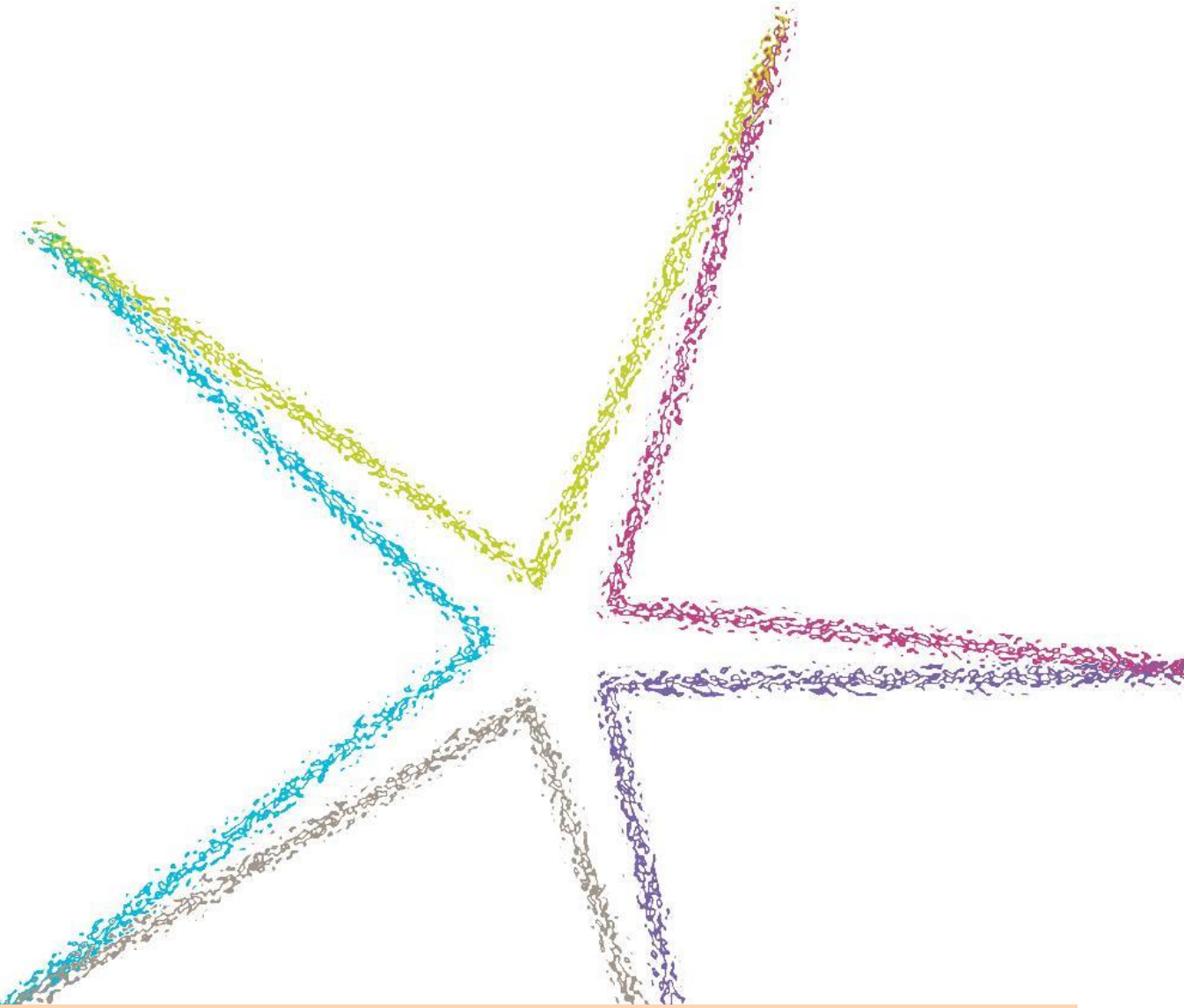

Engaging students in Institution-led Review

A practice guide for universities and students' associations

Developed in conjunction with The Robert Gordon University's Gray's School of Art and IT Services Department

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sparqs
student partnerships in quality scotland

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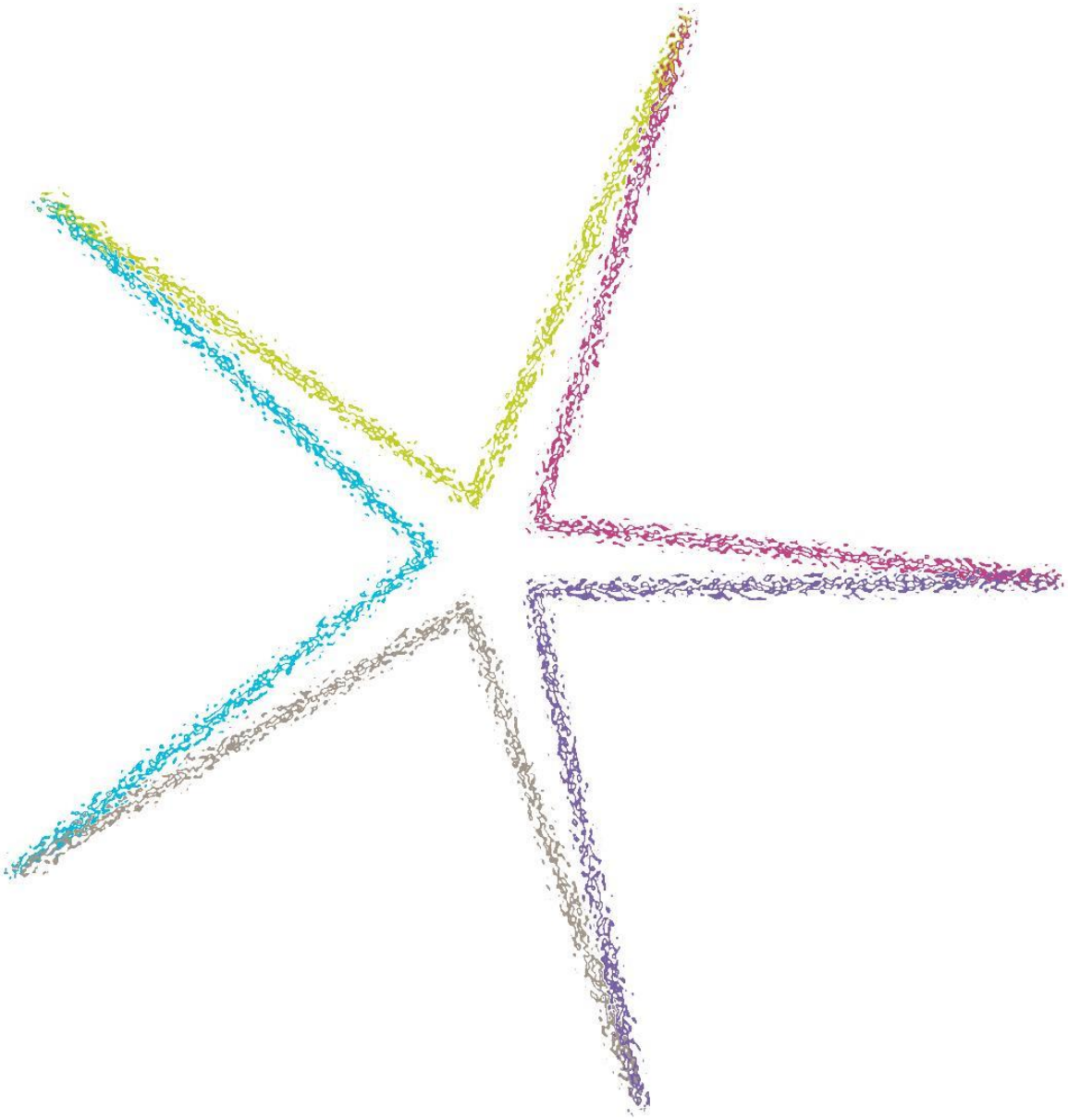

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1. Introduction

1.1 Using this guide

It is recommended that those leading a dept. or section's review prep engage with relevant student reps at the earliest opportunity to read through this guide and consider the questions it raises.

This guide has been produced to help schools, departments or sections in universities who are undergoing Institution-led Review to engage their students and student representatives throughout the process.

It is aimed primarily at those preparing for reviews, such as departmental senior management, quality administrators or school/department student officers. As student engagement is a core ingredient of the process, it is recommended that those leading a department or section's review preparation engage with relevant student representatives at the earliest opportunity to read through this guide and consider the questions it raises.

The sector's approach to reviews is being revised and redeveloped as part of a planned review of Scotland's quality arrangements with revised arrangements due to be in place for academic year 2017-18. This guide explores a range of practices and approaches that can support student engagement in review and will be transferable as revised arrangements develop. However, once the arrangements for 2017-18 are published we will review this guide accordingly.

There are three main sections to this guide, which deal in turn with the work done **before**, **during** and **after** Institution-led Reviews. Each section explores ways in which students – particularly representatives within schools or departments and senior students' association officers – can be involved in the shaping of the information developed within the review. There are a number of examples, case studies and questions for consideration, plus templates or tools to adapt to local circumstances which can be found in the appendices.

The template could also be usefully incorporated into a wider review timeline that includes other aspects such as staff preparation and admin activities.

This guide assumes that most student officers reading it may not have engaged with Institution-led Review before. It therefore provides substantial background information to the process. A shorter summary version, excluding much of the sectoral context, has been published separately: http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=229

The following page shows a diagram illustrating potential steps to student engagement throughout the process of Institution-led Review. It provides direct links to specific aspects of this guide.

