SFC Guidance

Scottish Funding Council guidance to higher education institutions on quality from August 2017-2022

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Summary: The purpose of this guidance is to inform Scotland's higher education institutions and other stakeholders of the Council's guidance on quality from August 2017-2022. The paper is in two sections. Section one provides general information on the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). Section Two provides technical guidance for institutions.

FAO: Principals and directors of Scotland's universities

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Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education

Scottish Funding Council guidance to higher education institutions on quality for the cycle from August 2017-2022

1.   The purpose of this guidance is to inform Scotland's higher education institutions and other stakeholders of the Council's guidance on quality from August 2017-2022. The paper is in two sections. Section one provides general information on the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). Section Two provides technical guidance for institutions.

Section One: Introduction and context

2.   The Scottish Funding Council has a statutory obligation under section 13 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 to secure that provision is made for assessing and enhancing the quality of fundable higher education provided by fundable bodies. It also supports polices to promote the continuing quality enhancement of learning and teaching in Scottish higher education institutions, and the engagement of the university sector in Scotland with the UK Quality Code. Evidence from the quality arrangements contributes to broader SFC interactions with HEIs, in particular Outcome Agreement discussions.

3.   The Scottish Funding Council meets its statutory obligation through the Quality Enhancement Framework, which is based on a partnership between:

- The Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

- The Quality Assurance Agency, Scotland.

- Universities Scotland.

- NUS Scotland.

- Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs).

- Higher Education Academy (Scotland).

The Quality Enhancement Framework

4.   The Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF) is designed to provide a coherent approach to quality. It has five inter-connecting elements:

- Enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR).

- Institution-led review (ILR).

- Student engagement.

- Enhancement Themes.

- Public information.

5.   Three key principles inform and underpin quality assurance and enhancement in the QEF:

- High quality learning.

- Student engagement.

- Quality culture.

6.   The QEF builds on shared values:

- A collaborative ethos based on partnership working.

- Recognition that the higher education institutions are autonomous, with primary responsibility for ensuring that academic standards are set and maintained and that the quality of provision is assured.

- External quality assurance based on co-regulation and external peer review.

- An enhancement-led ethos, which supports and encourages continuing improvement, innovation and critical self-evaluation.

- Recognition of learning as a partnership with students.

7.   The five elements of the QEF collectively provide public assurance about the security of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities at Scottish HEIs. The QEF ensures there can be trust in the level of qualifications and the quality of higher education provision in Scotland. Confirmation that academic standards are secure and quality is assured is provided through the QEF annually and periodically. Both ELIR and ILR explore institutional approaches to the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code and enable each institution to reflect on the effectiveness of its processes.

8.   Whilst the QEF provides clear information about threshold quality and academic standards, it also seeks to move beyond threshold expectations, promoting an excellent student experience and ongoing enhancement of learning and teaching.

9.   The QEF raises the international profile and competiveness of Scottish Higher Education. It achieves this by providing clear public information about the nature and outcomes arising from the evidence-based, enhancement-led quality processes and activities. The QEF makes extensive use of international expertise and reference points, notably in ELIR and the Enhancement Themes.

Governance

10. The Universities Quality Working Group (UQWG) has oversight of the Quality Enhancement Framework. Its membership includes representation from the partner bodies. It is chaired by a senior figure from the university sector and is managed by SFC. Further information on the remit and membership of UQWG is provided in Annex 2.

Quality Enhancement Framework and the wider context within which it operates

11. The wider context for the QEF and quality assurance combines national, UK-wide and European elements and a combination of statutory/legal aspects and agreed requirements or expectations.

12. **The UK context**: There are agreed UK-wide 'baseline requirements' overseen by the UK-wide Standing Committee for Quality Assessment, which has been established as a consequence of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017. Its function is to take a strategic oversight of the further development of baseline requirements across the UK, identifying where necessary, specific variations or country-specific additions.

