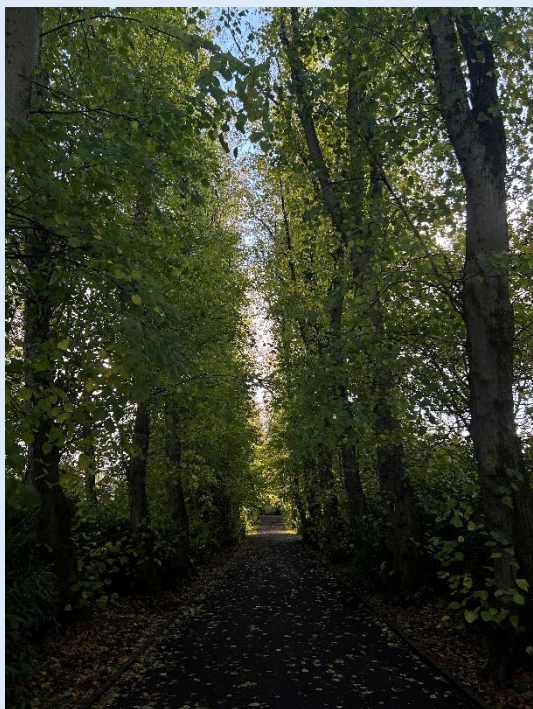


# TQF Bulletin, Autumn 2023

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 first meeting of session 2023-24 took place on Zoom on 10 October 2023. For this meeting, colleagues had requested that we allowed more time for detailed updates and discussion on the various workstreams of the [Tertiary Quality Project](#), so we opted for a simple 'one-part' agenda with no breakout discussions. We will return to the two-part agenda with breakout rooms for our future meetings.

Kevin McStravock from QAA joined us to give an update on UK-wide discussions. QAA has published a [Definition of Quality](#) with supporting infographics. These are aimed at external and lay stakeholders, and were developed in partnership with Universities UK and Guild HE. QAA is now working on a [policy series](#) on the English quality system. Work is ongoing on the [revision of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), and there will be a Scotland-specific session so that members can engage with this in more depth.

The House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee has published [its report into its recent inquiry into the Office for Students](#), which included a number of recommendations. Announcements at the Conservative Party Conference included the proposed [introduction of minimum service levels for universities in England](#) and the of an [Advanced British Standard](#) to replace A-Levels and T-Levels. [TEF results have been published](#), and the [Lifelong Learning Bill](#) has received royal assent.

In Wales, the [Commission for Tertiary Education and Research](#) has been established, with Simon Perrott taking up his post as Chair and most Board members having been announced. This Commission will come into effect in April 2024. QAA continues to work closely with government department in Northern Ireland on proposals for enhancement-led quality arrangements.

We then moved on to updates relating to the Tertiary Quality Project. Nichola Kett updated members on Workstream 3: [Strengthening Institutional Monitoring, Self-evaluation and Reporting on Quality](#). Nichola has worked closely with Ann Heron, Chair of CDN's Quality Network, and other colleagues to develop a template and guidance for the proposed SEAP (Self Evaluation and Action Plan). These were submitted to the Scottish Funding Council in June. The SEAP will be piloted in 2023-24 by a small number of institutions and there will be a workshop where pilot institutions can discuss its use. The intention is to publish the final version in Spring 2024 to allow institutions to plan for the following year. Nichola thanked all those members had supported the work to date.

Eve Lewis from sparqs provided an update on Workstream 4: [Evaluating and enhancing the student learning experience and student partnership](#). Work is planned for session 2023-24 to explore how sparqs can support institutions to use and embed the new Student Learning Experience Model, which is now available online and in hard copy. Anyone who is interested in exploring this with sparqs is encouraged to contact Eve. Meanwhile, work is progressing to map the Student Partnership Model to the principles on which the SEAP is based so that it can be used during the SEAP pilot. This is intended as a practical, useful document. The next step with both pieces of work is to explore how they fit with the broader quality arrangements.

Caroline Turnbull from QAA Scotland updated members on Workstream 5: [Tertiary sector enhancement activity](#), and Debra Macfarlane provided an update on the SFC commission to develop a tertiary review method. The latter is not a distinct workstream of the Tertiary Quality Project, but is obviously closely related to this work, and QAA Scotland are managing the two projects in parallel. Each project has its own cross-sector Advisory Group and a timeline with clear milestones. QAA colleagues shared these timescales and milestones with members. An online co-creation event (21 September) had provided an opportunity to set the context, while an all-day workshop (11 October) was planned to bring together colleagues from colleges, universities and sector agencies in person to explore options in more detail. The morning session would be dedicated to the review method and the afternoon to the enhancement activity.

Colleagues were reminded that the [Phase 1 Quality Arrangements](#), consisting of Quality Enhancement and Standards Review alongside Institution-Led Meetings, will conclude in session 2023-24 and that the new review method will commence after this.

Colleagues also asked about how the TQP Workstreams fitted together. On behalf of the SFC, Karen Gray reported that work is underway to agree on an overarching title and integrated timelines for the workstreams, after which a full update will be available on the SFC website.

In general updates, sparqs reported that their strategic planning process is underway and that they would welcome any input to a planned project on student interns. We also noted our congratulations to sparqs on their 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday, and to all winners and nominees in sparqs' Student Engagement Awards.

Alison Eales from QAA Scotland provided a brief update on the Tertiary Enhancement Topic project (The Future of Learning and Teaching: Defining and delivering an effective and inclusive digital/blended offering): following a successful sector event on 20 September, research findings will be published in the coming months alongside our plans for activity between now and June 2024.

Given how much change is underway in the sector, we noted that we may wish to have *ad hoc* meetings on specific issues during the year. We have also discussed the possibility of having an in-person or hybrid meeting during the 2023-24 session. If your institution might be willing to host, please let us know!

**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.**