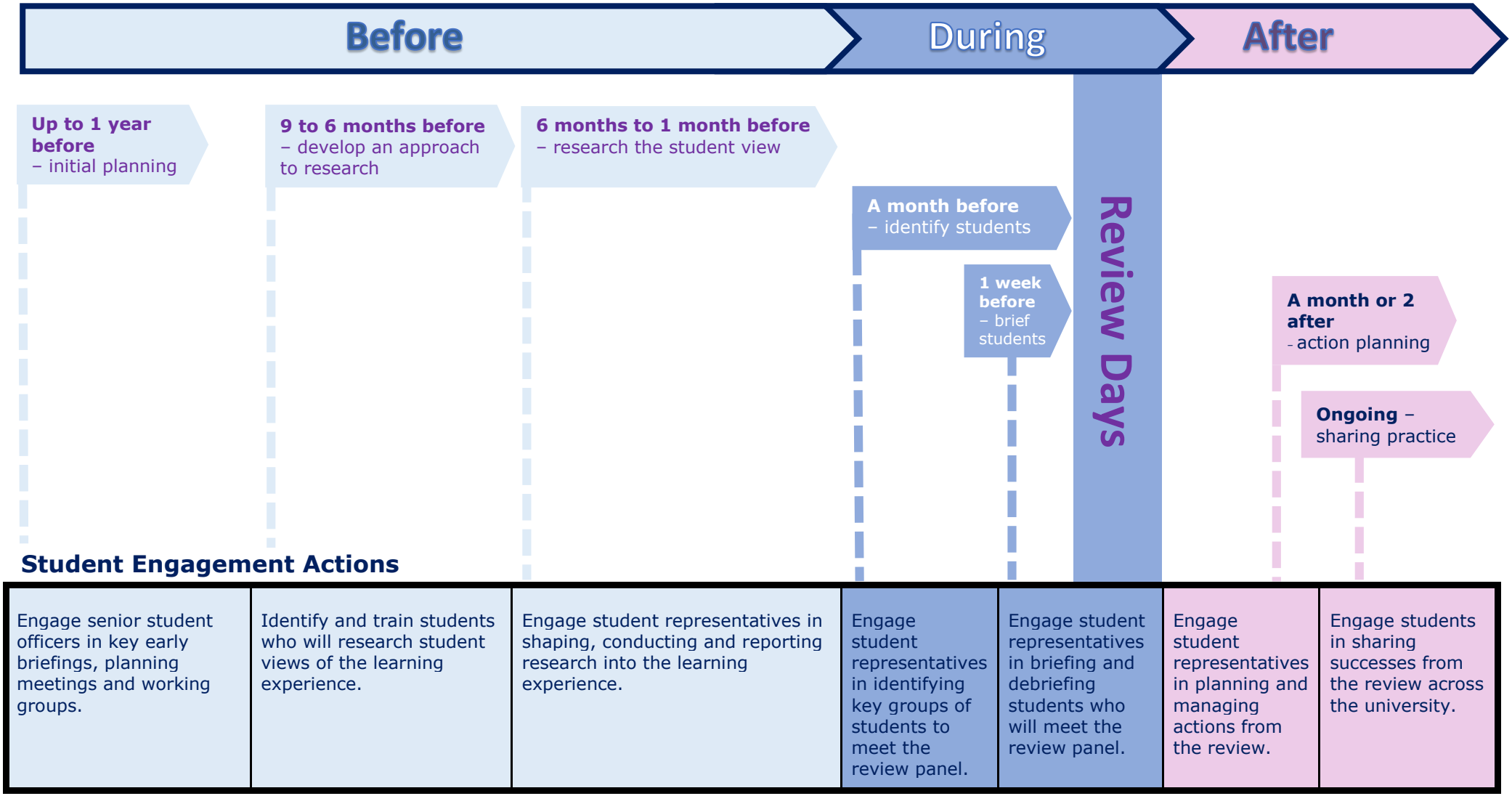
The detail of the timeline is suggestive, as each review will include different activities and operate to different timescales depending on whether it is exploring a subject area, service department or theme. There will also be variation between each university's quality regulations.

However, it is a template on which a more accurate, specific student engagement action plan can be generated in partnership between relevant staff and student representatives. The template could also be usefully incorporated into a wider review timeline that includes other aspects such as staff preparation and administrative activities.

sparqs is happy to be contacted by those preparing for a review, to provide further advice on how to most effectively use these materials.

A suggested timeline for student engagement in Institution-led Review

(click on the diagram/text areas online to go to the related section)



Student Engagement Actions

Engage senior student officers in key early briefings, planning meetings and working groups.	Identify and train students who will research student views of the learning experience.	Engage student representatives in shaping, conducting and reporting research into the learning experience.	Engage student representatives in identifying key groups of students to meet the review panel.	Engage student representatives in briefing and debriefing students who will meet the review panel.	Engage student representatives in planning and managing actions from the review.	Engage students in sharing successes from the review across the university.

1.2 Developing this guide

Although this guide has been informed by desk-based research and existing knowledge and practice within sparqs on reviews, it is substantially derived from detailed work undertaken in two reviews at The Robert Gordon University: a Student-Facing Review of the University's IT resources in 2015, and an Institution-led Subject Review of Gray's School of Art in 2016.

The former review was part of The Robert Gordon University's annual process of Student-Facing Review of support services, with each year's focus for review identified from institutional priorities and student feedback. The latter review formed a part of the university's ongoing periodic programme of subject review. Regulations relating to both forms of review at the university can be found in section 3 of the University's Academic Quality Handbook.[1]

In both reviews, sparqs worked with University management, staff and student representatives as they prepared for the review and gathered evidence, engaged with the review itself, and then responded to actions arising from the process. sparqs was able to contribute some of its expertise in terms of effective techniques of student engagement, but benefitted considerably in learning from the activities undertaken by those involved.

sparqs is therefore very grateful to the students and staff involved in those reviews for sharing their knowledge and perspectives, and for so thoroughly informing this guide. We are further grateful to a number of other individuals across the sector who provided case studies and perspectives for inclusion in this report.

Names of all those who kindly contributed to this guide can be found in the acknowledgements.

[1] < http://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/academic-affairs/quality-assurance-and-regulations/academic-quality-handbook/academic-quality-handbook/ >

Student engagement is a core principle for the sector, and this is especially true in reviews, where reflection on the nature of the learning experience cannot be done effectively unless in partnership with students and by drawing upon their perspectives.

1.3 Student engagement and reviews

Internal reviews within Scotland's universities, described nationally as Institution-led Review, and external reviews of universities, known as Enhancement-led Institutional Reviews (ELIR), both sit alongside student engagement among the five pillars of the Quality Enhancement Framework[2]:

1. Institution-led Review
2. Enhancement-led Institutional Review
3. Public information
4. Student engagement
5. Enhancement Themes

Student engagement is a core principle for the sector, and this is especially true in reviews, where reflection on the nature of the learning experience cannot be done effectively unless in partnership with students and by drawing upon their perspectives.

This guide complements sparqs' wider work on reviews in universities across the different aspects of review activity. We work with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Scotland,[3] the review body for the university sector. We are involved in the support and training of student reviewers, and we provide support to those being reviewed at both internal and university level.

The following table highlights our different areas of work across university sector reviews.

	Supporting reviewers	**Supporting reviewees**
Institution-led Review	Training for student members of internal review panels.[4] Consultancy and support to universities and students' associations on embedding that training within the institution.	***This new practice guide for departments and sections undergoing internal review.*** Individual consultancy work.
Enhancement-led Institutional Review	Involvement in training student members of Enhancement-led Institutional Review teams.	sparqs ELIR guidance.[5] Individual consultancy work.

sparqs provides an equivalent programme of support to the college sector, and there are some similarities and transferabilities in much of our work in this area.

[2] See more about the Quality Enhancement Framework at http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/scotland/development-and-enhancement. The framework, and the sector's approach to reviews, is being revised and redeveloped throughout 2016. This practice guide will be updated to reflect any significant changes that impact on its content.

[3] QAA Scotland is part of the UK-wide Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), the independent body entrusted with monitoring, and advising on, standards and quality in UK higher education. QAA Scotland has devolved responsibilities for the work of QAA in Scotland. See more at http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/scotland.

[4] < http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/institute.php?page=289 >

[5] < http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/institute.php?page=288 >

1.4 Overview of Institution-led Review

As outlined above, the first pillar of the Quality Enhancement Framework is "a comprehensive programme of Institution-led Reviews, carried out by higher education institutions with guidance from the Scottish Funding Council"[6].

That guidance from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) was most recently issued in August 2012[7] and recommends a number of broad approaches, including exploring both students' and graduates' views on their learning experience, and identifying potentially different views between various subjects or categories of students.

Of course, a key part of those approaches is engaging students in questions around gathering, prioritising and presenting this evidence, and that is a major focus of this practice guide.

Institution-led Review is the name used nationally for internal periodic reviews conducted by universities. Although these are internal processes, they have significant external input (such as in the membership of the review panels, which contain both university colleagues from different subject areas as well as subject specialists from elsewhere in the sector). However, individual universities often give these reviews other names, such as Subject Health Review (at the University of the West of Scotland)[8] or Institution-led Subject Review (at The Robert Gordon University)[9]. Universities also provide guidance for their schools and departments based on the SFC guidance.

However, as the SFC guidance states:

> "The role of support services (guidance, learning resources, ICT, recruitment, student finance and so on) is of crucial importance in determining the overall quality of the student learning experience. Institutions should satisfy themselves that there are appropriate mechanisms in place to facilitate periodic review of the strategic and operational role of support services in relation to their impact on the student experience."[10]

Institution-led Review therefore not only covers reviews of academic subject areas. It also includes reviews of professional service departments, plus thematic reviews where multiple schools or departments contribute to reflections on a shared, institution-wide topic.

This guide is therefore designed to be applicable for all types of internal review – subject, service department or thematic.

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[6] < http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/scotland/development-and-enhancement >

[7] http://www.sfc.ac.uk/communications/Circulars/2012/SFC1412.aspx. As noted in section 1.1, this practice guide will change as a result of current developments in the sector's agreed approach to reviews.

[8] < http://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/services-for-staff/quality-enhancement-unit/ >

[9] < http://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/academic-affairs/quality-assurance-and-regulations/academic-quality-handbook/academic-quality-handbook >

[10] *Council Guidance to Higher Education Institutions on Quality from August 2012* (Scottish Funding Council, August 2012, p11) http://www.sfc.ac.uk/communications/Circulars/2012/SFC1412.aspx

2. Before the review

This chapter outlines how students can be engaged in the preparatory work before an Institution-led Review, which often begins up to a year in advance. This involves identifying and agreeing the steps to engaging students, and then the participation of students and reps in generating evidence of perspectives on learning.

2.1 Initial planning

Early dialogue with students is essential to ensuring effective student engagement in the review. Throughout the process, it is important that student representatives are aware of the importance of student engagement in quality enhancement and how the university approaches it.

It is worth involving one or two key student reps in early informal consultations, in any review steering group that is established, and in any early departmental briefing from university or faculty quality staff.

It is also important at the earliest possible stage to emphasise to both staff and student representatives the enhancement nature of the review. In part this is so that staff are reassured that the process is not about finding problems or criticising individuals. In turn, it is key that student representatives are clear about this from the outset so that they can help to promote student engagement in the review as a constructive rather than negative force.

Therefore it is worth involving one or two key student representatives in early informal consultations, in any review steering group that is established, and in any early departmental briefing from university or faculty quality staff. It is also worth engaging such students in a small group that can read this guide and identify useful ideas and potential actions.

In subject reviews, such key student representatives will generally be the school officer (see section 2.3), a senior course rep or equivalent. For service or thematic reviews, a senior students' association officer or student members of relevant university committees will be more appropriate. In both cases, the students' association's Vice-President (Education) or equivalent is worth consulting at a general level for their views about how best students might be involved throughout the process.