13. All four nations agree on the core principles that the baseline requirements represent, that students are entitled to a high quality academic experience, that their interests are protected, and that degree standards are comparable across the UK.

14. The baseline regulatory requirements comprise:

- The frameworks for higher education qualifications, and the Expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education as the nationally agreed point of reference for providers who deliver or support UK higher education programmes.

- The HE Code of Governance, published by the Committee of University Chairs (CUC), which provides a statement of core values, key elements of governance that support those values, and illustrative guidance on how these elements can be implemented. Both codes include references to ensuring that governing bodies have effective oversight of the academic experience, of learning and teaching, and of the student voice.

- The providers' relevant obligations under consumer law. The Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) have published guidance to help higher education providers understand their responsibilities under consumer protection law.

- The relevant good practice framework for handling complaints and academic appeals. In Scotland this is the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

- The financial sustainability, management and governance requirements of the relevant funding body, and mission and strategy for higher education provision

15. **The European context**: the European Standards and Guidelines, (ESG) 2015. At a European level the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) as revised and agreed by Ministers at Yerevan in 2015 have been adopted across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The full title is "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015)[1]."

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[1] the full document can be accessed here: http://www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg/

Section Two: Review of the QEF and guidance for the 2017-22 cycle

16. SFC initiated a review of the QEF in 2015-16. The review confirmed the commitment to an enhancement-led approach and to all elements of the QEF including its underpinning values.

17. In the 2017-22 cycle there are two broad expectations and aspirations for Scottish Higher Education. Firstly, that all parties individually, collectively and collaboratively will continue to seek to strengthen and deepen the underlying principles of the QEF (high quality learning, student engagement and quality culture). Secondly, that increasing use will be made of robust evidence in continuously seeking to provide excellent learning opportunities and to enhance the student experience.

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)

18. SFC commissioned QAA to develop the 2017-22 method of external quality review in light of the outcomes of the QEF review and in consultation with the HE sector in Scotland. UQWG agreed that future external review cycles will use a 4+1 model: four years in which external reviews take place and one year to reflect on the review outcomes and impact of the method while also revising and developing the next iteration of the review method.

19. QAA Scotland worked with an expert advisory group to develop the method for 2017-22 and published the Enhancement-led Institutional Review Handbook (fourth edition) in April 2017[2].

20. The most significant change in the method for this fourth cycle is the emphasis ELIR 4 places on the contextualisation of each review. The intention is to maximise the value to individual institutions and to the sector, acknowledging the importance placed on evidence-based self-evaluation. Contextualisation allows reviews to focus where there will be most benefit, both to provide assurance and to promote enhancement, sharing good practice, and building the evidence base which demonstrates the effectiveness of the approach to home, UK and international audiences.

21. ELIR 4 enables a range of outcomes to be achieved:

- Promoting holistic, evidence-based evaluation by institutions and the opportunity to engage in discussion on the outcomes of that evaluation with a team of peers.

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[2] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/ELIR-4-Handbook-2017.pdf

- Delivering a clear statement on baseline quality and academic standards and, beyond that, providing a suite of differentiated commendations and recommendations.

- Enabling whole-sector enhancement and developmental activity to be conducted, drawing on thematic information about strengths and challenges of the institutions reviewed.

22. The underlying expectations for ELIR in its fourth cycle are unchanged: there should be open critical engagement with the process and active engagement by students in all elements (self-evaluation, review visit, follow-up and annual discussion). ELIR outcomes should inform wider enhancement activity, debate and strategic change at all levels.

Institution-led Review

23. The effectiveness of the arrangements for Institution-led Review (ILR) were considered as part of the overall QEF review. This included a review of student engagement in all five QEF elements. This guidance incorporates the greater emphasis on engaging students at all stages of ILR which emerged from that work. This guidance also draws on the 2016-17 Focus On: ILR project coordinated by QAA Scotland.

