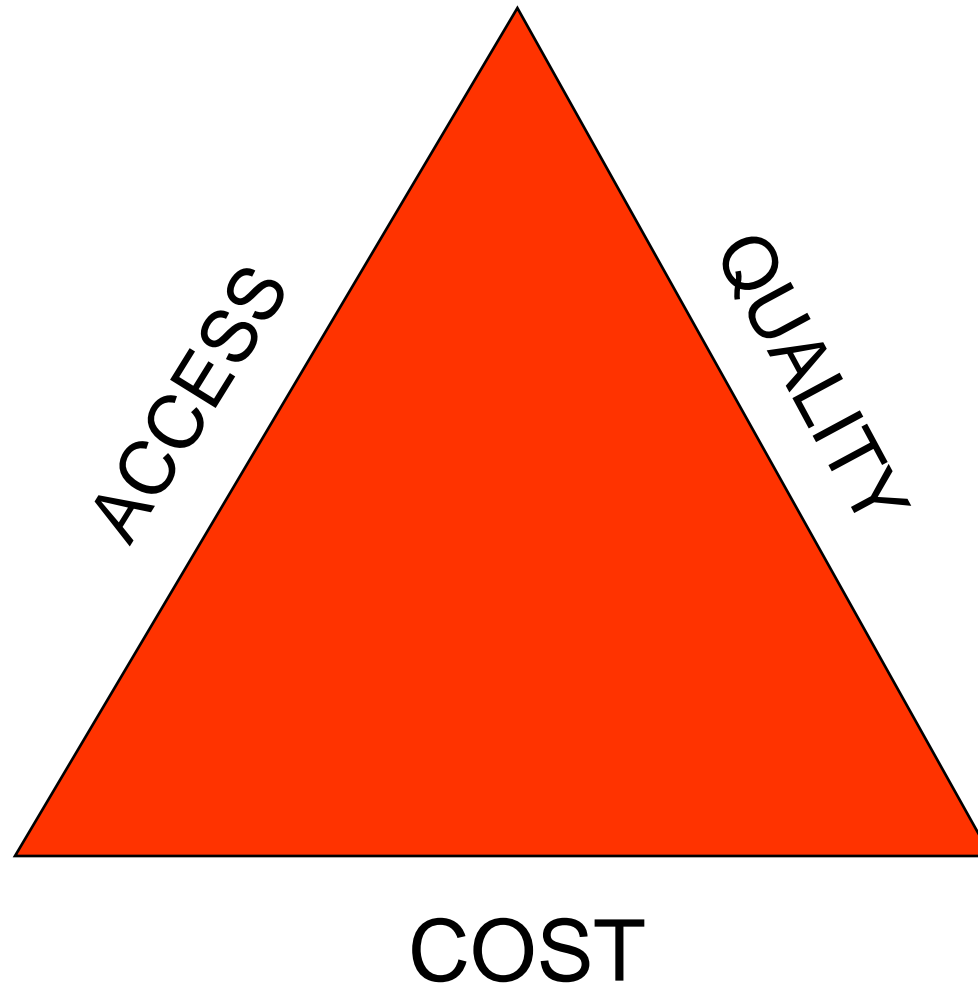
“Fitness for purpose
at minimum cost
to society”

The Iron Triangle



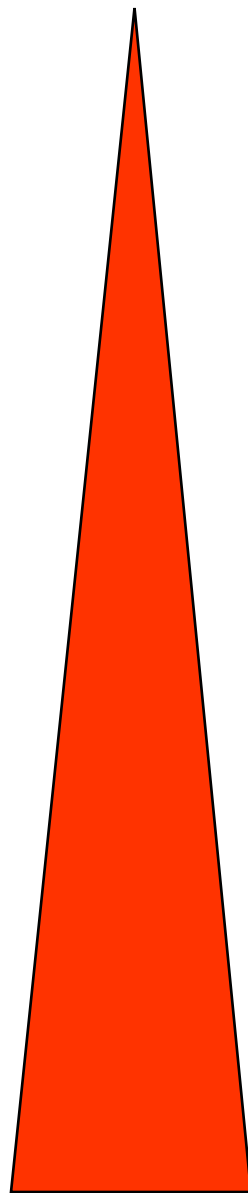
An insidious link
has developed in
our minds between
quality and
exclusivity

