



QAA



UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Advice and Guidance

Course Design and Development

Quality Code Update

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Standards and Frameworks Team
PSRB Forum, 28 November 2018

Quality in a diverse UK

QAA: UK's independent quality assurance body

Different approaches in different UK nations

- **England:** risk-based approach (regulated by OfS)
- **Scotland:** enhancement-led approach via ELIR (reviews on a five year cycle)
- **Wales** new Quality Enhancement review (reviews at least every six years)
- **N. Ireland** running with the current operating model and reviewing which model they will push forward with next year



Expectations (standards and quality)

THE CODE

Core practices
required by all UK HE regulatory jurisdictions

Common practices
common to the underpinning of quality in all UK providers but not regulatory requirements for providers in England regulated by the OfS

Supporting reference documents

National frameworks and statements
(e.g. Qualifications Frameworks, characteristics statements, benchmark statements)

1

2

3

Advice and guidance
(e.g. programme design, admissions, student engagement, etc..)

1

2

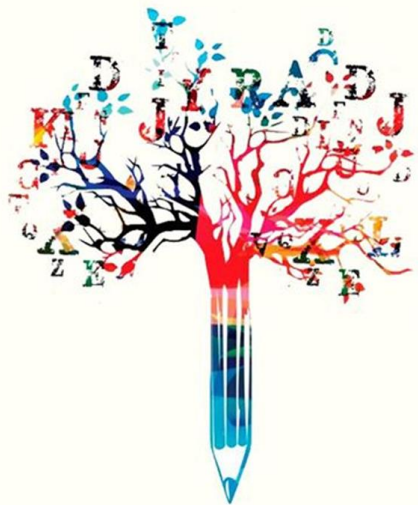
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Advice and Guidance

Purpose: To underpin the mandatory element of the Code by offering clear, succinct and practical advice and guidance to enable institutions to meet the core and common practices and the expectations, regardless of UK jurisdiction.

27 March 2018	Expectations, core and common practices published
April 2018	Scoping events
May 2018	Advice and guidance workshops
Mid-June 2018	Establishment of advice and guidance writing groups and wider reading groups to include sector wide representatives and experts
Early August	1st draft – created virtually. New interactive web design developed and tested by QAA.
Early September	Final draft
Mid-September (11, 13 and 18 Sept)	Final edit meetings in Gloucester
17 Oct	Endorsement by UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment
29 November	Publication and launch (Launch event now Full)



Writing and Reading Groups



Inst/Org type	Writing Group	Reading Group
English Alternative Provider	5	4
English Further Education College	11	8
English Higher Education Provider	41	53
Northern Irish AP	0	1
Northern Irish Further Education College	0	4
Northern Irish Higher Education Provider	1	2
Northern Irish Organisation	0	2
Scotland Higher Education Provider	9	7
UK-Wide Higher Education Provider	1	1
Wales Higher Education Provider	5	7
Scotland Organisation	2	3
UK AP	1	0
UK Organisation	5	5
Other AP	0	1
Other	5	4
England University College	1	0
PSRB	0	9

Student Involvement

NUS UK readers for

Course Design, Learning and Teaching, Enabling Student Achievement, Concerns, complaints and appeals, Assessment

SU/Student Assc/Guild representation on writing groups

Student Engagement, Learning and Teaching, Enabling Student Achievement

SU/Student Assc/Guild representation on reading groups

Student Engagement, Programme Design and Development, Concerns complaints and appeals

Course Design and Development

Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access

Learning and Teaching

Enabling Student Achievement

Student Engagement

Partnerships

External Expertise

Concerns, complaints and appeals

Assessment

Research Degrees

Work-based learning

Monitoring and Evaluation



UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Advice and Guidance

Structure of advice and guidance

Introduction &
explicit links to core
and common
practices

Guiding principles

Overarching Information

Practical advice and guidance on delivery of theme
aims include enhancements and good practice (in
particular through reflective questions) to include
specific monitoring and evaluation for that theme