Strategic approach to quality enhancement

24. SFC expects institutions to have an explicit strategic approach to quality assurance and enhancement. Institutions have flexibility in the precise manner of addressing this expectation. In earlier cycles institutions often formulated an explicit quality enhancement strategy, but more typically now, institutions embed their approach to quality enhancement within other institutional strategies, in addition to the approach being evident in wider institutional policies and practices.

25. Institutions are expected to reflect, at the institutional level, on strategic issues arising from their regular quality processes (including annual and periodic reviews), and to make use of this information as part of their strategic approach to quality enhancement. This strategic approach and its effectiveness is explicitly considered during ELIR.

Annual and periodic review

26. The primary mechanism by which institutions assure and enhance the quality of provision is through processes of institution-led evaluation and review, referred to generically as 'Institution-led Review' (ILR). It is a matter for each institution to determine how it organises its internal processes for reviewing and

evaluating provision, provided it follows this SFC guidance and the UK Quality Code.

27. SFC expects each institution to operate systems of annual monitoring and periodic Institution-led Review (ILR) across the full range of its provision. ILR should consider the effectiveness of annual monitoring arrangements and the effectiveness of the follow-up actions arising from annual monitoring. Reporting at the programme, subject or departmental level should identify action to address any issues and activity to promote areas of strength for consideration at institutional level. The ILR method should be designed to allow constructive reflection on the effectiveness of the annual monitoring and reporting procedures.

28. All aspects of provision are expected to be reviewed systematically and rigorously on a cycle of not more than six years to demonstrate that institutions meet the expectations set out in the UK Quality Code[3], and the standards set out in the European Standards and Guidelines (part 1).

29. It is vital that Institution-led Reviews continue to produce robust, comprehensive and credible evidence that the academic standards of awards are secure and that provision in Scottish HEIs is of high quality and being enhanced. ILR should be designed to promote and support critical reflection on policy and practice. The method used should ensure that any shortcomings are addressed and it should give a central role to quality enhancement by promoting dialogue on areas in which quality could be improved and identifying good practice for dissemination within the institution and beyond.

Scope, frequency and unit of review

30. All credit bearing provision should be reviewed on a cycle of not more than six years, including undergraduate and taught postgraduate awards, supervision of research students, provision delivered in collaboration with others, transnational education, work-based provision and placements, online and distance learning, and provision which provides only small volumes of credit.

31. Each institution is expected to produce an ILR review schedule. However the timetable is constructed, there should normally be some form of institution-led review activity taking place within each academic session.

32. There is flexibility for institutions to determine the precise order and aggregation of programmes and subjects in ways which provide coherence and fit the organisational structure, mode of delivery and enhancement-led

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

approach. The unit of review in the ILR process should have sufficient granularity to allow adequate scrutiny of programmes and disciplines including ensuring there is adequate external scrutiny at the discipline level by the external panel member(s). Excessive aggregation should be avoided if it means the process cannot examine the 'fine structure' of provision and doesn't facilitate the identification of specific issues affecting particular programmes.

Team size and composition

33. Institution-led reviews should provide an objective review of provision based on an understanding of national and international good practice. Each review team should include a student and at least one member external to the institution with a relevant background. Such members may come from across the UK, from industry, professional practice or may have wider international experience. Team size and composition must take account of the range and volume of provision to be reviewed and the balance between understanding of specific context and broader critical perspectives. It is good practice to ensure that review teams are able to bring a range of experience to the process and hence are able to act as 'critical friends' to the institution.

34. ILR should be designed to include an element of reflection on national and international good practice, such as a reflective statement from the institution on how its provision compares with similar practice outside the UK. Institutions are encouraged to consider how they can support such informal 'benchmarking'. (See para 40). SFC does not expect ILR teams to routinely include members from outside the UK although institutions are encouraged to actively consider the scope for this option.

