

About the Enhancement-led Institutional Review method

The QAA website explains the method for [Enhancement-led Institutional Review \(ELIR\)](#) and has links to the ELIR handbook and other informative documents.¹ You can also find out more about the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#).²

Further details about ELIR can be found in an accompanying [brief guide](#),³ including an overview of the review method, information about review teams, and explanations of

About Edinburgh Napier University

Edinburgh Napier University has a total student population of around 20,000 (headcount) from 140 countries studying at one of the University's three campuses in Edinburgh, online or through a transnational education partnership. The University has established collaborative partnerships in a variety of international locations including Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as a number of newer partnerships in countries including Myanmar, Mauritius and Vietnam. The University has six academic schools.

The University's Vision is to be 'an enterprising and innovative community, renowned internationally, with an unrivalled student learning experience'. Its range of provision has an applied and professional focus that builds on strong links with the communities in which it operates. The University is committed to widening access to higher education, to delivering graduates that are highly-valued by employers and to building a research base that contributes to policy, business and economic growth.

At the time of the 2019 ELIR, the University was developing a new strategy with the working title 'Shaping our Future' which aims to build on the achievements realised through its 2020 Strategic Plan (Strategy 2020). Strategy 2020, which was launched in 2014, set out key objectives that included: growing the academic reputation of the institution; delivering an excellent, personalised student experience; building innovation, enterprise and citizenship and internationalising provision.

Threshold judgement about Edinburgh Napier University

Edinburgh Napier University has **effective** arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience.

This is a positive judgement, which means that the University meets sector expectations in securing the academic standards of its awards and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience it provides, currently and into the future. This judgement confirms there can be public confidence in the University's awards and in the quality of the learning experience it provides for its students.

Commendations

- 1 The University is commended for the following areas of good practice.
- 2 **Strategic approach to widening participation** - the sustained, strategic, systematic and evidence-based approach to widening participation and direct entry which is having a continued positive impact on the number of widening participation students admitted to and progressing through the University. Effective interventions are evident at all stages of the learner journey from pre-admission through contextualised admissions arrangements to induction, transition and on-campus support. These include the student-led and University supported peer network of students from a widening participation background (Establish), the Countdown to Zero induction programme and introduction of dedicated widening participation student ambassadors.
- 3 **Support for developing students' skills in employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship** - the University's commitment to meeting its strategic objective to ensure that all students are prepared to succeed and thrive in the professional world through offering a range of programme-led work-related activities, placement learning opportunities and entrepreneurial skills development through its Bright Red Triangle service - a one-stop shop for extracurricular innovation and enterprise activities.
- 4 **Approach to monitoring postgraduate student academic progress** - since the 2015 ELIR, the University has developed a robust approach to overseeing individual postgraduate research student academic progress, including the introduction of regular review meetings every six months involving an independent panel chair.
- 5 **Systematic enhancement of leadership in learning, teaching and research** - the University has strengthened its structures for the support of learning and teaching and research-teaching linkages through the appointment of new vice-principals for learning and teaching and research, and the introduction of new school leadership roles. This includes the establishment of the school heads of learning and teaching, who are members of school leadership teams and participate in challenge discussions with the University Leadership Team which cover a range of matters including learning, teaching and research.
- 6 **Clear partnership working between academic and professional services staff** - academic and professional support services staff work effectively at school and institutional levels to deliver the University's strategic priorities. Examples of effective partnership working are evident in the delivery of a high-quality online learning environment and collaborative working between the academic staff and professional services colleagues working on placements, quality and planning.
- 7 **Effective development for academic and support services staff** - the University provides a wide range of opportunities, both formally and informally, to support the

action is taken at institutional level. The University is asked to ensure that the current institutional approach to reviewing postgraduate study considers more fully the wider student learning experience beyond student progression. There would also be benefit in the University ensuring it includes an appropriate level of externality and considering the extent to which the method will continue to be fit-for-purpose as postgraduate research student numbers grow. In addition, the University is asked to establish a systematic and timely mechanism for reviewing the contribution of the professional support services to the quality of the student experience.

16 **External examiner reports** - make external examiners' reports accessible to all students in order to give them the opportunity to engage in discussion and consideration of this element of the assessment process.

17 **English language proficiency for transnational education programmes** - review, within the current academic year, the English language entry criteria and proficiency of students on all transnational education programmes to ensure future student intakes have adequate language proficiency on entry and provide language support for existing students where required.

What happens next?

18 QAA Scotland will continue to engage with the institution through the annual discussion visits which, among other matters, consider the ways in which institutions respond to the ELIR outcomes.

19 One year after publication of the ELIR Outcome and Technical Reports, institutions are asked to provide a Follow-up Report to indicate how they are responding to the outcomes of ELIR. The final version of the institution's Follow-up Report is published on the QAA website. Institutions also engage in a range of enhancement and development activities including Focus On projects where institutions work collaboratively to improve policy and practice relating to topics that are frequently occurring in ELIR outcomes.

Further information

20 A more detailed [Technical Report](#) is also available for this review. The Technical Report sets out the team's findings under each heading in the ELIR 4 method.

21 This review and its findings relate to the institution as a whole and do not provide information about individual programmes of study or subjects. For further information about those, contact the institution or [visit its website](#).

22 University sector institutions in Scotland also engage in systematic Enhancement Theme activity. Further information about that work, which has a sector-wide and institutional focus, can be found on the [Enhancement Themes website](#).

23 Further information about QAA Scotland and the enhancement-led approach, including the ELIR method, can be found on the [QAA website](#).

24 For further information about the Scottish Funding Council see www.sfc.ac.uk.

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