

**Consultation on Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER)**

**Online Survey Questions**

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| This document provides a copy of the survey questions to help you when preparing your response to the TQER consultation. Please use the [online survey](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/qaa5/consultation-on-tertiary-quality-enhancement-review-tqer) to submit your response. You can find out more on the [consultation web page](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/reviewing-quality-in-scotland/scottish-quality-enhancement-arrangements/tertiary-quality-enhancement-review-consultation).Please note that the survey needs to be completed in one sitting. Once the survey has been submitted you will not be able to change your answers. |

# Introduction

## About TQER

Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) has been commissioned by the Scottish Funding Council and developed by QAA, working with Scotland's colleges and universities and key stakeholders. It aims to create a method for the review, assurance and enhancement of provision delivered by tertiary fundable bodies in Scotland. The review method takes account of, and builds on, the strengths and good practice across previous quality arrangements for both the Scottish college and university sectors, developing them for a tertiary context.

TQER is a peer-led, enhancement-focused approach which has been co-created with staff and students from across Scotland's tertiary institutions. It puts student interests and the student voice at the heart of our quality arrangements. It recognises the value, commitment and professionalism of staff across our system. It seeks to provide both support and challenge for institutions to deliver a high-quality student experience and to develop and innovate in learning and teaching. TQER provides the basis for public and stakeholder confidence in the management of academic standards, the enhancement of the quality of student learning experience, and enabling student success.

## About this consultation

This consultation seeks views on the proposed new external review for Scotland's colleges and universities - Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) as set out in the TQER Guide.

You are asked to review the proposed [TQER Guide for Institutions](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaas/reviewing-he-in-scotland/tqer-review-guide-for-institutions.pdf), which gives detailed information and explanation regarding TQER, and respond to the questions in the survey.

The consultation questions cover the whole approach and system for TQER. QAA recognises the time that will be invested in considering and responding. Your input will be invaluable in helping QAA Scotland finalise the TQER method.

There are 19 questions in the survey and the opportunity to provide free text comments. The time taken to complete the survey will depend on the amount of free text added. Free text is enormously helpful in understanding and interpreting the data. While comprehensive responses are welcomed, we recognise that some questions will be of more interest to different respondents - for example, students and/or their representatives - and that the level of response across the survey will differ. As a result, it is not necessary to answer all questions. All responses will be given equal consideration.

## Who should respond?

This consultation will be of interest to Scotland's colleges and universities, their staff and students, and their representative bodies. It will also be of interest to tertiary sector stakeholders, organisations and quality agencies in Scotland.

Your comments on the proposed TQER Guide will help us to ensure that the method reflects the needs of the Scottish tertiary sector and will help drive enhancement across Scotland's colleges and universities. Your comments and responses will also be used to inform briefings, training and further guidance.

## Consultation period

This consultation will run from **8 July to 2 September 2024** (17.00 BST). We recognise that institutions across the Scottish tertiary sector have different absence points and different pressure points. An extended consultation period gives all institutions an opportunity to respond and enables QAA to capture as many views as possible.

## How to respond

Please use the [online survey](https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/qaa5/consultation-on-tertiary-quality-enhancement-review-tqer) to upload your responses. An introduction to the consultation and the proposed documentation is available on the [QAA Scotland website](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/reviewing-quality-in-scotland/scottish-quality-enhancement-arrangements/tertiary-quality-enhancement-review-consultation).

*All answers provided will be completely confidential and anonymous unless you choose to provide identifiable personal data in response to any of the questions. No personal data will be shared with third parties. Any results reported following our analysis of the responses to the survey will only be in aggregate form, and individual responses will not be identifiable.*

*Further details about how QAA deals with your personal data is available in our* [*Privacy Notice*](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/privacy-and-cookies)*.*

## Next steps

Following the conclusion of the consultation, QAA will collate and consider responses. We will make appropriate changes to the proposals where we consider there is a clear reason to do so. We intend to publish our consultation response and final institutional guidance documents in October 2024. TQER will then be launched during academic year 2024-25. To support the transition to the new method, we will publish further guidance, including a short guide which will support staff in engaging with the process, and hold briefings for staff and students.

## Any questions?

For further enquiries and information, please contact arcadmin@qaa.ac.uk

We look forward to your feedback.

# Online survey questions

## Information about you

We collect this information to aid our understanding of the different constituencies of respondents and their perspectives. In line with our information retention schedule, we delete individual consultation responses within six months of receipt. If you want to know more about how we store your data, please read our [Privacy Notice](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/privacy-and-cookies).

