UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality

Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement

PART

B

Contents

About the Quality Code

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education providers.[1] It makes clear what higher education providers are required to do, what they can expect of each other, and what students and the general public can expect of them. The Quality Code covers all four nations of the UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) and all providers of UK higher education operating internationally. It protects the interests of all students, regardless of where they are studying or whether they are full-time, part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate students.

The Quality Code has three Parts. Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards contains three Chapters and seven Expectations. Each of the 11 Chapters of Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality, and Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision contain a single Expectation.
An Expectation expresses the key principle that the higher education community has identified as essential for the assurance of academic standards and quality within the area covered by the respective Chapter or Part. Higher education providers reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) are required to meet all the Expectations. The manner in which they do so is their own responsibility. QAA carries out reviews to check whether higher education providers are meeting the Expectations.[2]

The Expectations in Part C and each Chapter of Part B are accompanied by a series of Indicators that reflect sound practice, and through which providers can demonstrate they are meeting the relevant Expectation. Indicators are not designed to be used as a checklist; they are intended to help providers reflect on and develop their regulations, procedures and practices to demonstrate that the Expectations in the Quality Code are being met. Each Indicator is supported by an explanatory note that gives more information about it, together with examples of how the Indicator may be interpreted in practice. Indicators are grouped into clusters under a heading. There are no Indicators in Part A. The explanatory text provided directly supports the relevant Expectation.

Each Part and Chapter has been developed by QAA through an extensive process of consultation with higher education providers; their representative bodies; the National Union of Students; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; and other interested parties.

The *UK Quality Code for Higher Education: General Introduction*[3] should be considered in conjunction with this document. It provides a technical introduction for users, including guidance concerning the terminology used and a quick-reference glossary. A more detailed glossary is available on QAA's website.[4]

The Quality Code and legislation

Higher education providers are responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them, for example by funding bodies. The Quality Code does not interpret legislation nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements. Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Part or Chapter where appropriate. Higher education providers are responsible for how they use these resources.

Equality and diversity in the Quality Code

The Quality Code promotes an inclusive approach by embedding consideration of equality and diversity matters throughout. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, irrespective of the group or groups to which they belong, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, for example, because of a declared disability, specific cultural background, location or age, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in and responsibility for promoting equality.

Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of

inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary. Offering an equal opportunity to learn is distinguished from every student having an equal chance of success, because this is dependent on a range of factors including their motivation and engagement in learning.

All higher education providers have legal obligations which they must meet, for example in relation to equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination (in the UK particular considerations, such as the anticipatory duty to provide reasonable adjustments, apply to disabled students). The Quality Code does not seek to duplicate or interpret these requirements.

About this Chapter

This publication is a new Chapter of the Quality Code. It incorporates and supersedes the *Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education (Code of Practice), Section 8: Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (2010)*. It also incorporates and supersedes those parts of the *Code of Practice, Section 3: Disabled Students (2010)* relating to enabling student development and achievement. The evaluation of the Academic Infrastructure and consultation on subsequent changes which resulted in the development of the Quality Code identified the need for the introduction of a Chapter on this topic.

This Chapter was subject to public consultation between October 2012 and January 2013 and was published in March 2013. It became a reference point for the purpose of reviews carried out by QAA in January 2014.

Introduction: Enabling student development and achievement

This Chapter of the Quality Code addresses the ways in which higher education providers enable students to develop and achieve their academic, personal and professional potential. The guidance in this Chapter seeks to ensure that higher education providers have given thought and developed an approach to enabling student development and achievement whose quality is adequately assured and which meets the needs of all students. The underpinning approach is that all students benefit from being enabled to develop their potential and engage in their learning.

Effective approaches to enabling student development and achievement are likely to entail involvement from many different staff and departments within the higher education provider. The practices described in this Chapter are relevant to both academic departments and professional services, such as libraries, careers and employability specialists, services for disabled students, learning development and information technology. However, as a Chapter of the Quality Code, the scope is limited to activities which directly relate to the learning opportunities higher education providers make available and the academic experience of students. While areas such as advice on finance management and provision of accommodation contribute to the overall student experience, they are outside the remit of the Quality Code.

UK higher education providers are diverse in nature and size, and in the students they serve. This Chapter relates to all students, irrespective of their level, location, subject or mode of study, and previous educational background. It takes into account that a student body will have a diversity of protected characteristics, which higher education providers consider when developing their approach to enabling student development and achievement. Students pursue a wide range of subjects in higher education, at different points in their lives, and proceed to an increasingly diverse range of post-study destinations. Higher education providers define for themselves how they can best enable their particular student body, both as a whole and individually, to develop and achieve, bearing in mind the provider's particular context and mission.

