Membership in Northern Ireland 2019-20

Developing and delivering a dedicated and distinctive service in Northern Ireland

Committed to quality
What membership means for you:
Our work in Northern Ireland

As a QAA member in Northern Ireland, we will work with you to develop a range of activities specific to Northern Ireland – working collaboratively with you to support your commitment to enhance and enrich the learning experience of students.

We’ll offer a dedicated programme of work, resources and events, and provide access to other QAA events that meet the needs of providers in Northern Ireland. The model we would draw upon for this is the very successful Focus On approach in Scotland. There, recent projects have focused on Graduate Skills¹ and on Feedback from Assessment.²

Across the UK some of our events and activities will be particularly relevant to you – find out what’s on offer through our Membership calendar.

In order to provide a range of dedicated services, we are looking to extend membership to include the regional colleges and university colleges. Together we can then work on challenges shared across a number of higher education providers, build on common strengths and areas of good practice. QAA has established expertise in designing effective programmes to explore views and progress practice and would like to make full use of this to offer bespoke work in Northern Ireland.

QAA in Northern Ireland will continue to support the active participation of students as partners in our work and in quality enhancement in Northern Ireland, seeking further ways to deepen and strengthen student involvement.

We can provide commissioned quality reviews for individual institutions. External quality assurance by QAA is valued and respected, provides assurance to governing bodies, to your institutional partners, to staff, students, graduates and the wider public. Commissioned reviews are enhancement and peer-led and responsive to the context of each institution as well as the policy context in Northern Ireland.

Looking ahead, we aim to work with you to develop a new enhancement-oriented review method drawing on the experience of enhancement review in smaller sectors; to be developed in conjunction with stakeholders designed specifically for Northern Ireland.

Non-Membership work in Northern Ireland

Importantly, we will continue to work closely with DfENI and will liaise with NI representatives on the range of UK committees and groups. We will also undertake Unsatisfactory Quality and Standards Investigations should DfENI commission us to do so.

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/focus-on/graduate-skills
² www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/focus-on/feedback-from-assessment
What membership means for you:
Our UK-wide and international work

The UK-wide framework for Quality: maintaining a shared responsibility for quality and standards

With our members we’ll develop the quality and standards frameworks fundamental to UK higher education. QAA in Northern Ireland will both facilitate involvement from the sector in Northern Ireland and contribute our own staff expertise to the maintenance and development of UK-wide reference points such as the Quality Code for Higher Education, characteristics and benchmark statements and qualifications frameworks, alongside the supporting advice and guidance.

In the immediate future we will:

- collaborate with members and industry experts to commence the revision of Subject Benchmark Statements and map them to the new Quality Code for Higher Education
- review Quality Code Advice and Guidance, its impact and effectiveness
- develop a new characteristics statement for higher and degree apprenticeships.

And we’ll continue to:

- maintain the tools to deliver the highest academic quality to your students, including the frameworks for higher education qualifications, ensuring continued compatibility and referencing with European qualifications frameworks as part of the Bologna Process
- provide an expert and independent voice on quality and standards
- respond to political imperatives, social and economic trends to identify emerging challenges and help you prepare for future developments
- convene a twice-yearly PSRB Forum, a valuable dialogue with a range of professional regulators and membership bodies on the hottest issues in higher education.

Maintaining and developing international partnerships and engagement

QAA works to advance UK higher education’s international voice in global quality assurance and enhancement. To support UK HE in its work and operation internationally QAA maintains strategic relationships with national agencies in the countries and regions of most importance to UK HE. We engage with international and regional networks in furthering the development of quality assurance and promoting the principles and characteristics enshrined in the UK’s commitment to excellence.

As members you will benefit from:

- QAA’s work shaping the development of pan-European approaches to quality assurance through strong links within the European Higher Education Area
- the development and maintenance of our strategic relationships and partnerships with governments, agencies and networks worldwide; extending understanding of the quality of UK higher education, strengthening cross-border cooperation and mutual recognition
- our country-specific reports on the landscape and regulatory environment in key countries for UK higher education, supporting your international partnerships and TNE work.
Collaborating with you to address sector-wide challenges

Working in partnership with the UK higher education sector, QAA will identify and respond to emerging issues to support you in delivering the highest-quality experience for your students. In this we will ensure that distinctive features of each nation are given relevant prominence.

You will benefit from our work with, and on behalf of, the sector which includes:

- developing clear guidance on degree classifications, degree outcomes statements and other aspects of the Statement of Intent published by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment
- leading the fight against essay mills and helping your front-line staff detect and deter cheating, and maintain academic integrity
- research to provide new insight on subjects chosen by our members, a recent example being our work on how student opinion can be used as an indicator of quality.

QAA is a member of a number of groups, panels and committees, giving the sector a clear, quality-focused voice influencing policy at the strategic level. These include the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment, which provides sector-led oversight of HE quality assessment arrangements across the UK, and the TEF Delivery Group and TEF Project Board, addressing issues with TEF implementation and shaping its future.

Membership across the UK and the member voice

Our membership offer in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland provides continuity in our tailored services for each, together with easy access to the full range of our UK-wide activity. In England membership involves a core package together with further optional packages: Quality Insights and International Insights. Everything available through these membership packages in England is automatically included in Northern Ireland membership. Additionally, the Enhancement Themes website will remain a public resource - for all the many UK and international visitors to its pages.

QAA Membership is driven by its members for its members. As a member your voice can shape our future services through our Membership Advisory Group which comprises senior colleagues representing the wide range of QAA members. As a highly-skilled sounding board, this body will work in partnership with QAA to advise, influence and challenge us to develop and deliver activities and services that maintain the value and currency of the membership programme.

Membership is for your whole organisation

Our resources are extensively accessed by students, academic staff and governors, as well as our more traditional audience of quality professionals and, increasingly, by data/planning and international teams.
Membership resources

Our dedicated membership site enables you to easily access these exclusive membership resources.

- sector guidance documents
- research
- viewpoints on key sector policy matter
- international country reports

**Membership**

**Quality Insights**
- webinar recordings
- case studies
- spotlights on quality-related topics
- Quality Insight updates
- event materials

**International Insights**
- webinar recordings
- case studies
- spotlights on international topics
- International Insight updates
- event materials

**How to access membership resources**
To access the dedicated membership site, please contact us to request a log-in:

- 01452 557000
- membership@qaa.ac.uk
- www.qaa.ac.uk/membership/resources
Further information

To find out more about membership, you can arrange a meeting with your named QAA contact or get in touch with our membership team:

🌐 www.qaa.ac.uk/membership
✉️ membership@qaa.ac.uk
📞 01452 557000