Comments in our analysis will not be attributed to individuals or organisations. While you are not obliged to provide this information, we would find this information helpful in our analysis of comments.

We are happy to accept anonymous submissions; however, if you could provide information about the institution to which you are affiliated, or responding on behalf of, that would be beneficial for QAA Scotland in developing our response to the consultation and providing further information and training on TQER for institutions.

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| **Your name** *(optional)*:**Your role** *(optional):***Your institution/organisation** *(optional)*:**Are you responding:***(Please select at least one answer)*[ ]  on behalf of your institution[ ]  as an individual[ ]  as a student[ ]  on behalf of a student representative body[ ]  as a sector body[ ]  as a QAA reviewer[ ]  otherIf you selected 'other', please specify |

## Supporting the TQEF vision

Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) is the mechanism by which provision delivered by colleges and universities in Scotland will be reviewed, quality assured and enhanced. It is a peer-led, enhancement-focused approach which has been co-created with staff and students from across Scotland's tertiary institutions. It is intended to support the principles of the [Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF)](https://www.sfc.ac.uk/learning-quality/tertiary-quality/tertiary-quality-project.aspx).

TQER provides the basis for public and stakeholder confidence in the management of academic standards, the enhancement of the quality of student learning experience, and enabling student success.

The commission that QAA received was to create a single approach to review across the tertiary sector, with the right flexibility for different institutional contexts, and to create a peer-led model that both enables assurance and supports enhancement. The following questions will enable QAA to evaluate how well the proposed review method meets the components of the commission.

#### Does the method, as proposed in the Guide, enable a single approach to quality review across colleges and universities in Scotland?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

#### Does the method outlined in the Guide enable a peer-led model that supports both quality assurance and enhancement?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

TQER puts students at the forefront of the method. Student engagement in the review should help the review team to understand what it is like to be a student at the institution and how student partnership in decision-making, quality assurance and quality enhancement processes enhance the student learning experience.

Student engagement in TQER takes a number of forms:

* the appointment of a Lead Student Representative as the main point of contact between the review team and the student body
* student meetings and engagements which form the basis of the Initial Review Visit and help shape the lines of enquiry for the Main Review Visit
* contribution to the institution's Strategic Impact Analysis (SIA) (a self-evaluation document prepared for the review)
* formal meetings with the review team across a range of areas
* student reviewers as full and equal members of TQER review teams.

#### Does the method as proposed, enable effective student engagement in review (think about partnership and delivery of review as well as engagement throughout the review) and enable full insight of the student experience?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

#### Is there flexibility in the method as proposed to ensure parity across different provision and institution types?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

**Does the proposed method enable equitable participation in review?**

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

## Enabling institutional enhancement

#### Does the TQER method proposed support institutional enhancement and a culture of continuous improvement?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

#### Does the overall approach proposed provide an appropriate balance between assurance and enhancement?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

## Supporting assurance

#### Does the TQER method, as proposed, support institutions to demonstrate their alignment to the principles of the TQEF? You may want to consider the range of activities across the review, including scoping, initial visit, review visit and reporting.

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

TQER provides a set of outputs:

* a published contextualised report about the institution that includes the review judgement, recommendations and good practice
* a published action plan developed by the institution outlining how the institution will make progress on review outcomes.

#### Will the outputs of TQER provide information useful to institutions and present a basis for public confidence?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

## TQER operational delivery

The main review activity, requires every institution to submit evidence that will be assessed by external peer reviewers, including students. It is our intention to reduce the burden on institutions by using existing material as far as possible. However, the method requires all institutions to undertake a self-evaluation, known as the Strategic Impact Analysis (SIA). This is supported by an evidence base (made up of existing material), known as the Advance Information Set (AIS). Institutions will be given sufficient notice to begin preparations, develop the SIA and draw the AIS together. Submission of appropriate documentation will enable the review team to triangulate evidence ahead of review visits and develop lines of enquiry.

In addition, the TQER has been designed to ensure alignment with the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG). Universities will need to demonstrate this alignment. The [UK Quality Code](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/2024) is used as a reference point within TQER and provides institutions with a tool to map their own provision and processes against the ESG. To reduce burden, the AIS is designed to enable institutions to demonstrate this alignment without a need to provide additional mapping. The Quality Code is also likely to be a helpful tool for all institutions to support self-reflection and evaluation.