The Iron Triangle



ACCESS

QUALITY

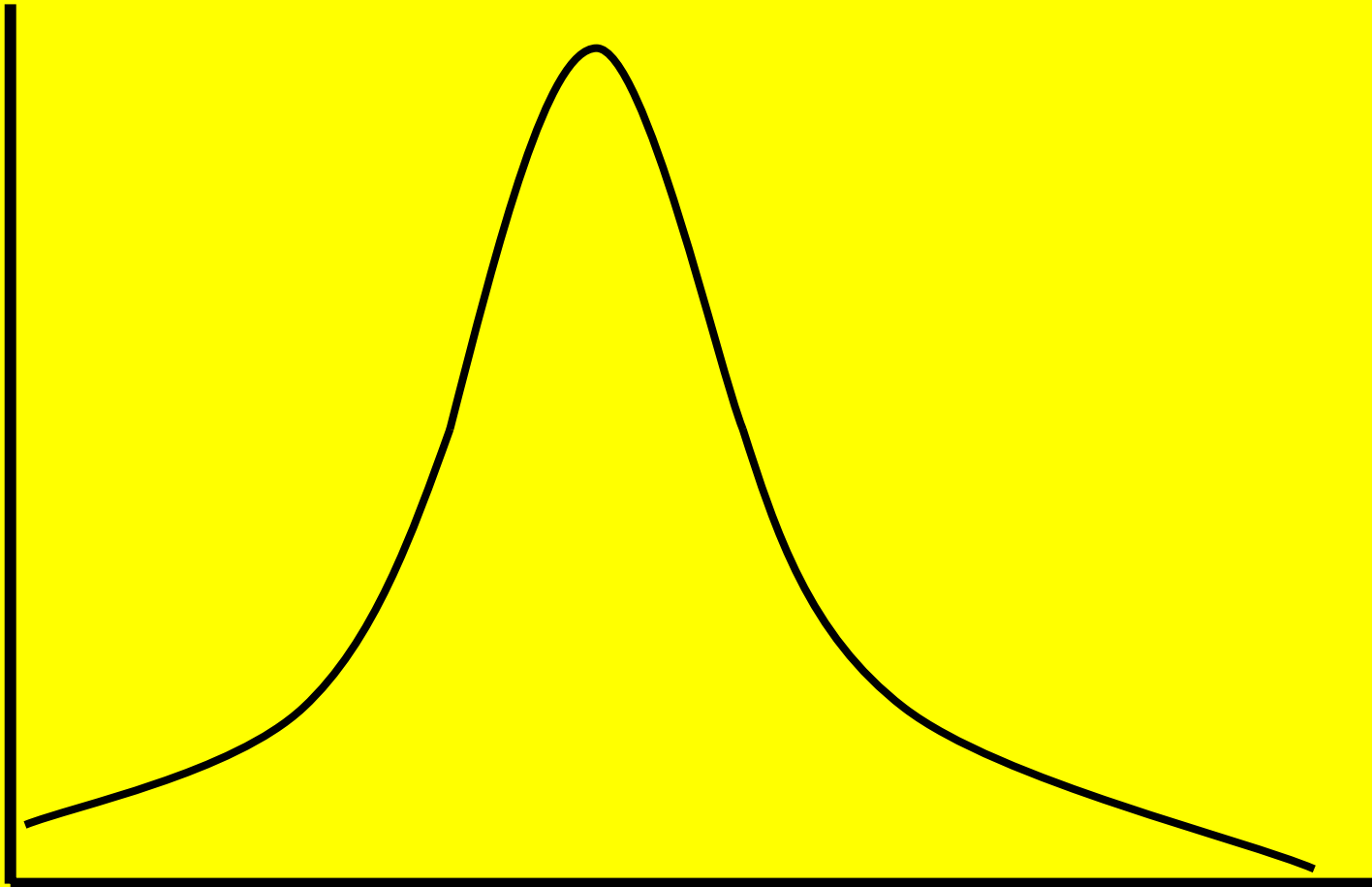


COST



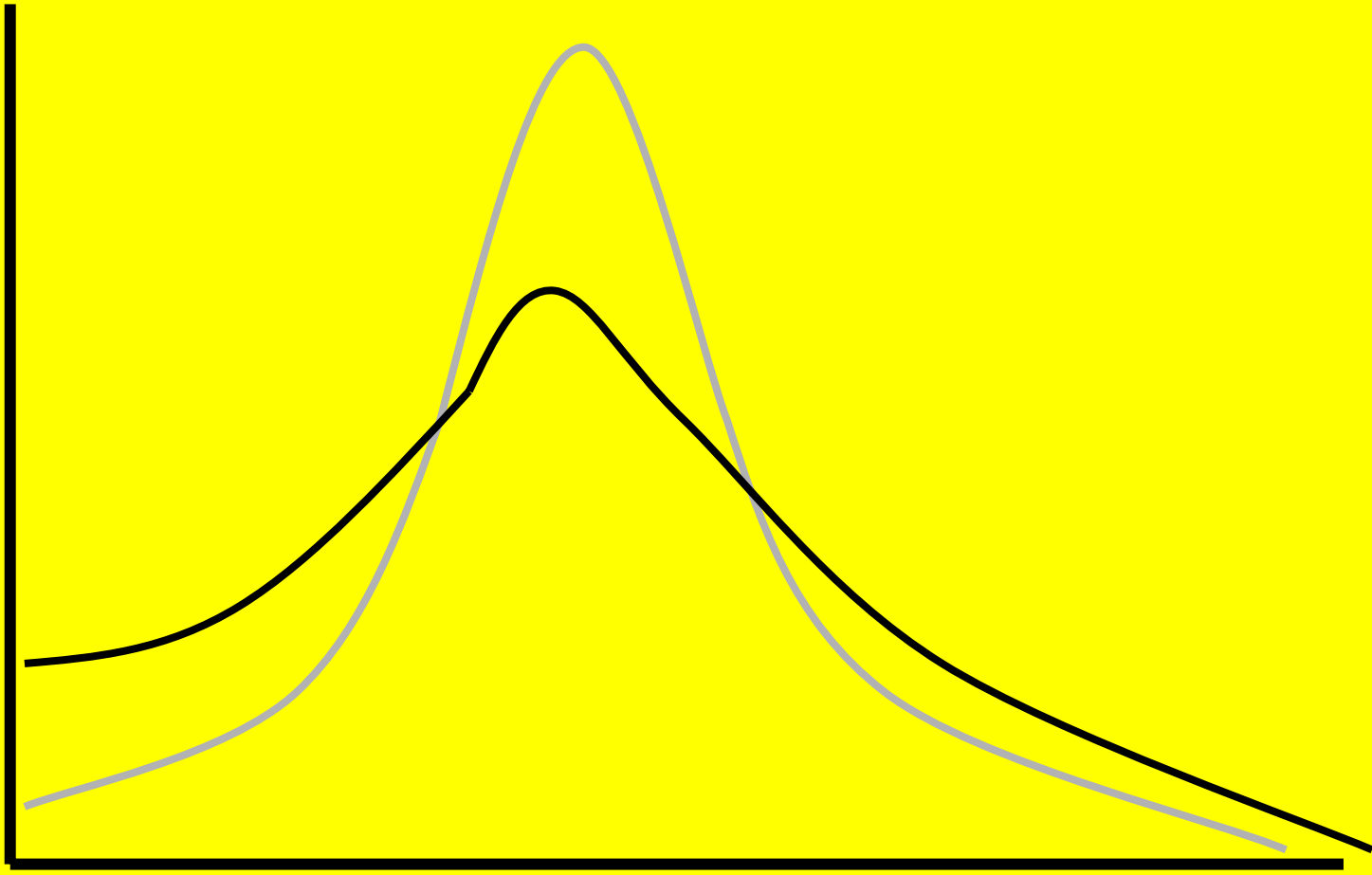
The Open University

Number



Age

Number



Age



The Open University

- 200,000 students
- Costs 60- 80% of conventional

BRITAIN'S TOP NINE UNIVERSITIES

Quality Rankings of Teaching

based on all subject assessments 1995-2004
(*Sunday Times University Guide 2004*)

