Glasgow School of Art

Follow-up Report to the Enhancement-led Institutional Re-Review

June 2023

Preface

As a result of the initial Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) in October 2020 which found limited effectiveness in the arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience and the outcomes of two submissions submitted to QAA Scotland's Scottish Concern Scheme (SCS), it was agreed that QAA Scotland would undertake a re-review of Glasgow School of Art (GSA), focused on the progress made by GSA on the recommendations made.

This re-review took place in June 2022 and having considered the overall progress made to address the recommendations, the re-review team found GSA has effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience. This is a positive judgement, which means that GSA meets sector expectations in securing the academic standards of the awards it offers 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 awards GSA offers and in the quality of the learning experience it provides for its students.

While commending GSA for a number of areas of good practice, the re-review team made a small number of new recommendations. The focus of this re-review was on the progress being made by GSA on its October 2020 ELIR and SCS investigation recommendations and, given the nature and scale of a number of these, the re-review team accepted that GSA would continue to need time to implement all of the projects set out in its ambitious and comprehensive GSA ELIR & QAA Concern Scheme Action Plan. The re-review team was content with the progress that has been made by GSA on the recommendations since its October 2020 ELIR.

However, the re-review team considered that a number of significant recommendations were still in the process of being addressed. It was therefore agreed that QAA Scotland would continue to engage with GSA through the current quarterly liaison meeting arrangements until such time as action on all recommendations is satisfactorily embedded in institutional procedures or GSA is subject to its next full external institutional review. In addition, one year after publication of the re-review report, GSA was asked to provide a follow-up report to indicate how they are continuing to respond to the October 2020 ELIR and SCS investigations. The remainder of this report provides GSA's year on follow-up report.

This report will also be submitted to the Scottish Funding Council. All follow-up reports linked to the ELIR method are written in the institution's own words and require to be endorsed by the institution's Governing Body prior to publication on the QAA website. Guidance on the content and structure was provided by QAA Scotland. Institutions are asked to focus on the action they have taken since the review and to include an indication of the effectiveness of that action. This follow-up report will be discussed with GSA as part of the ongoing quarterly liaison meetings and during annual discussion meetings.

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Enhancement Led Institutional Review (2020 & 2022) Follow-up Report

June 2023

Contents

1. Introduction

1. The Glasgow School of Art's (GSA) Enhancement Led Institutional Review (ELIR) 4 took place in October 2020 leading to a judgement of 'limited effectiveness' with a range of commendations and recommendations identified. At the same time as the original GSA ELIR 4, two Scottish Concerns Scheme (SCS) outcome reports were also published with additional, but linked recommendations to the ELIR 4 outcome[1].

2. In response to the ELIR 4 judgement of 'limited effectiveness', and the outcomes from the SCS investigations, GSA undertook a significant and structured plan of work to respond to recommendations in order to address concerns and return the institution to a positive judgment.

3. In June 2022 GSA was re-reviewed by QAA Scotland with a positive judgment of 'effective arrangements for managing academic standards and the student learning experience'. A re-review Outcome Report was published in August 2022 providing a detailed account of progress on each of the recommendations from the ELIR 4 and SCS investigations, as well as outlining two new commendations and four new recommendations[2].

4. Table 1 presents each of the recommendations from the ELIR 4, SCS investigations and re-review Outcome Reports outlining the judgment of the re-review panel as of June 2022 on each of the recommendations. As a number of recommendations from the ELIR 4 and SCS investigations were acknowledged as being fully addressed within the re-review Outcome Report this follow-up report provides an update only on those recommendations acknowledged as either partially addressed or on track to address. The report also provides an update on work in response to new recommendations from the re-review Outcome Report. A further column has been added to Table 1 indicating the status of outstanding and new recommendations at the time of writing. Where recommendations have been identified as ongoing, these have been consolidated within our Education Strategy 2023 – 2027 to ensure appropriate oversight, monitoring and delivery moving forward (see Section 7).

5. For ease of tracking and monitoring between the re-review Outcome Report and this report, GSA has structured this follow up report to mirror the Outcome Report aligning updates to our educational enhancement priorities for academic sessions 2021/22 and 2022/23.