Student engagement in ILR

35. Institutions are expected to continue extending student engagement and participation in quality in line with the Student Engagement Framework for Scotland. It is expected that students will be engaged at all stages of the ILR process including the development of the self-evaluation, as full members of ILR teams, and in follow-up activity.
36. ILR should gather additional specific information from students as part of the evidence base for reviews. Institutions have flexibility in deciding how to achieve this, taking account of the specific demographics of their student population and the characteristics of their provision. In line with previous guidance, it is good practice for ILR to:

- Generate holistic evidence about student views of provision and of their learning experience.

- Differentiate between the views of different categories of students where

these are likely to be significant (for example part-time and full-time, students from different levels of programme, entrants from school and entrants from further education etc).

- Allow identification of distinctive characteristics of provision.

- Take account of the views of graduates on the relevance of provision for their careers.

Contribution and role of support services

37. All services contributing to the student experience should be reviewed as part of an institution's approach. Support services are of crucial importance in determining the overall quality of the student learning experience and can impact significantly on student achievement and well-being. It is a matter for each institution to determine how this should be done. Whatever the approach taken, the evidence should allow the institution to reflect on the contribution of support services to the 'quality culture' within the institution, the ways in which the services engage with students to monitor and improve the quality of services, and the ways in which the services promote high quality learning and continuous quality enhancement.

Use of external reference points

38. ILR should explore the use of specific aspects of the UK Quality Code, most especially how Subject Benchmark Statements, Characteristics Statements and Credit and Qualifications Frameworks (as represented by the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) are used in setting and maintaining academic standards. ILR should demonstrate that programme design and learning outcomes are consistent with them.

39. Institution-led reviews should continue to support effective learner pathways through higher education, including embedding and developing the use of the SCQF. ILR should be designed to promote scrutiny and discussion of the institution's approach to the SCQF. This should include consideration of strategies for articulation and advanced standing, for the recognition of prior learning and through flexible pathways to awards, including CPD and work-based learning.

Use of data

40. Both annual monitoring and ILR are likely to consider: themes arising from and responses to external examiner reports; internal and external student survey data; performance data on recruitment, progression and achievement; and data trends. Data is likely to be benchmarked against other areas of the

institution's activities as well as equivalent provision in other institutions.(see para 34)

Relationship with PSRB accreditation

41. A significant volume of provision in Scottish HEIs is accredited by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs). SFC expects ILR to reflect on the outcomes of relevant PSRB accreditations. Institutions are encouraged to engage with PSRBs to explore appropriate ways of aligning PSRB activity with ILR. This might include the use of common documentation or joint processes which meet the needs of both ILR and external accreditation**.**

Inter-relationship of ILR with other elements of the QEF

42. The QEF approach continues to give a central role to quality enhancement, and we encourage institutions to continue to develop institution-led review processes which also:

- Promote dialogue on areas in which quality might be improved and consider how developing the use of evidence can contribute to enhancing the student experience.

- Identify good practice for dissemination within the institution and beyond including engagement in current and past national Enhancement Themes.

- Encourage and support critical reflection.

43. Institution-led review processes are subject to scrutiny through the periodic ELIR visits and through the ELIR annual discussion meetings between QAA officers and institutions. ILR should evidence the use of public information by institutions and how they seek to engage their students in quality and in their learning.

Student engagement in the QEF

44. Student engagement in quality processes is fundamental to the QEF. Since 2003 Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs) has worked to assist and support students, students' associations and institutions to improve the effectiveness of student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement across Scotland. Its focus is on supporting institutions and students' associations to engage students as equal partners in shaping their learning and contributing to the overall success of learning provision. sparqs supports activities which seek to engage all students, not just in providing feedback but also in developing solutions and contributing to strategies for enhancement.

45. The ***Student Engagement Framework for Scotland*** is now endorsed and owned by all the sector agencies and representative bodies in the university and college sector, and sets out the expectations and features of student engagement in Scotland. http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/culture.php?page=168.

