

# Student Engagement Staff Network

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**Welcome!**



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Your sparqs team today...



**Megan Brown**, Senior Development Consultant

**Gloria Laurini**, Development Consultant

**Justin Walker**, Development Consultant



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# Ok zoomers

- You can use your audio or the chat box to speak.
- Mute your microphone when not talking.
- To speak, type \* in the chat window or click the “raise hand” icon.
- If you are having any tech issues, post a comment in the chat.
- **Please change your display name to your own name and institution.**



# Agenda



- 10.00am **Welcome and headlines**
- 10.15am **Engagement with the Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model**
- 11.15am **Break**
- 11.30am **Institutional visits and emerging themes**
- 12.15pm **Conclusion and informal chat**
- 12.30 **Close**



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# Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP) update



- 2024/25 is the first year of STEP. This year is known as the 'discovery phase'. During this year, staff and students will come together as the STEP Network for a series of Discovery Days to establish collaborative partnerships and design projects that will form the core of the programme.
- The STEP Network is made up of a staff and student rep from every institution. Often, the student rep is a sabbatical officer (but not always).
- The purpose of the first Discovery Day on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec is to introduce STEP and the topic, which is *Supporting Diverse Learner Journeys*.
- 4 Discovery days for STEP institutional student rep diaries so far:

|                                     |                                     |                                   |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>4<sup>th</sup> December 2024</b> | <b>29<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b> | <b>26<sup>th</sup> March 2025</b> | <b>28<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|



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# Social media presence



Exploring Student's Associations most used social media platforms and online presence. Using annotate, please put a star in each box where you have an official SA account.

|                           |                  |                  |                |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Facebook/Messenger</b> | <b>X</b>         | <b>Instagram</b> | <b>TikTok</b>  |
| <b>Discord</b>            | <b>LinkedIn</b>  | <b>Snapchat</b>  | <b>YouTube</b> |
| <b>WhatsApp</b>           | <b>Pinterest</b> | <b>Bluesky</b>   | <b>Reddit</b>  |



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# Engagement with the Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model

Sarah Kirkpatrick, Scottish Funding Council



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Student engagement in the new Outcomes  
Framework and Assurance Model (OF & AM)  
sparqs staff network 28th  
November 2024



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba



# Today's agenda

- SFC - who we are
- What are we changing and why?
- Introducing the new Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model
- Student Engagement: where does it currently fit within the model?
- How do we strengthen Student Engagement within the model – **breakout discussion**
- Next steps

## SFC – who we are

- We are the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Scotland's tertiary education and research authority.
- We fund 24 colleges and 19 universities across Scotland. As a non-departmental public body (NDPB) established by the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005, we are directly accountable to Scottish Government Ministers and the Scottish Parliament.
- We work across many government portfolios and are sponsored by the Lifelong Learning and Skills (LLS) Directorate.
- We allocate around £2bn of public money each year and pay for around 260,000 student places each year.





*"(Outcome agreements) have become a labour-intensive process, rarely meeting the aim of setting out succinctly what an institution is delivering for its public sector investment and diverting precious resource from focusing on improved delivery."*  
- Cumberford-Little Report

## What are we changing and why?

### Jun 2021: SFC Review of Coherent Provision:

- OAs are based on planned activity; there's not enough focus on outcomes and impact
- Need better articulation on what SFC wants institutions to achieve.
- Drafting OA documents has become labour intensive
- There is duplication between the OA and other information returned to SFC and other agencies

### 2023: Working with institutions

- Evaluating how we currently get assurance
- Where is duplication?
- How can we make best use of existing material?

