

QAA Approach to Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment and Review Activity

In line with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015) (ESG)*, QAA is committed to have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of our activities.

In undertaking our internal quality assurance, we are committed to:

- being accountable to our stakeholders
- exhibiting high professional standards and integrity at all times
- continually reviewing and improving our activities
- ensuring that all persons involved in our activities are competent and act professionally and ethically
- operating internal and external feedback mechanisms that lead to continuous improvement
- guarding against intolerance or discrimination of any kind
- ensuring appropriate communication with relevant stakeholders
- ensuring that any activities carried out by subcontractors are in line with QAA policy and practice.

Leadership support for internal quality assurance

To ensure that there is consistent implementation of the principles of our internal quality assurance across the agency, QAA has an Assessment and Reviews Group that has representation from across all of its review methods at a senior level and provides strategic oversight of our quality assurance work. QAA also has a Reviewer Management Group. The focus of this Group is to consider the operational delivery of our quality assurance work, particularly our relationship with expert reviewers.

Operational approach to internal quality assurance

All QAA review methods have robust internal quality assurance approaches, bespoke to the particular review model. However, there are key elements/principles that are common among all our methods. These include:

- Method specific training for all reviewers, including student reviewers.
- Oversight of the peer review process by a QAA staff member.
- Moderation of all review reports prior to being sent to the provider.
- All providers subject to review having the opportunity to provide comment on points of accuracy in the draft report.
- All providers have access to QAA's consolidated appeals process should they be unhappy with the findings or conduct of a review activity.
- Review methods operate feedback procedures for providers and staff.
- Judgements are based on clear, published criteria.
- Methodology handbooks are published.
- Rigorous approaches to the selection and appointment of reviewers.

We have method specific working groups that oversee the delivery of our quality assurance work in each business area.

Lessons learned from feedback and internal quality assurance of our assessment and review activity is considered and acted upon at either the review method specific working groups or the QAA Assessment and Reviews Group depending on the nature of the feedback.

Method-specific matters, that may have wider implications, are referred to the Assessment and Reviews Group for consideration and action.