46. Our expectation is that all institutions will continue to work with the ***Student Engagement Framework*** in their own context, and will develop their partnership approaches with students and student representatives, and enhance student engagement. Institutions should ensure that there is a coherent and effective strategy in place for this activity. We encourage institutions to be ambitious in seeking opportunities for student engagement in the co-creation of learning; for empowering students to use evidence to enhance their own learning; for extending engagement to new groups of students; and developing the role and capacity of Student Association staff to build sustainability and maintain continuity of support for student officers.

Public information about quality

47. Public information is one of the five elements of the QEF. The established guiding principles for Public Information about the quality of educational provision are to provide:

- Assurances about the quality and standards of provision;

- *Information* to inform student choice, and to assist employers and other stakeholders to clearly understand the nature of the Scottish university sector.

- *Information* which helps current students to understand, engage with and make best use of institutional systems for quality improvement.

- *Information* about the institution's educational processes which stimulates reflection on academic practice and the sharing of good practice within the institution and more widely.

48. Information should be:

- Accurate and honest.

- Accessible and tailored to the needs of the intended user.

- *Updateable on appropriate timesca*les (which may vary from annually to daily in different contexts)*.*

- Re-usable so that, ideally, information can be entered once and used in a range of contexts.

49. We expect institutions to continue to produce information that meets the needs of a range of stakeholders including:

- Prospective students.

- Current students.

- Employers and employer organisations.

- Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.

- SFC, QAA, the National Union of Students, and other interested bodies or agencies, as proxies for Ministers, taxpayers, and the general public.

50. Scottish institutions participate in UK–wide public information collections and provision of information. The context into which public information is delivered will change and evolve over the cycle of these arrangements, with different quality arrangements across the UK nations, and institutions are therefore encouraged to consider how they may contribute to informing UK/international audiences about the QEF as well as their own institution.

51. The UK funding bodies carried out a *Review of Provision of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience,* which concluded in 2016. This included a review of the Unistats public UK website and the Key Information Sets (KIS), and as a consequence the latter was renamed Unistats data collection. The review also resulted in a decision to transfer responsibility for publishing some detailed information from Unistats to institutions' own websites. To support institutions in supplying this information, the UK funding bodies, jointly with the National Union of Students, Universities UK, GuildHE and the Association of Colleges, published a guide to good practice for providers in May 2017. This will be updated and developed over time. See http://www.sfc.ac.uk/guidance/qualityassurance/quality_enhancement_learne rs.aspx

52. The UK funding bodies continue to collect data on course-level links and to publish this on Unistats. Institutions are expected to continue to participate in the provision of information to Unistats, and in the publication of the Unistats data collection, (previously known as "Key Information Sets" KIS).

53. As the National Student Survey contributes significant items to the Unistats data collection, institutions are also expected to participate in the National Student Survey.

Enhancement Themes

54. Enhancement Themes are part of the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF). They aim to enhance the student learning experience in Scottish higher education by identifying specific areas for development, which are shared across all institutions. The Enhancement Themes are selected by the Scottish higher education sector and they provide a means for institutions, academic staff, support staff and students to work together in enhancing the learning experience. The Themes encourage staff and students to share current good practice and collectively generate ideas and models for innovation in learning and teaching. The work of the Enhancement Themes is planned and directed by the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC).

55. SFC expects all institutions to continue to actively contribute to the Enhancement Themes at the national level, and to benefit from them by supporting enhancement within their own institutions. SFC fully supports the recommendation from the review of the QEF that increasing use should be made of robust evidence in seeking to provide excellent learning opportunities and to enhance the student experience, and would particularly encourage all institutions to engage with the Enhancement Theme activity to take this forward.

Institutional reporting on quality for the 2017-22 cycle

Content and scope of annual report on institution-led review

56. SFC asks institutions to provide an annual report on institution-led review and enhancement activities, signed off by the governing body. The QAA is also requested to provide an annual summary statement of assurance to the SFC covering all fundable institutions.

57. SFC does not publish these annual reports, although under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 we may be obliged to consider releasing information in response to a request. SFC uses these reports to inform its overall understanding of how institutions are managing and to inform Outcome Agreements.