At the University of the West of Scotland, Institution-led Review of subject areas is known as Subject Health Review (SHR)[11]. A handbook has been produced outlining the process and scope of SHR[12], primarily for staff whose areas will be undergoing it. The handbook contains a dedicated section on student engagement that outlines why the student view is important to SHR and what happens when they meet the panel.

The section also describes the nature of the materials relating to students that should be gathered prior to the review. This includes current student perspectives on their learning, student input into the self-evaluation document, and evidence of how student views have been responded to by staff in the past.

[11] < http://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/services-for-staff/quality-enhancement-unit/subject-health-review/ >
[12] < http://www.uws.ac.uk/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=19327356690 >

In The Robert Gordon University's 2014-15 Student-Facing Review of IT Resources, two key early steps were taken. Firstly, the steering group for the review included student membership in the form of two senior students' association sabbatical officers. Secondly, the IT Services' department's proposed approach and scope of the review was explored with student representatives to ensure the review covered what students expected it to. This included reflection on the interpretations of the term 'IT resources'.

This engagement was crucial in setting the tone for the review. For instance, it was agreed that the review should have an ethos of quality enhancement, rather than merely fixing problems. As the final review report states, "From the outset, the enthusiastic way in which students and their representatives have contributed to the review openly and constructively has helped greatly and that was evident from this first meeting onwards."[13]

Students were, however, involved at other stages in the review, and this did not just include students' association officers. The students' association felt it was really important to have a wider pool involved in the review, such as faculty officers, course reps and indeed ordinary students. It widened the range of perspectives, but also meant that there could be continuity year on year, with many non-sabbatical reps carrying on into the following year during which much of the evaluation and reflection took place.

It is important to engage students at a course level. This is where the bulk of the research into the student experience can be done.

2.2 Developing an approach to research

Beyond the role of senior student officers in the development of the overall review, it is important to engage students at a course level too. This is where the bulk of the research into the student experience can be done. Key to this in a subject review is the department's team of course reps, and there are some topics worth exploring with them early on in the preparation:

1. **The nature and purpose of the review.**
2. **The school's context – such as key statistics, current priorities informed by ongoing monitoring activity, and actions or changes that arose from previous reviews.**
3. **The school's suggested plan for student engagement in the review.**
4. **The role of course reps in gathering evidence of students' views.**
5. **Students' likely priorities for research.**
6. **The role of staff in supporting them.**
7. **The research methodologies course reps might employ.**

[13] *Student-Facing Review of IT Resources 2014-15 – Final Report* (The Robert Gordon University, November 2015)

There are a number of ways in which this exploration can be undertaken, which will mainly depend on how course reps are engaged generally in the department. The following list is therefore not exhaustive.

1. **Mention the focus on the forthcoming review in the information disseminated to students about the course rep role prior to their election.**
2. **If course reps are trained in departmental groups, work with the university quality office and students' association to include some content in the course rep training about reps' key roles in the review preparation.**
3. **Deliver a presentation and generate discussion at a school-wide meeting of course reps.**
4. **Issue a short toolkit to provide some background and ideas. An example can be found in Appendix 1.**
5. **Create a space in the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for student representatives to exchange ideas, share approaches and ask questions about the review.**
6. **Engage course reps and academic staff together in a joint briefing or workshop in which they can discuss shared perceptions about the learning experience, identify common objectives, and create a plan for working in partnership in the preparation.**

As a pre-existing network of students elected and trained to represent their peers' views, course reps are ideally placed to provide their department with a wealth of evidence about what students think about different aspects of their learning experiences.

As a pre-existing network of students elected and trained to represent their peers' views, course reps are ideally placed to provide their department with a wealth of evidence about what students think about different aspects of their learning experiences in the months leading up to a review. However, there are situations in which others will also be well placed to perform this role, such as a dedicated team of student researchers.

At Gray's School of Art at The Robert Gordon University, a team of Student Partners was created in 2014, distinct from the school's course reps. These Student Partners are appointed from across the subject areas to work in partnership with staff to promote an ethos of student engagement in the school. They gather evidence about the learning experience, contribute to discussions around the school's priorities, and have helped to develop key initiatives such as a revised Personal and Professional Development approach for students and a student-staff partnership agreement for the school.

In the run up to the 2016 Institution-led Subject Review of Gray's School of Art, the Student Partners obviously had a key role in working with staff to prepare evidence. They were tasked with researching and collating student views of their learning experiences, and these reports formed an important part of the school's evidence base made available to the review panel.

While it is of course important for staff to listen to student views in preparation for their review, there are significant advantages in student researchers themselves undertaking the bulk of the research into the student experience. To do so:

1. Equips and empowers students.
2. Offers new skills and progression to interested representatives.
3. Makes students a core part of managing the process alongside staff as well as merely contributors of evidence to it.
4. Makes students feel like trusted, autonomous partners.
5. Demonstrates a strong general departmental ethos of student engagement.
6. Frees up management time to deal with other preparatory work.
7. May throw up new methods of engagement or interpretation of data that staff might not have thought of.
8. Might lead to questions being asked in novel or fresh ways.
9. Allows for the generation of a more free form of discussion that might not otherwise happen with school management involvement.

That said, there is also merit in having strong management involvement in some of the review research activity, as either facilitator or observer. It can help emphasise the importance of the process, can demonstrate partnership and can give a strong signal of institutional commitment to student views. Staff will also tend to have a perspective on quality enhancement activities over a number of years, and the information gathered in annual monitoring processes within programmes may present trends which staff are able to share and assist with interpreting. Moreover, staff involvement in the research can often lead to instant responses and action to issues raised.

According to the students' association at The Robert Gordon University, there had been some significant student dissatisfaction at one or two aspects of IT provision, for instance Wi-Fi across campus. Association officers reported that in the university's Student-Facing Review of IT Resources, the IT Services team was quick to identify these issues in focus groups and student-led forums, outlining their recognition of the problem and steps already taken, and discussing in detail people's experiences of the problems.

This was an instant reassurance to students that problems were noted and being acted on even before the review was complete.

Then, students complaining about Wi-Fi were asked to write diaries of their experiences – logging precise times and locations where the Wi-Fi did and didn't work.

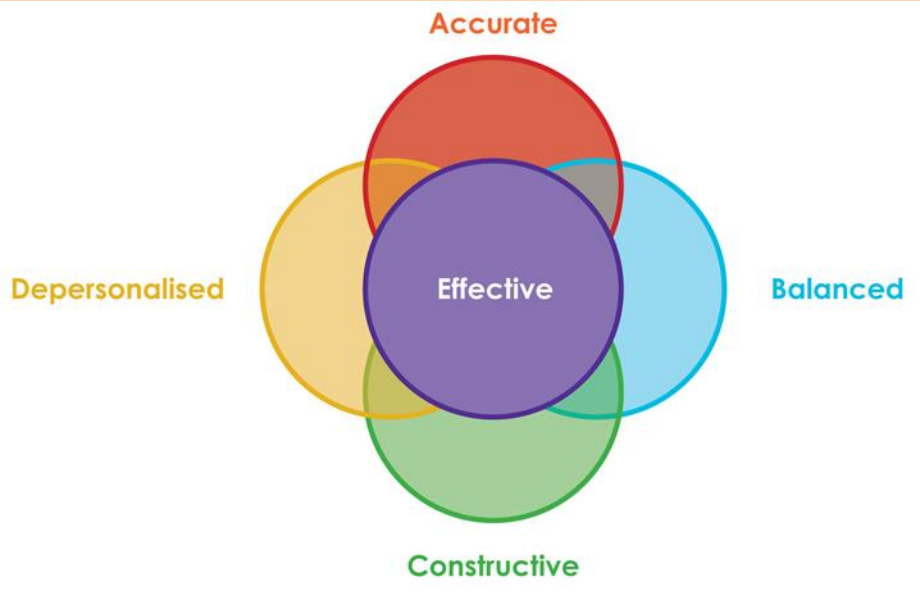
This provided specific, accurate data. It also had the advantage of turning disgruntled complainers into constructive actors, drawing in students as co-owners of the review and its outputs, and providing an example of real partnership working.

Contd…/

….contd.

This demonstrates the **ABCD of Effective Feedback** – positive behaviours that participants in sparqs' introductory course rep training are encouraged to adopt in order to build good working relationships with staff.

The behaviours are equally applicable to a review context, in which it is the job of students not to criticise staff or their work directly, but to provide constructive ideas for improving the learning experience.



Obviously in the run up to a review, a lead rep or School Officer plays a particularly important role, as they will be providing a high level of input about the student view and the best way of gathering it.

However, irrespective of which students are in place to fulfil this key role of undertaking the research, appropriate training and support will need to be provided, as outlined above at the beginning of section 2.2. A short training session or half-day workshop can be vital in giving student researchers the confidence, skills and understanding to fully undertake their role.

2.3 The role of School Officers

Beyond the contribution of course reps or other student researchers across a subject area, there is a key role for the post of lead rep – often called School Officer, School President, School Convener, or similar. This post, which exists in most universities in Scotland, is responsible for working with school management, sitting on school committees and liaising with the students' association and other school-level officers. There is more information about lead reps and support that can be provided to them on the sparqs website[14].

Obviously in the run up to a review, a lead rep or School Officer plays a particularly important role, as they will be providing a high level of input about the student view and the best way of gathering it.

[14] < http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/institute.php?page=42 >

The University of St Andrews has a team of over twenty School Presidents, who are lead student officers for each of the university's schools. When a school is reviewed, the School President has a vital role in researching and presenting student views.

They are expected to carry out research among students across the school, though are given considerable freedom to use their own tools, be that surveys, focus groups, the course rep system and so on, and will obviously draw upon their own knowledge and understanding of the learning experience in the school. They are also given guidance as to how to do this, which can be adapted for each school, plus a standard template form in which to write their report.

This approach has the advantage of allowing considerable freedom for the School President to undertake research in their own way, while being guided with common information and ensuring a consistency in reporting style across reviews.

The guidance and template is available in Appendix 4.

The University of the Highlands and Islands appoints Subject Network Student Officers (SNSOs) for each of its six Subject Networks. Every year each SNSO agrees a research topic with their Subject Network, and these reports – which include evidence, analysis and recommendations about the learning experience – are important parts of the Subject Network's understanding of student views about the learning experience.

When a Subject Network undergoes a periodic review these reports take on an additional importance. In the months preceding the review itself, the SNSO's report is a crucial contribution to the Subject Network's reflection in preparing for the review, and is submitted as part of the evidence base.

