

That's Quality! Universities 2018

Handbook

#TQ18uni



Welcome to your introductory handbook to That's Quality! Universities 2018.

This handbook should be **read in advance** of your attendance at the event, taking place on Tuesday 17th & Wednesday 18th July 2018 at Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling.

This handbook has multiple purposes; firstly, it has been developed as a tool to allow you to get the most from our training event, by giving you background and context to a lot of the material we will cover at That's Quality! However, its lifespan goes beyond that, and it is hoped that this will also be a source of information that you can refer back to throughout your time in office to help you succeed in your role.

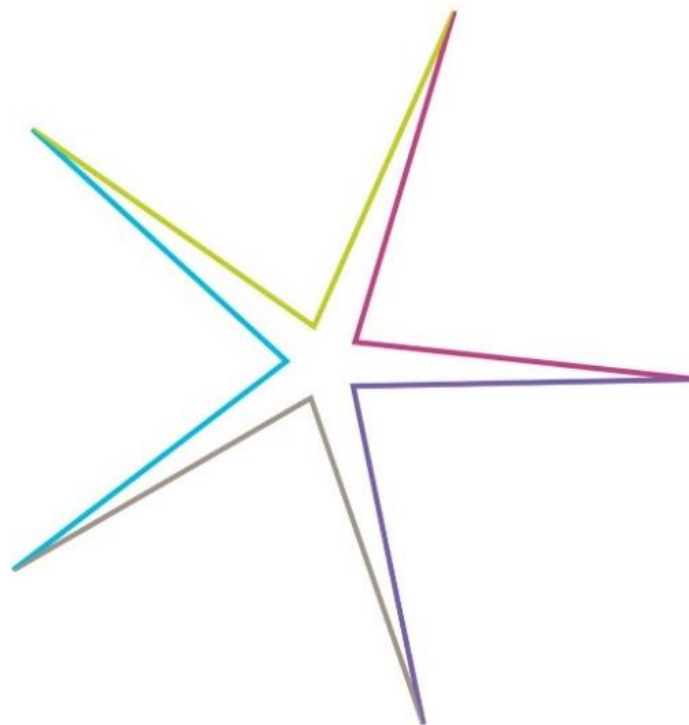
If you have any questions regarding this handbook, prior to your attendance at That's Quality! please get in touch with either of our staff members below:

Steph Kirkham

Development Consultant
steph.kirkham@sparqs.ac.uk
07880 192722

Stef Black

Development Consultant
stef.black@sparqs.ac.uk
07977 980867





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1. Understanding the Landscape

1.1 Sector Agencies

In your role, you will encounter a number of different sector agencies, all of whom have a remit, or aspects of their work, relating to quality assurance and enhancement. Your interaction with these agencies will vary; you may have regular contact with some, and more limited contact with others, but it is useful for you to know who they are and what they do.

We asked four of the main agencies three questions (and also completed them for sparqs) to help you get to know us all better:

1. Who they are and their overall role and remit.
2. Their role in quality and why it is important.
3. The role of students within their work.

student partnerships in quality Scotland

Who we are

student partnerships in quality Scotland (sparqs) is a publicly-funded agency for Scotland's university and college sectors which aims to support student engagement in the quality of the learning experience. We are funded by the Scottish Funding Council to advance education by promoting an environment where students are able to make a positive and rewarding difference to their own and others' educational experience. We support students to shape the nature of their learning and contribute to the overall success of learning provision, regardless of wherever and however they learn.

Our role in quality

Quality is at the heart of everything we do; our mission states that we want to "*ensure that students are able to engage as partners at all levels of quality assurance and enhancement activities.*" As such, our work focuses on empowering and supporting students to be partners in all aspects of quality. We provide training for student officers and students' association staff to help enable this, as well as a number of resources, including guidance and toolkits to help support them in their roles. We have representation on most sector committees that have a quality remit, including SHEEC, TLG and UQWG (see page 8 for details). We maintain strong working relationships with other sector agencies, e.g. our work with QAA Scotland supports their work with the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF), particularly around Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR), Institution-led Review (ILR) and the Enhancement Themes.

The role of students

Students play a key role in the work of sparqs; we have student members on our University Advisory Group and College Advisory Group, as well as our Members Steering Group, which guides the direction of sparqs and our work. Our work is developed with students in mind, to help support them in their role and to enable them to be partners in their own education. We work closely with other sector agencies to facilitate student engagement with the QEF and sector committees. We also support students and institutional staff from universities and colleges across Scotland and internationally to develop stronger partnership working within their own institutions.