6. This report was approved by the GSA Board of Governors in June 2023.

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[1] Please see the QAA website to access the full ELIR 4 Outcome and Technical Reports, as well as the two SCS outcome report: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Glasgow-School-of-Art
[2] Please see the QAA website to access the full ELIR re-review Outcome Report: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/quality-assurance-reports/Glasgow-School-of-Art

Table 1. Progress update on ELIR 4, SCS and Re-Review Recommendations as of June 2023

Cross-cutting strategic theme	Enhancement Project / Activities	ELIR Recommendations and SCS Outcomes	Re-review Outcome June 2022	Update as of June 2023
Strengthening leadership, governance, and awarding body oversight	Institutional leadership, strategy, and direction	ELIR 9: Institutional leadership, strategy, and direction	Fully addressed	Completed
		ELIR 15: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion	Fully addressed	Completed
		ELIR 20: Using data to enhance the student experience	Partially addressed	Completed
		Re-Review 1: Data Strategy	New	Completed
		ELIR 24 & UG/PG SCS 5: Awarding Body Oversight and Approval	On track to address	Completed
Improving cultures and structures of partnership with students	Student partnership	ELIR 10: Student Representation	Partially addressed	Completed
		ELIR 11: Partnership Working	On track to address	Completed
		ELIR 22: Responding to Feedback	Fully addressed	Completed
		Re-Review 4: Lead Representatives	New	Completed
Using student feedback and data to enhance learning & teaching and the student experience	Student survey policy & framework	ELIR 20: Using data to enhance the student experience	Partially addressed	Completed
		ELIR 22: Responding to Feedback	Fully addressed	Completed
Securing academic standards and enhancing assessment practices	Assessment & feedback policy and practice	ELIR 16: Assessment & Feedback	On track to address	Ongoing
		ELIR 17 & UG/PG SCS 2: Assessment Design	On track to address	Ongoing
		ELIR 18 & UG/PG SCS 3: Assessment Policy	Fully addressed	Completed
		ELIR 19 & UG/PG SCS 4: Academic Standards	Fully addressed	Completed
	Common Academic Framework	ELIR 17 & UG/PG SCS 2: Assessment Design	On track to address	Ongoing
		ELIR 19 & UG/PG SCS 4: Academic Standards	Fully addressed	Completed

Cross-cutting strategic theme	Enhancement Project / Activities	ELIR Recommendations and SCS Outcomes	Re-review Outcome June 2022	Update as of June 2023
Providing high quality and accessible learning environments and clear information for students	Courseware review	ELIR 13: Studio Workshop Provision	Partially addressed	Completed
		ELIR 14: Support for Additional Costs	Partially addressed	Completed
		GSA SCS 010: Access to Studio & Workshops	Partially addressed	Completed
		Re-Review 3: Managing student expectations	New	Completed
	Student communications strategy	ELIR 12 & UG/PG SCS 1: Communication & Consultation	Partially addressed	Completed
		UG/PG SCS 6: Guidance for digital and physical showcases	Fully addressed	Completed
		Re-Review 2: Communications	New	Completed
	Reviewing student facing services and policies	ELIR 21: Review of student-facing professional support services	Fully addressed	Completed
		ELIR 23: Independence in Student Facing Processes	Fully addressed	Completed
		GSA SCS 010: Complaints Handling Procedures	Fully addressed	Completed
	Estates strategy	ELIR 13: Studio Workshop Provision	Partially addressed	Completed
		GSA SCS 008: Accessibility	On track to address	Completed
		GSA SCS 010: Access to Studio & Workshops	Partially addressed	Completed

7. The following sections provide an update on each of the recommendations listed in Table 1 as 'partially addressed' or 'on track to address', as well as new recommendations from the re-review Outcome Report. Outstanding recommendations are set out in full in order to provide context to the work being reported.

2. Institutional leadership, strategy, and direction

Data Strategy

ELIR 20 Using data to enhance the student experience - progress with the development of a Data Strategy to facilitate the integration of data from diverse sources, and inform institutional decision-making and the development of policy and practice for use across the entire School.

