

Enhancement-led Institutional Review of University of Glasgow

Outcome Report

March 2019

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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 follow-up action.

About this review

This is the Outcome Report of the ELIR conducted by QAA at University of Glasgow. The review took place as follows: Planning Visit on 22 January 2019 and Review Visit on 18-22 March 2019. The review was conducted by a team of six reviewers:

Professor Jeremy Bradshaw (Academic Reviewer)
Professor Hilary Grainger (Academic Reviewer)
Ms Nichola Kett (Coordinating Reviewer)
Associate Professor Åsa Kettis (Academic Reviewer)
Mr Alex Muir (Student Reviewer)
Dr Gillian Thomson (Academic Reviewer).

This report sets out the threshold judgement formed by the ELIR team on:

the current and likely future effectiveness of the institution's arrangements for managing academic standards and enhancing the quality of the student learning experience.

The threshold judgement for this report can be found on page 3, followed by commendations and recommendations.

A more detailed [Technical Report](#) is also available for this review.⁴ The Technical Report

About the University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow was founded in 1451 and is one of Scotland's four ancient universities. The University describes itself as a research-intensive, broad-based, civic university with global reach, and local roots. Students come from around 140 countries, as well as from the West of Scotland.

In 2010, the current academic structure was introduced which comprises four colleges (Arts; Science and Engineering; Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences; and Social Sciences) - within and across those colleges, there are 33 schools and research institutes, including a graduate school in each college. The colleges are highly autonomous in relation to resource allocation, learning and teaching, and research activity.

The University's vision is to be a world-class, world-changing university by focusing on three core elements: people, place and purpose. These elements are underpinned by specific action areas which include: attracting the best staff and students; connecting with the world through internationalisation; developing a transformative campus; streamlining processes, policies, systems and student support; and undertaking outstanding teaching and world-class research that has societal and economic impact. The current five-year strategy (to 2021)

teaching, cultural values associated with teaching and other activities undertaken in the area under review. The staff views are anonymised and communicated directly to the review panel as part of the preparation for the review. The survey draws on practice adopted in an international university network and has been welcomed as a positive initiative by staff and students alike.

Recommendations

8 The University of Glasgow is asked to consider the following recommendations.

9 **Feedback on assessment** - ensure that staff communicate consistently to students where the stated institutional policy expectations relating to marking turnaround time will not be met. This is in the context of the University carrying out a range of positive work to improve its assessment practice.

10 **Advising for postgraduate taught students** - in view of differing models operating across the colleges, make certain that arrangements in place for advising postgraduate taught students are communicated clearly to students, in particular, identifying each student's designated advisor/advisory team at an early stage, as well as outlining the adviser role and responsibilities.

11 **Annual monitoring of the postgraduate research student experience** - ensure that the postgraduate research student experience is monitored systematically and on a regular basis, in a manner comparable to the University's taught provision. This should enable the University to have an overview of the totality of the postgraduate research student experience including student progression, student feedback, and student engagement with training and research skills provision.

12 **Review of student-facing professional services** - establish a systematic and timely mechanism to review the contribution of the professional support services to the quality of the student experience.

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

14 **Analysis of exam board decisions on discretion** - develop a systematic way of monitoring and analysing the use of discretion by examination boards in order to have a clear view of the effectiveness of these arrangements, and to have clearer and more detailed information about the consistency with which this aspect of the assessment regulations is applied across the University.

What happens next?

15 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.

16 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

17 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.

18 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](#).

19 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](#).

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

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

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