SNSOs also have a vital role to play in commenting on draft self-evaluation documents and other key documents prepared for the review.

The wider student population will be asked for their views by student reps or researchers. They will potentially be asked to meet the review panel, and they ultimately should benefit from review activities through resultant enhancements to learning and teaching.

2.4 Informing students

Although a subject area preparing for review will extensively engage student representatives as a core part of its gathering of student views, it is important to reach out to other students too. The wider student population will be asked for their views by student representatives or researchers. They will potentially be asked to meet the review panel, and they ultimately should benefit from review activities through resultant enhancements to learning and teaching.

It could be that student representatives and researchers are best placed to engage ordinary students in thinking about and commenting on their learning experiences and in reflecting on how they are engaged in regular activities such as module evaluations. Through using the usual university and students' association communication channels it can be useful to raise awareness of the forthcoming review and the sorts of questions students should begin to think about.

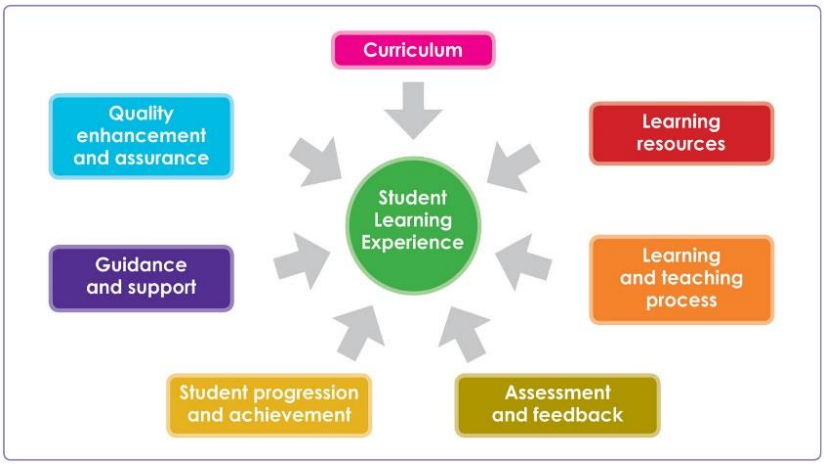
The Quality Enhancement Unit at the University of the West of Scotland produces a leaflet for students whose subject areas are soon to face Subject Health Review (SHR).

Entitled *Subject Health Review: Informing and Involving Student*[15] the leaflet explains what the review is about and why it is important to the learning experience, it outlines how students can contribute their views, and it provides links to resources with further information.

Arguably, much of the successful awareness-raising among students will happen most efficiently and effectively at the same time as the actual research into their views – and the following section explores some useful tools of research.

2.5 Researching the student view

Student representatives or researchers exploring the views of students will find it useful to begin with a framework that outlines the different areas of evidence. sparqs' Student Learning Experience (SLE) diagram, which forms a core part of its Introductory Course Rep Training, is an ideal example.



The headings within the SLE allow for meaningful questions to be asked about specific aspects of how students learn, the services provided to support them, and how their views contribute to improvements.

Focusing on different aspects of a student's experience on a course, the headings within the SLE allow for meaningful questions to be asked about specific aspects of how students learn, the services provided to support them, and how their views contribute to improvements. More information on the SLE and how to use it can be found on the sparqs website.[16]

[15] *Subject Health Review: Informing and Involving Students* (University of the West of Scotland, August 2012) www.uws.ac.uk/workarea/downloadasset.aspx?id=2147511700

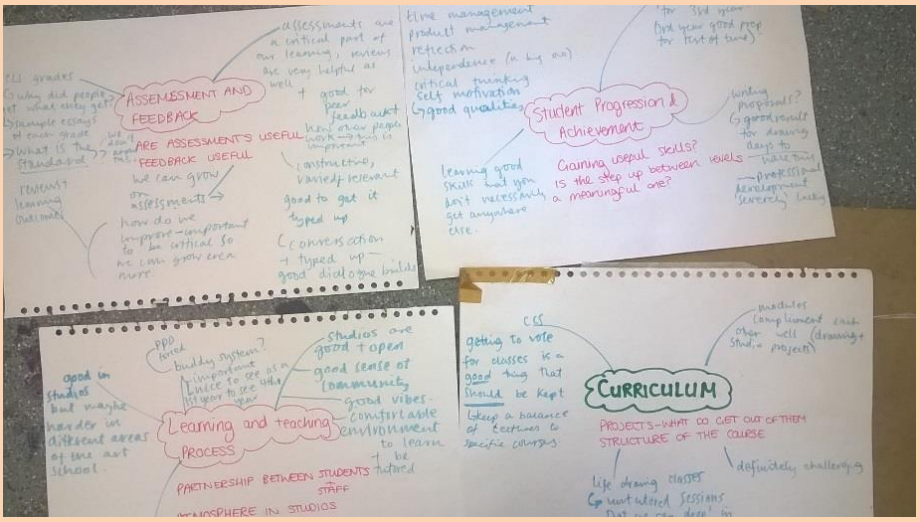
[16] < http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=205 >

Student Partners in the Gray's School of Art used the Student Learning Experience to approach their research in a structured way.

Teams of Student Partners used it in different ways across the school's various departments, however.

In many departments, the Partners asked students for their views across all the headings. In one, the Partners judged that career development was a major topic of concern for their fellow students so they focused their research primarily on the Student Progression and Achievement heading.

In one department, a team of Student Partners introduced the review to their peers at an informal lunch meeting, and then put headings up on the communal noticeboard for people to write their responses and ideas. The headings – inspired by the Student Learning Experience diagram – were then changed every few days to move discussion on to new areas.



Which elements of the Student Learning Experience should be a feature of review preparation will vary depending on institutional, students' association and subject area priorities, and this could be a matter of useful discussion at the planning stage.

In some circumstances it will be appropriate to focus on just a small part of the Student Learning Experience. For instance, in the case study above, one group of Student Partners at Gray's School of Art largely explored student progression and outcomes. In thematic or service department reviews, guidance and support might be foremost in the focus of student research.

Which elements of the Student Learning Experience should be a feature of review preparation will also vary depending on institutional, students' association and subject area priorities, and this could be a matter of useful discussion at the planning stage.

A variety of tools are available to students to research peers' views on the learning experience, such as web forums or social media discussions, focus groups, informal meetings, surveys and more, as well as access to historical data from recent years' annual monitoring activities. However, there are considerations around the availability of students (and of the student researchers themselves), timetabling, and where and how students are most easily engaged normally.

Support from course managers can be crucial here in terms of offering their ideas, creating time for discussions in classes, or providing incentives such as refreshments for meetings or focus groups.

Students will have a key role to play in shaping the tools that are used, and sparqs has developed a resource that can help to plan student engagement in the design, delivery, analysis and actions of feedback tools[17].

There is also the opportunity to use feedback tools on two levels – firstly an exploratory, information-gathering approach with a wide range of students, and secondly, a deeper more problem-solving approach with engaged representatives.

The IT resources review at The Robert Gordon University conducted two rounds of focus groups. The first one was open to a wide range of students who were able to contribute perspectives on any aspect of IT resources.

However, the second round, rather than repeating the methodology or gathering identical issues, allowed for a different approach. Firstly, it was a chance to identify any changes in students' experiences since issues began to be addressed after the first focus groups, and secondly, it was an opportunity to press participants on a more granular level of detail, for instance by exploring precisely how students would respond to certain problems they encountered with IT resources.

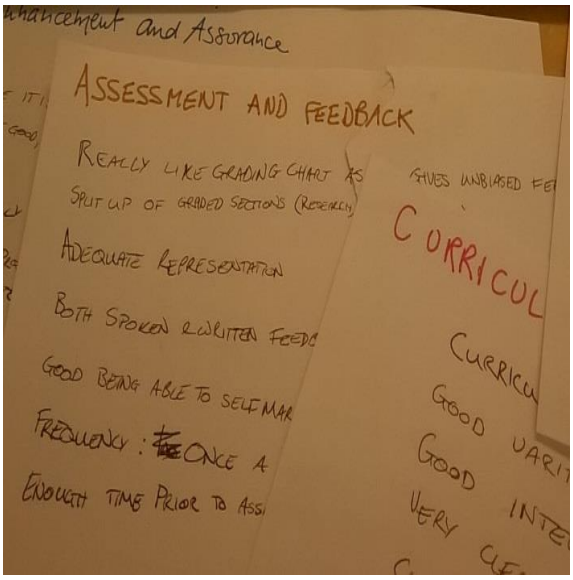
Thirdly, and arguably most importantly, it enabled the engagement of students in developing ideas. For instance, they were consulted on the potential wording of emails and leaflets to be produced by the IT Services department.

Although these second focus groups tended to have a narrower range of participants, mostly being very engaged representatives, this generated an atmosphere of deeper engagement with the issues and a more practical, proactive approach to working on solutions in partnership with the university.

In the Gray's School of Art review, students' creativity led them to creating graffiti walls with their views, photographs of students' comments, and even infographics presenting the results of student opinions.

It is important, too, to consider the nature of the subject being reviewed, and whether this naturally lends itself to certain approaches. For instance, in the Gray's School of Art review, students' creativity led them to creating graffiti walls with their views, photographs of students' comments, and even infographics presenting the results of student opinions. One Student Partner team submitted not only a written report but also short audio recordings of interviews with fellow students – allowing for a different medium of presentation while keeping students' views entirely unedited from how they were originally expressed.

[17] *Grid for Developing Tools of Feedback from Students* (sparqs, 2014) http://sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=206



It is important for student researchers not just to collect raw data, but also add their analysis. Through their experience of researching the student experience, they will inevitably develop a meaningful picture of the perceived strengths and development areas across the learning experience.

There are similar subject-inspired approaches that could be taken across the curriculum. For instance, social science students could apply their knowledge of different civic engagement processes to identify the best way of reaching out to their peers; students in health or care-related courses could reflect on whether techniques for engaging clients or patients are transferable to interviews about the learning experience; while students on computing courses could develop online survey tools.

It is important, however, for student researchers not just to collect raw data, but also add their analysis. Through their experience of researching the student experience, they will inevitably develop a meaningful picture of the perceived strengths and development areas across the learning experience. They will very likely be asked to speak about this analysis in person with the review panel.

Five months before the review of Gray's School of Art, sparqs delivered a workshop for the school's team of Student Partners. The workshop introduced the purpose of the review and began to develop thinking around how Student Partners might generate perspectives from the various departments of the school.

At the workshop a toolkit was circulated, which presented ideas on how to obtain ideas from students. See Appendix 1.

Two rounds of follow-up meetings were held by sparqs with each department's Student Partners, to understand how their research was developing and to contribute further support and advice where required.

