



QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND ASSURANCE POLICY

2018 V1

3: Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review

Contents

3.	ENHANCEMENT-LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW	14
3.1	Introduction	14
3.2	Characteristics	14
3.3	Scope	14
3.4	Process	15
3.5	The Self-Evaluation Document	15
3.6	The Review Event	16
3.7	Before the Review Event	17
3.8	Event Structure	17
3.9	The Review Report	18
3.10	Follow-up Action	18
Appendix 3(a)	Self Evaluation	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix 3(b)	Appointment of Panel Members	Error! Bookmark not defined.

3. ENHANCEMENT-LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The following sections describe a framework for the Enhancement-led Internal Subject Review (ELISR) process. The process will follow a five-year cycle and will normally take place at subject level¹. As far as is possible, the programme approval/review process will be subsumed within ELISR. The Department of Academic Quality and Development will be responsible for the organisation and facilitation of the review process. A working definition of the broad meaning of enhancement in this context is given in Appendix 3(a). This chapter takes account of the SFC guidance to higher education on quality updated in 2012.

3.2 Characteristics²

Reviews will:

- encourage dialogue on areas which can be enhanced and in which quality might be improved, identify excellence in practice, and promote evaluation and critical reflection on practice
- take full account of student feedback and report on partnership working
- articulate the student voice
- take account of and report performance statistics supplied by Strategy and Planning
- provide a mechanism for professional dialogue around the practice of teaching and learning
- provide an objective review of provision, based on an understanding of national and international good practice
- take full account of benchmarks and the QAA Quality Code³ and, where appropriate, the requirements of professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies
- take full account of the Strategy 2020, SfL and the SEF
- take full account of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
- consider the effectiveness of annual monitoring arrangements and follow-up actions
- consider the impact of central and school-based student support activities in promoting engagement and enhancing the student experience.

3.3 Scope

- the student experience and quality of student engagement
- impact of provision at all levels
- analysis and reporting on performance data such as admission, retention, progression and achievement, completion statistics, RPL, articulation, NSS, ISB
- QAA Enhancement Themes

¹ The exceptions being the Graduate School and Academic Development, which will be reviewed as single entities.

² As required by Scottish Funding Council, revised in August 2012.

³ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>

- CPD activity resulting in enhanced professional reputation such as Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) qualification of staff including HEA recognition at Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow, and Principal Fellow levels
- research-student supervision
- the extent to which research/scholarly/professional activity informs the curriculum
- collaborative provision with internal and external stakeholders including PSRBs (professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies)
- impact of central and school-based student support
- impact of professional services
- international students on and off campus
- any other provision leading to the award of credit.

3.4 Process

- production of a timeline for the review; School and Academic Quality Team
- preparation of a self-evaluation document by the area being reviewed
- collation of documentation
- review event
- production of a review report
- Submission of report to Academic Quality Team including response to requirements and recommendations for approval via LTSC and one-year-on review of action plan to gauge progress

3.5 The Self-Evaluation Document

The self-evaluation document is a statement, which demonstrates that the subject discipline has undertaken robust self-evaluation in a constructively self-critical manner. The self-evaluation process should promote dialogue on areas in which quality might be improved, identify good practice for dissemination across the institution and should encourage and support critical reflection on practice.

The following should be considered:

- the appropriateness of the academic standards set for its provision
- the effectiveness of annual monitoring including feedback and performance data reflecting on the outcomes of monitoring
- data gathering, analysing and using student feedback, progression data, performance indicators, and other data such as NSS results
- the effectiveness of the curriculum in delivering the aims and the intended outcomes of the provision
- the effectiveness of assessment in measuring attainment of the intended outcomes
- the extent to which the intended standards and outcomes are achieved by students
- the level and quality of student engagement and partnership working at programme, department, and school level
- the quality of the learning opportunities provided for students
- the success of the School's quality enhancement and assurance strategy
- the success of the School in implementing the SfL and the SEF
- the extent to which research/scholarly/professional activity informs the curriculum
- the effectiveness of research-student supervision

- the international student experience both on and off campus
- the effectiveness of central⁴ and school-based support in enhancing the student experience
- the effectiveness of professional development and CPD strategies.

Self-evaluation should discuss both the strengths of the provision and areas where enhancement and improvement is necessary, as perceived by the staff and students of the School. The document is an opportunity for the School, through the process of evaluation, to demonstrate how the strengths of the provision identified in previous subject reviews or accreditation events have been built upon, and how any areas for enhancement and improvement identified have been addressed. **Where areas for enhancement remain, plans for addressing these via the School's enhancement plan should be summarised.** Reference points for the evaluation will include benchmark statements, the QAA Quality Code⁵, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework⁶, and the requirements of professional, statutory bodies and regulatory bodies. Further guidelines on the content of the self-evaluation documentation are given in Appendix 3(b).