Re-Review 1 Data Strategy - in support of work that is underway to review the extent and scope of current datasets, GSA should, by the end of academic year 2022-23, develop, and communicate an effective data strategy to facilitate the integration of data from diverse sources, and inform institutional decision-making and the development of policy and practice

8. In support of our ambitions within the Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027[3] GSA is committed to the development of a Data Strategy. This strategy aims to set out fundamental principles by which we identify, capture, use, govern and evaluate data to inform business processes and enhancement activities, as well as how we evaluate our impact. In autumn 2022 the then Deputy Director (Academic) established a strategy development group comprising a range of stakeholders including academic colleagues and professional services. The group worked to scope the strategy, building on sector benchmarking and aligning ambitions to ensure objectives are both realistic and achievable. Following the departure of the Deputy Director (Academic) in January 2023 the strategy was put forward for consultation with key stakeholders to ensure the it aligned with further strategy developments.

9. The Data Strategy was finalised in May 2023 by the incoming Deputy Director (Academic) and sits as a sub-strategy of the Digital Strategy providing strategic guidance and direction as to our developments in data infrastructure, training and use. The strategy was approved in June 2023 by the Senior Leadership Group who will monitor implementation, oversight and reporting. This concludes our response to the ELIR and re-review recommendations (ELIR 30 & Re-Review 1) with further work being taken forward through the strategy's implementation.

Awarding Body Oversight

ELIR 24 & SCS 5 Awarding body oversight and approval - complete the work undertaken to date on the revisions to the Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Glasgow and ensure that the respective responsibilities of both parties are clear and well understood by key GSA staff. In addition, ensure that any significant changes to assessment practices, especially where these impact on student progression and/or degree awards and classification, are communicated and implemented following the agreed approval processes as detailed in GSA's Code of Assessment.

10. To continue to strengthen oversight and collaborative working with the University of Glasgow (UofG) as our validating body, key colleagues in both institutions have continued to meet regularly through the Joint Liaison Group formed in response to the ELIR and SCS outcomes. This group continues to maintain oversight of GSA's ELIR and SCS action plan, as well as providing a collegial space for sharing practice and collaborating on key institutional enhancement priorities.

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[3] Please see the GSA Strategic Plan website to access the full Strategic Plan 2022-2027: https://www.gsastrategicplan.co.uk/

11. Building upon work reported in our re-review Outcome Report to provide clearer guidance to staff and students as to the nature of the GSA / UofG relationship, the Joint Liaison Group approved and published a relationship overview document and frequently asked questions in March 2023. These resources aim to provide clear and accessible information to staff and students at GSA as to the relationship between both institutions, including arrangements for quality, approvals, and access to resources and facilities at the University. The documents have been published on the GSA website[4], GSA Registry intranet, GSA Student Handbook and the UofG website and shall be signposted to new students through our welcome and induction information. These follow up activities have now concluded our response to recommendations relating to our awarding body oversight (ELIR 24 & SCS 5).

3. Improving cultures and structures of partnership with students

Student Representation and Partnership Working

ELIR 10 Student representation - building on positive progress made with the introduction of Lead Representatives, GSA should continue to embed effective arrangements for student representation. In particular, GSA should aim to promote a culture where student representatives are involved wherever possible, including in any groupings outside the formal committee structure, at all levels. GSA should also work with student representatives in a mutually beneficial partnership to consider what tailored training and briefing would be most effective to allow them to contribute effectively to committees and groups and ensure that representatives have the information they need to fulfil their roles with confidence.

ELIR 11 Partnership with students - work to establish a culture where students are seen as equal partners, engaged individually and collectively in the development and enhancement of their educational experience. This should include setting out an agreed approach which allows progress to be made on matters of mutual priority where GSA and its Students' Association work together to enhance the student experience, for example, making demonstrable progress in finalising the existing Relationship Agreement and developing a new Student Partnership Agreement which both codifies the ways of working and facilitates actions being taken.

Re-Review 4 Lead Representatives - reflect on current arrangements and, where appropriate, further develop the induction and ongoing support available for Lead Representatives to ensure that these students are effectively equipped to carry out their roles, particularly in relation to working with Class Representatives and participating as committee members at all levels.

12. GSA's Student Partnership Group continues to oversee implementation of our Student Partnership Agreement[5] which embeds workstreams in response to ELIR and SCS recommendations for student representation and partnership. Our SPA sets out our ambitions for student partnership and a framework by which we aim to achieve these ambitions. Overseen by our Student Partnership Group we have continued to implement our SPA with a focus in session 2022/23 on enhancing induction and support for student representatives, responding to our re-review recommendation, and promoting opportunities for partnership working within Schools and departments.