58. Each institution should provide an annual report by 30 September, endorsed by its governing body, which describes the scope, nature and outcomes of institution-led review activities, as well as of reviews by PSRBs, which have taken place in the previous academic year, including commentary on actions taken to address issues identified and highlighting good practice identified for dissemination.

59. The purpose of the report is to give a high level, concise analysis of activities, highlighting the key findings, institutional actions and the impacts of these,

sufficient to provide assurance to the Council that the institution is effectively managing quality assurance and delivering on enhancement.

60. The format of the annual report is a matter for each institution to determine. We recommend that this should be a concise overview report, typically 6-10 pages, highlighting outcomes, impact and responses.

61. The annual report should:

- Provide a summary of the ILR outcomes from the preceding AY including main themes, recommendations and/or commendations.

- Indicate the ways in which support services were reviewed or included in review processes, with regard to their impact on teaching, learning and the quality of the student experience.

- Indicate the role and nature of student engagement in ILR including at the self-evaluation stage during the AY.

- Provide a reflective overview, which highlights key findings from the reviews in the preceding year, comments on 'distance travelled' and identifies any significant outcomes or actions relating to development needs or to good practice resulting from institution-led review processes.

62. Across the full range of provision the report should summarise:

- Relevant contextual information and key messages derived from monitoring and analysis of performance indicators, benchmarks and other collected data, particularly those relating to retention, progression, completion, attainment and achievement, and graduate destinations.

- The key messages from qualitative and quantitative analysis of feedback from students (including the National Student Survey and external surveys of postgraduate students) and actions taken/planned as a result.

63. Institutions should provide an annex listing subject/programme areas which were reviewed by other bodies, for example, by PSRBs, during the academic year; and an indication of the institution's planned schedule of institution-led reviews preferably for the full six year cycle.

Governing body provision of annual statement

64. The report should be considered by the governing body and include the formal annual statement of assurance to the Council. The Chair of the governing body should sign off the statement of assurance and indicate when it was endorsed. The template for the statement of assurance statement is:

On behalf of the governing body of [name of institution], I confirm that we have

considered the institution's arrangements for the management of academic standards and the quality of the learning experience for AY [year just elapsed], including the scope and impact of these. I further confirm that we are satisfied that the institution has effective arrangements to maintain standards and to assure and enhance the quality of its provision. We can therefore provide assurance to the Council that the academic standards and the quality of the learning provision at this institution continue to meet the requirements set by the Council.

How SFC and QAA use annual reports

65. Annual reports are the main source of information on quality and learning and teaching in institutions provided to the Council, and SFC uses these reports principally to understand how institutions are managing quality. The reports also assist SFC to gain a more holistic understanding of how institutions are addressing policy priorities, such as widening access, progression and attainment. Institutions may therefore wish to draw on the information in their Quality Reports to inform their Outcome Agreements. QAA provides SFC with an analysis of these reports, and also draws more broadly on them, alongside other evidence, as part of its annual reporting to Council. SFC uses this evidence as assurance and also to inform broader discussions including Outcome Agreements. SFC will continue to ensure that the use of evidence from both processes is aligned and that unnecessary reporting is avoided.

66. Institutions are expected to discuss their annual reports as part of the ELIR annual discussion meetings with QAA. In addition, we would encourage institutions to share information about current issues not only in the annual statement, but also, where appropriate, through *ad hoc* briefings on a '*no surprises*' basis. This might be particularly helpful where there is follow-up action to address any issues arising from an institution-led/PSRB review, but might also deal with other issues which may emerge from time to time.

Reporting on the institution's response to outcomes of QAA ELIR

67. One year after publication of the institution's ELIR Outcome report, institutions will produce a Follow-up report outlining how they have responded to the matters identified in the ELIR Outcome Report. This Follow-up report will be discussed with QAA officers, will form part of the material considered in the annual discussion and will be published on the QAA's website. The report, endorsed by the institution's governing body, should also be sent to SFC as confirmation of engagement with ELIR. Further information can be found in the ELIR handbook.