Quality Assurance Agency Scotland

Who we are

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Scotland is a UK-wide body with responsibility for safeguarding standards and improving the quality of UK higher education, wherever it is delivered around the world. QAA Scotland is Scotland's quality body for higher education. It is an independent guardian of quality and standards with drive for change and development, with a responsibility to safeguard the public interest, the interests of students and of other external stakeholders. We support the work of our partners through peer review, quality enhancement and the student learning experience. Our responsibilities include managing the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF), which includes ELIR and the Enhancement Themes.

Our role in quality

QAA Scotland build and maintain strong and effective relationships with universities and other higher education providers, funding bodies and students' organisations. We share universities' aspirations to provide excellent learning opportunities for all students and create innovative and tested ways to allow institutions to learn from each other.

QAA support Scotland's enhancement culture and oversee the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) and the Teaching Quality Forum (TQF). QAA are responsible for managing the Enhancement Themes, a multi-year programme of work that enables the sector to explore a specific area in depth. We deliver the external quality review of institutions through Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR). This is the process used in Scotland to maintain academic standards and enhance the quality of the student learning experience. We do this on behalf of the university sector and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). We also manage the Focus On projects and each year determine a topic in collaboration with SHEEC. The projects aim to support the enhancement of policy and practice in the sector. We also provide a link between the outcomes of ELIR and the enhancement of practice.

The role of students

Engaging with students is integral to the work of QAA. Every ELIR team includes a full student member, trained and supported in their role by QAA. We also include student representatives on all QAA working groups and committees, and work closely with institutions and associations to ensure active and engaged student involvement in their work. QAA also work closely with National Union of Students (NUS) Scotland and student partnerships in quality Scotland (sparqs).

Scottish Funding Council

Who we are

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is a public body which invests around £1.8 billion of public money each year on behalf of the Scottish Government. SFC's funding enables Scotland's colleges and universities to provide education opportunities for over half a million people, and to invest in research and innovation. SFC has a range of statutory functions, which include a specific statutory responsibility for quality assurance in colleges and universities.

Our role in quality

SFC has a statutory responsibility for quality assurance in colleges and universities. This involves ensuring that baseline quality standards are being met in all publicly funded colleges and HE institutions in Scotland. We hold colleges and universities to account for their performance. We report to Scottish Government, students and the public on the performance of institutions overall, including the quality of provision.



SFC contracts QAA Scotland to provide external assurance and support enhancement in the higher education sector; and Education Scotland to provide external assurance and support improvement in the college sector. All institutions in Scotland are above baseline quality standards, as Scotland has an excellent system of further and higher education, and SFC's expectation, therefore, is that colleges and universities will strive to continuously enhance their provision. SFC works in partnership with the sectors and learners to support continuous improvement of the quality of all aspects of the learner experience.

The role of students

A partnership approach with learners is a fundamental expectation of SFC's approach. We work at national level with sparqs and NUS on all aspects of the learner experience, and also provide funding to sparqs. We expect institutions to fully involve their students in all aspects of the learner experience.

National Union of Students Scotland

Who we are

The work of NUS Scotland has been crucial in shaping public life in Scotland. We strive for an education system in colleges and universities that supports students to enjoy their time, succeed in their chosen field and to be partners in their education.

NUS Scotland is the national campaigning organisation for students in Scotland – we represent over 500,000 students at college and university in Scotland. We promote, defend and extend the rights of students, and work to develop and champion strong students' associations. Whether that's through providing a chance for you to network with your peers across Scotland, celebrating best practice through the NUS Scotland Education Awards, or by leading the fight against TEF in Scotland to defend our unique quality arrangements. NUS Scotland is the collective movement that makes change happen.

Our role in quality

NUS Scotland passionately believes that the learner voice and partnership with students drives positive change and innovation in teaching and learning. Along with our member students' associations, we're fighting to defend Scotland from the effects of the marketisation of education that we've seen in England. We reject the increase in metrics and fees that we've seen in other parts of the UK, and continue to advocate to keep the learner voice at the heart of our education system.

To us, a good education system goes beyond just getting student feedback, and instead asks learners to co-design, co-produce and co-evaluate their environment, moving beyond learning and teaching to encompass the whole institution. In a changing education landscape we must create and drive the development of new models of learner voice that deliver quality, underpinned by principles of partnership and collectivism. We want to achieve a culture shift that puts learners at the heart of teaching and learning. The idea that students are experts in their learning, and in their wider lives, underpins all of our work. We believe that students should be supported to positively change their experiences both in the classroom, and outside of it.