1	CAMBRIDGE	96%
2	LOUGHBOROUGH	95%
3=	LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS	88%
3=	YORK	88%
5	<u>THE OPEN UNIVERSITY</u>	87%
6	OXFORD	86%
7	IMPERIAL COLLEGE	82%
8	UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON	77%
9	ESSEX	77%

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Quality Rankings of Teaching

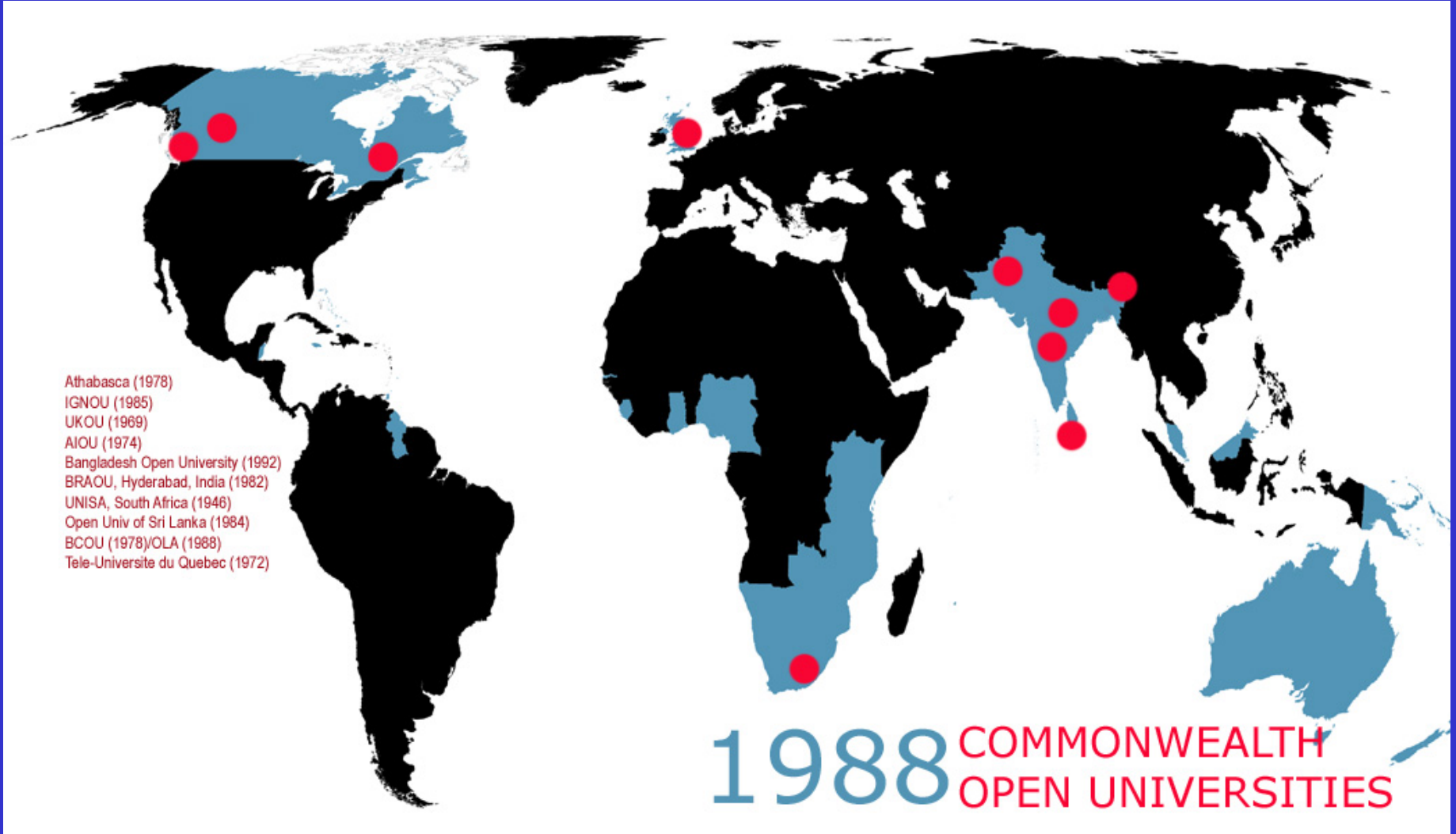
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...and top for student satisfaction