Working in partnership

Higher education is instrumental in personal change and development. By enabling students to develop and achieve, higher education providers create an environment in which students take responsibility for their own learning. Students who are fully informed about the opportunities available to them, but who are also aware of their responsibility to engage with those opportunities, are more likely to make effective use of services and resources. The ability of students to do this, and the ways in which they need to be enabled to take their next steps, whatever they may be, vary at different points of their higher education experience. Consideration is given to where the boundaries of responsibility lie between staff and the individual. Successful achievement of an individual student's academic, personal and professional objectives builds confidence and develops potential.

A holistic approach

This Chapter stresses the importance of integration, coherence and internal cooperation between different areas as part of a provider's commitment to enabling students to achieve their learning objectives and to develop more broadly as a result of the opportunities offered by higher education. This is reflected in the organisational strategies of providers and includes links between professional services, academic departments, and student representative bodies, as well as with external organisations. Students are effectively informed about the opportunities available and how and where they can access them.

The focus in this Chapter is upon enabling every student to develop and achieve, and it is helpful to recognise a continuum from generic provision for a cohort of students through to targeted support for particular individuals.

Higher education providers face the challenge of determining why and how the ways in which they enable student development and achievement are effective and can be made more so. The thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies and operation of provision to enable student development and achievement forms a key part of a higher education provider's quality assurance and enhancement cycle.

External links

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative lists of further guidelines, references and resources. QAA takes no responsibility for the content of external websites.

Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about enabling student development and achievement, which higher education providers are required to meet.

> **Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.**

Indicators of sound practice

Strategic approaches

Indicator 1

Through strategic and operational planning, and quality assurance and enhancement, higher education providers determine and evaluate how they enable student development and achievement.

Planning and resourcing

A key motivation for participation in higher education by students is the opportunity it presents for them to develop their potential, and higher education providers demonstrate a commitment to enabling this through a comprehensive strategic and operational approach. This considers how the needs of a diverse student body are best addressed. Higher education providers explicitly define responsibilities for enabling students to develop and achieve, including the role of any student representative bodies, so that financial resources are used effectively and learning resources kept under review.

Higher education providers' strategic and operational approaches to enabling student development and achievement may be expressed in documents such as corporate plans and strategies for learning, teaching and assessment; learning resources; information technology; employability; widening access and/or participation; and research and enterprise. Dissemination of approaches, which are endorsed and promoted by senior management, to all staff, students, and relevant external organisations, supports a shared understanding of the commitment made to enabling student development and achievement.

The approach taken may vary at different levels of the organisation and in different situations, or where a provider works with another organisation (see *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*). However, transparent, defined priorities and objectives facilitate the development and maintenance of a collective understanding of the provider's overarching approach. Those involved in enabling student development and achievement are routinely represented in internal decision-making processes to enable realistic goal-setting and monitoring of progress.

Approaches that enable student development and achievement are incorporated within the higher education provider's quality assurance processes of both academic and professional services. Quality assurance and enhancement enable the higher education provider to take account of relevant external benchmarks and national quality frameworks. In order to foster a culture of quality enhancement, higher education providers reflect on the ways that they identify and disseminate good practice in enabling student development and achievement.

Evaluating effectiveness

Data sources available to higher education providers include both those generated internally from academic departments and professional services and those from external sources. Such data, including feedback from students, are used to inform how provision to enable student development and achievement is enhanced. Higher education providers also consider how such data illustrate the effectiveness of provision in enabling different cohorts within a diverse student body, such as those with protected characteristics.

Higher education providers regularly review their provision which enables student development and achievement, to promote continuous improvement in ways which are not overly burdensome. Higher education providers have procedures establishing explicitly when and how this happens. This includes guidance about who will be involved and how feedback from and participation of key stakeholders contribute to the process. These stakeholders include students, employers, academic and professional services staff and external organisations, including professional, statutory and regulatory bodies where relevant. Reviews of provision may result in explicit action plans being published which identify responsibilities and a timeline against which progress is monitored. The outcomes of reviews are considered at an organisational level to provide strategic oversight.

The involvement of students in quality systems is addressed in *Chapter B5: Student Engagement*.