2.6 Institutional impact of thematic review

There is also scope for models of thematic review to put student engagement at the core of the preparatory work. While course reps might be more geared to investigating the student experience by subject area, others will be better placed to look more thematically.

For instance, the students' association, through its services and broad oversight of the whole student experience, will be in a strong position to contribute valuable insights. Meanwhile others playing a key role in informing thematic review can also engage students in their own preparation or draw on relevant student data.

Until recently, The University of Edinburgh conducted Periodic Reviews of Support Services, with the focus of review being a single service department. However, for 2015-16 it replaced them with Thematic Reviews, exploring the strategy, services and user experiences of aspects that cut across many areas of the university.

For instance, the 2016 review covered mental health services and well-being services and involved various student-facing services. The students' association's Advice Place also agreed to participate in the review as a core focus of the review was links and liaison between services.

With no single service responsible for writing a reflective analysis for a Thematic Review, Academic Services drew together contributions from all relevant parts of the university, with an introduction provided by the Deputy Secretary (Student Experience). Many review areas provided student feedback on services in their contributions to the 2016 review.

In future years, review areas will be asked to provide an opportunity to students to comment and shape these materials.

3. During the review

Student engagement during a subject review happens when students meet with the review panel to give their views. This generally takes two forms – firstly, students from across the various courses and levels will be asked about their experiences of the learning and teaching process and how they are engaged in shaping it, and secondly representatives will often (though not always) be met separately to talk about their roles.

3.1 Identifying students

Usually the review panel will give details in advance of who they would like to meet, and for how long. This may be quite general – for instance asking for up to a dozen students representing the full range of subjects and levels – or there might be a specific interest in meeting groups such as part-time, international or postgraduate students. It will be the job of the department to organise this, though there is clearly a role for student representatives in this process.

At the University of St Andrews, School Presidents play a key role in ensuring student engagement with the review itself. Obviously they meet the review panel themselves, as they are able to talk about the big picture of student engagement in the school and their involvement in school-wide committees and enhancement activities.

However, they also help to identify other students to meet the review panel. Having already done extensive research into students' views to prepare for the review (see the case study on page 14) they inevitably have a very good sense of which individual students or groups would have useful perspectives to share with the panel.

3.2 Briefing students

In the case of both representatives and the wider student body, those meeting the panel will require briefing – although this will take a different form for each group. Some students who may not be directly involved in preparatory work for the review, but are invited to the panel meeting, may have a limited understanding of the review panel's overall purpose and context. It will therefore be important to brief all students regarding the purpose of the review meeting and in context with the process.

Topics to cover in a briefing could include the nature and purpose of the review, the importance of the student member of the panel they will be meeting, and how to reflect on the learning experience. A template briefing document can be found in Appendix 3, which can be adapted to local circumstances and could be used in a variety of formats such as a leaflet or PowerPoint presentation.

For student reps, who will already know more about the review (not least if they have been involved in research), the panel will probably expect a higher degree of analysis of the learning experience.

For student representatives, who will already know more about the review (not least if they have been involved in research), the panel will probably expect a higher degree of analysis of the learning experience.

Panel members may ask more questions about quality systems, such as the effectiveness of course committees, support given to student representatives, and the commitment of staff to enhancement.

In both cases, but especially with the ordinary students, there is scope for senior student representatives, such as those who have contributed towards the preparation for the review and who have conducted research into student views, to provide this briefing. Such a step could provide an objectivity and honesty of discussion that departmental management may not feel they are best placed to facilitate.

Things may work slightly differently with thematic reviews, where there will not be the same natural subject-based cohort of students to draw upon. As such, students involved as service users, representatives or other interested groups may be more relevant as potential groups to meet the review panel.

In The University of Edinburgh's mental health services review, the review panel – which included student members – considered written contributions from across the university, and met various groups of staff and students who were users of the services plus staff from the areas under review.

In terms of meeting students, there were obvious sensitivities about identifying service users and ensuring that invitations emphasised the confidential nature of the meetings. The Review Team took a number of approaches to involving students in the review:

- It liaised with EUSA (Edinburgh University Students' Association) who invited student representatives and members of the International Society to participate in a meeting.
- It invited student societies who campaign on or have an interest in student mental health and well-being services at the university to a separate meeting.
- It invited students who are on online distance learning courses to a Skype meeting.

It is worth conducting a short debrief afterwards with all students who meet the panel. This will be a chance for management or senior student representatives to get students' impressions on how the meeting went, to share reflections on what the panel found particularly interesting, and also to learn for the future about whether the students felt sufficiently prepared and equipped for the meeting.

4. After the review

The challenge after a review, upon receipt of a report and recommendations, is twofold: firstly, it is important to undertake the resultant action points and engage student representatives in those activities; and secondly, it is necessary to communicate these changes to the wider student body. Part of this work might require briefing a new generation of student representatives, as those involved in undertaking the research prior to the review may have moved on from their role or even from their studies.

4.1 Action planning

A school's learning and teaching committee might have overall responsibility for responding to a review report, and will often establish short-life working groups to address action points. Naturally, student reps should be involved in each of these working groups.

Much of the engagement post-review will involve those senior student representatives who sit on the key departmental committees that have responsibility for managing responses to the review. For instance, a school's learning and teaching committee might have overall responsibility for responding to a review report, and will often establish short-life working groups to address action points. Naturally, student representatives should be involved in each of these working groups.

Also, course reps will usefully play a part as many actions will impact on course monitoring processes in which they will be routinely involved.

In a recent review of the Applied Life Studies Subject Network at the University of the Highlands and Islands, an action from the review was to produce a vision and strategy for the subject network. The newly appointed Subject Network Student Officer (SNSO) fed into the development and production of the document, through both faculty and Subject Network events. Their and other students' involvement in such events had in fact been a point of commendation by the review team.

Part of the SNSO's input to the strategy involved the development of a diagram explaining student representation in the Subject Network, particularly the role of the SNSO themselves. This information was developed in conjunction with the students' association and staff in the Subject Network, and included in students' handbooks.

One of the strategy's three sections related to student engagement, and the SNSO's comments on this part were particularly useful alongside other involvement in the action points arising from the review.

A recent Subject Network Review for Science, Environment & Rural Resource Management at the University of the Highlands and Islands recommended that the network should "Review the arrangements for written feedback for students to ensure a more consistent approach with regards to the provision of analytical comments to enhance the learning of students".

The Subject Network took forward four strands of inter-related work to act on this recommendation:

1. Compile available feedback proforma and exemplars in use across Subject Network and University.
2. Work with University assessment group to identify best practice.
3. Work with SNSO to investigate the students' view of feedback.
4. Work with Learning & Teaching Academy to disseminate best practice.

The Subject Network Student Officer (SNSO) was involved in all of these strands of work. They conducted an online survey with students and supplemented this quantitative data with qualitative data obtained during face-to-face and online discussions. They presented the interim results to programme leaders and the final report was circulated to all staff in the subject network and posted on the intranet. The SNSO also presented the report at the Subject Network conference and Faculty Board.

The SNSO's report was also shared with the university's Head of Academic Development who was examining assessment feedback at the wider university level. The SNSO's research helped the student voice to influence the development of a new Assessment, Feedback and Feedforward policy which has been implemented across the Subject Network and the university.

In the Institution-led Subject Review of Gray's School of Art, the work of the Student Partner team was commended by the panel.

In the Institution-led Subject Review of Gray's School of Art, the work of the Student Partner team was commended by the panel, with the review report saying that "the positivity and commitment shown by students was exemplary". The report also praised the "strong sense of community and collegiality" and the partnership working between staff and students "which engendered shared expectations".

The school proposes taking forward a range of work from the review through its Teaching and Learning Committee, including the further development of the Student Partner role and their engagement in more areas of enhancement activity such as curriculum development. Ideas include engaging first year Student Partners in shaping modules for the following year's cohort, and (as recommended by the review report) fourth year Student Partners working on a project to develop the school's Masters provision.

4.2 Sharing practice

Promoting the successes and outcomes of a review is not merely a case of informing students within the relevant area of the university. There is also much that can be done at a university level in the case of a thematic or service area review, and there are even wider implications for a subject review. For instance, there may be successful approaches taken in student engagement activity that can be shared with other schools.

As a result of the successful work by Student Partners in the review of Gray's School of Art, a number of the Student Partners were involved in presenting their review prep work as part of the University's ELIR, which took place a few months after the school's subject review, while others co-presented with staff on the topic to the university's L&T conference later that year.

As a result of the successful work by Student Partners in the review of Gray's School of Art, a number of the Student Partners were involved in presenting their review preparation work as part of the university's Enhancement-led Institutional Review which took place a few months after the school's subject review, while others co-presented with staff on the topic to the university's Learning and Teaching Conference later that year.

In certain reviews, action around the methods of student engagement may be an outcome in itself. For instance, it might be recommended that the way students or others are engaged in commenting on and shaping their learning should be addressed. This creates opportunities for not only student representatives in the department to play a key role in proposing enhancements to engagement, but also for the students' association to bring its institutional perspective to discussions.

Moreover, there is scope for staff to highlight outcomes as a demonstration of the department or university's ability and willingness to respond to feedback – for instance through tools such as "You Said… We Did". This emphasis on the value of student engagement will encourage students to continue to spend time sharing their views on their learning and have faith in ongoing quality activities.