QAA considers this is appropriate to ensure that the review is being conducted on a comparable basis and using a reference point that is widely understood and engaged with across all different types of institutions operating in UK tertiary education. For further detail see paragraphs 38-39 and Annex E: Advance Information Set of the Guide.

#### Do you consider that the external reference points used for TQER help outline expectations of institutions and provide a supportive basis for review?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

#### The evidence base is made up of a Strategic Impact Analysis, Advance Information Set and evidence from other sources. Does the submission of the evidence base for TQER support an institution to demonstrate that it meets sector expectations in managing academic standards, enhancing the quality of the learning experience it provides and enabling student success?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

Scotland's [Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF)](https://www.sfc.ac.uk/learning-quality/tertiary-quality/tertiary-quality-project.aspx) is the quality assurance and enhancement framework for Scotland's college and university further and higher education provision. In the Guide (paragraphs 23-25), we have proposed that external peer review teams look at an institution's effectiveness in meeting the [principles of the TQEF](https://www.sfc.ac.uk/assurance-accountability/learning-quality/tertiary-quality-project/).

The table in '*Evidencing the effectiveness of the institution against the TQEF principles'*, on pages 16-25 of the Guide, outline the questions that review teams will seek answers to when considering an institution's effectiveness against the TQEF principles and give an indication of where and how the review team might find the answers, and what sources of primary and secondary evidence might be considered.

#### Do you consider that the indicative evidence sources suggested, the range of engagements outlined for review visits and the questions to which the review team will seek answers, give institutions sufficient opportunity to demonstrate effectiveness against the TQEF principles?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

TQER is conducted by teams of peer reviewers who are: staff with senior-level expertise in the provision, management and delivery of education in the tertiary sector; or students with experience in representing student interests. The composition of each review team will be tailored to the institution to ensure the review team has the relevant knowledge and experience to undertake the review. This will take into consideration factors such as the type of institution, type of provision, and size and type of collaborative provision.

Following discussion with the QAA Review Manager, institutions can opt to request a specialist reviewer - for example, a reviewer with experience of industry, international work, or in a specific topic such as transitions or work-based learning. International reviewers may be recruited to a review team as a specialist reviewer.

#### Do you consider that the composition of review teams as proposed (Annex G: Review team size and composition) and the use of a specialist and/or international reviewers will ensure that a review team will be sufficiently tailored to understand the context of an institution and have the relevant knowledge and experience to undertake the review?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

The Guide proposes (Annex T: SCQF duty for quality assurance of credit-rating activity) that, to reduce institutional burden and to adopt a consistent tertiary approach, TQER will be the mechanism through which credit-rating activity for the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) for colleges and universities is tested, replacing existing processes. Through TQER, it will be confirmed that appropriate arrangements are in place for credit rating, vetting and confirmation processes, as well as the ongoing monitoring of credit-rated provision and third parties. SCQF will subsequently confirm an institution's status to continue as a credit-rating body.

#### Do you consider the process as proposed in TQER an effective mechanism to consider the assurance and continuation of credit-rating in colleges and universities?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

TQER provides a set of outcomes for individuals that include a judgement, and the identification of recommendations and good practice.

#### Do the criteria and indicators in the matrix (Annex J) offer useful clarification on the outcomes?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

#### Do you consider the outcomes clear?

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

All outcomes from Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review (TQER) will include follow-up activity (see paragraphs 132-141). The level of follow-up activity will depend on the outcomes from the review. Routine follow-up is the requirement for all institutions to submit an action plan, within a maximum of 12 weeks following the publication of the TQER report. Guidance on the format of the action plan can be found inAnnex L: Action plan guidance.

Progress against developing and disseminating areas of good practice and actions taken on TQER recommendations actions is considered as part of Institutional Liaison Meetings (ILM). Where there are concerns about the timeliness or effectiveness of actions being undertaken, these will be shared with SFC. SFC may wish to instigate further action where there is unsatisfactory progress on the specific area(s) identified.

ILMs are undertaken with every institution on an annual basis (apart from the year of review) to consider developments in and impact of an institution's quality assurance and enhancement approach and progress following external peer review. ILMs are a component of external quality arrangements and support the 'no surprises' and liaison approach of sharing information.

'Partial effectiveness' and 'not effective' outcomes will result in a TQER re-review.

**Does the Guide set out clearly what happens in follow-up activity?**

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

**Please provide comments on your answer**

## Other

#### Do you have any further views in relation to the contents of the Guide, or in relation to these proposals that you have not included elsewhere in your response to this consultation?

#### What training and/or support do you or your institution need to enable you to effectively prepare for a TQER?

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