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA (2011) *Outcomes from Institutional Audit: 2007-09: Managing Learning Opportunities*
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Outcomes-audit-learning-2007-9.pdf

QAA (2011) *Outcomes from Institutional Audit: 2007-09: Student Engagement and Support*
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Outcomes-institutional-audit-2007-9-Student-engagement.pdf

QAA Scotland (2009) *International Benchmarking Working Group - Supporting Student Success: A Forward-Looking Agenda*
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/report/supporting-student-success-a-forward-looking-agenda.pdf

AMOSSHE, the Student Services Organisation: Value & Impact Toolkit
www.amosshe.org/viptoolkit

JISC InfoNet: Managing strategic activity infokit
www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/managing-strategic-activity/

JISC InfoNet: Benchmarking infokit
www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/benchmarking/

JISC (2012) Activity data - delivering benefits from the data deluge
www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/reports/2012/activity-data-delivering-benefits.aspx

EFQM Excellence Model Higher Education Version (2003)
www.osti.gov/eprints/topicpages/documents/record/884/1265593.html

The Matrix Standard
http://matrixstandard.com/

Customer Service Excellence
www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com/

Indicator 2

Higher education providers define, coordinate, monitor and evaluate roles and responsibilities for enabling student development and achievement both internally and in cooperation with other organisations.

Defining and coordinating roles and responsibilities

The ways in which higher education providers enable student development and achievement may involve input from a range of different people and other organisations. Higher education providers make it clear where responsibilities lie and how different roles are defined. These arrangements are communicated both to students, so that they are aware of the opportunities available and how to access them, and to staff, so that they are fully briefed about their role and are able to direct students to other services appropriately. In particular, clarity about the respective responsibilities of academic and professional services, staff, and any student representative bodies, helps students seeking to develop their potential.

Higher education providers ensure that the services they offer are coherent by promoting internal communication between all those involved in enabling student development and achievement, including those responsible for planning academic provision. Appropriate and effective arrangements arise from a meaningful and well understood network of responsibilities, clarity of communication, oversight, monitoring and review. All parties involved work in partnership to facilitate effective delivery.

In formulating policies about the cooperation involved in enabling student development and achievement, higher education providers draw upon the expertise and knowledge of their staff including any student representative bodies, those with whom they work to deliver higher education and other stakeholders, as well as students themselves. The roles of staff involved in different aspects of enabling students are explained within policies and agreements. Policies also provide a vehicle for clarifying how provision can be coordinated so that it is offered consistently and makes optimal use of resources and expertise.

Higher education providers take steps to make students aware of their responsibilities to engage with the opportunities offered to enable their development and achievement. They recognise the role student representative bodies may have in making available opportunities for students to develop networks and peer support groups.

Working with other organisations

Higher education providers work with others to enable student development and achievement. The organisations involved may include other education providers and employers offering work-based learning or placement opportunities. Where higher education providers work with others to offer learning opportunities, the organisation and resourcing of provision to enable student development and learning are agreed. These agreements are recorded, for example in contracts or memoranda of understanding, and respective roles and responsibilities are actively communicated to students. Those with whom higher education providers work are informed sufficiently to understand the needs and expectations of students, either as a group or individually. Information is communicated with due regard to considerations of confidentiality, consent and timeliness. Feedback from other organisations with which they work contributes to the provider's own monitoring and evaluation of its provision.

For further information see *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*.

Further guidelines, references and resources

Higher Education Academy (2014) *Academic and Professional Services in Partnership Literature Review and Overview of Results: Leading the Student Experience*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/Research/prof_service_partnerships

HEFCW (2011) *Guidance on the Development of Student Charters*
www.hefcw.ac.uk/documents/publications/circulars/circulars_2011/W11%2031HE%20Guidance%20on%20the%20development%20of%20student%20charters.pdf

Student charter group (2011) Final report
www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-charter-group-final-report

Indicator 3

A commitment to equity guides higher education providers in enabling student development and achievement.

Reflecting student diversity

To enable student development and achievement effectively, the needs of individual students are considered, taking into account the diversity of the student body. Provision is guided by principles of fairness, inclusion and accessibility , enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers. An inclusive environment anticipates the varied requirements of students, for example because of a declared disability, specific cultural background, mode of study or age. Where possible, equity of access is achieved through inclusive design but, in some circumstances, arrangements are made to enable access for individuals. Higher education providers work in partnership with students to understand the implications of their specific needs.

