

TQF Bulletin, Summer 2026

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.

Our final meeting of 2026 took place on 11 June on Teams.

At our previous meeting, we had noted that the [Office for Students \(OFS\)](#) had highlighted concern with two degree algorithm practices. Since that meeting, this issue has been flagged up to the Quality Arrangements in Scottish Higher Education group (QASHE) as something to keep under review.

Amy Eberlin and Kyrsten Black ([QAA](#)) and Erica Russell-Hensens ([Scottish Funding Council](#)) provided an update on the [National Review of Awarding Arrangements](#), which SFC has commissioned QAA to undertake, and which is progressing ahead of schedule. The methodology has been designed, a [Guide for Institutions](#) published, and a [sample of institutions](#) selected. Institutions have been informed and have received their review timelines. Review teams are being put in place, and two institutional briefings have been held, along with a training session for reviewers and managers, another of which is planned. QAA staff are working closely with institutions selected and are being as flexible as possible to make the process supportive. Feedback about the composition of review teams has been taken on board, and three institutions have had their reviews delayed. There are still opportunities available for those who would be interested in becoming reviewers.

Chase Greenfield from [sparqs \(Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland\)](#) provided an update on the [Academic Development Toolkit](#), which had been the subject of a workshop activity led by Catriona Bell at a hybrid meeting of TQF in 2025. Chase thanked those who participated in the workshop and who had provided subsequent input. This had helped shape the outputs, which are bite-sized, asynchronous, tailorable for local context, and designed to be integrated into existing frameworks and processes. The Toolkit includes seven activities and fourteen supplemental resources organised across three levels. Chase extended an offer of support for institutions wishing to embed these tools and also offered to run a session for quality professionals, recommending activities six and/or seven as the basis for this. Members are encouraged to continue to provide sparqs with feedback on the Toolkit using [this form](#).

We then moved on to a discussion about student-facing Professional Services Review (PSR). This commonly appeared in recommendations from previous Scottish review methods including [Enhancement-Led Institutional Review \(ELIR\)](#) and [Quality Enhancement and Standards Review \(QESR\)](#) and continues to come up in [Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review \(TQER\)](#) and [Institution Liaison Meetings \(ILMs\)](#). Members commented that there still seems to be some confusion about exactly what is expected in this area, with some institutions having interpreted the guidance as requiring a standalone review method for PSR, while others have integrated the review of PSR into other review methods. There was also uncertainty about the definition of 'student-facing', with members noting that some institutional services may have student-facing functions while not being student-facing in their entirety. Thematic reviews were offered as a potential solution, giving the flexibility to include these functions in an enhancement-led manner. There was some discussion about how review of PSR worked on a cyclical basis. It was

recognised that more support is required in this area, and it was suggested that the Special Interest Group looking at PSR that was active in 2024-25 might be revived.

Chase Greenfield reported that sparqs are supporting the National Review in relation to student engagement and are developing a new Postgraduate Research (PGR) experience model, as well as updating the guide to student engagement in Institution-Led Quality Review (ILQR) and related resources. The annual [That's Quality](#) training event has been refreshed and is now open to booking.

Amy Eberlin reported that all TQER visits for 2025-26 have concluded, with two reports due to be published, and preparation for the 2026-27 reviews is underway. Thematic analysis is being conducted on reviews undertaken in the first two years of TQER, with a summary to be published in September. QAA plans to launch a 'Focus On' style programme of enhancement work offering practical, timely support around topics arising from TQER. All planned ILMs are complete. The final STEP events of the year have been delivered, current STEP projects are concluding their work for 2025-26, and six of these will be continuing. An enhancement project on Compassionate Communication has been launched.

Derek Horsburgh from the SFC reported that the refreshed [SFC Guidance on Quality for Colleges and Universities](#) was scheduled for publication in July and that no substantive changes were expected.

In closing the first part of the meeting, we noted that this was the final meeting of Alen McKinlay's first term as Vice-Convener and that an election would run over the summer. Alen is happy to serve a second term unless there are any challengers.

In the second part of the meeting, we had two breakout discussions. Dawn Martin led Spotlight on the [UK Quality Code](#): Recognising and Rewarding Student Contribution, which considered [Scotland's Ambition for Student Partnership](#) alongside the Code. Members shared examples of financial and non-financial incentives that they had found helpful, noting that paid roles tended to be better defined. Some institutions reported that it helped to have a key point of contact for students engaged in quality. The group also discussed how to avoid 'student fatigue' and how student-staff committees and class rep systems could be enhanced, as well as the impact of the professionalisation of student contribution.

Our second discussion concerned Preparation for Tertiary Enhancement Quality Review and was chaired by Alen McKinlay. Advice included: focusing on readiness and preparation; not underestimating the lead-in time required; ensuring that staff are able to dedicate time to preparing for TQER rather than treating it as business-as-usual; being mindful of the pressures everyone is under, as well as difficult institutional context; and the role and profile of the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#) in the review. There was also some discussion of the Lead Student Representative Role – it was acknowledged that there are a range of models for this student engagement, and that it would be good to share practice.

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. As always, we will survey members over the summer to shape the agenda and membership for the coming year.