



Publication of HEFCE's revised Unsatisfactory Quality Policy and its impact on Higher Education Review

This note is of interest to all providers undergoing Higher Education Review (HER) in 2013-14 and who have access to funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). It should be read in conjunction with paragraphs 112-123 of [Higher Education Review: A handbook for providers](#).

HEFCE published its revised Unsatisfactory Quality Policy (UQP) on 31 October 2013. The revised policy applies **with immediate effect** and changes the way in which both 'requires improvement' and 'does not meet UK expectations' judgements in HER are followed up, as follows.

'Requires improvement' judgements

Paragraph 117 of *Higher Education Review: A handbook for providers* states that providers who are unsuccessful in having a 'requires improvement' judgement changed to 'meets UK expectations' will be required to take part in the next level of follow-up: that for a 'does not meet UK expectations' judgement. HEFCE's revised UQP alters this arrangement such that providers in this position move directly to the HEFCE-led process.

'Does not meet UK expectations' judgements

Paragraph 118 of *Higher Education Review: A handbook for providers* states that a provider in receipt of one or more 'does not meet' judgements will be asked to provide an action plan to QAA detailing planned improvements to deal with the weaknesses or risks identified. HEFCE's revised UQP alters this arrangement such that UQP applies immediately. However, QAA will continue to be the lead stakeholder in the process, and the provider would continue to be asked to provide an action plan to QAA.

Paragraph 121 of *Higher Education Review: A handbook for providers* states that where the QAA Board does not change a judgement of 'does not meet UK expectations' to 'meets UK expectations' after a period of follow-up activity, where applicable HEFCE will invoke its UQP. The revised UQP states that providers in this position will move directly to the HEFCE-led process, which involves regular meetings and engagement with HEFCE and other stakeholders to agree and monitor progress against further actions.

For further information please see www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2013/201330/.