

## **Report from the Quality Assessment Committee**

### **Issue**

1. The board is kept informed of the work of its Quality Assessment Committee (QAC) by receiving a report on the outcomes of each meeting. The attached report summarises the outcomes of the QAC meeting held on 8 October 2018. This report will be supplemented by an oral report given by the chair of the committee.

### **Recommendations**

2. The board is invited to receive the report of the Quality Assessment Committee.

### **Further information**

3. Available from Simon Levine.

## Quality Assessment Committee report

October 2018

### Key performance measures for the Designated Quality Body (DQB)

1. The committee received a paper setting out some considerations in the setting of key performance measures (KPMs) for the DQB. Discussions were based around the following questions:
  - a. What does the OfS need from the DQB?
  - b. What are the necessary foundations or building blocks that need to be in place for the DQB to achieve what is needed?
  - c. How will the OfS know that the DQB has delivered what the OfS needs?
2. An initial meeting had been held with the QAA to discuss the development of KPMs and their use in reporting, and the committee was pleased to note that this initial meeting had been positive. QAA staff recognised the need for measures of how the QAA was performing in its role as the designated quality body. The committee considered that OfS officers were best placed to lead on the initial drafting of the KPMs (in collaboration with the QAA) but that the following considerations should be borne in mind:
  - a. The OfS needs KPMs to ensure that the DQB is accountable for the judgements it makes about quality and standards, and for the regulatory burden the DQB places on providers.
  - b. A shared view of the role and remit of the DQB is needed between the OfS and the QAA to progress these discussions.
  - c. The QAA's review methods must be fully aligned with the OfS's regulatory approach and allow the OfS to assure quality for students.
3. It was agreed that the OfS would continue discussions with the QAA and report back at the committee's next meeting.

### Reporting and engagement arrangements for the Designated Quality Body

4. The committee noted the reporting and engagement pattern which is driven from the designation agreement. This included quarterly reporting with the annual report presented to the committee in the spring.
5. The extent to which the committee would formally and informally engage with the QAA was discussed, with the committee noting that it wished to maximise opportunities for engagement. It was agreed that the QAA should attend QAC meetings regularly to discuss areas of shared interest. The committee would like to use this mechanism to build its knowledge of the DQB's work, and so would wish to meet with a range of QAA staff, reviewers and board members throughout the year.

Update on operational issues

6. The committee received an update on the following areas:
  - a. Design and implementation of the review methods for Quality and Standards Review (QSR) and degree awarding powers (DAPs) assessment.
  - b. DQB fee structure and levels.
7. Members noted that delays in the delivery of the new review methods would be discussed at the first quarterly report meeting between the OfS and the QAA.
8. The OfS had discussed with the QAA its intentions for the way it would use its power to charge fees to providers under the provisions of HERA. It was noted that information had not yet been provided to the OfS about likely fee structure and levels and so it had not been possible to assess whether fees would meet the HERA requirements, including for cost-recovery. The committee indicated that this could be a topic for future discussion with the QAA once information about its charging model was available.
9. Recent recruitment to the QAA's pool of reviewers was also discussed. The committee expressed an interest in learning more about the QAA's recruitment practices, and how it intended to ensure that review teams would be academically credible and how the expertise of reviewers would be widened to cover areas such as risk, regulation, and digital provision. The QAA would be invited to discuss this issue at the next meeting of QAC.

Future committee meetings

10. The next meeting will take place on 13 December 2018.