

Activity 3

Read through and compare the two paragraphs. Use the table provided to make a few notes about the differences you see.

Example A "Most UK higher education institutions (HEIs) are audited by an external quality body called the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The QAA was established in 1997 to "provide an integrated quality assurance service" through institutional and subject level reviews. It is an independent body funded by subscriptions from universities and colleges of higher education and through contracts with HE funding bodies. Its purpose is to review institutions' internal quality assurance mechanisms and the standards of learning and teaching. Through this it aims to "promote public confidence that the quality of provision and standards of awards in HE are being safeguarded and enhanced." In 2000, the QAA instituted processes as the Continuation Audit. Institutional level audits, unlike subject level reviews, were designed to concentrate on universities' quality assurance processes and thus investigate how they assured their awards and quality of their programmes."

Example B "In 2000, the QAA instituted a new process known as the Continuation Audit. Institutional level audits, unlike subject level reviews, were designed to concentrate on universities' quality assurance processes and thus investigate how they assured themselves of the standards of their awards and quality of their programmes through their internal quality assurance mechanisms. There has been much criticism of this method of review since it was introduced in the late nineties, with claims that it placed a huge burden on institutional resources. (Smith 2001, Taylor 2002). Indeed, a number of writers suggested that that the QAA was largely unnecessary and that universities should have the power to conduct their own reviews (Slimson 2005, Heggarty and Jones 2005). But it could be argued that these complaints are rather simplistic. Firstly, if institutions carried out their own review, would there be a nationally agreed quality standard? This seems unlikely. Secondly, it is doubtful if institutions could be trusted to judge themselves impartially."

How can you tell which one of these is critical writing and which one is descriptive writing?

Example A

Example B

Which example of writing is critical, and which is descriptive?

A: _____

B: _____