
Annex F: A guide to TQEF acronyms

AQE (Annual Quality Engagements)

There will be two aspects to annual quality engagement i.e. the SFC will include discussion of learning and quality and the outcomes of the SEAP in their engagement through the Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model, while QAA will undertake a programme of liaison meetings with institutions, within the context of the TQEF and the external peer review method (see TQER), which will support the provision of advice and guidance and the TQER process.

CDN (College Development Network)

CDN is the national enhancement agency for Scotland's colleges, working with the college sector to develop their people and deliver better outcomes for students. CDN will support the staff and leadership of the college sector to build their capacity and ensure that they can fully participate in all aspects of the TQEF.

ESG (Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area)

ESG provide the framework for internal and external quality assurance across the countries of the European Higher Education Area. The TQEF has been developed to ensure continued alignment with ESG. The current version of the ESG were developed in 2015 and will be reviewed in 2025.

ELIR (Enhancement Led-Institutional Review)

ELIR is the process of cyclical external quality assurance review for the university sector delivered by the QAA. ELIR ran for four cycles from 2003-04 to 2021-22. From AY 2024-25 it will be replaced by TQER.

ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)

Established in 2000, ENQA promotes European cooperation in the field of quality assurance in higher education. It aims to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of European higher education, and to act as a major driving force for the development of quality assurance across all the Bologna Process signatory countries, including the UK and Scottish Governments.

ES (Education Scotland)

ES is an executive agency of the Scottish Government charged with supporting quality and improvement in Scotland's schools. SFC has contracted with ES over many years to deliver SFC's statutory duty to assure and enhance the quality of SFC-fundable provision in Scotland's colleges. ES is a partner in the TQEF and has been commissioned by SFC to support its development and implementation.

HGIOC (How Good is our College)

HGIOC is the quality assurance framework for the college sector that integrated the assurances sought through ES's evaluative activities and SFC's Outcome Agreement process. HGIOC will be replaced by TQEF from AY 2024-25.

ILQR (Institution-led Quality Review)

Describes the systematic process for how institutions evaluate and review their own provision. It is for institutions to determine their own quality arrangements within the parameters and guidelines set out in SFC Guidance for ILQR.

ILR (Institution-led Review)

The systematic process for how universities reviewed their own provision under the QEF. Now superseded by ILQR within the TQEF.

MCHP (Model Complaints Handling Procedure)

The SPSO has developed MCHPs with the college and university sectors respectively. The MCHPs provide a standardised approach to dealing with complaints in each sector. It is a requirement of the MCHP that all complaints are recorded to ensure accountability and provide information for improvement.

NUS (National Union of Students) Scotland

NUS Scotland is the national union representing university and college student interests across Scotland.

OF (Outcomes Framework) and AM (Assurance Model)

The Outcomes Framework and Assurance Model is the SFC's approach to assurance and accountability from AY 2024-25. The Outcomes Framework sets out what outcomes the SFC expect institutions to deliver in return for the funding they receive. The outcomes are broad, forward looking and not bespoke to a particular institution. The Assurance Model tells the

SFC what and how institutions have delivered against these outcomes through monitoring and engagement.

PSRB (Professional, statutory, and regulatory body)

PSRBs accredit a significant volume of provision in colleges and universities. SFC expects institutions to reflect on the outcomes of relevant PSRB accreditations as part of the internal and external review activity. Institutions are also encouraged to explore ways of aligning PSRB activity with ILQR to reduce duplication and burden.

QAA (Quality Assurance Agency)

UK's independent higher education quality assurance works in partnership with SFC and the sector to assure and enhance the quality of higher education in Scotland. QAA delivers key aspects of the TQEF including TQER and STEP. Its independence from government ensures continued compliance with the ESG.

QA-TNE (Quality Evaluation and Enhancement of UK model for trans-national education)

QA-TNE is a method for the quality evaluation and enhancement of UK trans-national education delivered by QAA. Participation in QA-TNE is a requirement for all Scottish degree awarding bodies engaging in TNE from AY 2024-25.

