



QAA
Scotland



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba



University of
St Andrews

Student Partnership at the Heart – Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Scotland

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Eve Lewis, Director, sparqs (student partnerships in quality Scotland)
Professor Clare Peddie, University of St Andrews, Scotland



Introductions

- Debra Macfarlane (corresponding author) Quality Assurance Agency Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council
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- Professor Clare Peddie, University of St Andrews, Scotland

Why are we presenting together...



Scotland's Higher Education Institutions



14 Universities



2 small specialist institutions



2 tertiary institutions



The Open University in Scotland



Scotland's HEIs

UHI campuses:

- Argyll College
- Highland Theological College
- Inverness College
- Lews Castle College
- Moray College
- NAFC Marine Centre
- North Highland College
- Orkney College
- Perth College
- Sabhal Mór Ostaig
- SAMS UHI
- Shetland College
- West Highland College

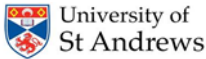
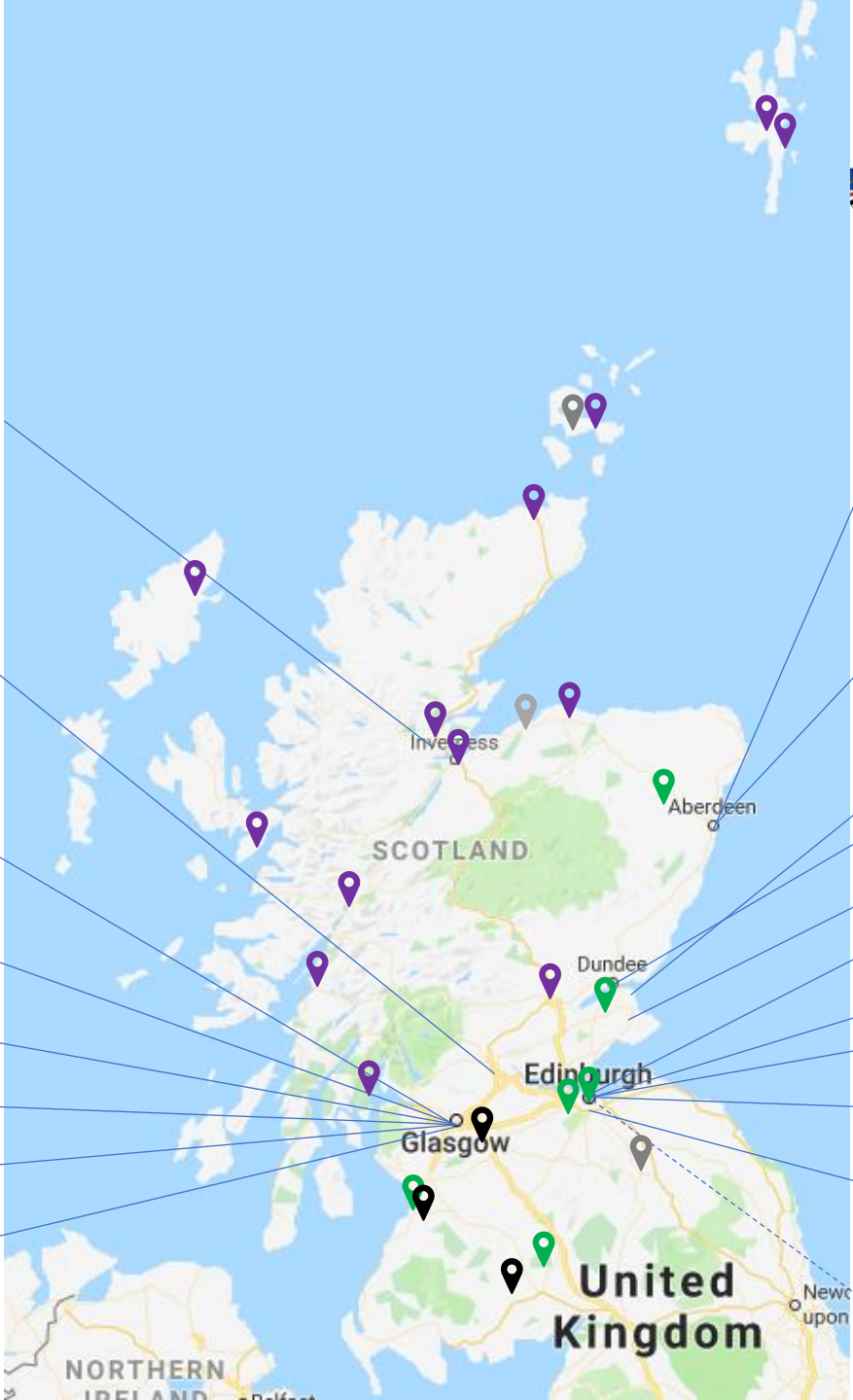


