Boosting student engagement within a quality assurance agency

EQAF Workshop November 2022

Who we are

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
QQI
www.qqi.ie

- Quality Assurance Agency

- Qualifications Authority

- Awarding Body

- Recognition Authority

National Student Engagement Programme
## NStEP
www.studentengagement.ie

- Student training and leadership development

- Supporting higher education institutions to improve student partnership

- Ensuring student engagement is recognised in national policy

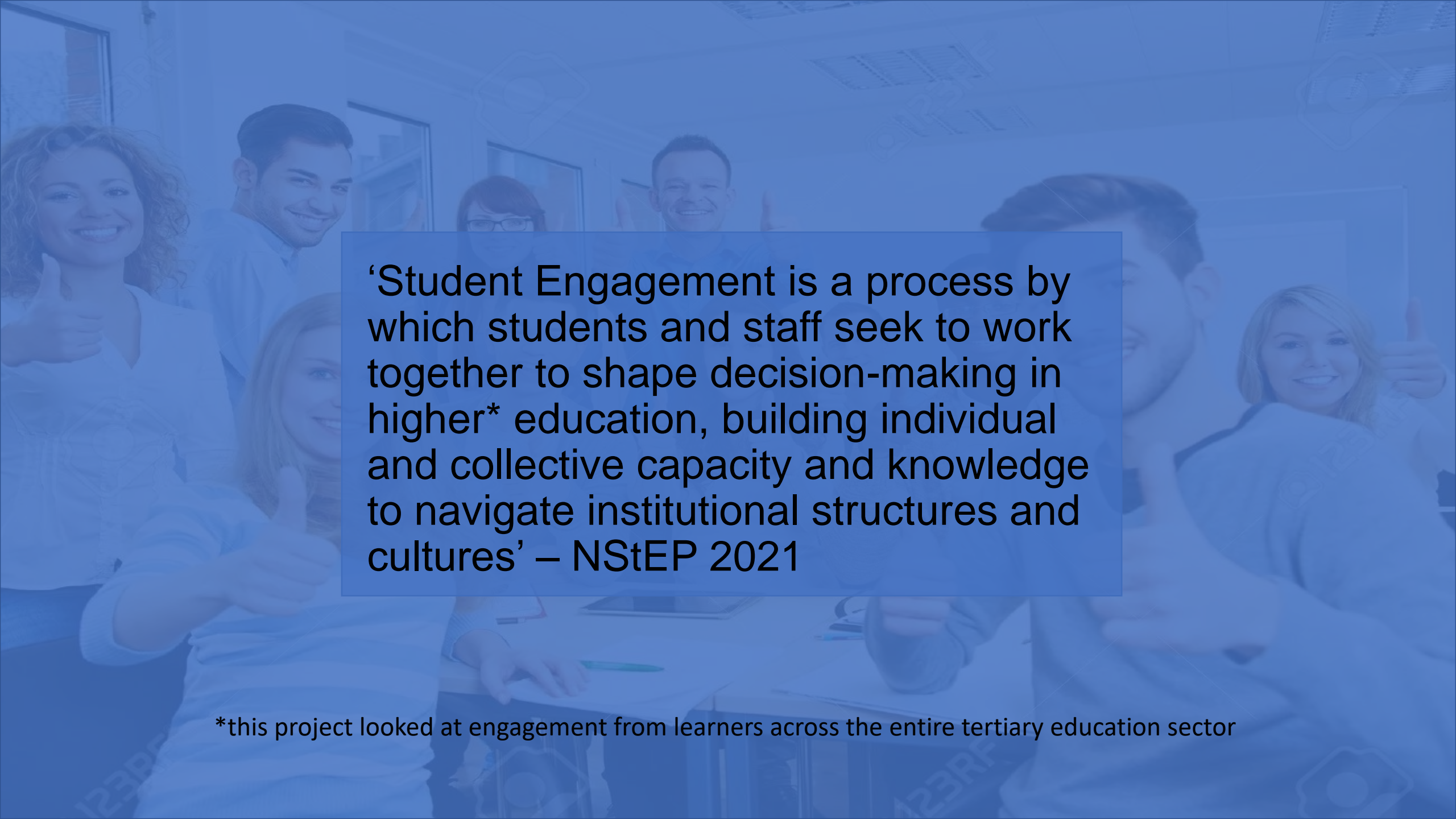- Providing professional development opportunities for staff

Objectives of this workshop

- Understand the current landscape of student engagement at QQI

- Identify how you can improve different forms of student engagement

- Identify ways that you can incentivise and promote engagement activities to students