Enhancing Student Representation
13. In the summer of 2022, a series of School based briefings were held with Heads of School and senior staff to explore induction and support processes in Schools for class reps and lead reps. These briefings provided guidance to Schools as how best to support student representatives joining Boards of Studies, Student Staff Consultative Committees (SSCCs) and School Forums. The sessions

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[4] Please see the GSA website to access the relationship overview document: https://www.gsa.ac.uk/about-gsa/key-information/relationship-with-the-university-of-glasgow/
[5] Please see the GSA Student Voice website to access the full Student Partnership Agreement: https://canvas.gsa.ac.uk/courses/1142/pages/student-partnership

were welcomed by staff and provided an impetus for discussion on partnership working with reps to enhance the student experience and close the feedback loop. Alongside this work the Learning and Teaching Team and Students' Association also revised rep training moving towards a School-based training model bringing senior staff into training sessions, both to build relationships early in the election and appointment processes, as well as to provide contextual information as to each School's priorities and developments. This work has seen some initial positive impacts with an increase of almost 30% in training uptake for class reps (74% completed training in session 2022/23 compared to 47% in 2021/22), and 100% training uptake for lead reps. Further training opportunities were provided through regular lead rep check-in meetings with the Deputy Director (Academic), Head of Learning and Teaching, and Students' Association President, with additional training provided in early spring 2023 for class reps who had missed training and those joining programmes with a January start.

14. Work to support student representation on committees was undertaken in summer 2022 with minor revisions to committee memberships to strengthen student representation, drawing reps from our class rep and lead rep pool. Inductions for all committees and groups has now been mainstreamed for staff and student members and feedback from attendees has been positive. Student representation on committees continues to be challenging with some positive shifts in uptake this session. We have successfully elected all student members of Academic Council and appointed student members to our Education Committee, Learning and Teaching Group and Student Partnership Group, however, we continue to have a number of vacancies. In order to ensure a strong student voice in these fora we have opened membership to all class reps for our Student Partnership Group and the Learning and Teaching Team are further exploring options with Student Partnership in Quality Scotland (sparqs), and other institutions who are working on this challenge.

15. Building upon this work and in order to set clear expectations for support and training of student representatives we have committed to developing a student engagement policy. The policy will set out student representative roles, as well as the function, timing, and reporting of SSCCs in order to provide clarity to staff and students and enhance mechanism for closing the feedback loop and communicating the impact of student feedback. To ensure a meaningful partnership approach to the policy's development we have recruited a Student Consultant to co-lead the work. This role has been invaluable in providing a student perspective to the work and the development of the policy and associated guidance. At time of writing, the policy is being drafted for consultation in the autumn of session 2023/24 with guidance published for staff and students in advance of session 2023/24.

16. In order to evaluate the impacts of our work to enhance student representation in line with our indicators of success within our SPA we have re-run our student representative survey in late spring 2023. At time of writing, data is being analysed by the Learning and Teaching Team and Students Association in order to identify further enhancements for the forthcoming academic session. Through this annual evaluative approach, we are committed to continue to enhance support for student representatives in partnership with the Students' Association, and overseen by the Student Partnership Group. In mainstreaming this enhancement approach, we have now concluded our formal response to the ELIR and SCS recommendations relating to student representation (ELIR 10) and Lead Representatives (Re-Review 4).

Enhancing Student Partnership
17. Building upon work to enhance our approach to partnership working with students and to meet the ambitions of our SPA a range of workstreams were taken forward in session 2022/23.

18. In early November 2022, the Student Partnership Group approved the development of a Student Partnership Project Fund to support and resource meaningful partnership initiatives across the School offering small pots of funding, up to £750, for work related to our SPA partnership priorities. These are sustainability, inclusion, and post pandemic studio practice. The fund attracted seventeen applications across all three partnership priorities with seven projects funded. As a condition of funding project leads are asked to disseminate outcomes of the projects through either a

presentation at our annual learning and teaching conference or through a case study which we share through our monthly Learning and Teaching Enhancement Hub newsletter. At time of writing, project leads are completing reporting requirements with plans in the summer by the Learning and Teaching Team to evaluate the fund and identify enhancements for support and publicising the fund and its impacts.