UWS campuses:

- Ayr
- Dumfries
- Hamilton

Glasgow School of Art campuses:

- Glasgow
- The Creative Campus, Highlands and Islands



Heriot Watt campuses:

- Edinburgh
- Scottish Borders
- Orkney



SRUC Campuses:

- Aberdeen
- Ayr
- Barony
- Edinburgh
- Elmwood
- Oatridge

Scotland's Quality Enhancement Framework



Evaluating the quality of learning & teaching through an enhancement-led approach since 2003

Partnership of agencies



QAA
Scotland



Scottish Funding Council
Promoting further and higher education



The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



nus
national union of students

sparqs
student partnerships in quality Scotland

The Quality Enhancement Framework 2003-2022

– Student Engagement

At all levels in the sector students are encouraged to take an active role

- Student representation and collaboration
- Institution-led review teams
- ELIR teams - student member is an equal member of the team
- Effective support and appropriate training.
- Enhancement Themes – leadership; participation at sector and institutional level
- Can be elected representatives, volunteers, interns or fully paid review team members



The new tertiary landscape – 2022 onwards

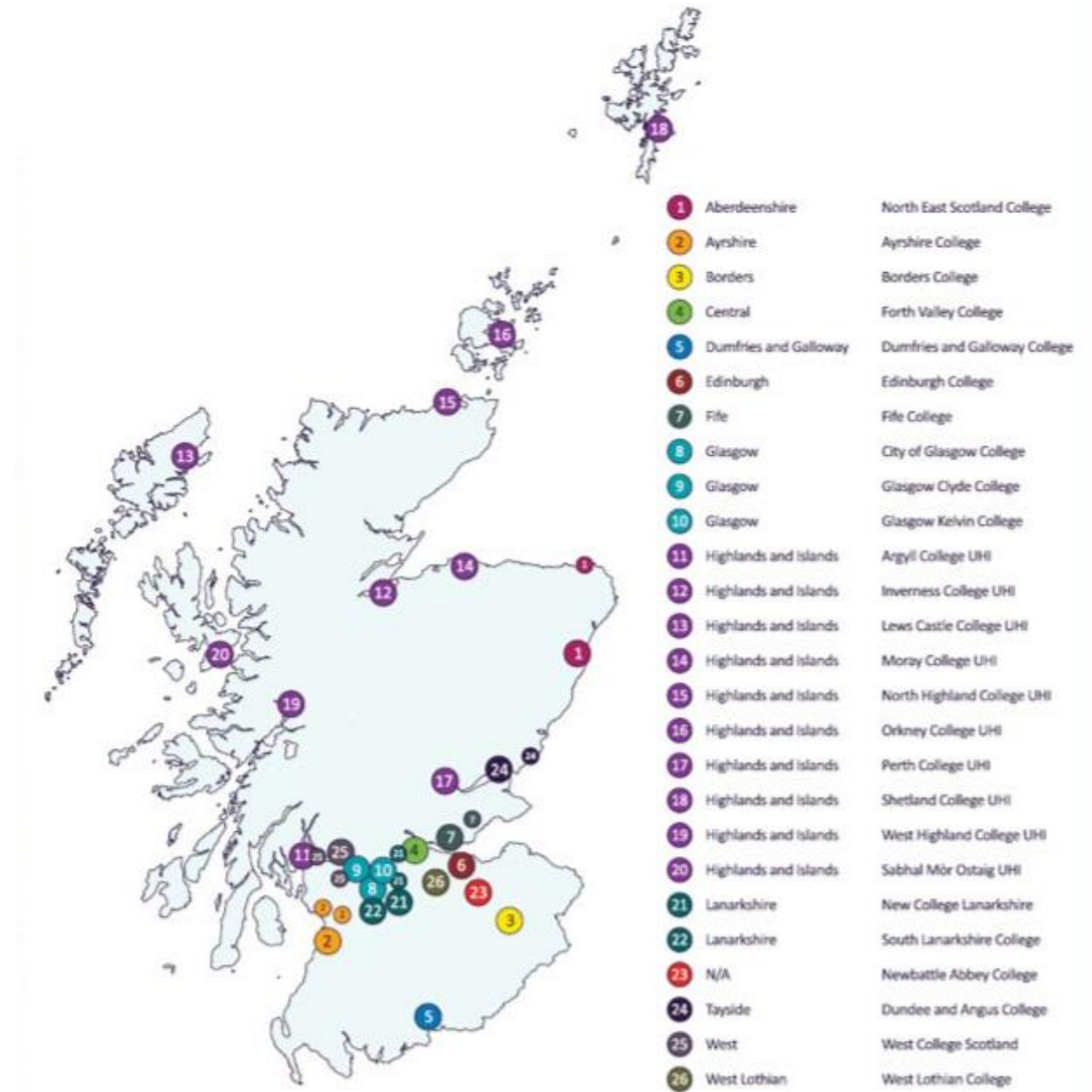
‘Our ambition is to make Scotland the very best place in which to be a student at college or university.