In the Student-Facing Review of IT resources at The Robert Gordon University, it was felt that the student engagement in the review had itself been a good outcome. As the review report noted:

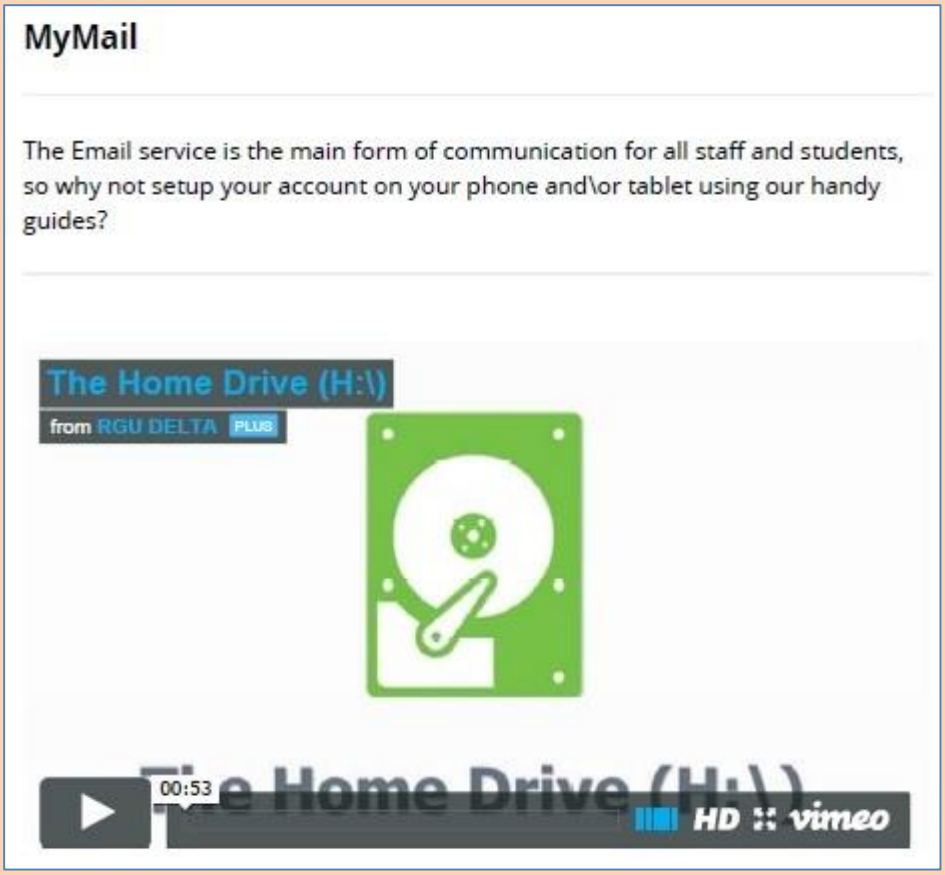
> "It was agreed that the engagement with students had been a major success factor, and it would be important to sustain some engagement on a permanent basis going forward. It was agreed that this should ideally be woven into existing arrangements for student representation rather than creating any new structure. IT Services will arrange to meet the new student presidents once they are in post and agree with them how best to sustain future engagement."[18]

[18] *Student-Facing Review of IT Resources 2014-15 – Final Report* (The Robert Gordon University, November 2015)

The Student-Facing Review of IT Resources at The Robert Gordon University found that students had a strong preference for very short 'how to' guides rather than long explanatory documentation, and also that there were some services of which students were unaware. The review also identified that students in later years were often unaware of new services that had been introduced after their initial induction period.

As such, the IT Services team undertook a significant programme of communication about its provision, including new features, services and guides. Very short videos were created with the University's Department for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Access (DELTA) providing pointers on how to find help on printing, Wi-Fi and other key functions.

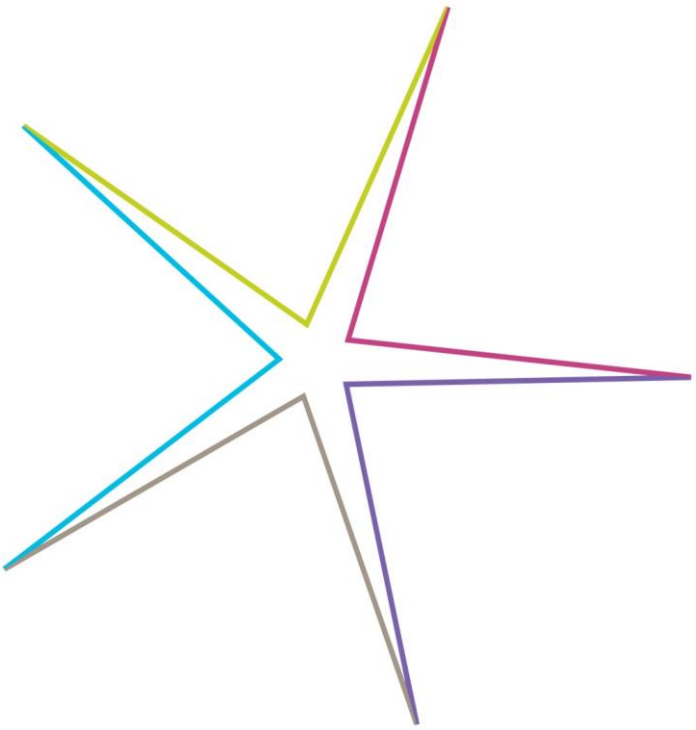
The videos have been promoted on the University's network of screens in public areas, on the Helpdesk webpage, on social media and on the IT Services blog.[19]



[19] These videos can be found on RGU DELTA's Vimeo page, along with a wider range of information videos for students about representation, student engagement and other matters. https://vimeo.com/user43188541/videos

Appendix 1

Toolkit for Student Partners at Gray's School of Art



September 2015

1. What is Institution-led Subject Review?

Every university in Scotland is expected to review each of its subject areas at least every six years, to ensure that courses are being well managed and improved. At RGU these reviews are called **Institution-led Subject Review (ILSR)**.

These Institution-led Reviews are one of five pillars that make up the Quality Enhancement Framework[20] - a collection of processes and principles that help guide the improvement of quality in Scottish universities.

The work involved in an Institution-led Subject Review can take many months, and there are three main stages:

- **Before the review** – The department or school being reviewed gathers evidence to show how well it is doing at delivering a good learning experience, with its own observations on strengths and potential areas of improvement. The department writes a large report for the review panel to read.
- **During the review** – The review panel reads the report and lots of other background information, and spends a few days meeting with a variety of people such as department staff, students, course reps, graduates, and representatives from the wider community such as employers.
- **After the review** – The review team writes a report with its assessment of the strengths and areas for improvement, and the department begins work on action points.

The role of students in internal review is huge, because the entire process is focused on making a better learning experience. For instance:

- There is a student member on every review panel (taken from a different subject area in the same university).
- The panel will meet students from the department to ask for their own views.
- The department is expected to present lots of evidence of what students think about their learning.
- Student representatives in the department have a big job in helping to gather and analyse this evidence and in developing action plans after the review.

Gray's School of Art is being reviewed in January 2016, and the preparation is already well underway. Student Partners have an important role in helping the school to understand the views of students across the six courses.

2. About sparqs and student engagement

Student engagement is a hugely important principle in Scotland's universities. In fact, it is one of the five pillars of the Quality Enhancement Framework alongside Institution-led Reviews.

To help support and develop student engagement, there is a national agency called **sparqs** – Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland[21] – which is funded to promote the role of students in quality throughout universities and colleges.

sparqs provides training for a variety of student representatives and staff; helps universities, colleges and students' associations develop their student engagement work; conducts research; and organises events.

[20] See http://www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/scotland/development-and-enhancement

[21] < www.sparqs.ac.uk >

A major piece of work in recent years was the creation of *A Student Engagement Framework for Scotland*[22], which all the national agencies in Scotland's university and college sector have agreed to and helped create. It helps everyone understand what student engagement might mean and what we might need to do to make it happen.

The framework has five key elements:

- Students feeling part of a supportive institution.
- Students engaging in their own learning.
- Students working with their institution in shaping the direction of learning.
- Formal mechanisms for quality and governance.
- Influencing the student experience at national level.

…and six key features:

1. Culture of engagement.
2. Students as partners.
3. Responding to diversity.
4. Valuing the student contribution.
5. Focus on enhancement and change.
6. Appropriate resources and support.

What evidence do you see for each of these elements and features of student engagement at Gray's School of Art?

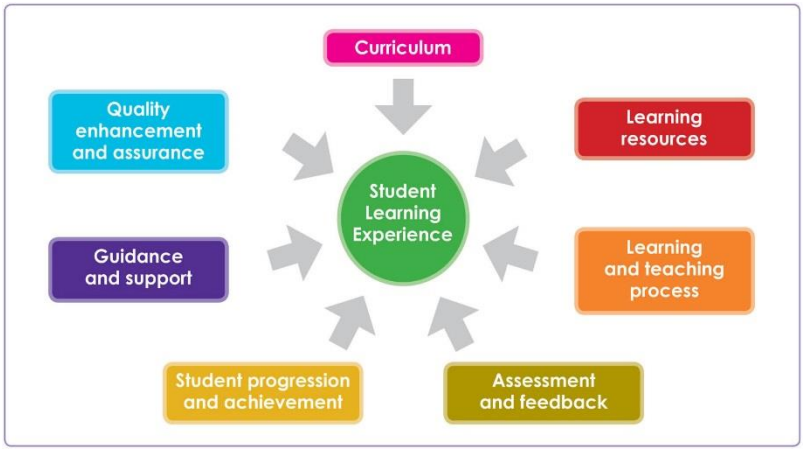
3. Tools of engaging students

When seeking students' views on their learning experiences, you need to have many different tools at your disposal. Students engage in different ways depending on their personalities, time commitments and interests, so you need to be flexible to accommodate this.

Student Learning Experience

This is a key part of sparqs' course rep training, but can be used by any student or staff member to get the views of students.

The idea is that rather than asking broad questions of students, you ask targeted, specific questions to ensure student input across the whole learning experience.



It can be used in virtually any setting, such as informal discussions, surveys or focus groups.

See http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=205

[22] *A Student Engagement Framework for Scotland* (sparqs, Education Scotland, HEA Scotland, NUS Scotland, QAA Scotland, Scotland's Colleges, SFC, Universities Scotland, December 2012) http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/upfiles/SEFScotland.pdf

A short survey

An alternative to asking lots of different questions of students is to ask three simple questions instead, which allows respondents to talk about what's important to them:

1. What do you like about your course?
2. How would you improve it?
3. What have you learned from it?

The strength of these questions is that they focus a lot on the positives rather than just the negatives, and seek solutions rather than just complaints. Again this can be used flexibly – for instance as open questions in an online survey, or in a focus group.

See http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=207

Online groups

It is easy to set up private (or indeed open) online groups for students on your course to discuss and share their views of their learning experience. You can do this on CampusMoodle, Facebook, or any other social media site.

Focus groups

If you can get a group of willing participants to give up to an hour of their time, you can get a lot of useful, detailed information from them. You can ask specific questions, or perhaps broader ones drawn from the Student Learning Experience. Whilst you can prompt participants for their views or attempt to clarify what they're saying, you mustn't ask leading questions or put words into their mouth to fit your expectations.

Chats in class

Sometimes just chatting, in an informal and unregulated way, is the best environment to generate honest feedback. You may already hear a lot from your fellow students without even trying! Lecturers will often be very happy to leave the room and give five or ten minutes at the end of a class for such a discussion, or you could do so anywhere such as in the common room or cafeteria between classes.

Getting creative!

Why not use your creativity and artistic skills to generate feedback from course mates? You could try to create…

- A graffiti wall, giving space to students to express their views about their learning experience using words, cartoons, imagery or indeed any other form of visual expression.
- A "wish tree" or similar 3D structure on which students can hang hopes, likes, dislikes, proposed changes on small pieces of paper.
- A graphic representation of the results you get – as the famous book says, "information is beautiful", so why can't student feedback also be?