19. Building on the success of our Student Consultant roles in session 2021-22 we took the decision to expand the offering for session 2022/23 recruiting eight roles. These included one Student Consultant within each of our five academic Schools to support curriculum review work within the Common Academic Framework (CAF) (see paragraph 41), one to support our year 3 Enhancement Themes work, one to continue to develop our partnership Teaching Awards Scheme with the GSA Students' Association, and one to support the development of a student engagement policy (see paragraph 15). Recruitment took place in winter 2022 with over 90 applications received across all eight roles. Each Student Consultant role is engaged as a 0.2 FTE for six months and is supported through a dedicated line manager and project co-lead, bespoke induction and ongoing mentoring and training. These roles have provided invaluable contributions to workstreams as well as supporting project co-leads, staff, and students engaged in project work, with clear exemplars of meaningful partnership approaches. As we move into the summer of 2023 we plan to evaluate the impacts of School based Student Consultants on our CAF implementation, and identify opportunities to maintain or expand the number of Student Consultants we can engage for session 2023/24.

20. In order to strengthen our approach to evaluating partnership working, and our approach to fostering a culture of student partnership, colleagues within the Learning and Teaching Team and Students' Association hosted a sector wide workshop on evaluating the effectiveness and impact of student partnership for enhancement. This workshop attracted a range of colleagues from the Scottish higher education sector and the team are planning to share outcomes from their analysis to help inform evaluative approaches moving forward. This work is a key aspect of our SPA and our commitment to understanding the impact of our partnership working.

21. Together these activities conclude our response to the ELIR recommendation 'partnership with students' (ELIR 11) with future enhancements being taken forward within our Education Strategy (see Section 7) and the implementation of our Student Partnership Agreement.

4. Using student feedback and data to enhance learning, teaching, and the student experience

ELIR 20 Using data to enhance the student experience - progress with the development of a Data Strategy to facilitate the integration of data from diverse sources, and inform institutional decision-making and the development of policy and practice for use across the entire School.

22. Building upon work to enhance our use of student survey data to inform institutional enhancement activities, we have continued to implement our Student Experience Performance Indicators. These indicators are used to identify high performing programmes (green), programmes requiring action (amber), and programmes requiring additional support and intervention (red). Indicators are based on overall satisfaction scores for programmes within the National Student Survey. This approach saw initial success in NSS 2022 with increases in satisfaction for the majority of programmes identified red rated and was taken forward for session 2022/23 with three programmes. In addition, a review and minor amendment to our Programme Annual Monitoring and Reporting (PMAR) process now requires all Programmes to explicitly develop an action plan in response to their NSS and internal Student Experience Survey (SES) results, recording these within annual Quality Enhancement Action Plans.

23. Monitoring of these action plans is undertaken by each School's Boards of Studies, with red rated programmes expected to provide specific updates to the institutions Learning and Teaching Group quarterly.

24. For session 2022/23 we also continued to implement our new approach to student surveys through an annual Survey Season defined within our Student Surveys Policy. This approach brings together all student experience surveys, excluding postgraduate research students which runs to a specific timeline, allowing a targeted campaign to promote and encourage students to participate. As an institution we have established a target of a 50% response rate for our internal SES. Building upon this approach we launched survey season in March 2023 with programmes required to undertake programme level briefings to students.

25. Survey Season closed in March 2023 achieving a 34% response rate, up 2% on previous year. Whilst clear improvements are required to meet our target response rate this new approach has seen significant impacts on previous response rates prior to undertaking our Survey Season approach (12.5% in 2020, and 11.7% in 2019). Overall satisfaction scores for SES have also shown strong improvements over the past two years for both UG and PGT programmes up 14% for UG and 20% for PGT compared to SES 2020 scores.

26. At time of writing we expect NSS results to be release in early August 2023 and shall continue to implement our Student Experience Performance Indicators. Our response to this ELIR recommendation is now mainstreamed through the implementation of our Student Surveys policy and Student Experience Performance Indicators concluding formal reporting on this recommendation (ELIR 20).

5. Securing academic standards and enhancing assessment practices

27. Two key workstreams were developed and taken forward in session 2021/22 in response to our ELIR and SCS recommendations relating to assessment and feedback. These were the review of our Code of Assessment which sets out GSA's policy and regulations by which assessment and feedback are designed, used and quality assured; and secondly the development of a Common Academic Framework (CAF) by which our programmes are designed to ensure effective arrangements for assessment and feedback to support the student learning experience.