- Examine ways to improve student engagement and make the most of engagements when they are occurring

- Discuss how student engagement adds value to a QA agencies work

- Explore the suggested approach to student engagement with critical constructive analysis and discussion about the pros and cons

- Critically consider your agencies student engagement

- Share ideas for more successful student engagement and approaches that might work in your agency

What are the gaps in QQIs student engagement and how can we address these?
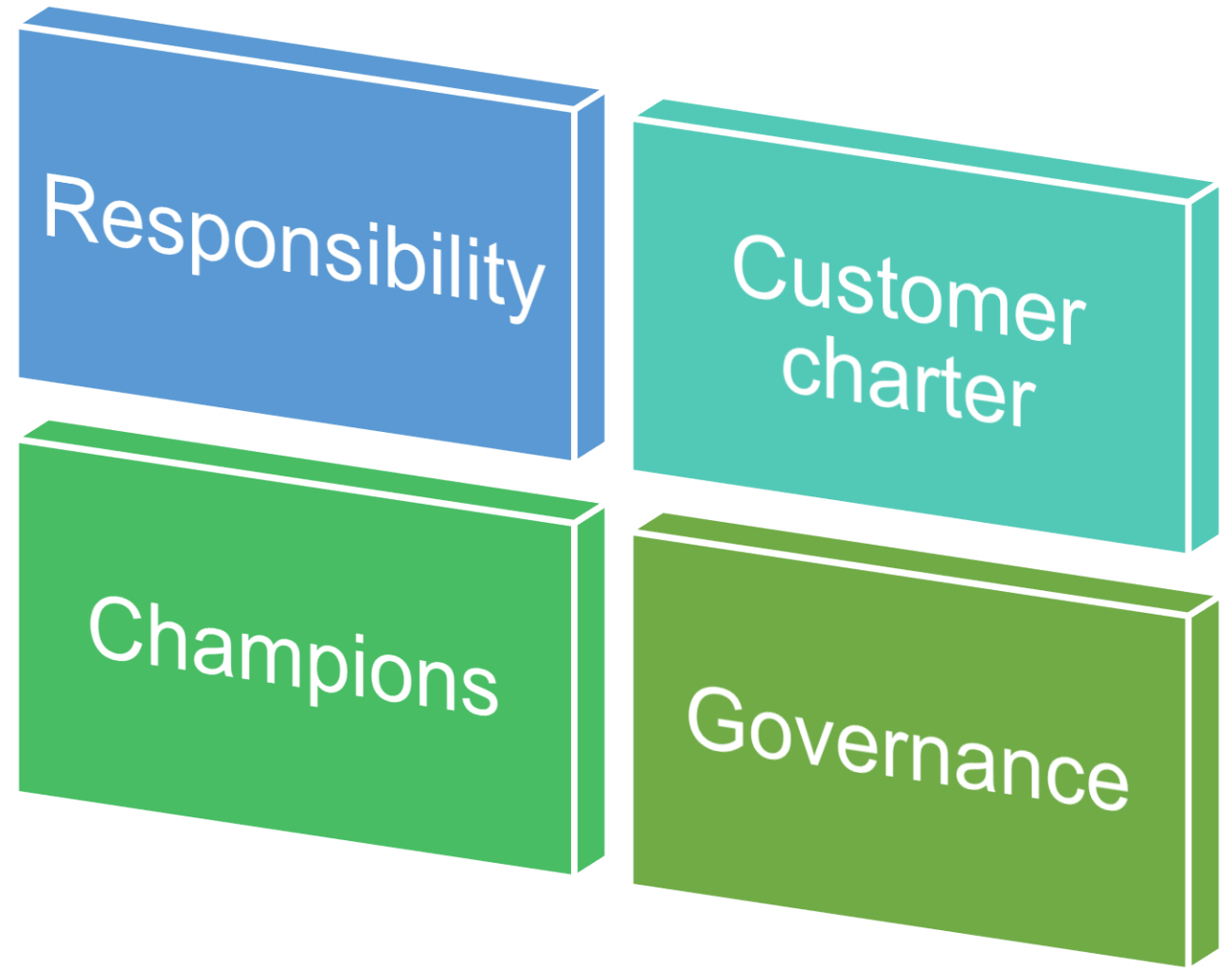
Responsibility

Customer charter

Champions

Governance

'Student Engagement is a process by which students and staff seek to work together to shape decision-making in higher* education, building individual and collective capacity and knowledge to navigate institutional structures and cultures' – NStEP 2021

*this project looked at engagement from learners across the entire tertiary education sector