4. Some themes to explore

Obviously you and the students on your course will have your own views on what the priorities are for the learning experience, and what you think the review panel should most importantly hear from you.

But the staff in the school also have thoughts about the questions you could explore:

1. The learning experience and studio culture on your course, including for instance:
    a. What do you think about the delivery of your learning experience?
    b. Assessment and the feedback staff give you on your work.
    c. How you develop partnership with the staff, and how your views are listened to by staff and student representatives.
2. Employability and graduate attributes – what knowledge and skills are you taking into the world after your studies?
3. Personal & Professional Development – how is the school helping you grow and develop as a creative practitioner?

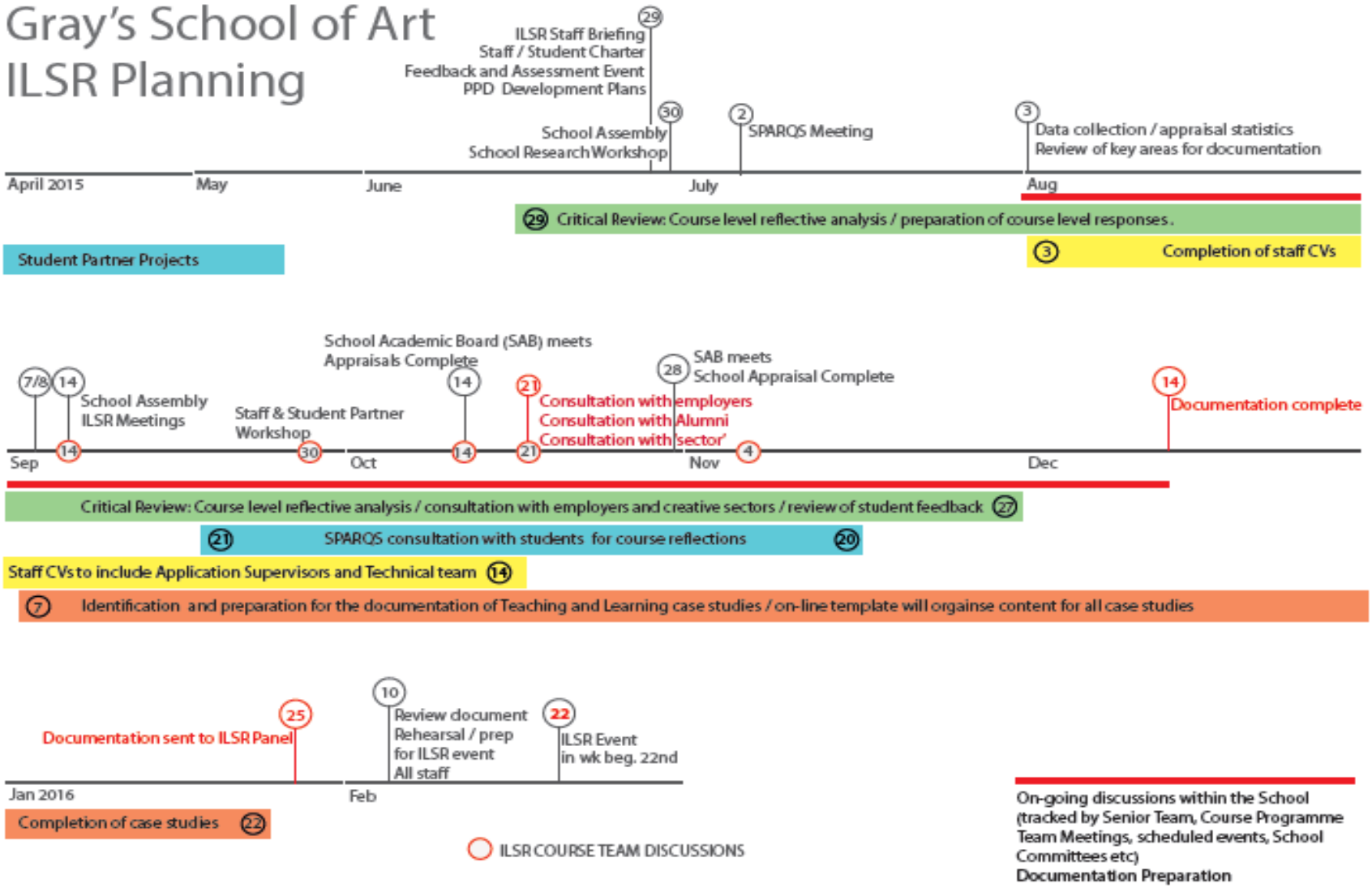
5. Gathering your views

You as Student Partners will need to work together as a team to collect, analyse and present the views of students for the review. However, you will have as much support as you need from the school and from sparqs.

You should, in the coming weeks, be able to identify the main trends in what students are saying about:

1. The great things about learning at Gray's School of Art.
2. The things students have gained personally, professionally, creatively and educationally.
3. The things students have seen improve during your time at the school.
4. The partnership between staff and students.
5. The things students would still like to see change or improve.

Review timeline from Gray's School of Art **Appendix 2**



Appendix 3

Template for briefing students who will meet an internal review panel

What is the review about?

All universities in Scotland need to review each of their subject areas at least every six years. This is usually done by department or school, with the university running perhaps one or two reviews per year. This year, it is our subject area's turn!

The whole focus of these reviews is the learning experience. So it's a great chance to look at students' views of their courses and what they think the strengths and potential areas of development might be.

How does the review work?

The review team is made up of staff from other parts of the university, subject specialists from other universities, a student from elsewhere in the university, and a university administrator to support them. So there are lots of different areas of expertise.

The first thing they do is read lots of evidence prepared by the department – including a Reflective Analysis that describes what the department feels are the main areas of activity, strength and development.

Then the review team spend two or three days meeting a range of staff and students from the department to find out their views. They also meet with representatives of industry and recent graduates to find out how the courses in the department prepare students for the world of work.

After that, the panel writes a report highlighting what they think are the strengths and potential improvements within the department's learning and teaching. The department receives this report and then decides how to respond to what it says.

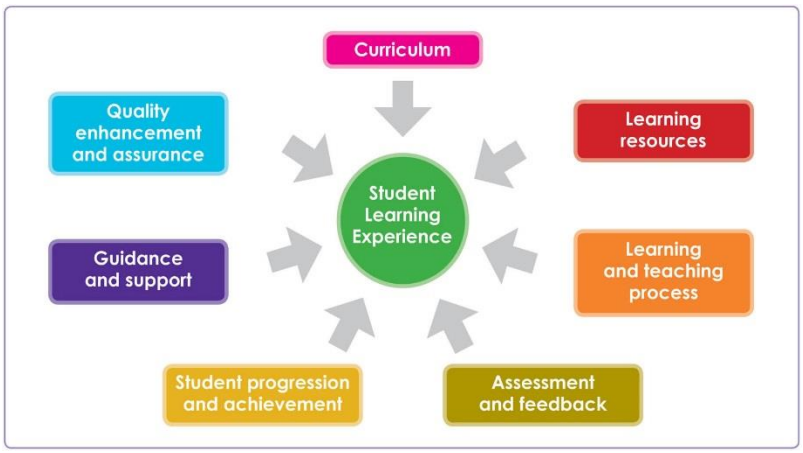
How will I be involved?

The views of students are hugely important to the review. The review team want to meet lots of different students from across the department – different backgrounds, different subjects, different levels – to ask a range of questions about the learning experience.

What questions might I be asked?

You need to think about your entire learning experience – what you like about it and what you would improve.

sparqs (student partnerships in quality Scotland) has produced a tool called the Student Learning Experience diagram which highlights different aspects you could think about[23].



[23] < http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=205 >

Some questions you might be asked by the panel under each heading are:

- **Curriculum** – Is the course put together coherently? Do the learning objectives match the content? Are modules taught in a helpful order?
- **Learning resources** – Do you have the right materials to help you learn? This could include lab space, computer software, library books or any other tools you use.
- **Learning and teaching process** – What is it like learning on a day-to-day basis? Are there different styles of teaching, and is it easy to get into meaningful discussions about what you are learning?
- **Assessment and feedback** – What do you think about the format and timing of assessments? Are you able to learn and develop as a result of the feedback you get?
- **Student progression and achievement** – How easy is it to progress through the levels of your course? What employment or further study opportunities does it lead to?
- **Guidance and support** – What kind of help is available to you both in terms of academic issues (for instance, support on essay writing or how to use the library) or other things that might impact on your studies (such as personal or financial advice)?
- **Quality enhancement and assurance** – How do students' views improve the course? Do the results of student surveys or informal chats with staff lead to improvements? Do your course reps help identify strengths and weaknesses in your course?

How should I answer the questions?

In considering the questions above, think about ABCD…

Be **accurate** – Give specific examples that back up your opinions and arguments.

Be **balanced** – Talk about both the positives and the negatives of your experiences.

Be **constructive** – Don't just mention the problems: say how things could or should be better.

Be **depersonalised** – This is not a chance to slag off individual staff members! Talk instead about the impact on your and others' learning.

Finally, only you understand what your learning feels like to you, so explain things in terms of your own experience and be honest!

The review panel will genuinely listen to everything you say. It's their job to get a good sense of the strengths or potential improvements in the department, and your ideas will be crucial in helping them do that!

Appendix 4

University of St Andrews
University-led Review of Learning and Teaching
School/Department
Date of Review

Guidance for School President

A programme of University reviews is one of the main ways the University checks and improves the quality of learning and teaching. Schools are subject to University review on a 5-year cycle and School/Department is included in the programme for this academic year.

The review is carried out by the relevant Dean, two external subject specialists (from the same subject area in another Higher Education institution in the UK), an internal member of academic staff from a related discipline, the Director of Representation (DoRep) from the Students' Association, a Postgraduate (PG) Representative, the Director of CAPOD and Quality Monitoring or CAPOD's Academic Monitoring and Development Adviser.

Role of School President in advance of the review

a) Write and submit a student view

The School/Department prepares a Reflective Analysis and other supporting documentation in advance of the review and sends it to the review team. Your Director of Teaching (DoT) should ask you to comment on the Reflective Analysis prior to submission to the review team. As a School President, you will be responsible for writing a **short document summarising the student view of the School/Department** This is your opportunity to bring the attention of the review team to areas that are working well and areas that may require further development. It should be emailed directly to CAPOD (further details below) and will form part of the advance documentation issued to the review team.

Before you write the student view, you should **gather opinion from a wide range of students** in your School/Department (make sure to target not only undergraduate students, but also those studying at taught and research postgraduate level). You should consult with your Class Representatives, and perhaps complement this feedback with a survey or focus groups.

If you have any questions, or are unsure about what to include in the student view, please do not hesitate to get in touch with [reviews contact in quality office].

