
SFC Data Analysis for Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the sector with further detail about the data analysis that SFC will be sharing with the QAA Review team and the institution as part of the Tertiary Quality External Review (TQER) process.

Background - SFC's use of data and evidence

2. As outlined in [SFC's Guidance on Quality for Colleges and Universities 2024-25 to 2030-31](#) it is the continued intention to develop and enhance the use of data and evidence in how we account for public investment in the delivery of high quality learning. SFC holds the responsibility for the published institutional data and will use this to inform:
 - The [Assurance Model](#), including using the data to evidence and inform our understanding of the quality assessment and enhancement through the SEAP and external review, in conjunction with the information we receive from institutions and external quality agencies.
 - Regular engagement with institutions.
 - The external peer review process, through SFC sharing analysis of the data with the TQER review teams.
3. In the college sector, SFC collects and quality assures data on students and the student experience directly from colleges as part of the Further Education Statistical (FES) return. SFC also conducts an annual College Leaver Destination survey on the destinations of successful full-time college leavers, and the [Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey \(SSES\)](#).
4. In the university sector, SFC is a statutory customer of the [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\)](#) which collects statutory data from Scottish institutions on behalf of SFC. SFC also has access to data from the [Graduate Outcomes \(GO\)](#) surveys, as well as data from the [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service \(UCAS\)](#), and jointly owns the [National Student Survey \(NSS\)](#).

Data Analysis for TQER

5. As described in the [TQER Guide for Institutions](#), SFC will be sharing an analysis of data that is relevant to the institution's context at the time of the review, with the review team, eight weeks prior to the initial visit. This information will be shared with the institution by QAA as part of review preparations.
6. As outlined above SFC hold, access and/or collect a range of data and it is this data that will be reviewed and analysed by SFC as part of the TQER process. As set out in the SFC

Guidance on Quality this may include:

- Data on student outcomes (quantitative) and how institutions are taking action to improve outcomes (qualitative) for students of all backgrounds, with a particular interest in measures and actions about:
 - Student populations.
 - Retention.
 - Success.
 - Employability.
 - Student survey results (e.g., NSS in universities and SSES in colleges) and how institutions are addressing feedback from such surveys.
 - Course closures and the management of students in flight on those courses.
 - Qualitative information from key stakeholders, such as sparqs, NUS and Student Associations.
 - Staff, student or other feedback (including complaints) on quality and standards.
 - Industry and employer feedback on the preparedness of graduates / leavers.
7. Much of this data and evidence will be collected or be available systematically (e.g., student outcomes data, student survey results, complaints) through existing returns and surveys. Other data and evidence will be utilised as and when it is available or is drawn to our attention (e.g., feedback from industry, employers, and Student Associations and information about course closures). It is important to note that this data and evidence will be used alongside information from the annual SEAPs and periodic external review reports.
8. Institutions are expected to comply with the established guiding principles for Public Information about the quality of educational provision and the student experience. All information should be accurate, honest, accessible, tailored to the intended user, updateable (on appropriate timescales) and re-usable.

TQER Data Analysis Process

9. SFC has identified the key data and evidence that is relevant to the external review process for colleges and universities (see table below).
10. The analysis of the data will be undertaken as a collaborative process between relevant colleagues across SFC, including the Outcome Manager for the institution.
11. For each institution undergoing review, there will be meetings of SFC colleagues to explore and discuss the data. The report and associated evidence will be prepared and subject to internal approval prior to submission to QAA.

Indicative measures/data sources to be reviewed in the TQER Data Analysis

Please note that some measures are relevant only to colleges or universities.

Principle: Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Entry qualifications.
- Student populations and demographics.
- Volume of credits delivered / FTE.
- Early withdrawals.
- Retention a.k.a. non-completion, considering partial and full success.
- Qualifications obtained and good honours.
- Apprenticeships.
- Review SEAPs for references to these metrics.

Principle: Supporting Student Success

- Articulation – progression from college HN to university degree.
- Graduate Outcomes.
- Student Destinations.
- Review SEAPs for references to these metrics.

Principle: Student Engagement and Partnership

- National Student Survey.
- Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey.
- Review SEAPs for reference to PTES/PRES where relevant.

TQER Data Analysis Report

12. The report will give the TQER peer-review team an indication of the **scope of funded activity**. Although the scope of the TQER will include all credit bearing activity, SFC can only report on those activities for which it has access to the necessary data and evidence.
13. Where there are restrictions on the data which SFC has access to, or the manner in which it is collected restricts the narrative, this will be noted in the report.
14. When considering the data, the focus will be on the **overarching trend over a period of five years** (where this is available), not on minor year on year variations in measures. Comparisons with the sector average may be drawn where this information is available and relevant.
15. The five-year period refers to published data available at the time of the data analysis meeting for the individual institution. Where relevant, measures will be considered in the context of student demographics too.
16. There will be a focus on providing feedback on key strengths and areas for development.

17. The final report will represent a **factual, evidence-informed view of the institution.**

Next Steps

18. The approach to the analysis and compilation of the institutional reports, will be reviewed as part of our TQEF evaluation. If colleagues have any questions about this process, please contact the Learning and Quality team via quality@sfc.ac.uk