

Teaching, Quality, and the Student Experience Committee

Terms of reference

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Committee is to contribute to the Board's aim for learning and teaching to ensure that all higher education (HE) students benefit from a high quality learning experience fully meeting their needs and the needs of the economy and society.
2. The Committee undertakes the Council's statutory responsibilities in respect of quality assessment. Specifically, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 requires the Council to ensure that it provides for assessing the quality of the education in institutions it funds so for statutory purposes the Committee acts as the Council's Quality Assessment Committee. The Committee also advises the Board on the effectiveness of its policies to promote excellence in learning and teaching, including support for pedagogic development, innovation and staff development.

Functions

Strategic and policy advice

3. Provide strategic advice to the Board on matters relating to learning and teaching.
4. Advise on appropriate implementation of policies to achieve the Council's strategic plan objectives.
5. Advise on the appropriate connections and relationships required to develop and implement the strategic theme for learning and teaching including the role of related bodies and other stakeholders.
6. Advise on matters as requested by the Board.

Monitoring and assurance

7. Oversee implementation of the strategic theme for learning and teaching and the management of risk, and monitor progress against the key performance targets.
8. Ensure the Council's policies and programmes are evaluated, and advise the Board on future options, having due regard to the diversity of the sector and its needs.
9. Advise on the resource and funding implications (both for the Council and for institutions) of delivering the strategic theme for learning and teaching.
10. Advise the Board on the continuing development of the quality assurance framework.
11. Advise the Board on issues of quality in learning and teaching drawn from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) reports on the outcome of audits presented at each Committee meeting.

12. Provide an annual opinion to the HEFCE Board in June of each year on the operation of the Quality Assurance Framework including performance of the QAA against its contract deliverables.

13. In addition to the work of the Committee conducted through its meetings, the Committee will:

- a. Report progress to the Board after each meeting.
- b. Establish advisory groups and commission advice as appropriate.
- c. Liaise with other standing committees of the Council in the development and implementation of the Council's policies to promote excellence in learning and teaching.

14. The terms of reference of each strategic committee directly incorporate the objectives and key performance targets agreed by the Board.

Objectives

15. The Board's objectives for the learning and teaching theme in the planning period 2006-11 are:

- a. To promote continuous improvement in learning and teaching through:
 - i. Investing in excellence.
 - ii. Overseeing the arrangements for quality assurance and advising on how HEFCE can best support quality enhancement.
 - iii. Supporting the professional development of those who contribute to the effectiveness of student learning.
- b. To enable greater flexibility in the provision of learning and teaching and opportunities for lifelong learning.
- c. To facilitate engagement with students and other stakeholders to ensure a high quality learning experience that meets the needs of students, the economy and society.
- d. To support innovation and the use of technologies that enrich the student experience and promote greater skills for lifelong learning.

- e. To support the sector to be internationally competitive in learning and teaching and to play a leading role in co-operation and good practice at European and international levels.
- f. To develop further a funding policy that supports these objectives.

Key performance targets

16. The Board's key performance targets for the learning and teaching theme are:
- a. At least 95 per cent of higher education institutions (HEIs) receive judgements of confidence in institutional quality audit by the Quality Assurance Agency, completed by 2008-09.
 - b. The proportion of students who are broadly satisfied with all aspects of teaching covered by the National Student Survey increases between 2005 and 2009.
 - c. The continuation rate for students in English HEIs across the planning period is the same as, or better than, the benchmark value calculated from the start year 2002-03.
 - d. To increase innovative, flexible approaches to the delivery of HE across the planning period.