What challenges did we face

Student interactions V Student Engagement

Gathering current practice

Deciding the best approach

Student awareness of QQI

Variety of QQIs work

What methods did we use: 1

One to one meetings with key colleagues

- Finalised the approach to the project
- Understood the culture at QQI

Survey of all units in QQI

- Identified existing good practices, for example, reviews
- Identified gaps in engagement, for example, international students
- Understood the challenges, for example, turnover of student representatives
- Identified benefits of engagement, for example,
- Understood the importance of student representative organisations, for example, USI
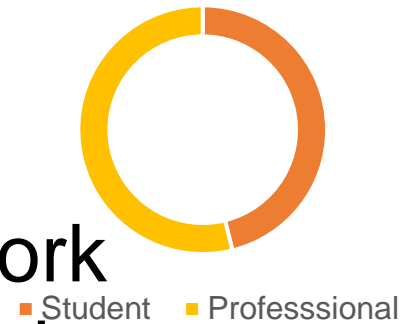
What methods did we use: 2

Consultation with heads of unit at QQI

- Discussed categorisation of work activities
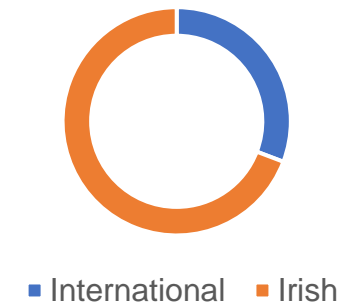- Ensured all work activities were covered

Working group with internal and external stakeholders

- Reviewed QQI activities and categorised work
- Reviewed current engagement activities and levels of engagement
- Identified of the forms of engagement and improve student engagement

Student Representation

- Student
- Professsional

Sector Representation

- Both
- HE
- FE

International Voice

- International
- Irish
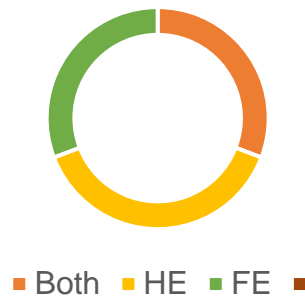
What were the results of the working group: 1

1. Types of work happening at QQI

- Project management
- Quality management
- Services management
- Corporate services management
- Network engagement and management