ELIR 16 Assessment and feedback - ensure staff and students have a clear understanding of institutional expectations around grading criteria and practices. GSA should also ensure that there are clearer expectations for feedback practice which are implemented effectively across the institution, so that all students receive timely, and high-quality formative feedback on their progress at key points during their programmes. Students should be supported to understand how their assessed work relates to learning outcomes, how assessment criteria are used to make judgements about the achievement of learning outcomes, and how feedback should help their understanding of why a particular grade has been awarded. Feedback on formative assessment - for example, at the existing Mid-Year Review - should be shared with students on all programmes.

ELIR 17 Assessment design - in view of the ongoing pandemic, continue to develop an approach to delivering alternative assessments, in particular for studio-based courses, that can be used online if necessary, and ensure students are able to demonstrate attainment of intended learning outcomes and achieve minimum threshold academic standards for their programmes. GSA should also consider its programme structure, including whether the distribution of formative and summative assessment allows adequate flexibility to assess student attainment fairly.

SCS 2 Assessment policy - ensure that the planned changes are clearly outlined in addenda to the GSA Code of Assessment and communicated to students in consultation with student representatives. In particular, in view of recent experience, GSA should review and reconsider the 'Good Cause' process. Particular attention should be paid to how to communicate arrangements to staff and students to ensure that they fully understand what they are required to do and by when.

Assessment & Feedback

28. The new Code of Assessment was approved in June 2022 at the time of the re-review and sets out institutional expectations as to how we design and use assessment and feedback to support student learning and how we assure ourselves that our practices are of high quality and meet threshold academic standards within the higher education sector. The new Code went live in September 2022 with a range of support activities put in place in the summer for staff to ensure awareness of the new Code, and changes to regulations and expectations. Support included a resource site on our VLE Canvas with induction videos for Programme Leaders, Course Leads and Course Tutors, as well as a checklist identifying key changes within the Code and implications for programmes and courses. In addition, a number of live briefing sessions were held via Zoom for staff to provide an opportunity to ask questions and seek advice as how best to implement the new Code.

29. Information for students was provided through a dedicated multimedia resource shared within the new GSA Student Handbook and welcome and induction site (see paragraph 50). This resource was co-designed by the Learning and Teaching Team and a Student Consultant in session 2021/22, with a focus on ensuring students were aware of changes to the Code as well as more broadly providing induction resources to assessment and feedback at GSA. Programme staff were also asked to ensure that, assessment and feedback be covered as part of induction and reference made to the new resource site.

30. The resource went live in September 2022 with initial positive feedback from staff. Upon review in November 2022 we identified that only a small number of students had accessed the resource. As such the resource was linked to within all programme and course Canvas sites and a reminder sent out through Canvas in time for assessment processes at the end of semester 1. Prior to the relaunch, learning analytics indicated that around 100 students had accessed the resource. Following the relaunch and at time of writing over 1,600 students had accessed the resource. Further work to refine and evaluate the resource is planned for session 2023/24.

31. Other workstreams to support the implementation of the new Code related to guidance and support for new Good Cause and extensions processes. Academic Registry working with Learning and Teaching, and Student Support and Development have revised guidance to students, and ensured alignment with new processes for reasonable adjustment. New processes for Good Cause have now centralised decision making through the formation of a Good Cause Panel, reducing potential for conflict of interest in decision making, as well as providing a timely response to students, and reducing wait times on outcomes.

32. As part of our implementation of the new Code we have committed to a one-year review in autumn 2023, with Schools asked to capture feedback on the new Code throughout the current session in order to inform the review and any potential revisions, or additional guidance and support.

33. The initial project group who monitored the review and revision of the Code of Assessment was reconvened in November 2022 to determine the future scope of the group and the project. It was agreed that the project group continue with a focus on support for assessment design and scoping a common approach to the development and use of assessment criteria. The group has worked to review existing practices in the design and use of assessment criteria across the institution and is at time of writing working to develop enhancements for implementation within amended programmes launching in session 2024/25 in line with CAF timelines.