Over the last few years we have:

- Campaigned to diversify the curriculum, highlighting the need for an end to reading lists which do not reflect the diverse student body.
- Won an extra £21million per year investment in student bursary support.
- Received funding to develop strong, sustainable, college students' associations.
- Supported students to engage in Gender Action Plans – tackling the gender imbalance in our education system.



The role of students

All of our work is led by students. Every year students from colleges and universities across Scotland gather together to discuss and debate policy and elect their student leaders at a national level. This is a chance for students to shape our work by bringing forward their ideas about the work that should be taken forward nationally, and how we should deliver on those objectives.

Gemma Jones, Deputy President of NUS Scotland, leads our work around learning, teaching and quality assurance arrangements. Through her role, Gemma represents students in Scotland on a number of national committees including the QAA Strategic Advisory Committee, the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee, and the College Quality Arrangements Steering Group.

Universities Scotland

Who we are

Universities Scotland are a membership organisation working for the Principals and Directors of Scotland's 19 higher education institutions. We develop and influence higher education policy, and campaign on issues where our members have a shared interest, with the aim of securing a policy and funding landscape which best supports the continued success of the Scottish higher education sector. We cover almost all aspects of higher education activity in Scotland, from learning and teaching, widening access and employability, to research, innovation, internationalisation, and governance and funding. Higher education is devolved to the Scottish Parliament, with policy and funding decisions affecting higher education taken primarily by the Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament and the SFC. Working closely and constructively with all three organisations is a major focus of our time. We also work closely with Universities UK on matters that are reserved to Westminster (such as immigration policy) or governed by UK bodies (such as the Teaching Excellence Framework) but directly affect universities in Scotland. Founded in 1992, Universities Scotland is an autonomous national council of Universities UK.

Our role in quality

Universities Scotland is a partner in the Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF) and, on behalf of Scottish higher education institutions, we work with the other QEF partners to develop and oversee the arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement in Scotland.

We also work with partners at a UK level to influence developments in UK-wide quality arrangements with a potential impact on the Scottish higher education sector (for example, in recent years, the introduction of the TEF and changes to the Quality Code).

Our role is important in providing a collective voice for Scottish university leaders, within Scotland and beyond. Our policy positions on quality matters are developed through working closely with practitioners in the sector, our Learning and Teaching Committee (of Vice Principals or equivalents with responsibility for learning and teaching issues) and our Main Committee (of Principals and Directors).

The role of students

All of our members are committed to working closely with their students as partners in quality assurance and enhancement, and this commitment is reflected in Universities Scotland's policy positions on quality matters. Universities Scotland also co-operates with NUS Scotland and sparqs to ensure our work is informed by student perspectives.



1.2 Sector Committees

There are a number of committees that you may have the opportunity to get involved with, all which have different responsibilities relating to quality across the sector. As well as the committees detailed below, it is worth keeping an eye out for any short-life working groups that sparqs, NUS Scotland or QAA may run as additional opportunities to get involved.

SHEEC – Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee ensures that higher education in Scotland continues to be considered as being at the forefront of developing and enhancing the student learning experience and student success. Every Scottish institution has a representative on the committee. Committee members are senior colleagues from across the sector who have institutional responsibility for learning and teaching. They have a key role in supporting the embedding of effective enhancement-led approaches to managing quality in their higher education institutions. The committee is supported by the QAA.

Student membership – four student members, including a Theme Student lead, nominated by their institution.

TLG – Theme Leaders' Group is central to delivering the QAA's Enhancement Themes. The group determines, directs, supports and evaluates the work undertaken for each Theme. Every Scottish higher education institution is represented on TLG by a member of staff and a student. The TLG staff member leads their institution's work on the Theme, working with their Institutional Team. Institutional Teams typically comprise a mix of academic staff, professional services staff and students. Representatives from organisations key Quality Enhancement Framework partners also attend TLG meetings.

Student membership – one student member per higher education institution.

TQF – Teaching Quality Forum is a network for university quality staff and provides an opportunity to discuss sector issues and feed back to other meetings/committees making decisions. It is also a chance to update people on sector developments or research. A representative from TQF will feed back Forum views to SHEEC/UQWG on issues being discussed – for example changes to ELIR, etc. The Committee is supported by the QAA.

Student membership – there are no individual student members, but NUS Scotland and sparqs are observers.

UQWG – Universities Quality Working Group brings together representatives from a range of sector organisations (and other committees) to consider the university quality arrangements. UQWG is run by the SFC to monitor the overall quality arrangements for the university sector – most recently to help to oversee the review of the Quality Enhancement Framework.

Student membership – one student representative.