Action: Send the student view to [reviews contact in quality office] by <insert date>

b) Identify students for meetings with the review team

On the day of the review, the team will meet with students from the School/Department, and hold separate meetings with members of staff. Together with your DoT, **you will be responsible for identifying various students to meet the review team** (they should be representative of the cohort not just your friends group or your Class Rep team). As a School President, you will also

be expected to take part in one of the meetings with students. For further details on the typical format for the day, please see the sample programme.

Action: Together with your DoT, identify a representative group of students and insert their names, year, and programme of study into the review programme.

Role of School President on the day of the review

The meetings with students will be an opportunity for the review team to follow up on anything you mentioned in the student view and ask about the student experience of studying XXXX at St Andrews. Students attending the meetings will receive a student note, which summarises the purpose of the meetings, and the types of questions that might be asked.

The review team may ask the students about:

- Their introduction to the School/Department.
- Their learning experience.
- Assessment and feedback on their work.
- Opportunities for them to provide feedback and how it is responded to.
- The availability and quality of learning resources and study space.
- Support services, e.g. Library and Careers.

Students will also be able to raise and discuss other issues. Essentially the reviewers wish to explore commendable aspects of the degree programmes and student experience, so that good practice can be reinforced and disseminated to other Schools as appropriate. Students should also tell the team about any difficulties or shortcomings they have encountered, as one of the aims of this review is to help the School to improve the quality of provision and the student experience.

Notes will be made on all discussions held during the review but no comments will be attributed to any individuals, and no members of staff from the School are present during the student meetings, so please feel free to speak frankly and encourage your peers to do the same.

Role of School President after the review

The review team will write an evaluative report, which will incorporate a summary of the principal strengths and weaknesses of the provision, as judged by the review team, together with its commendations and recommendations for possible action. The report will normally be provided to the School under review within 25 working days of the review in final draft form to allow correction of any factual errors.

On receipt of the evaluative report, the School is required to submit a response, outlining intended actions (and timescales) as a consequence of the review team's recommendations. The Director of CAPOD and Quality Monitoring will follow up on progress on actions and report back to the Academic Monitoring Group within a suitable timeframe agreed with the School.

The School should make a copy of the evaluative report available to you, and you should have an opportunity to feed into discussion in relation to the School's response and action plan, e.g. via the school's Learning and Teaching Committee.

Further information

Further information on the process is available via www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/teaching/monitoring/irlt/ If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact [reviews contact in quality office].

[Name]
Director of quality

[Name]
Students' association education officer

[date]

Student view
University-led Review of Learning and Teaching
School of X

When gathering feedback from **undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate students**, you may wish to ask for their opinion on aspects such as the curriculum, assessment and feedback, learning and teaching provision, study abroad and work placements (if applicable), progression (for example the transition from junior honours to senior honours), and learning resources. Once you have collated this information, please complete this form and send it to [reviews contact in quality office].

1. How was the student view gathered?

2. What is working well in the School?

3. Did the students identify any areas for improvement? If so, please provide details.

4. General comments

Acknowledgements

sparqs is enormously grateful to a large number of individuals who contributed to this guide, not least those in The Robert Gordon University's Gray's School of Art and IT Services who generously involved sparqs in their preparatory activities, shared their perspectives, and worked with sparqs to develop and trial a variety of approaches to student engagement in the reviews.

Institution-led Subject Review of Gray's School of Art

Prof Chris O'Neil, Head of School
Libby Curtis, Associate Head of School
Lenny Smith, Head of Design
Dr Allan Watson, Head of Fine Art
Daniel Sutherland, Course Leader, Three Dimensional Design
Keith Grant, Course Leader, Painting
Josie Steed, Course Leader, Fashion and Textiles
Michael Agnew, Course Leader, Contemporary Art Practice
Cameron Craddock, Course Leader, Communication Design
Mick Eason, Course Leader, Commercial Photography
Iain Morrison, Learning Enhancement Co-ordinator
Annette Murray, Learning Enhancement Co-ordinator

Tamsin Russell, Student Partner, Fashion and Textiles
Gabby O'Driscoll, Student Partner, Fashion and Textiles
Jean Oberlander, Student Partner, Fashion and Textiles
Egle Mazeikaite, Student Partner, Fashion and Textiles
Forest Napier, Student Partner, Fashion and Textiles
Ellie Turner, Student Partner, Fashion and Textiles

Eilidh Earl-Mitchell, Student Partner, Three Dimensional Design
Jordan McGinlay, Student Partner, Three Dimensional Design
Tyguepaulo Gacita, Student Partner, Three Dimensional Design
Natasha Duda, Student Partner, Three Dimensional Design
Beatrice Charnley, Student Partner, Three Dimensional Design
Scott Crawford, Student Partner, Three Dimensional Design

Kathryn Johnstone, Student Partner, Painting
Simona Stojanovska, Student Partner, Painting
Hugh Morton, Student Partner, Painting
Toni Harrower, Student Partner, Painting
Jessica Barrie, Student Partner, Painting

Nicholas Rodger, Student Partner, Communication Design
Stewart McEwan, Student Partner, Communication Design
Jack Gibson, Student Partner, Communication Design
Steven Affleck, Student Partner, Communication Design
Beverley Dobbie, Student Partner, Communication Design

Ashleigh Falconer, Student Partner, Commercial Photography
Rowena Winram, Student Partner, Commercial Photography

David Brown, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice
Anna Gray, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice
Kaitlin Dunsmore, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice
Andrew Matheson, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice
Sam Holland, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice
Sean Wheelan, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice
Paula Buskevica, Student Partner, Contemporary Art Practice

Student-Facing Review of IT Resources

Andrew McCreath, Executive Director, IT and Communication
Richard Lynch, Head of IT Operations and Support
Kim Walsh, Campus IT Service Lead
Michelle Anderson, Director of Library Services
Lukas Podhrasky, Project Support Intern, DELTA
Paul Greene, President (Communications and Democracy), RGU:Union (2014-15)
Stefan Gheorghe, President (Education and Welfare), RGU:Union (2014-15)

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Edward Pollock, President (Communications and Democracy), RGU:Union (2015-16)
Kirsty Campbell, Projects & Quality Co-ordinator, DELTA
James Dunphy, Head of DELTA
Hilary Douglas, Academic Registrar and Secretary to the Board
Clare Parks, Quality Officer, Faculty of Design and Technology

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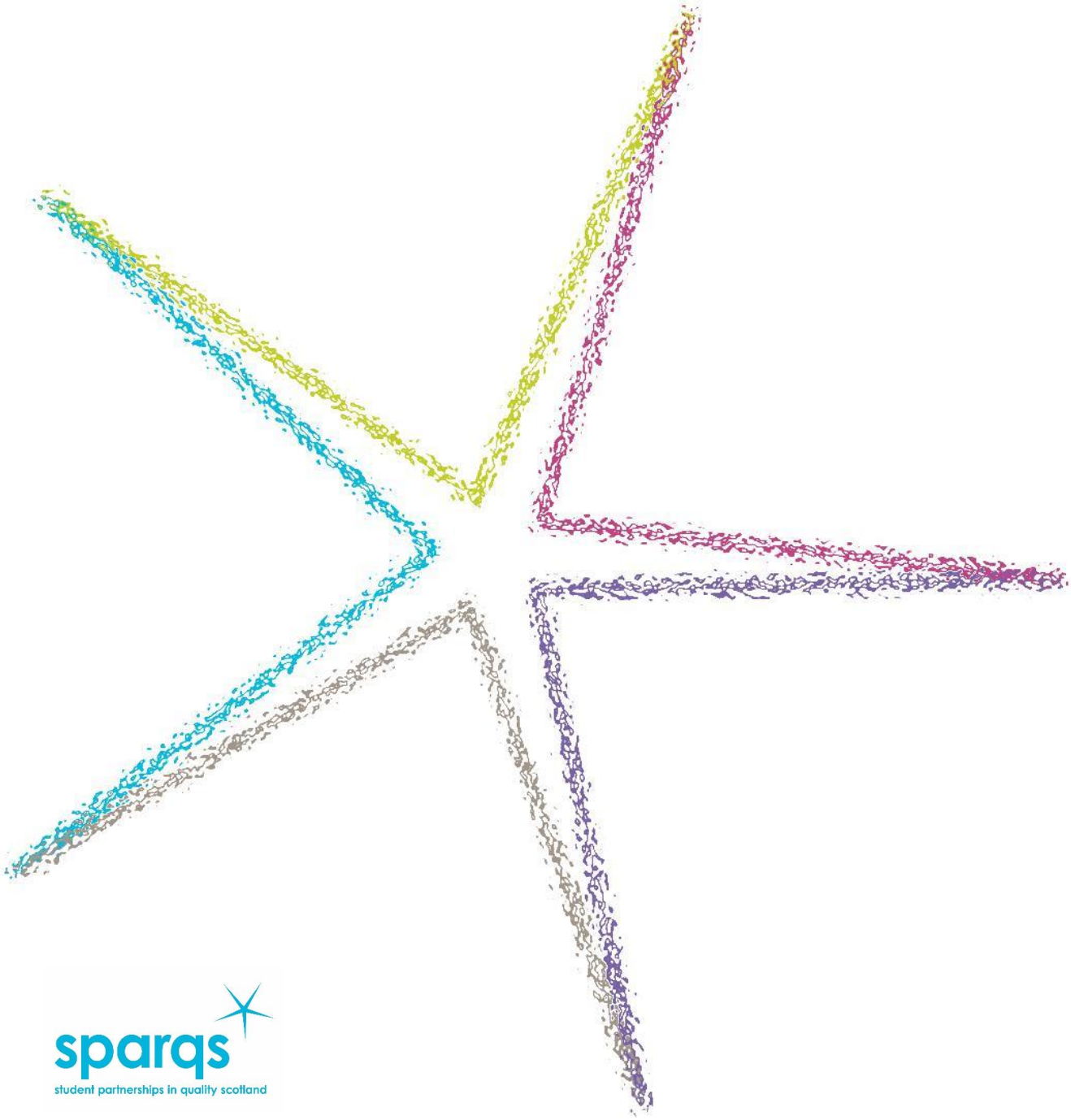
Carol Morris, Director of CAPOD and Quality Monitoring, University of St Andrews
Louise MacDonald, Student Development Officer, University of the Highlands and Islands
Su Engstrand, Subject Network Leader for Sustainable, Environment and Rural Resource Management, University of the Highlands and Islands
Fiona Skinner, Subject Network Leader for Applied Life Studies, University of the Highlands and Islands
Anne Marie O'Mullane, Academic Policy Officer, The University of Edinburgh



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