34. In support of CAF developments, the assessment and feedback project group have also worked to inform support and development activities for staff in constructive alignment, assessment design and practice offered in spring 2023 (see paragraphs 39-40). The project group shall continue to operate into session 2023/24 to support CAF implementation and continue to take forward our response to these recommendations through our Education Strategy (see Section 7).

Common Academic Framework

35. The Common Academic Framework (CAF) sets out common principles, characteristics, and structures for the design and review of our Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate programmes. A key driver for developing the CAF aligned to our ELIR and SCS recommendations was ensuring that our programme structures support students effectively through well designed arrangements for assessment and feedback. The CAF now requires all programmes to review and revise their structures from large credit blocks delivered over two semesters to smaller credit blocks delivered each semester in order to support student achievement and progression. As a fundamental principle of the CAF it was important that we not simply use this process to review and revise credit structures but also undertake a meaningful review of curriculum and assessment.

36. Following approval of the CAF in June 2022 a phased timeline was developed to support Schools to review their curriculum and programme structures as well as set out timelines for the amendment and re-validation of their provision. This timeline incorporated three phases, aligned to our Major Programme Amendment policy.

37. Phase 1 launched in autumn 2022 with a focus on supporting programme teams to review their overall programme structures considering how each course contributed to programme aims and ILOs, developing new programme structure proposals in line with requirements set out within the CAF. Phase 1 included early engagement with students as to proposed changes to programmes as well as engagement with External Examiners and other key stakeholders. Phase 1 concluded in late winter 2022 with submission of programme amendment proposals through GSA committees and the University of Glasgow for consideration in early spring 2023.

38. Phase 2 launched in January 2023 with a focus on supporting programme teams to review curriculum and begin to develop new programme and course specifications for validation in autumn 2023. Consultation with students, Externals Examiners, employers, and industry specialists, has also been a key part of the curriculum review process.

39. Support for curriculum review has been provided through a range of strategies and activities. Our newly establish Programme Leaders Forum launched in November 2022 has provided a key vehicle for institutional briefings, as well as providing regular upskilling opportunities for Programme Leaders to engage in discussions about enhancement and academic leadership. The forum has met three times to date, exploring diversifying curriculum, evidence for enhancement and graduate attributes.

40. Additional support for Programme Leaders and programme teams was commissioned by Human Resources, Learning and Teaching and Programme Development through two online short courses from AdvanceHE focused on 'Liberating the Curriculum for the 21st Century', and 'Inclusive and Equitable Assessment and Feedback'. Both courses concluded in March 2023 with participant feedback highly positive. Internal training workshops have also been offered on programme design, intended learning outcomes, assessment, and constructive alignment. Alongside these live events and workshops a dedicated CAF site has been provided on our VLE Canvas identifying useful resources, guides, and support materials to aid with curriculum review.

41. Support for student engagement in curriculum review has been provided through the engagement of five School based Student Consultants. These roles along with leads in each of the Schools have been tasked with developing innovative and discipline aligned approaches to student engagement, ensuring a strong student voice within curriculum review work. At time of writing, the consultants are working with their co-leads to produce a shareable outcome from their student engagement work to be shared with staff and students, and as potential case studies of student partnership working.

42. Phase 3 of CAF implementation will begin in late 2023. This phase shall focus on designing curriculum for delivery of revised programmes launching in September 2024.

43. At time of writing, programme teams are continuing with curriculum review and development of revised programme and course documentation for validation early 2024. Oversight of the CAF implementation has been monitored through a CAF working group led by the Head of Programme Development and reporting to Learning and Teaching Group, Education Committee and Academic Council. Delivery of the CAF project is embedded as a key priority within our Education Strategy (see Section 7) which shall direct and monitor progress moving forward from session 2023/2024.

6. Providing high quality and accessible learning environments and clear information for students

44. Recommendations relating to our learning environment and the provision of information to students continue to be taken forward through three key projects as outlined below. Recommendations relating to the review of student facing services and policies were identified as fully addressed within the re-review as of June 2022. We continue to operate our Student-Facing Professional Services Review policy with our Technical Services Department undertaking review in session 2022/23 and revisions to key student policies being implemented as outlined in our re-review Outcome Report.

Courseware review

ELIR 13 & SCS 010 Studio space and workshop provision - ensure that processes to align the demands of curricula and the resources available to support students in achieving learning outcomes are effective and equitable. In parallel, establish and make clear to students before entry, minimum levels of studio availability and technical support that can be expected on each programme of study to ensure consistency and equity of provision.