Action and reporting requirements with ELIR judgements of limited effectiveness or not effective

68. If the overarching judgement arising from an ELIR visit is of limited effectiveness or is not effective, the Council will require the institution to prepare and fulfil an action plan to address the shortcomings identified. QAA will provide advice to the Council on the adequacy of the action plan and on how it is being implemented. The Council, taking in to account any advice from QAA, will normally require a formal follow-up review at an appropriate time, usually no more than two years after the original ELIR. Further information can be found in the ELIR handbook.

69. Exceptionally, where external review identifies issues of significant concern, the Council will require institutions to prepare a detailed action plan to address the deficiency(ies) and to take urgent action, as necessary. Given the importance of governance and accountability in these cases, any such action plan should include commentary on how the governing body will be involved in the implementation and monitoring of the plan.

70. For ease of reference Annex 1 lists the reports which institutions and QAA respectively are expected to provide.

Further information

70. Please contact Derek Horsburgh, Senior Policy Analysis Officer, Access, Learning and Outcome Agreements for further information, tel: 0131 313 6649, email: acook@sfc.ac.uk.

John Kemp
Interim Chief Executive

	Annual Reports	Action by HEI	When	Action by QAA	When	Feedback/ follow up
Annex 1 Summary of reporting						
1	Annual report on institution-led quality review in preceding AY incorporating the Governing body's annual statement of assurance	Produce a concise overview report, endorsed by the governing body, on preceding AY Provide the annual statement of assurance with formal sign off on quality relating to the preceding AY	By **30 September** each year To SFC and QAA	Annual analysis of institutions' annual reports Produce the annual overview and analysis of institutions' annual reports on ILR from the preceding AY	By **30 November** each year to SFC	Overview and analysis Feedback to individual institutions via QAA officers in the Annual discussion Feedback from SFC OAMs as part of regular communications Discussed at SHEEC and TQF to provide feedback and collective learning from ILR
2	Annual statement of assurance for each institution	-	-	Produce an annual assurance statement on each HEI based on the range of evidence accrued during the preceding AY	By **30 September** each year to SFC Not published	By exception by SFC or QAA when serious issues identified
3	Annual sector overview report	-	-	Produce the annual overview report of quality assurance and enhancement in the university sector in the preceding AY	By **31 January** each year Agenda item at SHEEC	Discussed at SHEEC to provide feedback and collective learning from ELIR etc. Used to identify topics for Focus on projects, sector events etc.

Periodic Reports	Action by QAA	When	Action by HEI	Follow up	Submit to	When
ELIR outcome and technical reports	Drafted by the ELIR review team and published by QAA	within 20 weeks of ELIR review	Consider and initiate actions internally	Produce a Follow up report, endorsed by the governing body	To QAA and SFC Published by QAA	one year after publication of ELIR report

Remit of the University Quality Working Group

Purpose

The University Quality Working Group is a sector/stakeholder representative body which oversees the arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement in the HE sector in Scotland. It is not a committee of the Council, but SFC provides the secretariat and hosts the meetings. The group is advisory in function and has no decision-making responsibilities.

The remit of the Group is to:

- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information on quality assurance and enhancement issues relating to the university sector in Scotland.

- Provide advice to the Council's executive on the arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement.

- Provide oversight and advice on any review or updating of the quality arrangements.

Membership

The Group is expected to include representation from key sector organisations and relevant stakeholders. This representation should comprise representation from QAA, SHEEC, Universities Scotland, sparqs, NUS Scotland, Education Scotland, and the university sector.

Current University Quality Working Group Membership

Chair - nominated by Universities Scotland LTC
HEI Institutional representation
NUS
QAA Scotland
SFC
SHEEC
sparqs
Teaching Quality Forum (TQF)
Universities Scotland
HEA in Scotland
Education Scotland