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quaint ▶ adj. attractively unusual or old-fashioned.
 – DERIVATIVES **quaintly** adv. **quaintness** n.
 – ORIGIN ME (orig. in the sense ‘clever, ingenious’): from OFr. *cointe*, from L. *cognit-*, *cognoscere* ‘ascertain’.

quake ▶ v. **1** (especially of the earth) shake or tremble. **2** shudder with fear. ▶ n. informal an earthquake.
 – DERIVATIVES **quaky** adj.
 – ORIGIN OE *cwacian*.

Quaker ▶ n. a member of the Religious Society of Friends, a Christian movement devoted to peaceful principles and rejecting both formal ministry and all set forms of worship.
 – DERIVATIVES **Quakerish** adj. **Quakerism** n.
 – ORIGIN from **QUAKE** + **-ER**, perh. alluding to the founder’s direction to his followers to ‘tremble at the name of the Lord’.

quaking grass ▶ n. a grass with oval or heart-shaped flower heads which tremble in the wind. [Genus *Briza*.]

quale /ˈkwɛɪli/ ▶ n. (pl. **qualia** /ˈkwɛɪliə/) Philosophy a quality or property as perceived or experienced by a person.
 – ORIGIN C17: from L., neut. of *qualis* ‘of what kind’.

qualification ▶ n. **1** the action of qualifying or the fact of becoming qualified. **2** a pass of an examination or an official completion of a course. **3** a quality that qualifies someone for a job or activity. **4** a condition that must be fulfilled before a right can be acquired. **5** a statement or assertion that qualifies another.
 – DERIVATIVES **qualificatory** adj.

qualify ▶ v. (**qualifies**, **qualifying**, **qualified**) **1** (often **qualify for**) be entitled to a benefit or privilege by fulfilling a necessary condition. ■ fulfil the necessary conditions to be eligible for a competition. ■ be or make properly entitled to be classed in a particular way. **2** become officially recognized as a practitioner of a profession or activity, typically by undertaking a course and passing examinations. ■ make competent or knowledgeable enough to do something. **3** make (a statement or assertion) less absolute. ■ archaic make less severe or extreme. **4** Grammar (of a word or phrase) attribute a quality to (another word, especially a preceding noun).
 – DERIVATIVES **qualifiable** adj. **qualifier** n.
 – ORIGIN ME (in the sense ‘describe in a particular way’): from Fr. *qualifier*, from med. L. *qualificare*, from L. *qualis* (see **QUALITY**).

qualitative /ˈkwɒlɪtətɪv/ ▶ adj. **1** relating to or measured by quality. Often contrasted with **QUANTITATIVE**. **2** Grammar (of an adjective) describing the quality of something in size, appearance, etc.
 – DERIVATIVES **qualitatively** adv.
 – ORIGIN ME: from late L. *qualitativus*, from L. *qualitas* (see **QUALITY**).

qualitative analysis ▶ n. Chemistry identification of the constituents present in a substance.

quality ▶ n. (pl. **qualities**) **1** the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind. ■ general excellence. ■ archaic high social standing. **2** a distinctive attribute or characteristic. ■ Phonetics the distinguishing characteristic or characteristics of a speech sound. ▶ adj. informal of good quality; excellent: *he’s a quality player*.
 – ORIGIN ME: from OFr. *qualite*, from L. *qualitas*, from *qualis* ‘of what kind, of such a kind’.

quality control ▶ n. a system of maintaining standards in manufactured products by testing a sample of the output against the specification.
 – DERIVATIVES **quality controller** n.

quality time ▶ n. time devoted exclusively to another person in order to strengthen a relationship.

qualm /kwɔ:m, kwɔ:ɪm/ ▶ n. **1** a feeling of doubt or unease, especially about one’s conduct. **2** archaic a momentary faint or sick feeling.
 – DERIVATIVES **qualmish** adj.
 – ORIGIN C16: perh. rel. to OE *cw(e)alm* ‘pain’, of Gmc origin.

quamash /kwəˈmʌʃ, ˈkwɒmʌʃ/ ▶ n. variant spelling of **CAMAS**.

quandary /ˈkwɒnd(ə)ri/ ▶ n. (pl. **quandaries**) a state of uncertainty over what to do in a difficult situation: *Kate was in a quandary*.