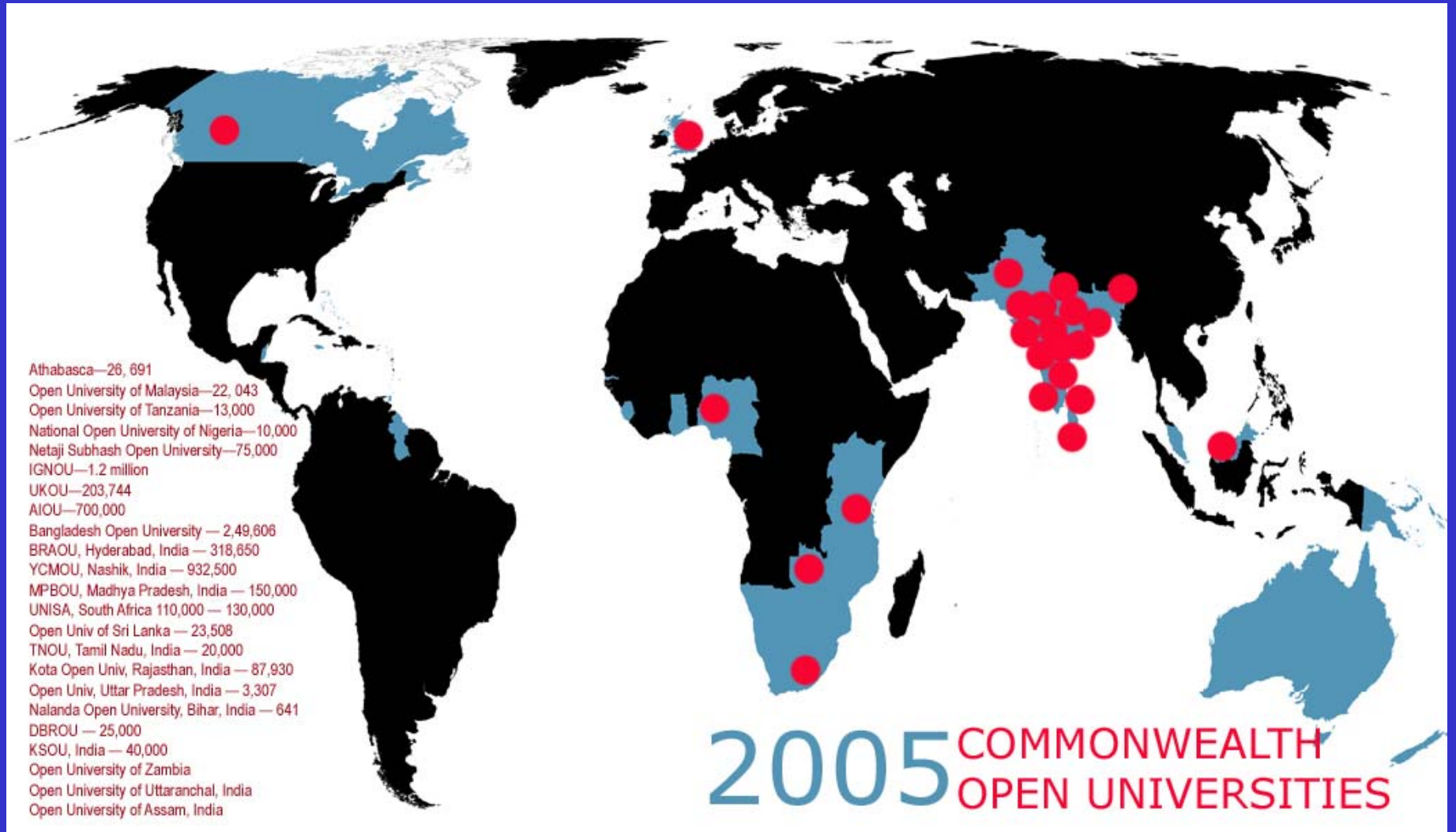
QUALITY

“Fitness for purpose
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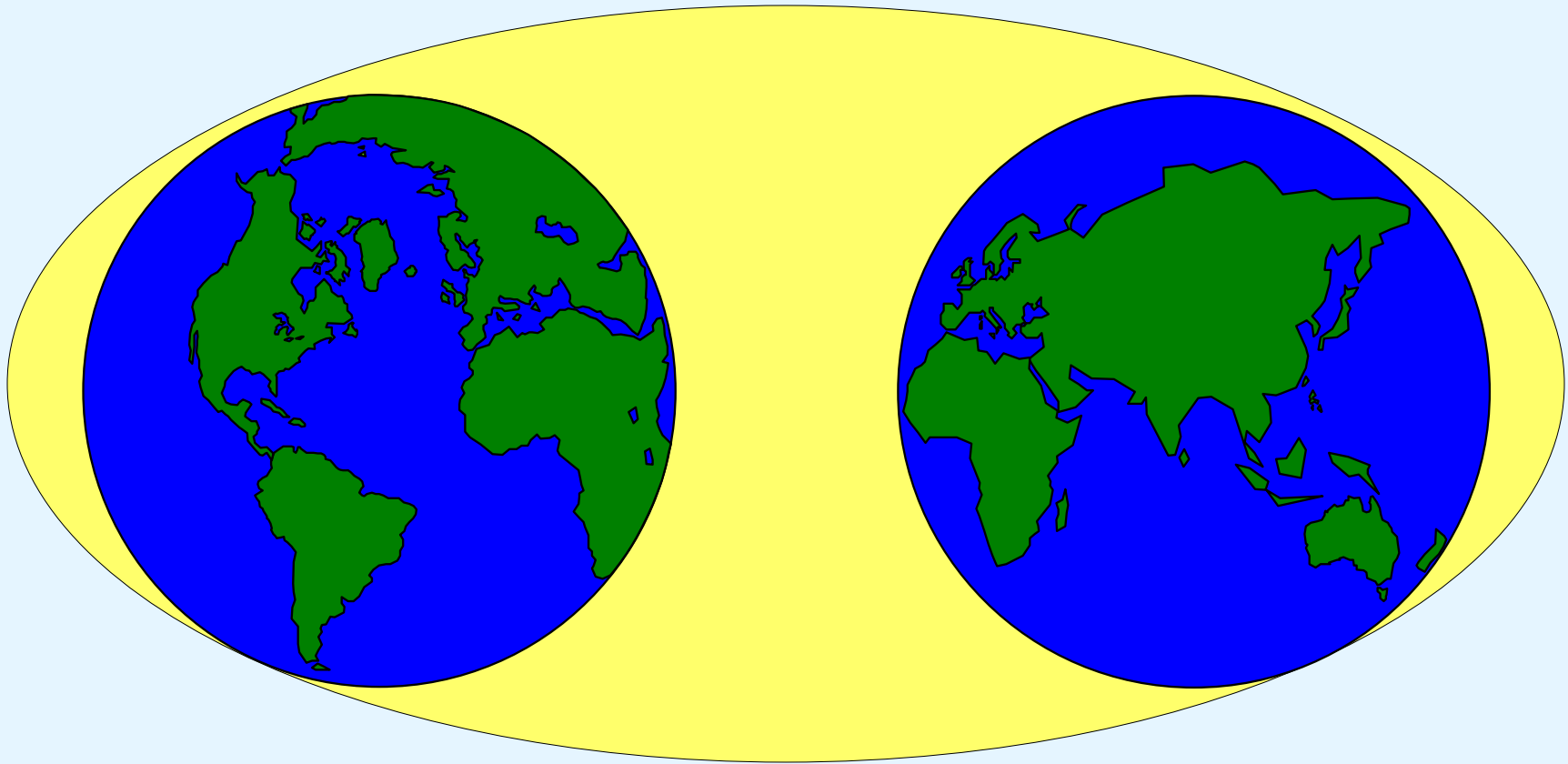
- Athabasca (1978)
- IGNOU (1985)
- UKOU (1969)
- AIOU (1974)
- Bangladesh Open University (1992)
- BRAOU, Hyderabad, India (1982)
- UNISA, South Africa (1946)
- Open Univ of Sri Lanka (1984)
- BCOU (1978)/OLA (1988)
- Tele-Universite du Quebec (1972)