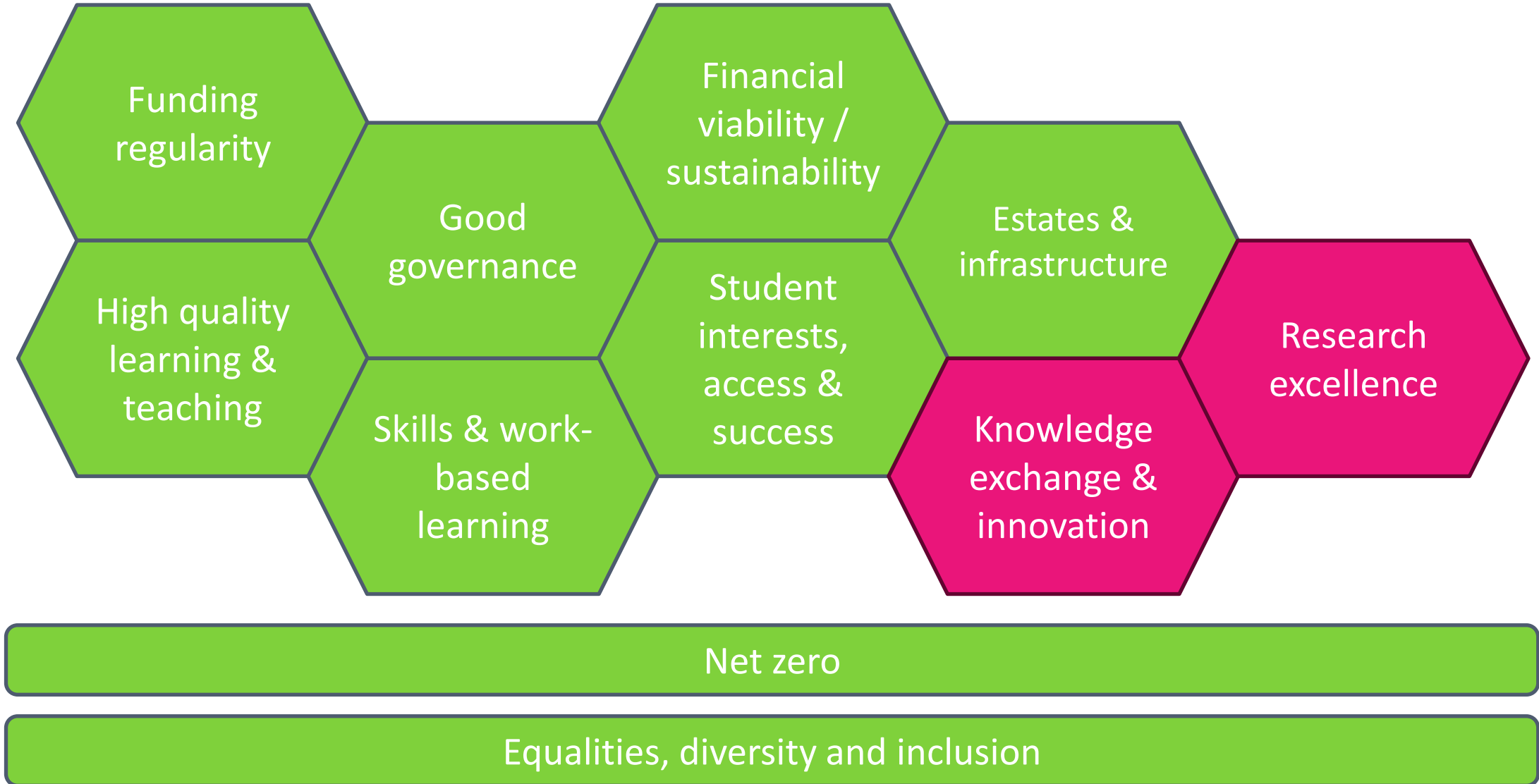
## Introducing the new Outcomes Framework & Assurance Model

- Introduced AY 2024-25
- OF will specify what we want institutions to deliver. AM is the method we use to get assurance they've achieved what we want
- Moves to retrospective model – based on outcomes delivered
- Written document no longer required in advance of AY.
- Monitoring of data and evaluative info (various sources) takes place in year
- Underpinned by quarterly engagements with a dedicated Outcome Manager for each institution
- Retrospective Contextual Commentaries can be submitted