QEF (Quality Enhancement Framework)

The QEF was the enhancement-led approach to quality assurance for the Scottish university sector. QEF will be replaced by TQEF from AY 2024-25.

SCQFP (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership)

The SCQFP is the independent body set up to maintain and develop Scotland's National Qualifications Framework. SCQFP works with awarding bodies, professional bodies and other programme owners to ensure that a wide variety of learning is recognised on the Framework.

SEAP (Self-Evaluation and Action Plan)

The SEAP is an annual self-evaluative report, framed against the principles of the TQEF, that institutions will be required to submit to the SFC. The report should be a high-level summary of the outcomes of institution led quality assurance and enhancement activities and should identify areas of strength and areas for development or enhancement at a strategic level. It should include an action plan detailing how institutions will address areas for enhancement

or development and any actions arising from the commendations and/or recommendations arising from external review.

SFC (Scottish Funding Council)

SFC is Scotland's tertiary education and research authority. The SFC is a non-departmental public body that is directly accountable to Scottish Ministers of c£1.9 billion of public investment annually to support high-quality learning provision and research in Scotland's colleges and universities. SFC has a statutory duty to secure provision for quality assurance and enhancement of SFC-fundable provision delivered by fundable bodies (colleges and universities) in Scotland. It does this through the TQEF.

SIA (Strategic Impact Analysis)

SIA is an overarching periodic commentary on an institution's journey in the period between TQER reviews, outlining institutions' current context, trends over this timeframe, challenges, opportunities and successes to support the upcoming review. Alongside the annual SEAPs, the SIA will be used as part of the evidence base in advance of TQER review visits.

SPSO (Scottish Public Service Ombudsman)

The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about public services in Scotland. Its remit covers colleges and universities and government agencies such as SFC. SPSO has developed model complaints handling procedures for the college and university sectors respectively that provide a standardised approach to dealing, recording and reporting on complaints.

sparqs (Student Partnership in Quality Scotland)

sparqs is the SFC-funded agency that supports college and university students engage as partners in the decisions made about the quality of the learning experience. sparqs has led the development of a Student Learning Experience Model and Student Partnership Ambition Statement. These feature as key sector reference points for effective student engagement and partnership in the TQEF. Sparqs' ongoing work directly supports students and Student Associations to enhance their capacity to take part in internal and external quality review and in enhancement activity.

SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority)

SQA is the Scottish Government executive agency responsible for accrediting educational awards in Scotland.

SQCS (Scottish Quality Concerns Scheme)

The QAA-managed scheme provides an opportunity for students and staff from the university sector in Scotland to raise concerns about academic standards and quality in higher education institutions to the QAA. Only concerns which indicate serious systemic weaknesses in an institution's approach to the management of quality and standards are investigated under the SQCS.

STEP (Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme)

The sector-owned national programme of co-ordinated thematic activity across a cycle of four years. STEP will enable Scotland's colleges and universities to work together to deliver innovation, improvement and enhancement of learning, teaching student experience and staff development across tertiary provision. STEP is managed by QAA on behalf of colleges and universities.

TQEF (Scotland's Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework)

From AY 2024-25 the new quality assurance and enhancement framework for Scotland's colleges and universities. It comprises a shared set of principles, delivery mechanisms, and outputs that can be applied to the different contexts of our colleges and universities to give assurance on and enhancement of academic standards and the quality of the student experience, and ensure accountability for public investment in learning and teaching.

TQER (Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review)

The peer-led and enhancement focused external review methodology for colleges and universities. Managed by QAA, it is one of the key delivery mechanisms of the TQEF and ensures there is independent, robust assurance about quality and about enhancement of quality in Scotland's colleges and universities.

TQSG (Tertiary Quality Steering Group)

The TQSG provides advice and guidance to the SFC on the co-creation of a tertiary approach to quality assurance and enhancement in Scotland. The TQSG is made up of leaders and practitioners from Scotland's colleges and universities alongside SFC's quality agency delivery partners.