Dear Principal

Return of annual report on institution-led review and statement of assurance in the light of Covid-19

I hope that you and your colleagues are keeping well and are looking after yourselves at this time.

Given the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in, I recognise that some institutions will not have been able to carry out the full range of review activities for their Institution-Led Review (ILR) schedules.

As you know, SFC guidance states that all credit bearing provision should be reviewed on a cycle of not more than six years and that students should be engaged at all stages of the ILR process. I understand, however, that it may not have been possible this year to complete all such reviews in person.

Although SFC has minimised its reporting requirements in a number of areas recently in order to reduce the burden on the sector, we know that ILR is one of the fundamental pillars of the Quality Enhancement Framework and necessary for assuring quality in the university sector. Please see SFC’s guidance to higher education institutions on quality here: [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/guidance_sfcgd112017/SFCGD112017-SFC-guidance-HE-institutions-quality.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/guidance_sfcgd112017/SFCGD112017-SFC-guidance-HE-institutions-quality.pdf)

I ask, therefore, that you submit your Annual Report on ILR and governing body statement of assurance at the end of September, or as near as possible to the 30 September deadline. We also ask that you help us understand the impact of Covid-19 by including information on the following:

- The extent to which you were able to complete your ILR schedule.
- Where you have not been able to complete subject reviews, identify and outline any perceived risks and how you plan to mitigate for these.
- Your plans, as far as you are able to outline at this time, to ensure that the provision is reviewed going forward.
- Reflections on how Covid-19 is impacting on your ability to carry out subject reviews more generally and any plans you have in place or are developing to manage reviews, for example, if you have made adjustments to your annual monitoring arrangements.
I hope institutions will not find this additional ask too burdensome. Please note that the Annual Report should still be within the usual 10 page limit.

You may wish to discuss these arrangements with QAA Scotland in advance of submitting your Annual Report to SFC.

Again, I understand that this is a very difficult time for institutions. We wish to support you however we are able and ask that you get in touch if you, or a colleague, would like to discuss this request. Please contact Derek Horsburgh, Senior Policy Officer, directly at dhorsburgh@sfc.ac.uk.

Please return the annual report and the governing body of statement of assurance electronically to Angela Iannetta at: aiannetta@sfc.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

Dr Dee Bird
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