

University of Glasgow

Academic Standards Committee – Friday 29 May 2009

Enhancement-led Institutional Review 2009 - Update

Dr Jack Aitken and Wendy Muir, Senate Office

1. Dates for the Review

Dates have now been confirmed for the University's Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR): 20-21 October (Part One) and the week beginning 23 November 2009 (Part Two). A timetable of key dates is set out in Annex 1.

It will be recalled that the review assesses the University's performance in maintaining academic standards and maintaining and enhancing academic quality. This exercise is comparable, for our Learning & Teaching activity, to the RAE. The review is conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for HE (Scotland) (QAA).

2. How the exercise works

A visiting team of six reviewers (including a student and a reviewer from outwith the UK) will meet with groups of staff and students from around the University during both the Part One and Part Two visits. The purpose of Part One is for the reviewers to get a feel for the University and set an agenda for the main Part Two visit. However, we know that, at least, in Part One, they will wish to meet with a group of senior staff, students representatives and staff who have recent experience of a DPTLA review. The precise groupings cannot be predicted at this stage. Part Two involves a larger number of meetings. We will notify staff and students as soon as possible.

Briefings will be provided for those the reviewers wish to see. There will also be a broader programme of briefings and information provided for the University community before that, mainly in the early autumn.

We will be seeking the support of colleagues around the University in ensuring that we achieve an outcome that properly reflects the high quality of our students' learning experience and the commitment of staff to delivering this.

3. Preparation of the 'Reflective Analysis'

For the ELIR, the University has to produce an evaluation of its own performance re academic standards and quality. This is the 'Reflective Analysis' (RA) which we submit to QAA in advance of the exercise. The first draft of that document is being finalised and will be circulated shortly to the ELIR Steering Group we have established. Subsequent drafts will be submitted to Senate, Court and EdPSC for comment at their meetings in June. Drafts versions of the Reflective Analysis will be available on the University web site, and comments are encouraged and will be welcome at any time. It is important that we have the broadest input to, and awareness of, the exercise.

Guidance notes from the [ELIR handbook](#) on what the RA should address are set out in [Annex 2](#).

The Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee has overseen the development of Indicators of Enhancement. The indicators are a contribution to the overall environment which supports the enhancement of higher education in Scotland. The latest version of the Indicator of Enhancement document (see [Annex 3](#)) sets out a

framework which comprises the Indicators and an accompanying set of questions. The framework has been designed to facilitate informed discussions at all levels within institutions about the enhancement of the student experience. In drafting the Reflective Analysis, reference will be made to the indicators and accompanying questions.

4. The purpose and subject of ELIR

ELIR is twin pronged: part of the exercise is devoted to checking that the University is properly maintaining effective arrangements for quality assurance and maintaining standards; the other is to assess the effectiveness of our approach and activities designed to enhance the student learning experience. A judgement is made on our ability to maintain standards. This will be expressed in terms of the team's 'confidence' in the University in this regard.

The main focus will be on our taught degree provision, postgraduate as well as undergraduate. However, from the published guidance, it is possible that there will be more attention devoted than at the last ELIR to the postgraduate research experience- this also falls within the scope of the review. It is also possible that the review will consider aspects of the University's collaborative activity to a greater extent than at the 2004 ELIR.

5. Review outcomes

The University will be notified of the confidence judgement c. one week after the second part of the visit. This will come in a letter that also notes the key themes the reviewers decided to pursue.

There will be two reports that follow: a summary that will be published, designed for the layperson, and a technical document, intended to aid those more directly involved.

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ELIR 2009
Key Dates and Events

Weeks from Part 2 visit	Key Dates	Event
-32	17 April	1 st draft of Reflective Analysis (RA)
-29	4 May	2 nd draft of RA
-29	8 May	Meeting with QAA Assistant Director
-14	w/c 21 Aug	Review team identified and QAA notifies the University
-12	31 Aug	Final RA submitted to QAA
-12 to -6	31 Aug to 16 Oct	Identify, contact and brief those who will meet with reviewers in Part 1 visit.
-5	20+21 Oct	Part 1 visit.
-5 to -1	19 Oct to 20 Nov	Identify, contact and brief those who will meet with reviewers in Part 2 visit. Identify and collate documentation.
0	w/c 23 Nov	Part 2 visit
+1	30 Nov	QAA sends key themes letter to GU
+10	~1 Feb 2010	QAA sends draft report to GU
+20	~12 April	Report published on QAA website