This requires a strong commitment to enhancing the student learning experience through the effective use of evidence; **clear and purposeful partnerships with students** at all levels; and a commitment to cross-sector collaboration and sharing good practice across the college and university sector’.

(SFC Coherence and Sustainability: A Review Of Tertiary Education, 2021)

Scotland's Colleges

- There are **26 colleges** in 13 regions across Scotland, delivering **69 million hours** of learning to around **213,135 learners** every year.
- Around a quarter of all higher education in Scotland is delivered in colleges and the sector enables around **8,000** students to progress into university each year.



Scottish Funding Council Review

SFC Review Recommendation

"We recommend developing a single quality assurance and enhancement framework for tertiary education, to uphold academic standards, and enhance the learning experience of all students"

Scottish Government response



"We are reassured by the SFC's commitment to build on the feedback from stakeholders about what they value within existing approaches and are content for SFC to explore options for a single quality assurance and enhancement framework for tertiary education"



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29 JUNE 2021

securing the— (a) coherent provision by the fundable bodies (as a whole) of a **high quality** of fundable further education and fundable higher education

SFC's statutory duty

AND

secure that provision for: (a) assessing; and
(b) **enhancing** the quality of fundable further and fundable higher education provided by [post-16 education] bodies





Developing a Tertiary Quality Framework

Key elements of an effective framework for Scotland are likely to include:

- coherence - the design should allow all elements to work together
- an emphasis on enhancement, not only quality assurance
- a **student-centred focus** on the whole learning experience.

BENEFITS OF A TERTIARY APPROACH TO QUALITY

FOR STUDENTS



SUPPORTING SUCCESSFUL STUDENT OUTCOMES – clearer links between our quality arrangements and successful outcomes for students;



LEARNER JOURNEY AND TRANSITIONS – better support for student transitions and more seamless pathways for learners from senior phase and between colleges and universities;



SUPPORTING ALL TYPES OF PROVISION CONSISTENTLY – increased consistency for arrangements across different types of provision (e.g. work-based learning and micro-credentials). A significant proportion of higher education provision is delivered by Scotland's colleges, and with more joint provision between the sectors planned, the divide between college and university quality approaches is already artificial;



CONTINUED CONFIDENCE IN STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF QUALIFICATIONS – the value of qualifications is crucial to students, employers as well as to the reputation of our system.

