Membership in Scotland 2019-20

Supporting quality enhancement in Scotland

Committed to quality
What membership means for you
Our work in Scotland

As a QAA member in Scotland, we will continue to work with you across the full range of familiar activities specific to Scotland, working collaboratively with you to support your commitment to enhance and enrich the learning experience of students.

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)

We’ll continue to provide external quality assurance that is valued and respected, providing assurance to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) enabling it to meet its statutory duty as well as to governing bodies, to institutional partners, to staff, students, graduates and the wider public. Our approach will remain enhancement-led and responsive to the context of each institution. It will continue to embrace regular engagement through annual discussions as well as the full benefits of periodic review by peers.

We will continue to maintain an expert pool of reviewers specifically selected and trained for ELIR. We’ll work with you and SFC in the ongoing evaluation of the operation of ELIR and on the further development of the method for 2023 onwards.

Scotland’s flagship Enhancement Themes

Working with the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) and the Theme Leaders’ Group, we will continue to plan and manage national Enhancement Themes. 2019-20 will see Evidence for Enhancement come to a close with our International Conference in June 2020 – Beyond Measure? Exploring what counts in higher education. We will launch the incoming Theme at the Conference and will close that Theme with an international conference in 2023 that also celebrates 20 years of Enhancement in Scotland.

The Enhancement Themes website will remain a public resource and continue to demonstrate the special commitment to enhancement in Scotland across the globe. The Themes and their resources will continue to promote how higher education in Scotland reflects and innovates so that it remains at the forefront of excellence.

Focus On: Bringing review and enhancement together

About to enter its sixth year, Focus On has been an outstanding success. The projects draw on topics that emerge as themes across a number of review reports. Once the sector has selected the topic for the year, we’ll scope it with you and then design and deliver a programme of research, events and activities to support you in progressing practice and learning from colleagues across the sector and further afield.
As part of membership, QAA Scotland will continue to support SHEEC, the Theme Leaders Group and the Teaching Quality Forum. Equally, we will continue to support the active participation of students as partners in our work and in quality enhancement in Scotland, seeking further ways to deepen and strengthen student involvement.

We will be active in contributing to Universities Scotland and SFC committees, to the development and implementation of relevant government initiatives and priorities (such as the Learner Journey and Widening Access) as well as participating in working groups where our expertise is of value.

QAA Scotland will continue to undertake thematic and analytical reporting to help the sector gain insight into what Scotland does well and where there are issues and challenges for practice.

These include:

- annual statements of assurance
- annual overview reports for SFC that identify shared challenges and strengths
- building on the evolving suite of thematic reports on the outcomes from ELIR.

Discussed at sector level, these help inform decision-making and action planning where it is needed.

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 Scotland will both facilitate involvement from the sector in Scotland 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.
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.

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.

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
- 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.
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 Scotland membership.

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.

**Membership**
- sector guidance documents
- research
- viewpoints on key sector policy matter
- international country reports
- Focus On projects

**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