Higher education providers consistently apply processes for assessing the impact of current and proposed policies and procedures on all students, taking into account the diversity of protected characteristics, and use specialist advice where it is needed. In line with principles of equity, and to identify organisational barriers to student development and achievement, higher education providers gather feedback from the range of their students. Students are encouraged to give their views at different points during the time they are studying in a variety of ways. Prospective, current and former students are included among those who are asked for feedback in order to understand the full scope of arrangements that may be needed. Higher education providers make available an appropriate and proportionate level of resource for this engagement.

Student-centredness and impartiality characterise certain services which enable student development and achievement. These qualities are embedded in professional codes of practice and quality frameworks. The principles of consistency, timeliness and confidentiality also apply to advice and guidance that enable students to develop and achieve. Discussion about such matters is conducted in an environment where the individual's need for privacy is respected. Information about student needs is collected and communicated with due regard to considerations of necessity, confidentiality and consent.

Further guidelines, references and resources

Equality Act 2010
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011
www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/2260/contents/made

Equality Challenge Unit (2011) *Public Sector Equality Duty: Specific Duties for England*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/public-sector-equality-duty-specific-duties-for-england/

Equality Challenge Unit (2011) *The Public Sector Equality Duty: Specific Duties for Wales*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/the-public-sector-equality-duty-specific-duties-for-wales/

Equality Challenge Unit (2010) *Anti-Discrimination Law in Northern Ireland*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/anti-discrimination-law-in-northern-ireland

Equality and Human Rights Commission (2012) *Equality Act 2012: Technical Guidance on Further and Higher Education*
www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/legislation/equality-act-2010/equality-act-codes-practice-and-technical-guidance

Equality Challenge Unit (2012) *Male Students: Engagement with Academic and Pastoral Support Services*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/male-students-engagement-with-academic-and-pastoral-support-services

Equality Challenge Unit (2012) *Student Services: Supporting LGB students*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/student-services-supporting-lgb-students

Equality Challenge Unit (2010) *Trans Staff and Students in Higher Education*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/trans-staff-and-students-in-he-revised/

Equality Challenge Unit (2009) *Religious Observance in Higher Education: Facilities and Services*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/religious-obs-facilities

Equality Challenge Unit (2009) *Religious Observance in Higher Education: Institutional Timetabling and Work Patterns*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/religious-obs-timetabling

QAA (2012) *International Students Studying in the UK - Guidance for UK Higher Education Providers*
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/International-students-studying-in-the-UK.pdf

Government Equalities Office: Equality Act 2010 - A Summary Guide for Public Sector Organisations
www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-summary-guide-for-public-sector-organisations

Action on Access (2011) Disability Focus Guide - Widening Participation and Disability
http://actiononaccess.org/wp-content/files_mf/wpdisfocusguide.pdf

National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP)
http://nadp-uk.org/

Higher Education Academy (2010) Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
www.heacademy.ac.uk/node/3710

Higher Education Academy and Equality Challenge Unit: Ethnicity, Gender and Degree Attainment
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/resources/detail/inclusion/ethnicity_gender_and_degree_attainment_project

Higher Education Academy and Equality Challenge Unit (2011) *Improving the Degree Attainment of Black and Minority Ethnic Students*
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/improving-attainment-of-bme-students

Higher Education Academy (2012) *Black and Minority Ethnic Student Degree Retention and Attainment*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/node/2905

Higher Education Academy (2011) *Male Access and Success in Higher Education: A Discussion Paper*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/retention/Male_Access_report

Higher Education Academy and UK Council for International Student Affairs:
Teaching International Students Project
www.heacademy.ac.uk/node/4576

National Union of Students/Million+ (2012) *Never Too Late to Learn: Mature Students in Higher Education*
www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/2012_NUS_millionplus_Never_Too_Late_To_Learn.pdf

Higher Education Academy (2006) Faith Guides
http://basr.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/

Student transitions

Indicator 4

Higher education providers inform students before and during their period of study of opportunities designed to enable their development and achievement.

Higher education providers have processes in place for communicating with students throughout their period of study in a structured, accessible, concise and timely way about opportunities designed to enable their development and achievement. They also regularly evaluate the effectiveness of these processes. Students who are fully informed of the opportunities available are more likely to make effective use of the services and resources provided. To target information effectively, consideration is given to when, how, and to whom it is given. Professional services, academic departments and any student representative bodies work in partnership with students to achieve a seamless approach from the student perspective. Higher education providers take steps to enable students to understand that they are responsible as independent learners for using effectively the information with which they are provided.