FOR INSTITUTIONS



REDUCTION IN DUPLICATION – of delivery of quality assurance and enhancement across the system;



MAXIMISING INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCE – in streamlining activity there are opportunities to both maximise institutional resource and the impact of the framework;



SUPPORTING OUR APPROACH TO COLLABORATION – a single approach to quality will enable us to support institution-led and learner focused collaborations across our tertiary system. As new provision and approaches to delivery are developed, the role of a shared quality framework will be crucial in continuing to do this effectively;



MORE EFFECTIVE IDENTIFICATION AND SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICE – we have excellent practice in both sectors at present and a tertiary approach will help organise how we share and gain impact from our collective experience.

FOR OUR SYSTEM



GREATER OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY – of key issues facing students, staff, and institutions through more consistent methodologies and reporting;



MAXIMISING IMPACT – of the expertise within our delivery partners;



CLEARER LINKS – between national and sector level priorities in shaping enhancement and improvement activities;



CONSISTENT APPROACH – to assurance and accountability, working with partners to optimise the assurance approach is consistent with development of the National Impact Framework and the Assurance and Accountability Framework;



GIVING SOMETHING BACK – a clearer link to UN Sustainability Goals can help us articulate how we can use our approach to learning, teaching, and working with students to benefit others.

Co-creation approach & overarching questions

- How can we drive authentic student partnership?
- How can we continue to build on our reputation for meaningful student partnership?
 - A model for Student Partnership
- How do we know the student experience is good?
 - A Student Learning Experience Model