Practical Advice &
Guidance

Resources, Further Information, Relevant Organisations & Glossary

Signposting

Engaging with the Advice and Guidance

Works in 3 ways:

- 1) Web based – top level - Overarching information at a glance
- 2) Summary information – Short explanatory information
- 3) Full advice and guidance – PDF comprising detailed advice and guidance



Sneak Peek

Expectations and practices
Student Engagement

Introduction to Student Engagement

Expectation
for quality

...heme describes the meaningful participation of students in quality assurance and
... processes, which result in the improvement of their educational experience as well as benefits
... and ... institution and sector. For student engagement to contribute effectively to quality assurance
... processes, it needs to capture the voices of all students, irrespective of location, mode
... study or discipline.

In practice: Learning ... a high-quality academic experience for all students
... an essential aspect of their achievement. Students ... effort and ... students is
... on the conditions needed for a high-quality academic ... an in ... perspective
... and how this can be continuously improved.

Students can provide feedback, work collaboratively with staff and ...
stakeholders as they consider feedback and other quality indicators ...
creators of the curriculum. These activities will contribute to effective ...
and approval, periodic review and the recognition of high quality teaching ...
... of their educational
... effort to ensure
... working

The virtual interface

QAA

Home > Quality code > Reviewing higher education > News & Events > Training & Consultancy > International

THE REVISED UK QUALITY CODE

The revised UK Quality Code is developed by QAA on behalf of the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA), in consultation with the higher education sector.

The revised Quality Code is based on three elements that together provide a reference point for effective quality assurance:



THE EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICES

EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS
The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.
The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

PRACTICES

CORE PRACTICES	COMMON PRACTICES
The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications framework. The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers. Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them. The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.	The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancements. The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers. The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.

EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY
Courses are well designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.
From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

PRACTICES

The revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education
Publication date: 18 May 2018

ADVICE & GUIDANCE

View more

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENTS | QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORKS | GLOSSARY

Find out more: Contact us, Home, Library, Newsletter

About this site: Accessibility, Privacy & Cookies

Our other websites: Access to Higher Education, QAA Scotland, Enhancement Themes

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ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The revised UK Quality Code is developed by QAA on behalf of the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA), in consultation with the higher education sector. The Expectations and Practices of the revised Code were published in March 2018. The full Code, including the advice and guidance, is scheduled for publication in November 2018.

- PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT
- ADMISSIONS, RECRUITMENT AND WIDENING ACCESS
- LEARNING AND TEACHING
- ENABLING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
- STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
- PARTNERSHIPS
- EXTERNAL EXPERTISE
- CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS
- ASSESSMENT
- RESEARCH DEGREES
- WORK-BASED LEARNING

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STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Aliquam vel ipsum enim

PRACTISES FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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KEY PRINCIPLES

- Student engagement and partnership working are integral to the culture of Higher Education providers. They are led strategically but widely owned.
- Student engagement supports enhancements, innovation and transformation locally and nationally, driving improvements to the experience of students.
- Higher education providers, in partnership with their student body, define and promote the range of opportunities to enable all students to engage in educational enhancement and quality assurance.
- Arrangements exist for the effective representation of the student voice at all organisational levels, and these arrangements provide opportunities for all students to be heard.
- Student engagement and representation is adequately resourced and supported. Staff involved in delivering and evaluating student engagement activities have access to ongoing training and support to ensure practice and processes are current.

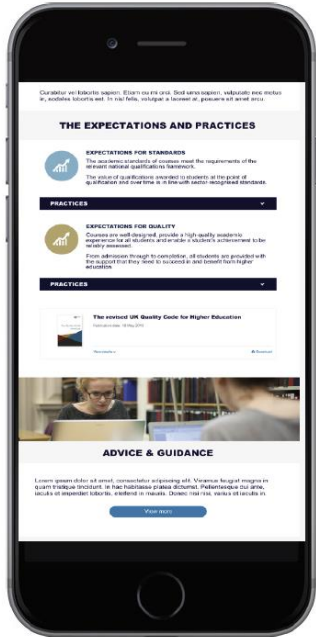
Revised Quality Code: Student Engagement Theme
Publication date: 20 September 2018

Further resources

Back to advice & guidance



Practices for Standards and Quality can be viewed by clicking the expandable accordion to reveal the text. This ensures that the web page avoids being too text heavy, enhancing accessibility and usability on mobile devices (less scrolling).