Higher education providers make available information which is accessible to the diversity of the student body. Information about the services and resources available within the higher education provider is available to both prospective and current students, appropriate to the nature of their student experience. This enables students to make informed decisions about the routes and options they might take during their programmes. Higher education providers have information systems in place that are accessible to all staff with responsibilities for welcoming, registering and informing students of next steps they need to take, whether on initial entry to the provider or at a subsequent stage of their study.

Timely provision of accessible and comprehensive information about the commitment required of students, including any timetabled activity or scheduled requirements, enables students to prepare for their study. The information is available so that students are able to take steps to manage demands on their time. Appropriate staff are able to articulate and explain requirements and commitments to students.

The provision of information about higher education is addressed in more detail in Part C: Information about Higher Education Provision. *Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education* addresses student recruitment and admission in more detail and *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching* addresses information about learning opportunities.

Further guidelines, references and resources

Student FIRST project
www.amosshe.org.uk/projects/Stu_1st

JISC: *Student Lifecycle Relationship Management*
www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/reports/2008/slrmfinalreport.aspx

JISC InfoNet: Relationship management infokit
www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/relationship-management/

National Union of Students: Course organisation and management charter
www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/open/highereducation/Charter-on-Course-Organisation-and-Management/

JISC TechDis: Accessibility Essentials Series
www.jisctechdis.ac.uk/accessibilityessentials

JISC TechDis/Learning and Skills Improvement Service: Toolkit for creating accessible learning materials
www.excellencegateway.org.uk/jisctechdis

Teachability project: Creating accessible information about courses or programmes of study for disabled students
www.teachability.strath.ac.uk/chapter_1/tableofcontents1.html

HEFCE (2001) *Strategies for Widening Participation in Higher Education: A Guide to Good Practice*
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100202100434/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/Pubs/hefce/2001/01_36.htm

---

Indicator 5

To enable student development and achievement, higher education providers put in place policies, practices and systems that facilitate successful transitions and academic progression.

Before arrival

Enabling students to develop, progress and achieve begins before they formally begin their studies with the higher education provider, through appropriate activities. These activities facilitate a rapid adjustment to a higher education provider's learning and social environment. A student's sense of having a recognised identity and of being welcomed as an individual contributes towards an effective transition into study. This includes making arrangements in advance for students who require specific adjustments and recognising that in some circumstances, students may have a dual identity with both the delivery organisation where they study and the body which awards their degree, diploma or certificate (see *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*).

Initial and ongoing transitions

The nature of the transitions that students make varies according to subject, level and mode of study. The delivery of induction involves a partnership between a wide variety of academic and professional service staff and any student representative bodies. Responsibilities are delegated in different ways depending on the nature of the higher education provider, but those involved fully understand their role. Higher education providers consider how induction meets the needs of every student, taking into account the diversity of protected characteristics, varied physical locations and those that begin their studies at different points in the academic cycle.

Higher education providers put in place policies and practices to facilitate the various transitions that students need to make to succeed. Induction is an ongoing process for students rather than one that is completed within a defined period of time at the start of their programme. Induction processes continue at points of transition, including between defined periods, such as semesters or terms, or years of a programme, when academic demands are likely to change. Existing students may be able to support the transition of new students through peer mentoring schemes or other networks. Staff involved in working with individual students to encourage their achievement and development are able to devote sufficient time to this activity. Effective induction contributes to a student's successful adaptation to their learning environment and their ability to progress and complete their programme.

Further details about induction for postgraduate research students may be found in *Chapter B11: Research Degrees*.

Academic progression and retention

During their period of study, the learning environment for students is likely to change, and higher education providers manage this to enable students to develop and progress. Higher education providers put in place accessible and effectively communicated opportunities to enable students to discuss specific issues about their learning objectives and academic progression and make appropriate choices. The systems which enable students' academic progression are implemented through a partnership between students and staff in both professional services and academic departments, with information and organisational facilities and procedures shared appropriately. These systems are supported by clearly articulated communication processes in order to harness relevant expertise, so staff know how and when to refer students to others, and to whom.

Higher education providers pay particular attention to how these systems operate when students move into another learning environment, such as an employment-based placement or period of study abroad. They also recognise the value of peer networks of support among students and encourage and facilitate this development.

For a variety of reasons, some students may wish to take time out from their programme or change their mode of study, while others leave before completing their studies. Higher education providers develop transparent strategies to make provision for intermission or change of mode of study, and to manage individual cases. Students are signposted to non-judgemental and confidential guidance and advice. Most commonly, students who leave do so in the early stages of their programme, again for many different reasons. However, early identification of an individual's dissatisfaction, for whatever reason, provides the possibility of appropriate intervention. Personal contact with individual members of staff helps students to make sound decisions about their future. Higher education providers make students aware of mechanisms which they can access if things do go wrong (see *Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*).