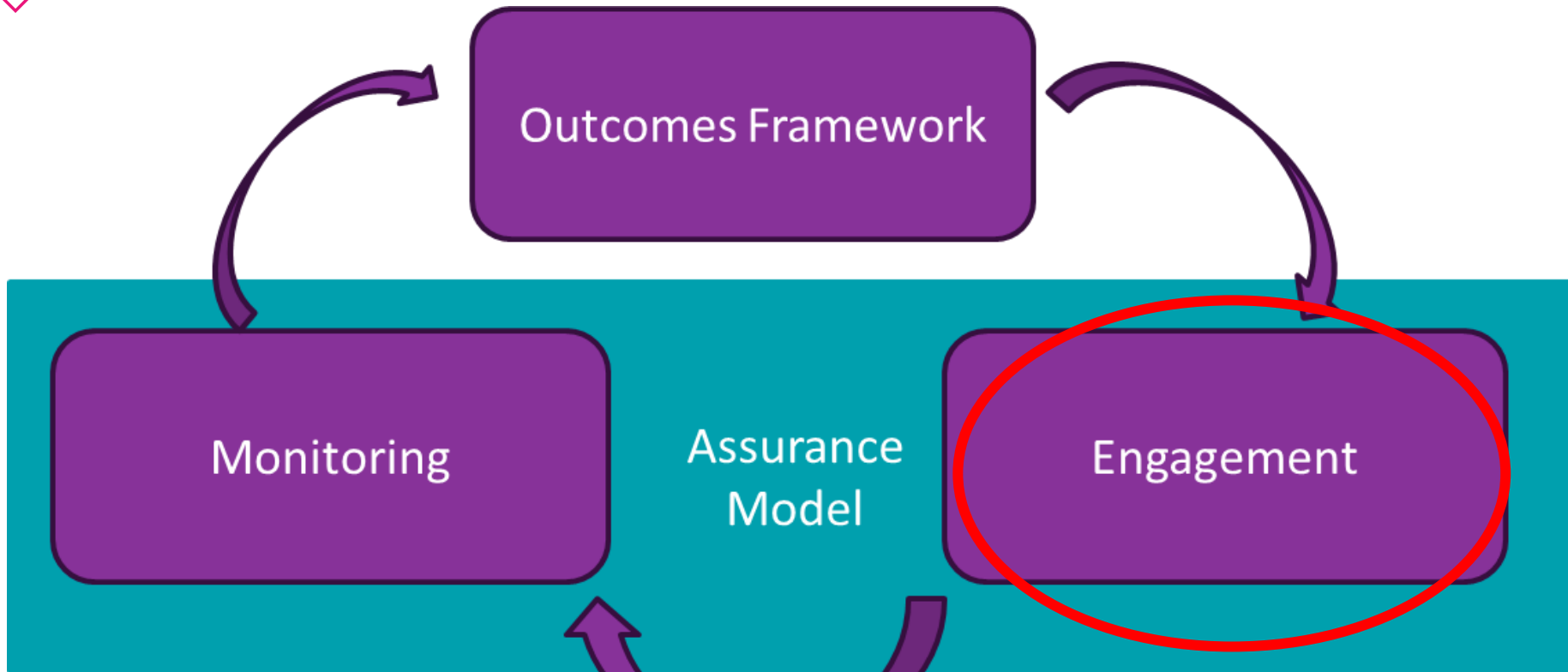


# Outcomes Framework





# Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model



- Proportionate
- Consistent
- Accountable
- Transparent
- Targeted only where needed

- Data and information returns
- Thematic reviews
- Contextual commentary
- Interventions

- **SFC Outcome Managers and institutions**
- Senior leadership of SFC/institutions
- SFC Board engagements with funded bodies
- Representative bodies, including **student groups**
- Relevant officers at SFC and institution

# Previous feedback from students on approaches to engagement

## Methods:

- Need to engage students from the beginning to help shape policy/processes, not at the end to comment on proposals / options.
- Good engagement would be student focus groups on specific issues/student panel/advisory group set up specifically to engage with.
- SA officers e.g. Vice Presidents and Presidents take part in discussions
- Engagement should provide an opportunity to bring employers and students together and to bring staff and students together.
- Incentives could encourage engagement.
- Engagement at all levels: via courses, head of schools, class reps etc.

## Consideration should be given to:

- How discussion spaces are constructed to ensure we encourage equal contribution from all parties involved e.g. use of jargon.
- The need to be aware of students' ability to contribute to the themes and what information could be provided to them beforehand to help them with some of the discussions.
- Need to ensure we engage with non-traditional students.
- Timing of engagements would need to be carefully considered given the exam timetable, movement of students around the holiday period and other student commitments.



- 
- ~~An opportunity to get a high-level read out across the outcomes from the student perspective~~

- Evidence gathering to support longer-term developments and enhancements (working with sparqs, NUS Scotland etc.)
- Build a relationship between SFC and student officers/SA staff, establish a 'touch point' within SFC
- Sharing of good practice and potential links to OF & AM thematic reviews
- Help Outcome Managers develop lines of enquiry for further engagement with the institution
- Develop a better sector-wide understanding of common issues and challenges



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**Purpose  
of  
engagement** – if SFC  
was to meet  
with  
student  
associations  
on an  
annual  
basis



## Challenges from SFC perspective

- Some student reps in place for a relatively short time.
- Student reps are juggling academic requirements with their duties.
- Level of expertise – finding the right person for each outcome.
- Student surveys and feedback – who is motivated to respond?

Why we need sparqs!

## What SFC needs

- Assurance that **individual institutions** have the right systems in place, so that students are properly involved at all levels.
- A student view on how **individual institutions** are performing **over 9 outcomes**.
- Sector-level overviews on each outcome?



## Breakout Discussion – key questions to consider

1. **Baseline** - how are students already engaged in decision making around the nine outcomes?
2. **Agenda setting** – in meetings with SFC, what would be best to discuss? What would make the interaction useful for all parties?
3. **Timing** – when should any meeting take place?
4. **Who** – who should be involved...officers, staff, other student reps?
5. **Support** – what support is required to enable productive conversations; data, briefings, background information?
6. **Performance** - how best do SFC understand the performance of an institution from the student perspective?



## Useful links

Main page:

<https://www.sfc.ac.uk/assurance-accountability/outcomes-framework-and-assurance-model/>

Announcement:

<https://www.sfc.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Outcomes-Framework-and-Assurance-Model.pdf>

Blog: <https://www.sfc.ac.uk/setting-a-clear-direction/>

FAQs: <https://www.sfc.ac.uk/assurance-accountability/outcomes-framework-and-assurance-model/outcomes-framework-and-assurance-model-faqs/>



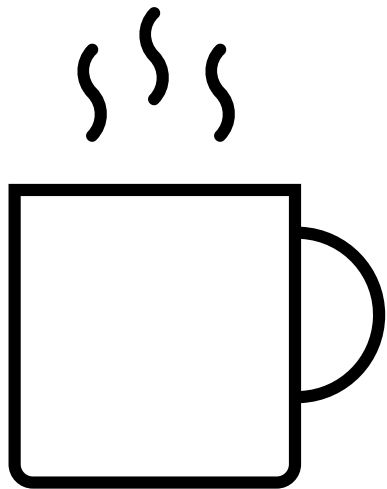
- Sarah Kirkpatrick, [skirkpatrick@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:skirkpatrick@sfc.ac.uk)

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Apex 2 • 97 Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh • EH12 5HD  
T 0131 313 6500 • [www.sfc.ac.uk](http://www.sfc.ac.uk)  
🐦 @ScotFundCouncil

## Break

**Please stay connected,  
and be back at 11.25am**



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# Institutional visits and emerging themes

Gloria Laurini, Development Consultant



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# Discussion

- sparqs institutional visits in these months will shape the work and support we will provide in the coming year and beyond
- Open the [GoogleDoc](#) and share your thoughts





# Conclusions and evaluation



## Next SESN

**WHEN:** Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 10am to 1pm

**WHERE:** on Zoom



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## Before you go...

- Complete the [evaluation form](#)
- (select “November 24”).
- Sign up to the [sparqs newsletter](#).
- Sign up to the [sparqsSESN Jiscmail list](#) (and do use the list to chat and share!).



**Thank you and see you next time!**