1988 COMMONWEALTH OPEN UNIVERSITIES



The burgeoning
demand for
open schooling

SOUTH-SOUTH COLLABORATION



TO DEVELOP OPEN SCHOOLING

Higher Education in the 21st Century

- More private, for-profits
- More distance learning
- More cross-border education

CROSS-BORDER TERTIARY EDUCATION

- is facilitated by distance learning

CROSS-BORDER TERTIARY EDUCATION

- is facilitated by distance learning
- can come in under the radar

CROSS-BORDER TERTIARY EDUCATION

- is facilitated by distance learning
- can come in under the radar
- is currently negligible in developing countries

QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

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- 1970s – quest for parity

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- 1970s – quest for parity
- 1980s – intrinsic quality measures

QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

- 1970s – quest for parity
- 1980s – intrinsic quality measures
- 1990s – DL & F2F same treatment

The UKOU was subject to the same processes as other UK universities for:

- Quality audit
- Research assessment
- Teaching quality assessment

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Teaching Quality Assessment

Criteria: (4 points each)

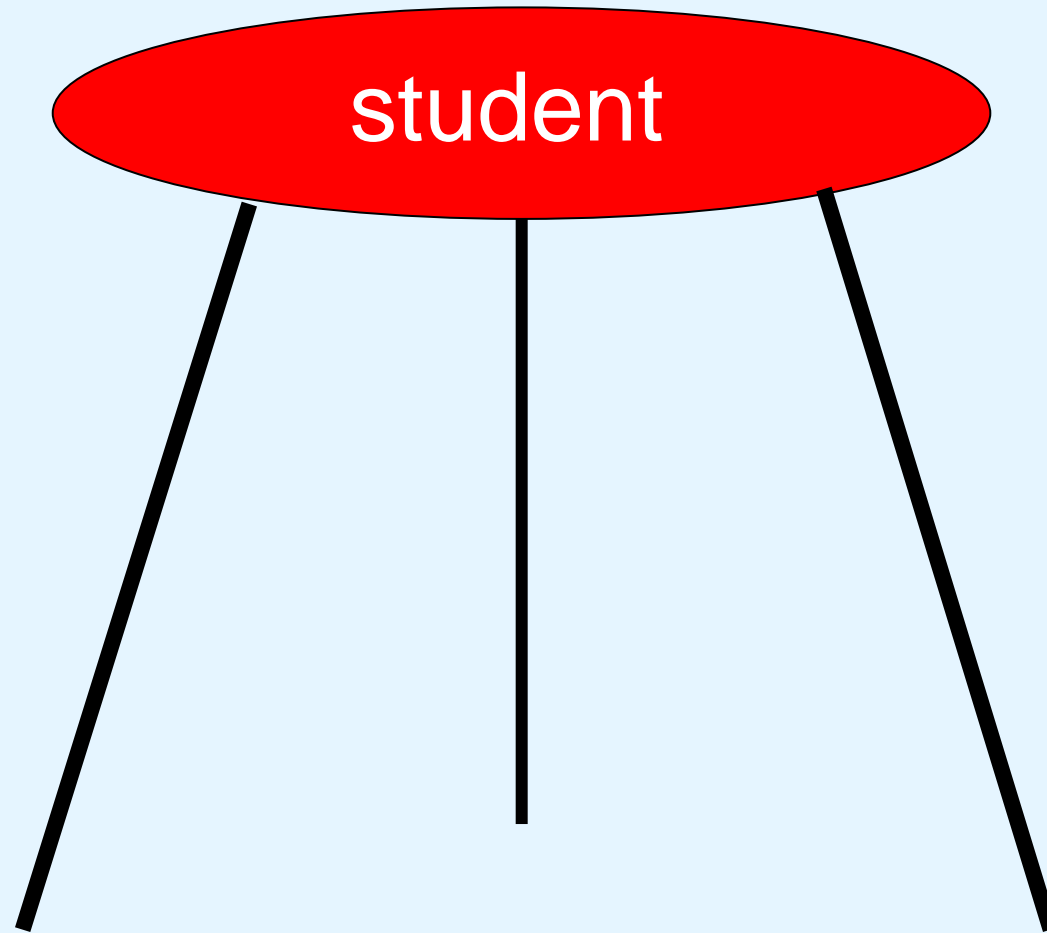
- Curriculum design, content and organisation
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- Student progression and achievement
- Student support and guidance
- Learning resources
- Quality management and enhancement

Distance learning uses
the well-tried
industrial principles of
division of labour and
specialisation

QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

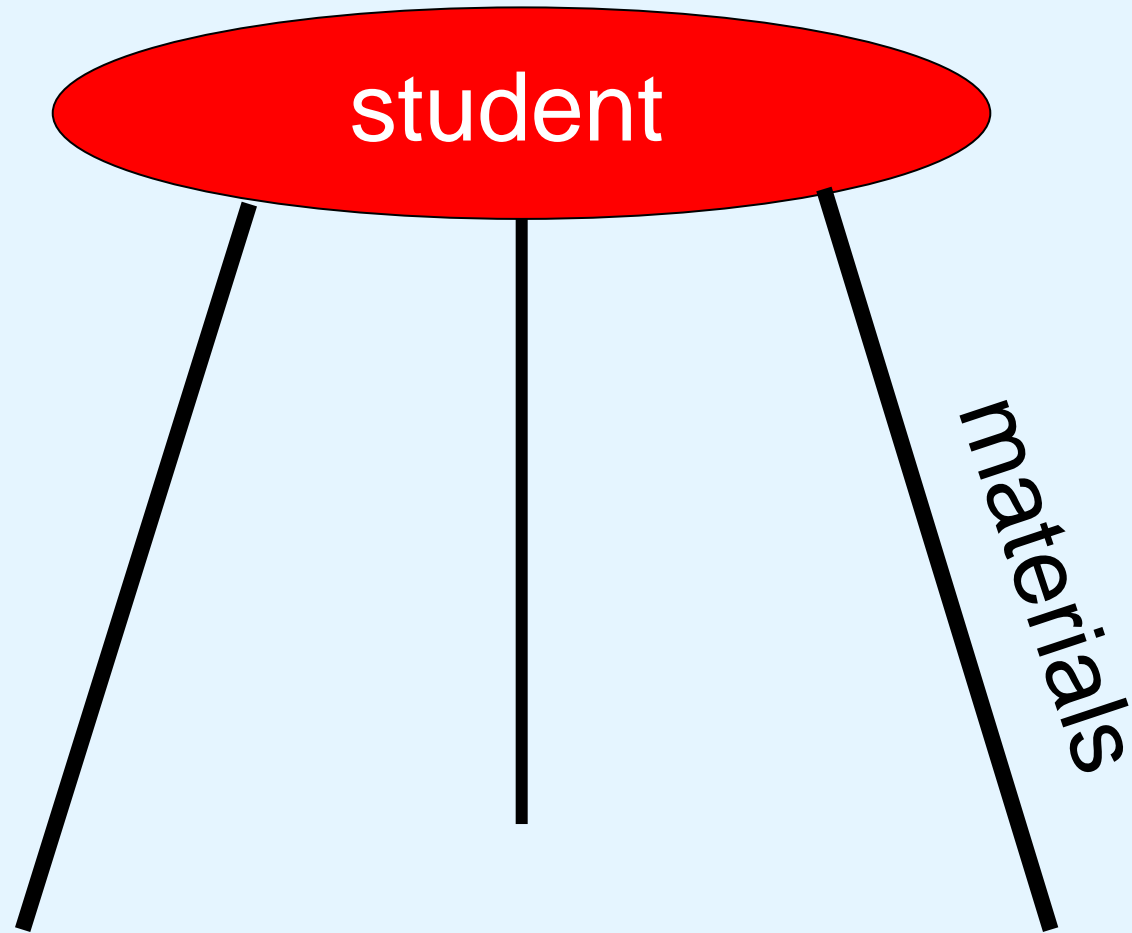
- 1970s – quest for parity
- 1980s – intrinsic quality measures
- 1990s – DL & F2F same treatment
- 2000s – towards a culture of quality