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: First Year: Engagement and Empowerment
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/first-year

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Responding to student needs
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/responding-to-student-needs

National Union of Students (NUS) (2012) *Student Experience Research Part 4: First Year Student Experience*
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Student-Experience-Research-12-Part-4.pdf

JISC InfoNet: Curriculum design and delivery infokit
www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/topics/learning-teaching/curriculum/

Universities UK and the Institute for Access Studies, Staffordshire University (2002) *Student Services: Effective Approaches to Retaining Students in Higher Education*
www.improvingthestudentexperience.com/library/UG_documents/Student_Services-_effective_approaches_to_retaining_students.pdf

Higher Education Academy (2012) *Building Student Engagement and Belonging in Higher Education at a Time of Change: Final Report from the What Works? Student Retention and Success programme*
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/what-works-student-retention/What_works_final_report

National Union of Students: Academic support charter
www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/archived/learning-and-teaching-hub/academicsupport/

National Union of Students: Personal tutor charter
www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/archived/learning-and-teaching-hub/personaltutors/

Back on Course
www.backoncourse.ac.uk

Action on Access (2009) *Induction and Disabled Learners*
http://actiononaccess.org/wp-content/files_mf/induction_disabled_learners19.pdf

Student Transition and Retention project (STAR)
www.ulster.ac.uk/star/

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE)
www.aldinhe.ac.uk

Developing academic skills

Higher education providers consider the ways in which they can enable students to develop their academic potential through the development of appropriate academic skills such as reasoning, research, numeracy, writing and referencing. Such provision takes account of the needs of a diverse body of students and is appropriate to the academic level of study. Approaches such as personal development planning help students to identify their personal, academic and employability development needs, to reflect on their experiences, and to record their achievements. Facilitating effective learning and teaching is discussed further in *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*.

Developing employability skills

Higher education providers have strategies to promote students' employability and their ability to articulate their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. In developing such strategies, higher education providers work in partnership with students and external stakeholders. Higher education providers also recognise the challenges presented by the great diversity of aspirations of individual students, including those already in employment. Different modes and locations of study may require different approaches, while changes in academic programmes and pedagogic developments necessitate ongoing review of approaches to employability. The strategies adopted by a higher education provider depend on factors such as its specific student profile, programme portfolio and geographical location and may benefit from a mix of curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular approaches.

Extra-curricular activities and volunteering provide opportunities for students to develop skills and experiences that are both valued by employers and relevant more broadly after they have completed their programme of study. The involvement of student representative bodies and societies and the local community helps to maximise the opportunities available to students. Higher education providers also consider how they enable students to develop enterprise and entrepreneurship skills in ways relevant to a variety of future paths.

Delivery of strategies that develop student employability is adequately resourced, managed and monitored. Contributions are made as appropriate by careers and employability specialists, academic and professional services staff, employers, professional bodies, students and graduates, including former students.

Facilitating career management

Career education, information, advice and guidance enable students to make choices about their future. Those involved, whether staff of the higher education provider or external agents, are appropriately informed about the local, regional, national and international graduate labour market. Higher education providers make use of strong current links with the providers of employment opportunities and where appropriate with professional, regulatory and statutory bodies. They enable students to access appropriate, well informed careers advice and impartial, student-centred, confidential careers guidance. Higher education providers consider how careers education provision is best offered in the context of their mission and student body and may include discrete modules or elements embedded across a programme of study where these are congruent with the objectives of the programme.

Contact with employers and experience of the workplace help students to develop a range of skills and inform their career planning. Higher education providers consider how they can best facilitate inclusive interaction with employers for all students.