Student Strategic Advisory Committee provides an opportunity for informed discussions between students and the QAA around developments in the higher education sector, and as an opportunity for students to share best practice and to have input into the work of QAA. The Committee plays a role in QAA's governance, as a board subcommittee, with an enhanced role in advising the organisation, its leadership and board of directors.

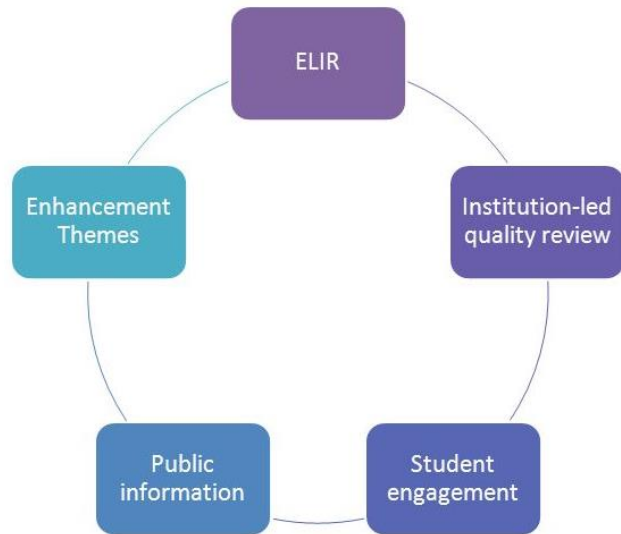
Student membership – six student members and three students' association staff.



1.3 The Quality Enhancement Framework

The Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF) is the enhancement-led approach to quality in Scotland. Collaboration and partnership are at the heart of this innovative method.

The QEF is a set of national arrangements agreed between the SFC, QAA Scotland, NUS Scotland and Universities Scotland. The QEF supports higher education institutions in managing the quality of the student learning experience. It also provides public confidence in academic standards and the quality of the student experience. There are five key elements to the QEF, which are outlined below.



- 1. Student engagement** - Student engagement is not only an individual strand in the QEF, but is an important part of every other strand within the QEF. Student involvement in the other parts is integral to the success of the QEF. All students should have a responsibility and an opportunity to improve learning within their institution. [A Student Engagement Framework for Scotland](#) (available in the Resource Library on the sparqs website) is a document endorsed and owned by all the sector agencies and representative bodies in the university and college sectors. The framework consists of five key elements of student engagement, and six features of effective student engagement.
- 2. Institution-led Review (ILR)** – ILRs are internal reviews which the university conducts itself. Universities have a lot of flexibility around what they do for an Institution-led Review. This could be a review of subjects or disciplines, or reviewing a particular topic that has many dimensions. This could be a review of all the support services; a review of the post-graduate taught experience; or a review of the curriculum. All ILRs should have students on the review panel. If a panel is reviewing a subject or discipline, there will be a student reviewer on the panel. The outcomes of all ILRs should be published and made available to staff and students. For further information on engaging students in ILR, see the [sparqs ILR Practice Guide for Universities and Students' Associations](#) (available in the Resource Library on the sparqs website).
- 3. Public information on quality** – Public information refers to all information that is published and available to the general public about the student experience. An institution is required to display all information it thinks is relevant to provision of its programmes, accommodation, extra-curricular activity, etc. This information must be aimed at its students (current and potential), employers and other stakeholders. Public Information includes internal and external information, for example:
 - The university's own surveys; Institutional-led Review reports; programme feedback.
 - National surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES); Key Information Sets (KIS); Which? University; ELIR Review Reports. (See more information about surveys and data on page 15 of this handbook).



It's also important to note that universities are also subject to **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)** guidance regarding their compliance with competition law. This includes what information is transparent to students and how it is presented. More information about CMA and universities' obligations in this area are detailed on the [Office for Students website](#), or have a look at the guidance from the CMA on [consumer protection law](#).

4. **Enhancement Themes** – They aim to improve the learning experience of students studying within the Scottish higher education sector. The sector achieves this by identifying and agreeing a specific area to work on (known as a Theme). The Themes encourage institutions, staff and students to work together to develop new ideas and models for innovation in learning and teaching and to collaborate on one or more topics to improve strategy, policy and practice. Each Theme also allows the sector to share and learn from current and innovative national and international practice.

The focus or themes of the Enhancement Themes are chosen by SHEEC (The Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee), which is made up of senior academic managers and student representatives. The themes are managed by QAA Scotland on behalf of the sector as a whole.

The current Theme, running from 2017-2020 is titled ***Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience***, and launched in October 2017. The Theme will consider the information that is available within the Scottish sector to help us understand what we do well and what we could improve. We aim to identify any issues that will benefit from intervention, help prioritise interventions for the student experience, and evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions. This will include reporting on the ways in which the student experience is improving. There is also a dedicated student-led project which is related to student feedback for 2018-19.

