

TQF Bulletin, Spring 2022

Welcome to the TQF Bulletin - your quick guide to the activity of [The Quality Forum](#). Please feel free to share this with colleagues who might find it valuable.



Photo credit: Alison Eales

Our second meeting of 2021-22 took place on 15 March on Zoom. We were delighted to welcome those who were returning to TQF or attending for the first time.

James Harrison (QAA) provided an update on several UK-wide developments. These included: [proposed changes to the Teaching Excellence Framework](#); the [ongoing development of principles relating to external examiners](#), with QAA working alongside Universities UK and Guild HE; the Draft of Joint statement on the UK-wide approach to regulation of higher education being drafted by the [UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment](#); the status of the [Quality Code](#); the [review of subject benchmark statements](#); [forthcoming legislation around essay mills](#); and QAA's ongoing review by ENQA (the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). Members were invited to sign up to the [Academic Integrity Charter](#) if they had not already done so.

Kathryn O'Loan from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) provided an update on the development of the [tertiary quality framework](#). Following consultation through sector quality and learning and teaching networks, work is underway to pull what SFC have heard together into one document outlining a draft framework. The draft will be for further discussion with the sectors. Priorities included the recognition of existing sector strengths, identifying synergies across the UK nations, and aligning with the [European Standards and Guidelines](#). The framework would be enhancement-led with emphases on self-evaluation and student engagement, and would have an increased focus on the impact on learners. A transition period was planned, with work taking place to identify activities that might be trialled during that time.

Laura Porter (QAA) spoke to a paper on the revision of the Scottish Concerns Scheme. Key changes included a clarification of scope, emphasising the role of the scheme within the enhancement-led approach to quality, clarification of process stages, approach to sharing information, and the removal of references to the Quality Mark. Members were supportive of the suggested changes.

Our colleagues at the Wales Quality Network have decided to open their meetings to members from across the UK. The meeting of 4 May will include a discussion about the aforementioned review of external examining practice. You can register to attend the meeting [here](#).

We rounded off the first hour of the meeting with short presentations from Heriot-Watt University and the University of the Highlands and Islands on recent ELIR commendations. Members welcomed this addition to the agenda, so we will repeat it at future meetings. Please let us know if you would like a five-minute slot at the June meeting.

In the second hour of our meeting, we went into two breakout rooms.

The group in breakout room 1 aimed to discuss institution-led review (ILR) and annual monitoring, though discussion focused on ILR. This had been raised on the Yammer network and various aspects were discussed, including: the interaction of ILR with other processes such as TDAP and curriculum review; the recruitment and training of reviewers; the support offered to reviewers (and varying levels of engagement with this support); the provision of datasets for self-evaluation; the structure of documentation; the processes in place for setting meeting agendas (and the balance of structure and flexibility at these meetings); the use of Teams to support ILR activity; and how best to capture issues that are surfaced during ILRs but are outwith the remit of the process. Members agreed that the discussion had been valuable and could have been longer.

In breakout room 2, Rhiannon Tinsley and Liz Cook from the University of the Highlands and Islands led a discussion on how quality arrangements are managed within an institution that offers HE and FE provision.

The group discussed the differences between the current frameworks, including measures and timing, and the similarities, including student engagement and support services review.

Our final meeting for session 2021-22 will take place on 16 June on Zoom.

TQF is a forum for sharing practice on matters of teaching quality, and colleagues are encouraged to suggest items for discussion. Please [get in touch with QAA Scotland](#) if you would like to share practice from your institution or learn more about practice across the sector. You can also join the [TQF Yammer Network](#).