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA (2009) *Personal Development Planning: Guidelines for Institutional Policy and Practice in Higher Education*
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Personal-development-planning-guidance-for-institutional-policy-and-practice-in-higher-education.pdf

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Employability
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/employability

QAA (2012) *Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education: Guidance for UK Higher Education Providers*
www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/enterprise-entrepreneurship-guidance.pdf

Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)
www.agcas.org.uk

Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR)
www.agr.org.uk/

ASET - the Placement and Employability Professionals' Body
www.asetonline.org

National Centre for Universities and Business (NCUB)
www.ncub.co.uk/

Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA)
www.recordingachievement.org

Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)
www.hear.ac.uk

JISC InfoNet: e-Portfolios infokit
www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/e-portfolios/

Universities UK (2012) Bringing it all together: introducing the HEAR
www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/highereducation/Pages/IntroducingtheHEAR.aspx

Scottish Higher Education Employability Forum (SHEEF)
http://scotland.heacademy.ac.uk/sheef

Higher Education Academy (HEA)
www.heacademy.ac.uk/employability

Action on Access (2011) *Disability Focus Guide - Employability*
http://actiononaccess.org/wp-content/files_mf/employabilitydisabilityguide.pdf

National HE STEM Programme (2012) *Embedded Employability: A Guide to Enhancing the University Curriculum*
www.hestem.ac.uk/sites/default/files/employability_skills_guide.pdf

National HE STEM Programme (2012) *A Toolkit for Setting up Credit-Bearing Placements to Improve the Employability Skills of STEM Students*
www.hestem.ac.uk/sites/default/files/a_toolkit_for_setting_up_credit-bearing_placements.pdf

Higher Education Academy (2014) Mathematical Transitions: a Report on the Mathematical and Statistical Needs of Students Undertaking Undergraduate Studies in Various Disciplines
www.heacademy.ac.uk/mathematical-transitions-report-mathematical-and-statistical-needs-students-undertaking

Facilitating development and achievement

Indicator 7

Higher education providers ensure staff who enable students to develop and achieve are appropriately qualified, competent, up to date and supported.

Staff from across the higher education provider, as well as from other organisations, are involved in enabling students to develop and achieve at various stages of the student life cycle, including recruitment, selection and admissions staff, academic teachers, administrators, research supervisors, and the staff of specialist professional services. Higher education providers encourage staff to recognise and understand their particular involvement and its boundaries in enabling student development and achievement. They make available transparent, effective and appropriate mechanisms for liaising with and referring students to other expert and professional sources of information and guidance.

Higher education providers benefit from enabling appropriate staff to obtain and enhance their expertise through appropriate professional qualifications and continuing professional development. This may include induction programmes, teaching and learning support courses, staff development programmes and networking opportunities such as discussion groups. As appropriate to their role in enabling student development and achievement, staff are properly trained, competent and up to date. Staff are made aware of how they can contribute to the development of an inclusive organisational culture and of the impact of principles of equity on their role.

Feedback from current and former students is used by the higher education provider to inform its approach to developing staff, and the approach is facilitated by adequate resources. Consideration of the effectiveness of the provision, including any services delivered by external organisations, the outcomes of training and professional development, together with the resources required for it, form an explicit part of the regular review of the approach.

The continuing professional development of staff who teach and support learning is covered in more detail in *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*.

Further guidelines, references and resources

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Developing and Supporting the Curriculum
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/developing-and-supporting-the-curriculum

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE)
www.aldinhe.ac.uk

Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)
www.cilip.org.uk

Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA)
www.ucisa.ac.uk

National Association of Student Money Advisors (NASMA)
www.nasma.org.uk

Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)
www.agcas.org.uk

AMOSSHE, the Student Services Organisation
www.amosshe.org.uk

Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA)
www.seda.ac.uk

National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP)
http://nadp-uk.org/

JISC TechDis
www.jisctechdis.ac.uk/techdis/investinyourself

UK Professional Standards Framework
www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf

Indicator 8

Higher education providers make available appropriate learning resources and enable students to develop the skills to use them.

Higher education providers make available learning resources which take account of different modes of study and the range of academic programmes and pedagogic practices, including considering requirements in the context of programme design, development, approval monitoring and review processes (see *Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval* and *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*). This includes the provision and maintenance of adequate computing and library facilities, physical and digital information resources, the range of necessary specialist facilities such as laboratories, workshops, practice rooms, sports facilities, and social learning spaces. Consideration is given to how appropriate facilities are made available when higher education is delivered with others and how students are informed of the resources available to them (see *Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others*).

Formal links between academic departments and relevant professional services ensure that appropriate resources are fit for purpose and meet any relevant legislative or regulatory requirements and appropriate sector benchmarks. Higher education providers facilitate communication and the sharing of practice between academic and professional services staff to enable the effective use of learning resources, and anticipation of current and future user needs. Information and communication technology facilities and services, the virtual learning environment and other learning resources systems are fully accessible and inclusive.