2. Approach to student engagement
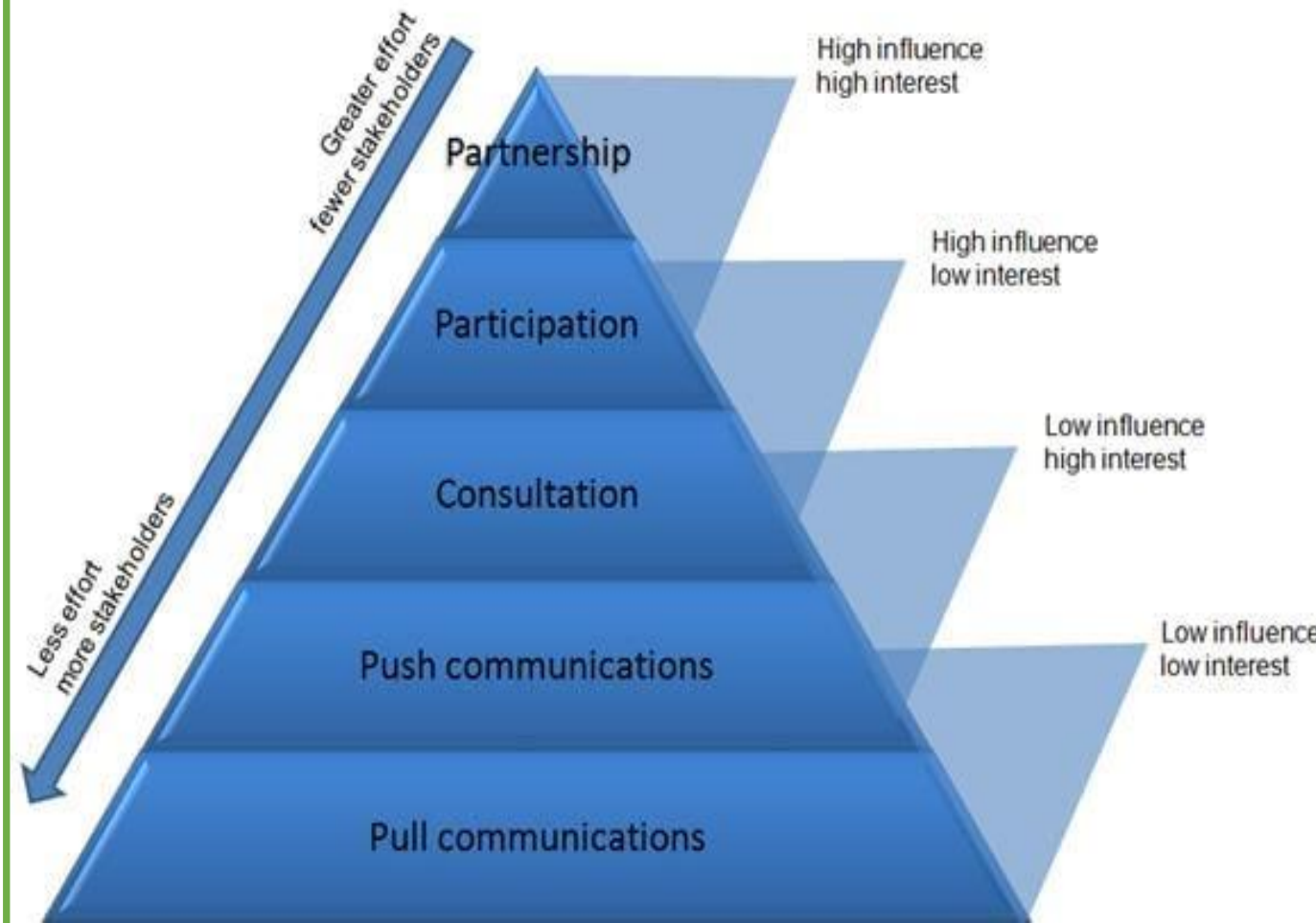
What were the results of the working group: 2

Create student-friendly communications

Engage students from the beginning

Draw on student representative groups

Ensure regular engagement

Provide training for students

Develop understanding of QQI

Learn from best practice

What were the outcomes of the research

Amplifying good practice

We are promoting the good practice that is already happening in QQI. Colleagues are happy to hear about this good work and get recognition for it.

Advancing the conversation

There are more and more conversations about student engagement internally and externally. It is moving higher up colleagues priority list.

Identification of areas for improvement

We have clear recommendations backed up by the research and suggestions on how to move forward. The recommendations come from colleagues and the working group

Centralised repository of practices and resources
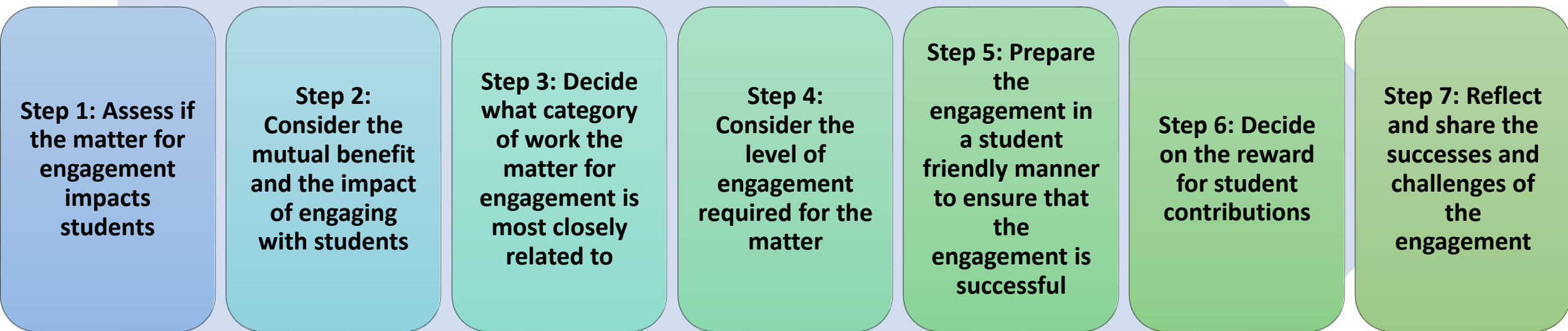
We are in the process of finalising a report promoting current good practices within the organisation and resources to help colleagues engage with students going forward

Framework for student engagement

We have developed a series of guiding criterion to help all staff members of QQI to decide if they need to engage with students and if so, what they need to consider and do.

What we did with the results

Step 1: Assess if the matter for engagement impacts students

Step 2: Consider the mutual benefit and the impact of engaging with students

Step 3: Decide what category of work the matter for engagement is most closely related to

Step 4: Consider the level of engagement required for the matter

Step 5: Prepare the engagement in a student friendly manner to ensure that the engagement is successful

Step 6: Decide on the reward for student contributions

Step 7: Reflect and share the successes and challenges of the engagement

QQI Student Engagement Framework