

PROGRAMME APPROVAL, REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT-LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW (ELISR) INFORMATION FOR STUDENT PANEL MEMBERS

1 Introduction

Like all universities and colleges in Scotland, GCU is required by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in the Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF), to undertake periodic reviews of our academic programmes and subject areas. The key question the SFC seeks to answer is:

“Is the provision delivered by Scotland’s colleges and universities of high quality and does it continue to improve?”

As such, the Department of Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) at GCU coordinates an ongoing cycle of review events at programme and subject level, known as **Programme Review** and **Enhancement-Led Internal Subject Review (ELISR)** respectively. Programme Review and ELISR focus on assuring academic standards, continuous quality enhancement, and enhancing the student experience. As well as Programme Review and ELISR, **Programme Approval** takes place when a new academic programme is proposed for delivery.

The input of students throughout the approval and review process is crucial, and student engagement and partnership working is interwoven through all aspects of each event’s end-to-end process. This information guide has been designed to provide you with some useful information to assist you in your role as a student panel member. We hope that you enjoy the experience and benefit from taking part, and we thank you in advance for your participation.

2 What happens during Programme Approval, Review and ELISR?

- Programme Approval events take place when a new academic programme is proposed for delivery.
- Programme Reviews are typically focussed on the review of one academic programme, while ELISR events consider a whole subject area (normally an academic department). Both take place every five years.
- A panel meets to undertake the approval or review, normally comprised of GCU staff, a **student panel member** and external panel members.
- Events are normally held virtually via Microsoft Teams but may occasionally be held on campus. A representative from the Department of QAE undertakes the role of Coordinating Reviewer for each event and will be your main point of contact and support throughout.
- Staff from the programme or department being approved or reviewed produce a documentation set in advance of the event. The main documents are called: Programme Approval Submission Document (Programme Approval); Programme Periodic Review Document (Programme Review); and Reflective Analysis Document (ELISR).
- On the day(s), the panel holds a series of meetings with groups of key stakeholders, including staff, students, recent graduates and employers, to discuss themes arising from the

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documentation set and learn more about how things work in practice. Events usually span one to three days.

- At the end of the event, the panel confirms the outcome of the approval or review, which includes agreeing on any areas of good practice, and any recommendations for enhancement. A report is produced by the Department of QAE post-event.

3 What is my role as a student panel member?

The key role of the student panel member is to bring the student expertise and voice to the event that you are participating in. To do this, you are expected to attend all briefing sessions; read the documentation set provided to you in advance of the event; identify any areas you might want to ask more about; contribute to a series of discussions on the day itself; and review the final report after the event. The exact questions or topics that the panel raise with stakeholders will vary from event to event, but typically you will be interested in the student learning experience, covering themes such as:

- Learning and teaching, including assessment and feedback
- Enabling student success – wellbeing, inclusion, equality, student support
- Learning resources, environment and technologies e.g. library or computer labs, IT
- Student engagement and partnership working

The student learning experience is central to all of this, and you may find the [sparqs Student Learning Experience Model Digital Resource](#) helpful. You are not expected to get to grips with everything contained within the model, but it may give you a useful steer and inform thinking when reading the documentation set and thinking about any areas you'd like to explore on the day of the event.

Further detailed information on your role, as well as the Student Learning Experience Model itself is contained within the Student Panel Member Handbook.

4 Who is eligible to be a student panel member?

Lead academic reps (Department Reps, PGT Reps, and PGR Reps) are eligible to be a student panel member. Allocation to a panel is carried out by the Students' Association and any upcoming events are usually promoted at meetings of Student Action Group for Engagement (SAGE). Student panel members are not allocated to Approval, Review or ELISR events in their own department and you wouldn't normally participate in more than two events in one academic session.

5 Is being a student panel member a paid role?

Yes, student panel members are paid £250 for a programme approval or review and £600 for an ELISR event. For combined Programme Approval/Review and ELISR events, student panel members are eligible for a payment of £850. All payments are flat rates and are irrespective of length of the event. All payments are taxable and are paid through the GCU Payroll system.

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Before you participate in an event as a paid student panel member you are required to:

- provide confirmation of your right to work in the UK
- complete a Casual Worker Profile Form
- provide bank details to receive your payment

Due to current UK employment legislation, it is mandatory that we receive proof of your right to work in the UK before you undertake any aspect of the role. Please note, you will be required to provide the department with original documents, either via post or by attending campus in person. Please also note, you must attend and participate in the full event, including attending a virtual briefing session and commenting on the final report before payment can be made.

6 Student panel member checklist:

Before the event:

- ✓ Attend the online briefing session with the Coordinating Reviewer from the Department of QAE where you will learn more about the purpose and structure of the event and your role, as well as ask any questions you may have.
- ✓ Familiarise yourself with the Student Panel Members Handbook. This contains a wealth of information which will be helpful to you.
- ✓ Read the documentation set – allow at least a day to do this. You will receive this approximately four weeks prior to the event, and you will receive guidance from the Coordinating Reviewer on how you might approach this.
- ✓ Complete the relevant sections of the documentation feedback template and submit to the Coordinating Reviewer by email.
- ✓ Familiarise yourself with the event timetable. This will be provided to you by the Coordinating Reviewer in advance of the event.

On the day(s):

- ✓ Preparation is key: you will feel at your most confident if you have done all the reading and preparation and are clear about what you'd like to ask. The Coordinating Reviewer will support you with this.
- ✓ If the event is online, ensure you have a quiet, comfortable, and private space to participate. Maintaining confidentiality is expected, so a public space will not be a suitable environment.
- ✓ For online meetings, please switch your camera on. This provides a more open, interactive and engaging environment for all involved.
- ✓ Remember to be punctual!
- ✓ Provide balanced and constructive feedback and ask questions that are respectful of others. Feel free to ask for clarification or further information at any point if you are not clear on anything.
- ✓ It's normal to feel a little nervous – the other panel members probably do too! Don't worry – you won't ever be put on the spot, and all meetings take place in a group setting.
- ✓ Don't worry if you lose connection or experience any IT difficulties or issues - just re-join as soon as you can.

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- ✓ If you have any questions or are experiencing any difficulties on the day, please don't hesitate to contact the Coordinating Reviewer.

After the event:

- ✓ Review the event report and reply to the Coordinating Reviewer with any comments.
- ✓ Congratulate yourself for your contributions to the quality assurance and enhancement of the programme/department at GCU. You have likely gained some valuable skills through this undertaking, including:
 - An opportunity to work in partnership with the University; to share your experiences; and to influence and shape high-level decision making.
 - Gaining an insight into how other departments work, including networking with professionals from these teams.
 - Development of your knowledge and skills in a professional setting. These include but are not limited to: partnership working; communication; critical and systems thinking; confidence; emotional intelligence. Prospective employers in a range of industries and professions like to hear examples of when you have demonstrated these skills.
 - Enhancement of your CV. Showcase the experience and skills you have gained as a student stakeholder in your CV and job applications.

Thank you in advance for your contribution to quality assurance and enhancement at GCU. If you have questions about being a student panel member or would like to discuss the role further, please contact quality@gcu.ac.uk.