Previous themes include Student Transitions, Developing and Supporting the Curriculum and Graduates for the 21st Century.

More information on Enhancement Themes can be found on QAA Scotland's [Enhancement Themes website](#).

5. **Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)** – ELIR is an external review process that looks in depth at how students are engaged in shaping quality at each university, and how well students are engaged in ELIR itself. The main focus of the review is to consider the university's approach to improving the student learning experience. ELIR has been QAA Scotland's review method since 2003 and there have been 3 review cycles since then. ELIR is one of the ways in which the SFC fulfils its legal duty to review quality in Scottish higher education institutions.

In 2016, the length of the cycle was extended to 5 years (reviews over 4 years and a year of development) and the ELIR 4 cycle will run from 2017-2022. External review panels are made up of academic, professional service and student reviewers.

Another notable development to ELIR 4 is the greater institutional contextualisation of the review. This means that institutions' ELIR will focus on the areas that matter most to students and the university ensuring the review provides the most benefit possible to the institution.



Student engagement in all stages of the ELIR process is essential to the success of the review and there is a renewed commitment to the value of the role of students in all elements of the process, as 'reviewees' (i.e. in terms of engaging with and informing the review), and as 'reviewers' (i.e. students as members of review teams) in ELIR 4. This means that students should be actively engaged in the institutional self-evaluation, the review visit, the follow-up and in annual discussions with QAA Scotland.

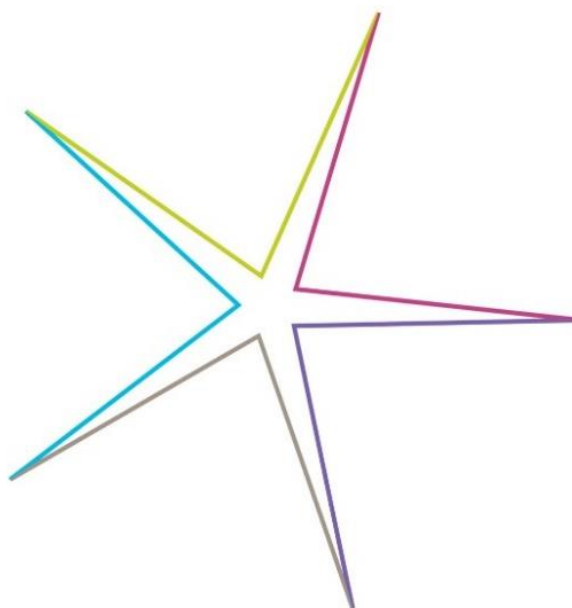
You can find [QAA's Guidance for ELIR 4](#) on their website and sparqs' new [ELIR Cycle 4 Practice Guide](#), launched at That's Quality! Universities 2018, is accessible via the Resource Library on the sparqs website.

Another key area of QAA's work is the **Focus On** project. Every year SHEEC (The Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee) works with QAA Scotland to identify a topic for a national Focus On project. Focus On topics are informed by the themes arising from ELIR and aim to support the enhancement of policy and practice in the sector. At the start of each project, QAA Scotland consults with institutions and students' associations to ensure the project is relevant and useful to staff and students across Scotland. Previous Focus On projects include:

- 2017-18 Feedback from Assessment
- 2016-17 the Postgraduate Research (PGR) Student Experience
- 2016-17 Institution-led Review
- 2015-16 Collaborative Activity
- 2014-15 Assessment and Feedback

Student involvement in Focus On is key to the success of the projects. Student representatives and students' associations have the opportunity to shape the direction of Focus On and each project generally has specific activities relating to student engagement. Student representatives and students' association staff are encouraged to contribute to projects and attend Focus On events.

More information about Focus On and materials produced as a result of the projects are available on QAA Scotland's [Enhancement Themes website](#).

