



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 9 May 2022. 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, May 2022

Implementation of new and revised quality and standards conditions

4. The committee received a paper which provided an update on the outcomes of the consultation on regulating quality and standards and the implementation of new and revised conditions of registration.
5. The committee supported the work proposed in the paper and noted the potential that it has to positively change providers' behaviour.
6. The committee noted the proposed timeline of Summer 2022 for the OfS to have setup a new team to conduct quality investigations over the next 18 months, noting that an early recruitment process would be needed to ensure availability of a pool of assessors to supply the expert academic judgement needed to conduct assessments during 2022-23. The investigation team will be part-funded by the Department for Education (DfE) for 2022-23 which will provide an additional level of resource to the OfS to undertake the number of investigations anticipated.
7. The committee agreed that proposals that would see an OfS officer working directly with a team of assessors attending visits and being involved in drafting reports and helping to form judgements would be helpful.
8. The committee noted that there is a need to ensure clarity of purpose for the OfS when looking at themed reviews of learning and teaching in practice as the OfS should not be seen as an improvement agency to help providers rather than a regulator. It is important to clearly distinguish OfS's role in this space and clarify what the mechanism is of moving to regulatory action from thematic work.

Student Outcomes (B3) and TEF consultations

9. The committee received a presentation updating on the early analysis of responses to the consultation on regulating student outcomes which closed in March 2022 and next steps.
10. The presentation focused on the following areas:
 - Overall approach
 - Indicators
 - Thresholds
 - Publication of data and information
 - Making judgements
 - Taking action
11. The committee noted that some consultation responses had argued that OfS should not regulate minimum expectations for student outcomes, but reiterated its support for the proposed approach. The committee discussed how the OfS might implement proposals for progression. Officers noted that the proposals for setting minimum numerical thresholds had included an explicit test to take account of data on past outcomes for different student groups and courses. Officers noted that if the proposals were implemented in line with the original proposals, then early case studies could be a valuable tool to show how decisions have been made in practice.

12. Members noted that respondents had asked how the DfE's Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) consultation and its focus on flexible and modular study would fit with the OfS's current proposals for regulating student outcomes. Officers confirmed that the OfS is in regular contact with DfE on this issue as government policy develops. The consultation set out the OfS's view that the proposed framework for regulating student outcomes would continue to be appropriate, but that new indicators could then be added as necessary to account for changing patterns of provision. Over the next three years more work will take place on the complex task of how to define positive outcomes on a modular course to enable effective regulation of student outcomes in this space.

13. The committee received a presentation updating on the early analysis of responses to the consultation on the TEF which closed in March 2022 and next steps.

14. The presentation focused on the following areas:

- Overall approach
- Rating scheme
- Scope
- Evidence
- Assessment
- Implementation

16. The committee noted the updates in the presentation.

Monitoring of the DQB – Q4 report 21-22

15. The committee received a paper that set out the OfS's evaluation of the performance of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) as the designated quality body (DQB) for Year 4, Q4 2021-22.

16. Exempt from publication.

17. Exempt from publication.

Development of new assessment methods by the DQB

18. The committee received a paper providing an update on progress in relation to the development of new assessment methods by the DQB.

19. Exempt from publication.

20. Exempt from publication.

21. Exempt from publication.

[Exempt from publication]

22. Exempt from publication.

23. Exempt from publication.

Future committee meetings

24. The next meeting will take place on 12 September 2022.