Information and digital literacy

Students are able to acquire the skills necessary for the effective use of learning resources and facilities through appropriate training, including the safe and effective use of specialist facilities, laboratories and digital resources. Higher education providers consider the challenges involved in communicating with students increasingly through electronic forms. These include the need for efficiency and directness on the one hand and the need, on the other, to manage student expectations with consistency and probity of practice, particularly at programme and module level. The development of students' digital literacy enables them to develop and thrive in the virtual environments made available by the higher education provider or that they seek to create for themselves.

Further guidelines, references and resources

Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)
www.sconul.ac.uk

SCONUL (2011) The SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy: Core Model for Higher Education
www.sconul.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/coremodel.pdf

JISC: Learning Literacies in a Digital Age
www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/projects/elearningllida.aspx

JISC (2010) Digital information seekers: How academic libraries can support the use of digital resources
www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/briefingpapers/2010/bpdigitalinfoseekerv1.aspx

JISC Design Studio: Developing digital literacies
http://jiscdesignstudio.pbworks.com/w/page/46421608/Developing%20digital%20literacies

Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (UCISA) (2011) *Engaging Hearts and Minds Best Practice Guide*
www.ucisa.ac.uk/publications/engaging.aspx

JISC: Designing Spaces for Effective Learning
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140702233839/http:/www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearninginnovation/learningspaces.aspx

Designing Libraries
www.designinglibraries.org.uk

Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE): Learning Spaces
www.aude.ac.uk/resources/learningspaces/

JISC Collections
www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/

Action on Access (2011) *Disability Focus Guide - Library Support Services*
http://actiononaccess.org/wp-content/files_mf/librarydisabilityguide.pdf

Action on Access (2011) *Disability Focus Guide - Facilities Management*
http://actiononaccess.org/wp-content/files_mf/facilitiesdisabilityguide.pdf

---

Appendix 1 - The Expectation and Indicators Enabling Student Development and Achievement

The Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about enabling students' development and achievement, which higher education providers are required to meet.

Higher education providers have in place, monitor and evaluate arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

The Indicators of sound practice

Indicator 1

Through strategic and operational planning, and quality assurance and enhancement, higher education providers determine and evaluate how they enable student development and achievement.

Indicator 2

Higher education providers define, coordinate, monitor and evaluate roles and responsibilities for enabling student development and achievement both internally and in cooperation with other organisations.

Indicator 3

A commitment to equity guides higher education providers in enabling student development and achievement.

Indicator 4

Higher education providers inform students before and during their period of study of opportunities designed to enable their development and achievement.

Indicator 5

To enable student development and achievement, higher education providers put in place policies, practices and systems that facilitate successful transitions and academic progression.

Indicator 6

Higher education providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.

Indicator 7

Higher education providers ensure staff who enable students to develop and achieve are appropriately qualified, competent, up to date and supported.

Indicator 8

Higher education providers make available appropriate learning resources and enable students to develop the skills to use them.

Appendix 2 - Membership of the advisory group for this Chapter

Name	Position	Affiliation
Jayne Aldridge	Deputy Director Student Services	Kingston University
Dr John Barkham	Specialist writer	
Harriet Barnes	Development Officer	QAA
Julie Berry	University Librarian	University of Salford
Janet Bohrer	Assistant Director	QAA
Dr Claire Carney	Head of Enhancement	QAA Scotland
Allison Cole-Stutz	Dean of Students	Richmond University, the American International University in London
Caryl Davies	Acting Director Student Support	Aberystwyth University
Ruth Drysdale	Programme Manager, e-learning	JISC
Julie Garrigan	HE Advanced Practitioner	Accrington and Rossendale College
Carl Gilleard	Chief Executive	Association of Graduate Recruiters
Dr Michael Gilmore	Academic Registrar	Durham University
Dr Sarah Gilroy	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)	University of Chichester
Nicola Hannam	Director, Education and Skills	The Science Council

Chris Jackson	Communications and Marketing Manager	AGCAS
Dr Karen King	Senior Teaching Fellow	Queen's University Belfast
Gary Loke	Head of Policy	Equality Challenge Unit
Dr Rob Macpherson	Network Leader: Business and Leisure	University of the Highlands and Islands
David Malcolm	Head of Social Policy	National Union of Students
Maja Maricevic	Head of Higher Education	British Library
Dr Janette Myers	Senior Lecturer in Student Learning and Support	St George's, University of London
Alyson Twyman	Manager, Career Development Services	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Dr Andrew West	Director of Student Services Chair, AMOSSHE (2010-12)	University of Sheffield

References

1 www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code

2 www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review

3 www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=181

4 www.qaa.ac.uk/AboutUs/glossary