DISTANCE LEARNING



a three-legged stool

DISTANCE LEARNING



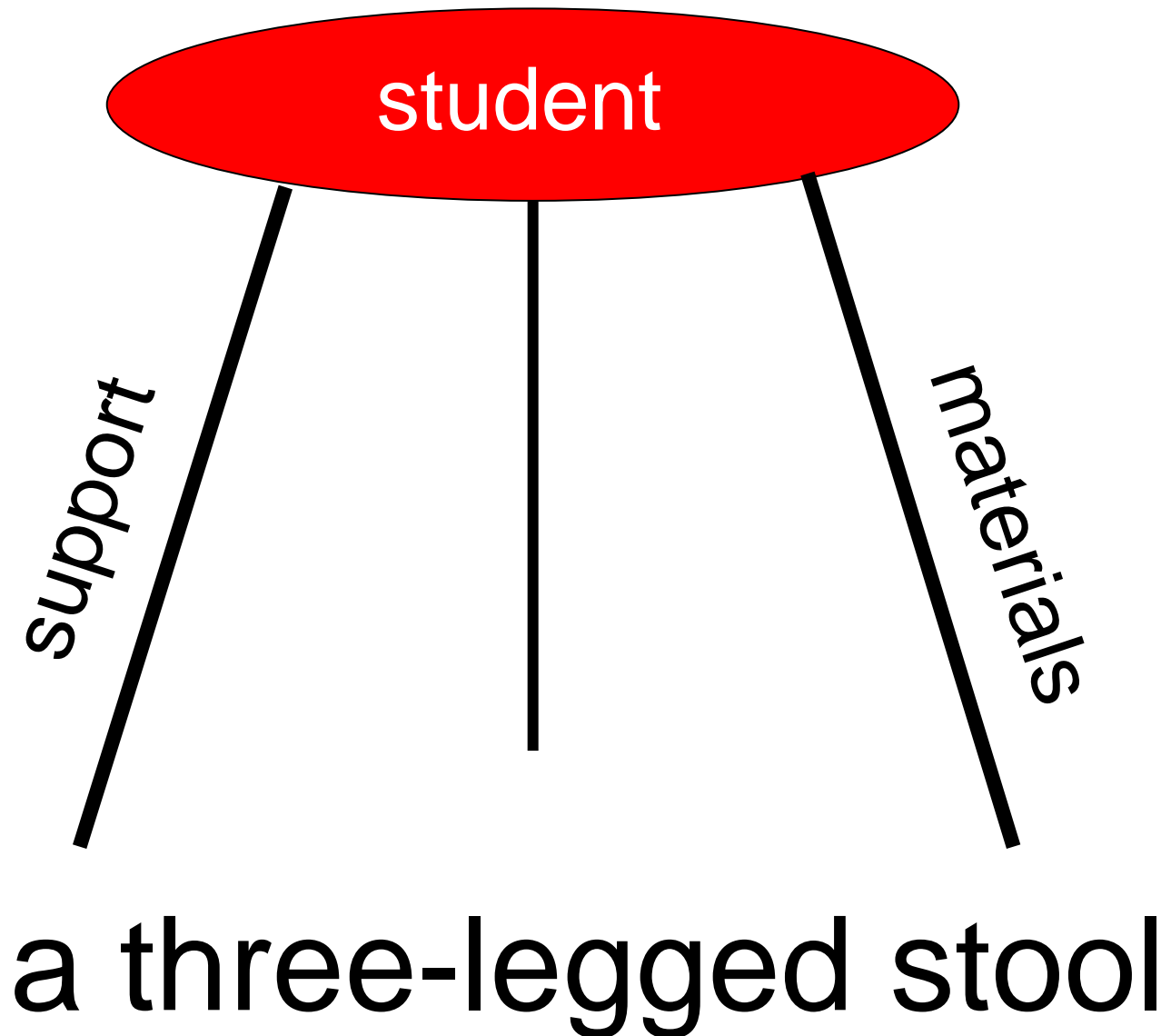
a three-legged stool

LEARNING MATERIALS

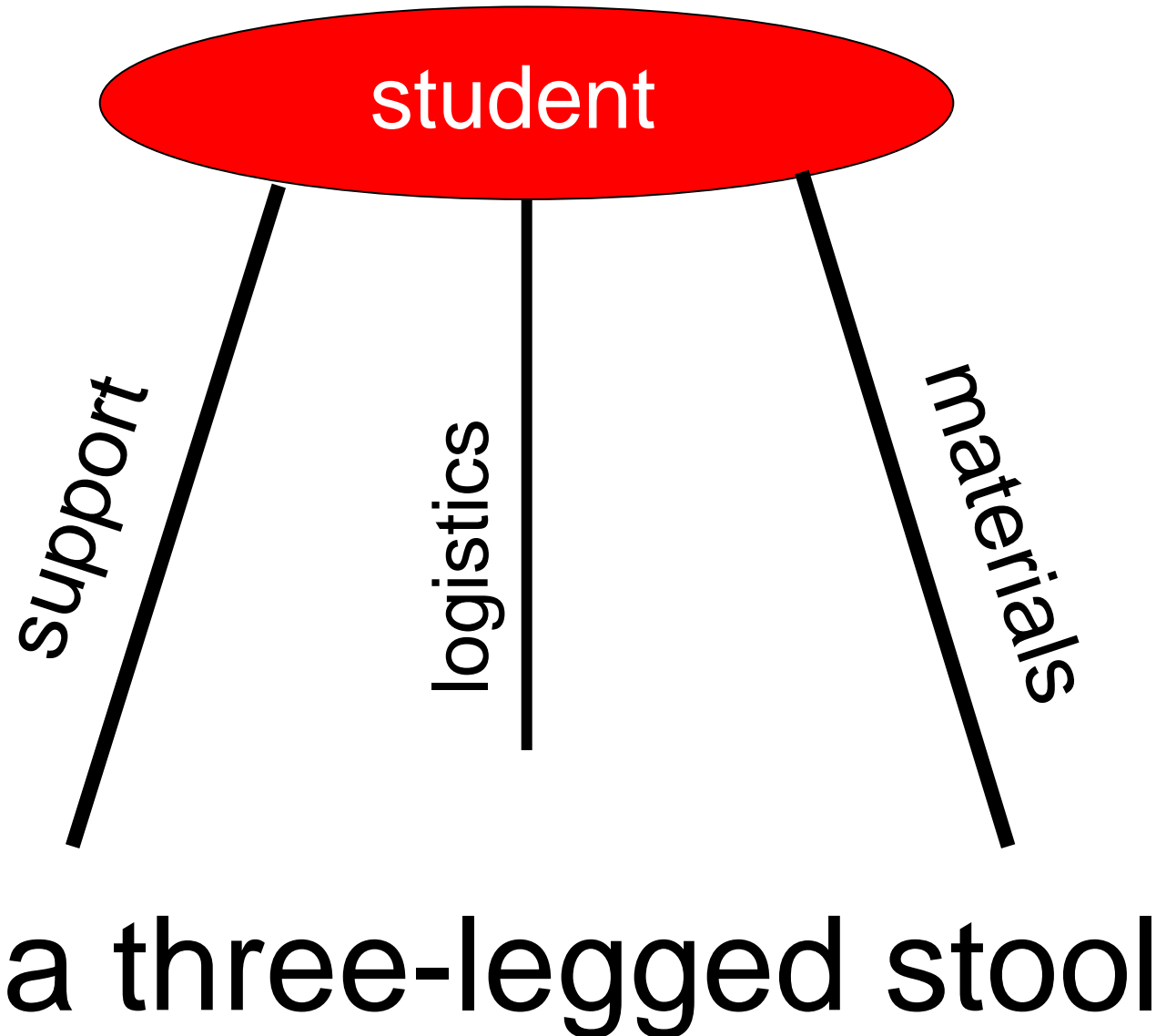
Use media that allow:

- Economies of scale
- Quality of scale

DISTANCE LEARNING



DISTANCE LEARNING



The challenge for developing countries:

To invent quality assurance
arrangements that are fit for
purpose at minimum cost to
society

QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

- 1970s – quest for parity
- 1980s – intrinsic quality measures
- 1990s – DL & F2F same treatment
- 2000s – towards a culture of quality

Towards a Culture of Quality

“Re-enfranchising academics”

“Commitment to improvement is more
than rhetorical”

Mala Singh



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**PERSPECTIVES ON
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Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda Teacher Education by Distance Learning

Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda
Teacher Education by Distance Learning