Full Quality Code PDF can be downloaded/opened by clicking 'download'.

Clicking the 'View more' button takes the user to the Advice and Guidance page. See page 2

Quick links help navigate quickly to other related areas. Clicking an icon/link text takes the user to that page.

THE EXPECTATIONS AND PRACTICES



EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS
The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.
The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

PRACTICES

CORE PRACTICES

The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.

The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.

Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.

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COMMON PRACTICES

The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.



EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY
Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

PRACTICES



ADVICE & GUIDANCE

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[View more](#)

KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS



SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENTS



STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORKS

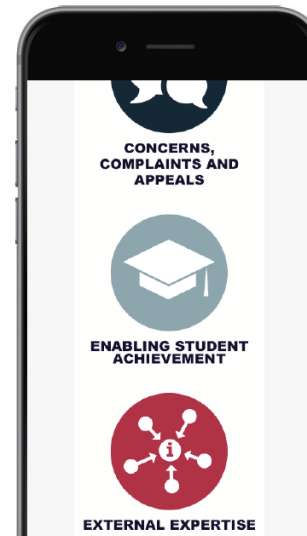


GLOSSARY

Each theme has a coloured icon. Clicking the icon takes the user to the individual web page for that theme. See page 3

On mobile devices, icons are displayed in one column and can be tapped to open the new page - providing an interactive experience.

Note: all buttons/icons across all pages that are clickable on desktop are tapable on mobile devices. All pages have been designed with mobile users in mind and are fully responsive.



ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

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ADMISSIONS, RECRUITMENT AND WIDENING ACCESS



ASSESSMENT



CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS



ENABLING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



EXTERNAL EXPERTISE



LEARNING AND TEACHING



MONITORING & EVALUATION



PARTNERSHIPS



COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT



RESEARCH DEGREES



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



WORK-BASED LEARNING

KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS



SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENTS



STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORKS



GLOSSARY

What are SBSs?

SUBJECT BENCHMARK STATEMENTS

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas. They show what graduates might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their studies.

Subject Benchmark Statements are written by subject specialists and we facilitate this process. They are used as reference points in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes. They provide general guidance but are not intended to represent a national curriculum or to prescribe set approaches. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation.

Subject Benchmark Statements are available for bachelor's degrees with honours, master's degrees, and professional qualifications in Scotland. Statements for health professions are now out of date but available on request.

UK Quality Code provides the basis for quality assurance

- Subject Benchmark Statements (SBSs) currently appear in Part A
 - Expectation A1: *“In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies: ... d) consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements.”*
- New Code’s Expectations’ references are less specific, but still implied
 - Expectation for standards: *“The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.”*

Reviewing SBSs

- Quality Code steering group now defunct – strategic oversight provided by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment
- Reviews normally after 5 years (for first reviews) or 7 (for previously reviewed SBSs). Can also be on basis of need (e.g new professional requirements)
- Last review adopted phased ‘big bang’
- Process: group selected – initial meeting – drafting – 2nd meeting - consultation – analysis – final edit meeting – publication
- QAA retains editing control

The new proposed process

- 1st meeting
- Groups effectively 'self-select'
- Redrafting via SharePoint
- Consultation
- Analysis
- Final edit meeting
- Publication

Challenges

- Resources
- Out-of-date healthcare subjects
- The strategic role of SBSs in revised Quality Code – degree classification tie-in?
- Inconsistencies across the suite of statements ('threshold', 'threshold and typical', 'threshold, typical and excellent')
- Justifying new statements in a crowded space – and where professional competence standards exist
- Methods to utilise: increased use of shared documents, virtual meetings
- Consultation on revised processes next year





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