Student Learning Experience

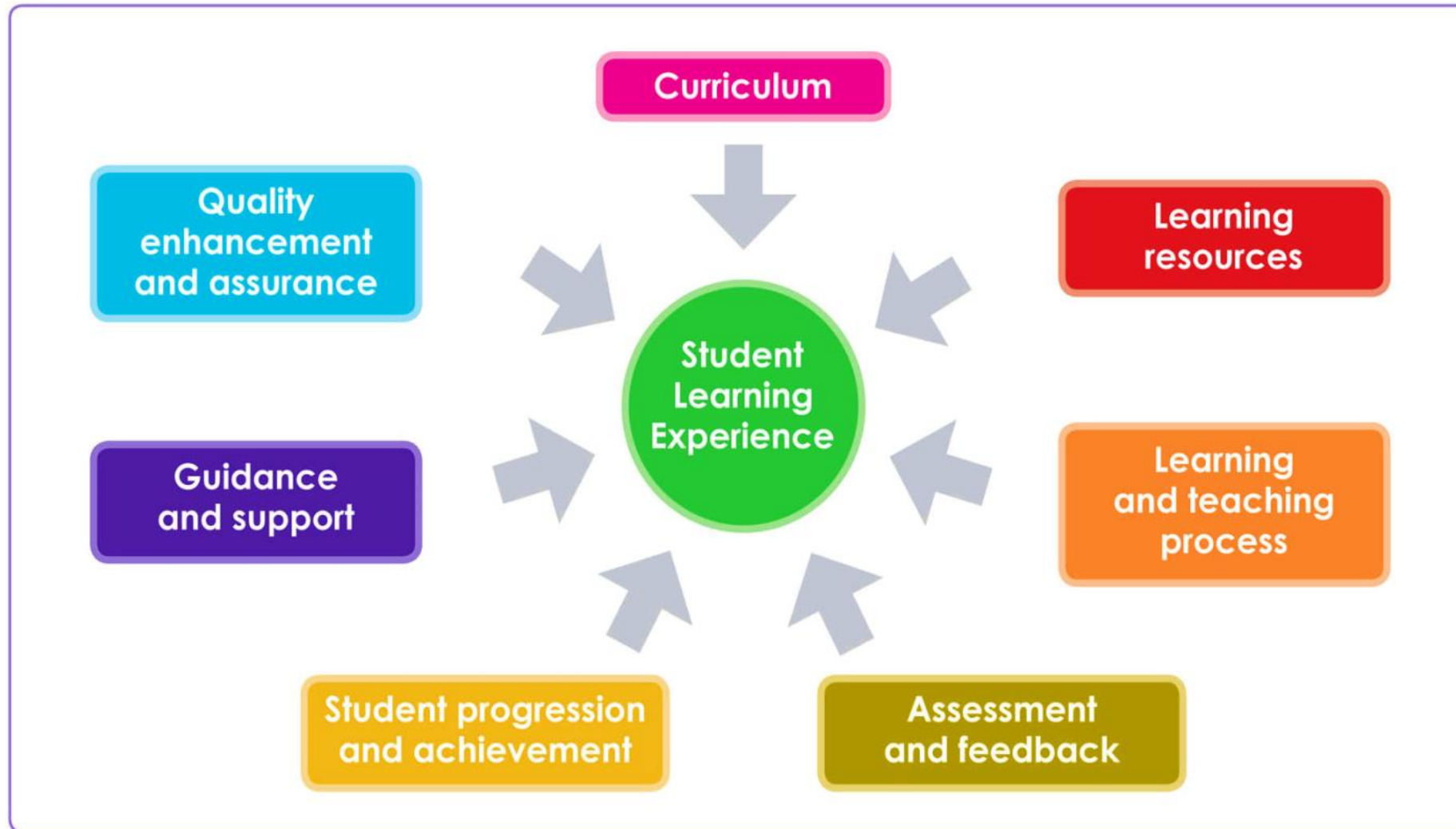


What does good look like?

Student Learning Experience

- A clearer understanding of students' views on what an effective student learning experience is in 2022, supporting future change.
- Co-creation leading to shared sector understanding of what an effective student learning experience is and how to evaluate provision.
- Desk research - building on existing work on what makes a good student experience.
- Student Workshops – to develop principles for each building block that apply across the tertiary sector and for a diverse range of students.
- Student Led but partnership with academic staff and professional services etc.

Student Learning Experience Model



12 building blocks:



Curriculum

**Learning resources,
environment and
technologies**

**Learning, teaching
and research process/
approaches/
pedagogy**

**Assessment and
feedback**

**Progression and
attainment/ learner
journey/ transitions/
pathways**

**Academic and
pastoral support
and guidance**

**Quality enhancement
and assurance/
monitoring and
evaluation**

**Student voice/
engagement/
partnership**

**Learning community/
academic community/
research community**

**Personal and
professional skills
development**

**Organisation and
management**

**Equality, diversity,
inclusion and
wellbeing**



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What is Partnership?

Student Partnership

sparqs – promotes, supports and explores partnership between students and staff, acknowledging the complexity of the approach and the nature of partnership as a journey rather than a definitive end point

Student Engagement and Partnership in Quality Arrangements

What does student engagement in quality look like?

Student Learning Experience

Dialogue with students
+ feedback and survey data;
+ other evidence of student success.

Student as . . .



Partner

Collaborator

Contributor

Informer

Student Learning Experience - Discussion

- How do we understand what good looks like and from who's perspective - do participants have access to similar reference points?
- How can we build a shared reference point for what good looks like into quality assurance and enhancement processes and, in particular, ensure we do this in partnership with students?
- How can we ensure that a shared understanding of what good looks like and partnership within the quality processes has a real impact on the quality of the student learning experience?

Student Partnership Discussion

- Where do we show our commitment – is this commitment shared by students, staff, policy makers?
- Do we know what Partnership looks like, do we all hold the same views and how can we develop this shared understanding?
- How can we develop a shared reference point? Is the model useful in your circumstances, do you have other ways to explore this? How do the descriptors relate to your own quality arrangements? Do you think your interpretation will match that of others?

Our **Vision** is that:



Students are partners in shaping
the quality of learning, making
positive change to their own and
others' experience, however and
wherever they learn.



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Our **Mission** is to:



Foster a culture of partnership
between students and staff which
enables the Scottish education sector
to respond to challenges and realise
its ambitions to provide the best
possible experience for each
and every student.



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We will do this by:



- Supporting students to develop the skills, approaches and expertise that enable them to be instrumental in enhancement activity and decision-making.

and

- Supporting institutions, sector agencies and decision-making bodies to embed effective and innovative practices that enable them to harness this student expertise.

We will promote and develop these approaches nationally and internationally.



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