– ORIGIN C16: perh. partly from L. *quando* ‘when’.

quango /ˈkwɒŋɡəʊ/ ▶ n. (pl. **quangos**) Brit., chiefly derogatory a semi-public administrative body outside the civil service but receiving financial support from the government, which makes senior appointments to it.
 – ORIGIN 1970s (orig. US): acronym from *quasi* (or *quasi-autonomous*) *non-government(al) organization*.

quant /kwɒnt, kwant/ ▶ n. Brit. a pole for propelling a barge or punt, with a prong at the bottom to prevent it sinking into the mud.
 – ORIGIN ME: perh. from L. *contus*, from Gk *kontos* ‘boat pole’.

quanta plural form of **QUANTUM**.

quantal /ˈkwɒnt(ə)l/ ▶ adj. technical composed of discrete units or quanta; varying in steps rather than continuously.

quantic ▶ n. Mathematics a homogeneous function of two or more variables having rational or integral coefficients.
 – ORIGIN C19: from L. *quantus* ‘how great, how much’ + **-IC**.

quantifier ▶ n. **1** Logic an expression (e.g. *some*) that indicates the scope of a term to which it is attached. **2** Grammar a determiner or pronoun indicative of quantity (e.g. *all*).

quantify ▶ v. (**quantifies**, **quantifying**, **quantified**) **1** express or measure the quantity of. **2** Logic define the application of (a term or proposition) by the use of a quantifier.
 – DERIVATIVES **quantifiability** n. **quantifiable** adj. **quantification** n.
 – ORIGIN C16: from med. L. *quantificare*, from L. *quantus* ‘how much’.

quantitate /ˈkwɒntɪteɪt/ ▶ v. Medicine & Biology determine the quantity or extent of.
 – DERIVATIVES **quantitation** n.
 – ORIGIN 1960s: from **QUANTITY** + **-ATE**.

quantitative /ˈkwɒntɪtətɪv, -tɪtɪv/ ▶ adj. **1** relating to or measured by quantity. Often contrasted with **QUALITATIVE**. **2** denoting or relating to verse whose metre is based on the length of syllables, as in Latin, as opposed to the stress, as in English.
 – DERIVATIVES **quantitatively** adv.
 – ORIGIN C16 (in the sense ‘having spatial extent’): from med. L. *quantitativus*, from L. *quantitas* (see **QUANTITY**).

quantitative analysis ▶ n. Chemistry measurement of the quantities of particular constituents present in a substance.

quantitative easing ▶ n. Finance the introduction of new money into the money supply by a central bank.

quantitive ▶ adj. another term for **QUANTITATIVE**.
 – DERIVATIVES **quantitively** adv.

quantity ▶ n. (pl. **quantities**) **1** a certain amount or number. ■ a considerable number or amount. **2** the property of something that is measurable: *wages depended on quantity of output, regardless of quality*. **3** Phonetics the perceived length of a vowel sound or syllable.
 – ORIGIN ME: from OFr. *quantite*, from L. *quantitas*, from *quantus* ‘how great, how much’.

quantity surveyor ▶ n. Brit. a person who calculates the amount and cost of materials needed for building work.

quantize or **quantise** ▶ v. **1** Physics form into quanta; make subject to quantum theory. **2** Electronics approximate (a continuously varying signal) by one whose amplitude is restricted to prescribed values.
 – DERIVATIVES **quantization** n. **quantizer** n.

quantum /ˈkwɒntəm/ ▶ n. (pl. **quanta** /-tə/) **1** Physics a discrete quantity of energy proportional in magnitude to a particular frequency of radiation and corresponding e.g. to a single photon or to a transition of an atom between energy states. ■ an analogous unit amount of something. **2** a total amount, especially an amount of money legally payable in damages. ■ a share.
 – ORIGIN C16: from L., neut. of *quantus* (see **QUANTITY**).

quantum bit ▶ n. the basic unit of information in a quantum computer.