- Scarce funds and human resources, poor infrastructure
- Internal and/or external assessment too expensive
- **Quality = care shown to students**
- **Culture of Quality = attitude and ethos**
- **Focus on materials & learner support**



The Indira Gandhi National Open University
Training the elected members of local councils

The Indira Gandhi National Open University
Training the elected members of local councils

QUALITY =

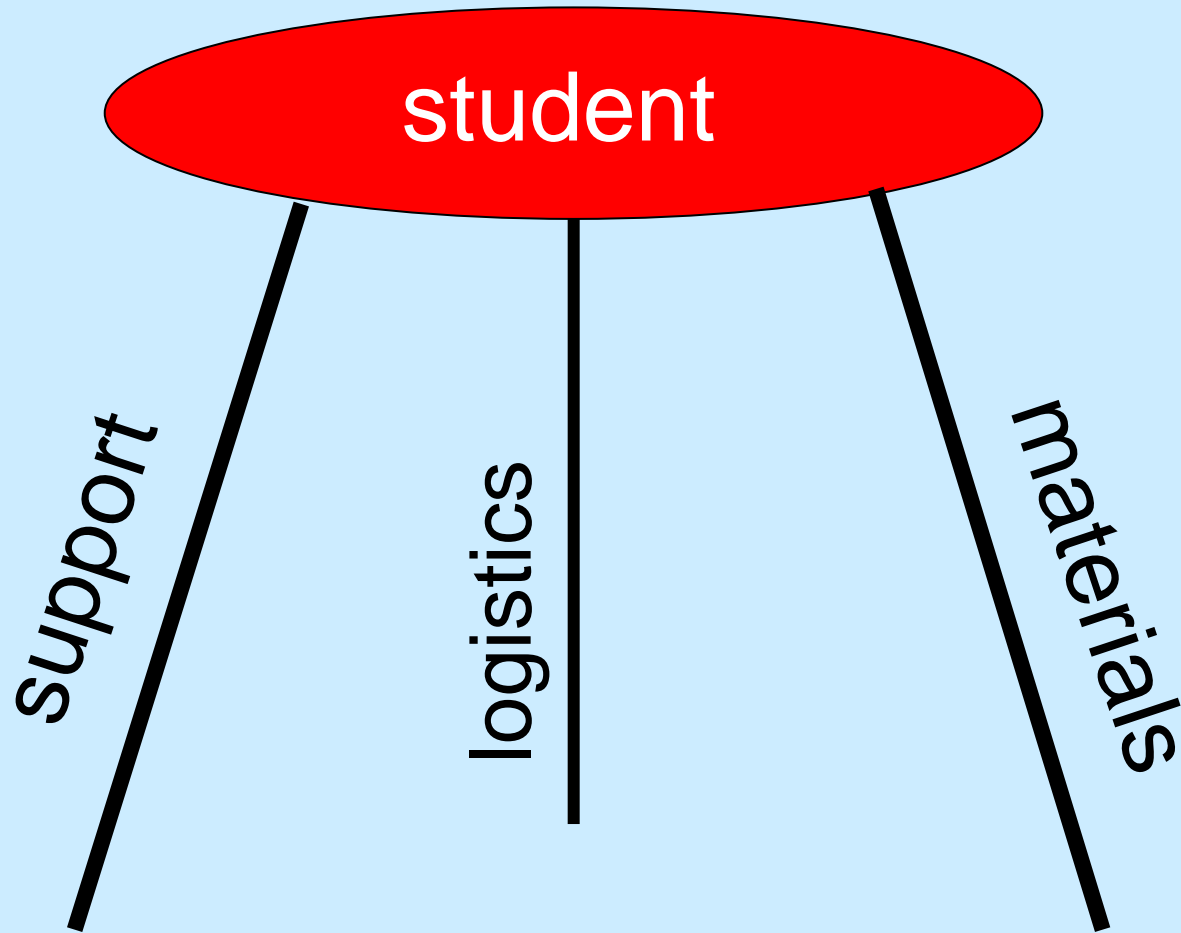
- Planning
- Design
- Media choice
- Training
- Evaluation strategy: Capabilities developed?

Towards a Culture of Quality

ELEMENTS

- 1. Core dimension:** study materials, instructional design, learner support and assessment, systemic research.

DISTANCE LEARNING



based on research with a learner focus

Towards a Culture of Quality

ELEMENTS

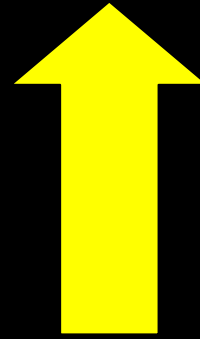
- 1. Core dimension:** study materials, instructional design, learner support and assessment, systemic research.
- 2. Systemic dimension:** state policy, participatory governance, institutional leadership/management, planning.

Towards a Culture of Quality

ELEMENTS

- 1. Core dimension:** study materials, instructional design, learner support and assessment, research.
- 2. Systemic dimension:** state policy, participatory governance, institutional leadership/management, planning.
- 3. Resource dimension:** academic/technical expertise, learning resources, networking, ICTs.

External Assessment



QUALITY ASSURANCE



Culture of Quality

eLEARNING

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

(open course content, open source software & tools)

eLEARNING

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

(open course content, open source software & tools)

ARE DYNAMIC AND

EVOLVING

LEARNING RESOURCES



2000-03:

Extensive peer review.

24 articles; 74 in progress



2003-

Dynamic editing and quality assurance

1,175,807 articles; ~ 1 million in progress

HYPOTHESIS:

...a self-organising system
in which division of
labour and specialisation
happen spontaneously...

"It is advisable to follow not just best practices, but to develop next practices to blaze a trail and stay ahead of the pack!"

C. K. Prahalad

CONCLUSIONS

- Rapid expansion of tertiary education in developing world
- Distance learning is fit for purpose
- Evolve towards a culture of quality
- Emphasise capacity building

Thank you!



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COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING