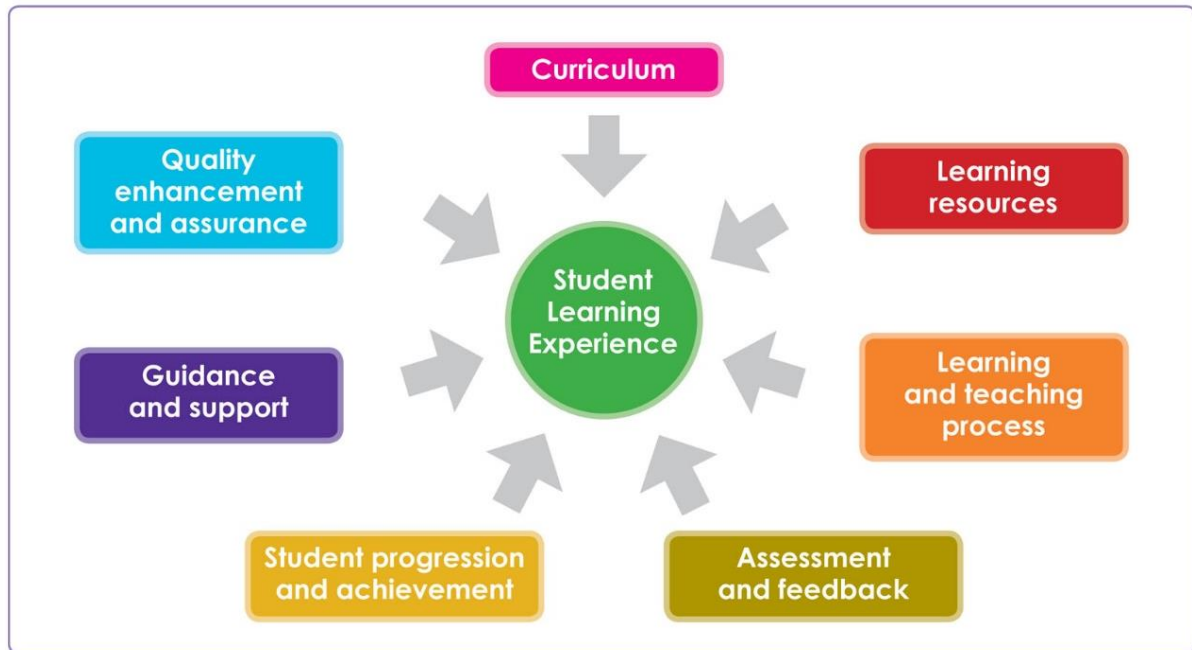




2. Quality in Action

2.1 The Student Learning Experience

The [Student Learning Experience](#) (SLE), developed by sparqs and a key component of Course Rep Training, refers to all elements of a student's experience during their time at their institution. There are seven elements: Curriculum, Learning Resources, Learning and Teaching Process, Assessment and Feedback, Student Progression and Achievement, Guidance and Support, Quality Enhancement and Assurance (*available in the Resource Library on the sparqs website*).



2.2 Outcome Agreements

Outcome Agreements set out what colleges and universities plan to deliver in return for their funding and how the institution meets Scottish Government priorities. They are managed by the SFC, on behalf of the Scottish Government. SFC Outcome Agreement Managers are responsible for working with institutions to negotiate the agreements, and it is expected that students are involved in the process. You can find out who your institutions Outcome Agreement Manager is [on the SFC website](#).

Ministers have asked SFC to intensify the Outcome Agreement process for 2018 onwards to secure greater progress with priority outcomes, and indicated that this should include: the setting of more ambitious and challenging targets; more dynamic allocation of places and funding to drive and incentivise improvement; and enhanced transparency and accountability on institutional performance.

Areas identified for prioritisation and enhanced focus for the 2018-19 round of Outcome Agreements include: widening access; retention and enhanced outcomes for disadvantaged learners; enhanced alignment of skills provision with the needs of the economy; increased participation in STEM subjects; supporting enhanced business innovation; and addressing gender imbalances.



Universities are required to consult with their student association; in line with this, the SFC expect universities to summarise how – from the outset of the process and throughout – their Outcome Agreements have been developed in consultation with students, the university’s students’ association, staff, and with trade union representatives.

The strategic priority areas for the Scottish Government are:

- 1. High-quality learning and teaching**
- 2. World-leading research.**
- 3. Greater innovation in the economy.**
- 4. Widening Access.**

Within those strategic aims, the key priority areas for Outcome Agreements within Universities are:

- Access to education for people from the widest range of backgrounds, including implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access and addressing gender balance among student intakes for some key subjects.
- High-quality learning in a learning system which is seamlessly connected for the learner, including learning which prepares people well for the world of work and successful long term careers, prioritising provision that meets known skills gaps in the economy
- Ensuring provision of quality learning in Scottish higher education institutions, i.e. HE strategic futures, Quality Assurance and HE governance.
- Internationally competitive and impactful research
- Effective knowledge exchange and innovation including excellent collaboration between universities and industry

There are also three specific equality priorities for HEI’s for 2017- 2021:

- Inclusivity and widening access.
- Promoting gender equality for staff.
- Meeting equality and diversity within governance requirements.

SFC also produce guidance for Universities on Outcome Agreements; you can find the latest guidance for 2018-19 to 2020-21 on the [SFC website](#).

2.3 Student Partnership Agreements

Many institutions now have Student Partnership Agreements or equivalent documents in place with their students’ associations. SPAs set out the relationship between the students’ association and the university and identify a number of jointly-agreed priority areas for enhancing the student learning experience. These priority areas will have been decided upon as a result of looking at a range of evidence and will have gone through a process of consultation with students, and so should give a good indication of what matters to the student body.

Further information about Student Partnership Agreements (SPAs) is available in sparqs’ [Guidance on the development and implementation of a Student Partnership Agreement in universities](#) (*accessible in the Resource Library on the sparqs website*).



2.4 Gender Action Plans

In 2016, the SFC published its Gender Action Plan (GAP), setting out ambitious targets for tackling the long-standing problem of gender imbalance within colleges and universities. It stipulates that, by 2030, no individual subject at a Scottish college or university shall have a gender imbalance greater than 75:25, and that the gap between overall male and female participation in undergraduate study shall be reduced to 5%. Meaningful and sustained student participation throughout the GAP process is key to ensuring that colleges and universities are bold and creative in their approaches, and put the needs of their students at the centre of the process. In July 2017, each institution was required to publish a GAP, detailing its plans for meeting the SFC's targets. A review of these institutional GAPs indicated that student engagement in the process had been patchy and inconsistent, and there was significant scope for improvement.

Further information on GAPs, including SFCs initial GAP and subsequent technical report, can be found [on the SFC website](#).

2.5 Teaching Excellence Framework

The aim of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is to monitor and assess teaching quality in universities. Participating institutions are awarded a rating to indicate the level of teaching quality that they provide. For the moment, assessments are made at an institutional level, but there are plans to develop subject-level TEF in the future. The first year of the TEF awards (confusingly called TEF 2) was year 2016-17. It used various metrics as proxies to measure teaching excellence, including NSS (National Student Survey) and DLHE (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education) data. Participating institutions also have to submit a written provider submission that provides contextual information and supports their case. While TEF is not compulsory in Scotland, five Scottish institutions chose to participate in TEF 2 and were awarded in June 2017, and their results can be seen below. No Scottish providers entered into TEF 3 in 2017/18.

For more information on TEF 3 see the [TEF Operational Guidance](#) on the Office for Students website.

Institution	Award
Robert Gordon University	Gold
University of St Andrews	Gold
University of Dundee	Gold
Abertay University	Silver
Heriot-Watt University	Silver

2.6 UK Quality Code

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) defines and sets out the expectations all providers of UK higher education are required to meet. The Quality Code gives all higher education providers a shared starting point for setting, describing and assuring the academic standards of their higher education awards and programmes and the quality of the learning opportunities they provide.

The Expectations and Practices of the revised [UK Quality Code](#) was published on 27th March 2018 after undergoing a significant redevelopment. The full code, including the Advice and Guidance that underpins the Expectations and Practices is scheduled for publication in November 2018.



2.7 National Surveys

	<u>What</u>	<u>Survey window</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
NSS	The National Student Survey is aimed at final year students and asks 27 question relating to 8 aspects of the student experience. <i>NSS is one of the metrics used in TEF.</i>	Early January until 30 th April	NSS is used by universities as a marketing tool for prospective students. It is also used in-house to establish areas for improvements, as well as best practice examples.
PRES	The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey is the only UK higher education sector-wide survey to gain insight from postgraduate research students about their learning and supervision experience.	Early February until mid-May	PRES is used by universities to enhance the research community and environment through providing key information to support strategic decisions and target areas for improvement.
PTES	The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey is the largest sector-wide survey aimed at gaining insight from taught postgraduate students about their learning and teaching experience.	Early February until late June	PTES enables higher education institutions to gather important information about the experience of any taught postgraduate student on a Masters, Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma course and act accordingly.
DLHE	The Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey collects information on what leavers from higher education programmes are doing six months after qualifying from their course. <i>DLHE has undergone a review and from December 2018 the new survey 'Graduate Outcomes' will be used. DLHE is one of the metrics used in TEF.</i>	Students will usually receive an email/ phone call <i>around</i> 6 months post-graduation	DLHE enables institutions to see how many of their students are in 'positive destinations' post-degree, which can be a key marketing tool for universities. It examines the wide range of options available with particular subjects when you leave university and provides an idea of the range of jobs that were available in particular parts of the country for people who had just qualified with a degree.
LEO	Longitudinal Education Outcomes measures how much UK graduates of different courses at different universities are earning now, either one, three or five years since graduating. It does this by linking up tax, benefits, and student loans data. LEO data is historical so cannot be used to predict a graduate's future earnings.	N/A	For a comprehensive guide to LEO: https://wonkhe.com/blogs/a-beginners-guide-to-longitudinal-education-outcomes-leo-data/



3. Tools of the Trade

3.1 Acronym Buster

API	Alternative Provider Institution
CoWA	Commission on Widening Access
CPD	Continued Professional Development
DfE	Department for Education
DLHE	Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education
ELIR	Enhancement-led Institutional Review
GAP	Gender Action Plan
ILR	Institution-led Review
KPI's	Key Performance Indications
LEO	Longitudinal Education Outcomes
NSS	National Student Survey
NUS	National Union of Students
OfS	Office for Students
PRES	Postgraduate Research Experience Survey
PSRB	Professional, statutory or regulatory body
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
QEF	Quality Enhancement Framework
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SAAS	Student Awards Agency for Scotland
SEF	Student Engagement Framework
SFC	Scottish Funding Council
SLE	Student Learning Experience
SMG	Senior Management Group
SPA	Student Partnership Agreement
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
TSEP	The Student Engagement Partnership
UUK	Universities UK
UCU	Universities & Colleges Union

Each Institution will also have their own acronyms, such as SSCC (Student Staff Consultative Committee), but these will vary from institution to institution, so it is best you familiarise yourself with the ones relevant to you.



3.2 Key sparqs contacts

To email a member of staff use the following format: firstname.surname@sparqs.ac.uk

Simon Varwell

Development Consultant

Colleges - all of the UHI colleges and North East Scotland College

Universities - RGU, Aberdeen, The Open University and UHI.

Morven Stewart

Development Consultant

Colleges - Ayrshire, Glasgow Clyde and Glasgow Kelvin.

Universities - GCU, Glasgow School of Art, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Strathclyde.

Lindsay Isaacs

Development Consultant

Colleges - Borders, City of Glasgow, Dundee & Angus, Fife and SRUC.

Universities - Edinburgh Napier, QMU, SRUC and University of Glasgow.

Stef Black

Development Consultant

Colleges - Dumfries & Galloway, New College Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian.

Universities - Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt and UWS.

Steph Kirkham

Development Consultant

Colleges - Edinburgh College, Forth Valley, Newbattle Abbey and West College Scotland

Universities - Abertay, Dundee, St Andrews and Stirling

3.3 Where to find out more

WonkHE (pronounced wonky) – subscribe to their Monday morning briefing email

<http://wonkhe.com/>

Times Higher Education

www.timeshighereducation.com

Guardian Higher Education

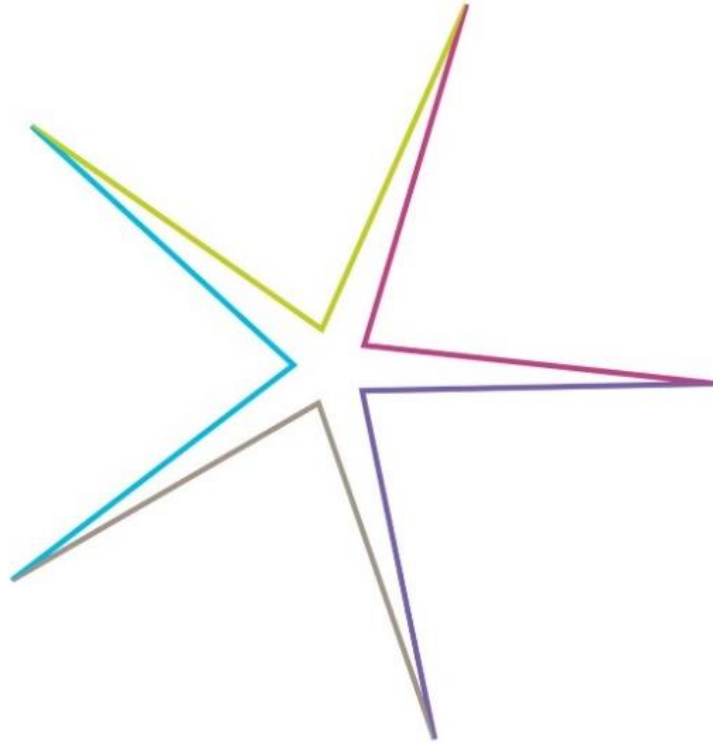
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/higher-education>

University World News

<http://www.universityworldnews.com/>

Higher Education Policy Institute Blog

<http://www.hepi.ac.uk/category/blog/>



sparqs
1 Papermill Wynd
Edinburgh
EH7 4QL
0131 622 6599
www.sparqs.ac.uk

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