The student representatives on the School Boards, Programme Boards and Student Staff Consultative Groups, reflecting the SFC (2012) guidelines, should be fully engaged in the review process and given adequate opportunity to comment on the final draft of the document before it is submitted to the Department of Academic Quality and Development. To ensure that the student voice is represented, their views should be woven into the narrative where appropriate. The QEA Strategy supports the updated SFC guidance to widen the scope and understanding of student engagement in quality, signalling a shift from encouragement to expectation.

3.6 The Review Event

The time taken for the review event will be determined by the extent of the provision being reviewed but will normally last at least two days and no longer than five.

An appropriate senior academic from GCU will chair the review.

Review Panels:

- must include cross-Department/School representation
- must normally include appropriate academic and professional external peers and other stakeholders (as appropriate)
- must include student representation
- must include a member from Student Support Services
- may include other groups as appropriate to the subject area.

Care must be taken to ensure that a sufficient number of externals with the appropriate breadth of experience are appointed to the Panel to adequately cover the subject provision in the timeframe available.

The criteria for the selection of reviewers are given in Appendix 3(b).

⁴ This includes the Registry, Student Support Services, the Library, Information Support Services, Marketing and Communications, Academic Quality and Development, Admissions and Enquiry Service, Finance Office, and the Graduate School.

⁵ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code>

⁶ <http://scqf.org.uk/the-framework/>

3.7 Before the Review Event

The ELISR should be confirmed with the Academic Quality Team at the academic session prior to the event. **Six weeks** before the event a draft document is submitted to the Academic Quality Team and **four weeks** before the document and a draft timetable is issued to the Panel. **Two weeks** before the event the final timetable is circulated to the Panel. The Chair of the Panel, in conjunction with the Department of Academic Quality and Development will confirm the final timetable for the process at least **three weeks** prior to the review.

The **Department Lead for Learning, Teaching and Quality** will be the point of contact within the School throughout the preparation for the Review. The ADLTQ will agree at the outset with the Academic Quality Team the timeline for the ELISR process.

Panel members must submit any comments they may have, including requests to see any additional documentation during the event, to the Department of Academic Quality and Development at least **two weeks** prior to the review.

The documentation (from the last three academic sessions) provided for the event will include:

- External Examiners' reports
- Student Staff Consultative Group minutes
- annual programme analyses
- annual report on monitoring quality enhancement and assurance of programmes
- quality enhancement section of School Plans
- performance data supplied by Strategy and Planning
- programme specifications
- Programme Handbooks.

3.8 Event Structure

The length of the event will be determined by the extent of the provision being reviewed and the extent of any approval and review activity subsumed within the process. The structure of each event is determined after consultation between the Department of Academic Quality and Development, the Chair and the School.

The review event will seek to assess the claims made in the self-evaluation document. The principle means of assessment testing shall be in meetings with staff, students, and recent graduates and in the review of any additional documentation requested.

Where programme approval/review is subsumed within the ELISR process, the documentation specified in Appendix 4(c) and/or Appendix 6(a) will require to be submitted to the Department of Academic Quality and Enhancement at the same time as the self-evaluation document. The role of the Programme Approval/Review Panel will be to evaluate the programme provision and communicate their conclusions to the main ELISR Panel to inform their overall evaluation of the subject provision being presented for review. **If the two processes are scheduled to run concurrently the School and associated Panels will follow the timeline detailed above.**

In the event that the ELISR process contains no programme approval or review activity, the process will concentrate solely on the evaluation of the subject provision.

3.9 The Review Report

The draft report on the ELISR will be circulated to panel members for comment before being passed to the School (*normally within twenty working days*) for comment on factual accuracy. The School will be given *five working days* to comment, at which point the status of the report is confirmed (in providing comment on factual accuracy, it is recommended that consultation should take place with all relevant stakeholders involved in the subject provision).

The review report will provide a short summary of the proceedings confirming the appropriateness of the School self-evaluation. The report will also identify areas of good practice and areas which require enhancement.

In the event that the area being reviewed disputes any of the contents of the report, the dispute will be referred in the first instance to the Director of the Department of Academic Quality and Development. If a resolution is not possible, the matter will be referred to the DVC Academic and APPC.

3.10 Follow-up Action

Four weeks after confirmation of the event report the School will be required to produce a response in the form of an enhancement plan which will be initially considered and approved by the Chair of the Panel and may be circulated to the ELISR Panel if deemed appropriate. Any enhancement plans required by support departments will be included as an Appendix. Any actions requiring University level consideration will be considered by the Academic Policy Committee (APPC). The report and associated enhancement plan will then be considered and approved by the Learning and Teaching Subcommittee (LTSC) on behalf of the APPC and Senate. In the event of any serious issues arising from the report, APPC will draw these issues to the attention of Senate.

The conclusions of the report and the action plan must be made available to the students within the subject provision reviewed via GCU Learn.

One year on from the review, the Chair of the Panel, a representative from the Department of Academic Quality and Development, the Head of Department, and the Dean of School will review progress on the approved action plan. (LTSC will be informed at that stage if there are any problems with action plan implementation). Further follow-up will take place after **twelve months** and thereafter (two years and onwards) the progress of the action plan will be monitored through the annual report on monitoring of the Quality Enhancement and Assurance of programmes and school planning process.