ELIR 14 Support for additional programme costs - develop a clear and effective process for identifying and communicating additional programme costs (building on the existing fees document) and an equitable institutional approach to support students in meeting these. In parallel, continue to promote creative means of achieving learning outcomes in sustainable alternative ways through options that are made available to all students.

Re-review 3 Managing student expectations - ensure that prospective students are provided with clear information before entry which confirms the notional minimum levels of studio and workshop availability and access to resources that can be expected on each programme of study, and continue to evaluate this information to ensure student expectations are appropriately managed. In implementing the process for identifying and communicating additional programme costs, GSA should ensure that prospective and current students are provided with an accurate view of how much they will be expected to spend above their tuition fees in each year, with a view to ensuring that no student is disadvantaged through an inability to afford material costs. Both of these changes should be in place to support students engaging with the 2022-23 application cycle.

45. The Courseware Review project is a multiphase project which aims to enhance programme and course information across the student lifecycle as well as responding to ELIR and SCS recommendations relating to additional programme costs and clarifying student access to studios and workshops.

46. As reported in our re-review Outcome Report a new process was developed to review and approve programme associated costs. These costs are determined by programme teams using a generic proforma, reviewed, updated and approved annually by the Learning and Teaching Group. This information is made available to applicants through programme webpages and pre-enrolment information within our Pre-Enrolment Gateway, and to current students through programme Canvas sites.

47. Programme associated costs for session 2023/24 were reviewed and approved by Learning and Teaching Group in March 2023 with refinements to information related to optional post study exhibitions costs and travel related costs. In taking an inclusive approach to the calculation of programme associated costs, programme teams continue to manage costs for students through reviewing project briefs, minimising requirements to print project outcomes and recommending low cost alternatives to making and producing work. The process for reviewing and approving programme associated costs is now well embedded within our annual planning and committee cycle and as such concludes our formal response to ELIR and re-review recommendations (ELIR 14 & Re-Review 3).

48. Information relating to studio and workshop access is similarly provided to applicants through the GSA website and Pre-Enrolment Gateway, and to current students through programme Canvas sites. This information is periodically reviewed and updated to ensure appropriate access for students thus concluding our response to ELIR and SCS recommendations relating to studio and workshop access (ELIR 13 & SCS 010).

49. Beyond our ELIR and SCS recommendations the courseware project has made significant enhancements to programme and course information during session 2022/23 including:

- **New Programme and Course Specifications templates**: revised templates have been developed in consultation with staff and students in order to streamline and enhance programme and course information, making this more student-centred, and simpler for staff to complete. Guidance has also been refreshed in anticipation for CAF implementation.

- **Revised programme equality impact assessment**: a new equality impact assessment (EqIA) form has been developed to support EqIA of programmes and courses in anticipation of CAF implementation.

- **Revised Canvas homepage**: a review of programme and course homepages was undertaken with staff and students in order to identify enhancements and improve course organisation. A new homepage template was developed and launched for session 2022/23 providing links to central services and information including the Student Intranet, new Student Handbook, Technical Services, Library, Student Support and Development, and IT Service Desk.

50. Three inter-related projects have also made significant progress in session 2022/23 through our Pre-Enrolment Gateway, Welcome and Induction and GSA Student Handbook. Together these sites ensure synergies for students as they progress from application to study as well as ensuring consistency and wayfinding to information.

- **Welcome and Induction**: A comprehensive review of student welcome and induction information has informed the development of a new digital site to support student induction. This comprises a range of central information about studying at GSA, as well as advertising welcome and induction events. This revised approach has clarified the central GSA led induction from programme and course induction activities.

- **Pre-Enrolment Gateway**: A refreshed and revised Pre-Enrolment Gateway has been developed to support applicants to GSA, providing information about study as well as the full range of services and facilities available to students.

- **GSA Student Handbook**: In response to persistent student feedback as to the challenges of accessing key information a new central GSA Student Handbook has been developed within Canvas to help students locate key central information.

51. Evaluation of these enhancements is ongoing with the courseware project being monitored through the Learning and Teaching Group. Initial evaluative work to better understand students' use of Canvas for instance was undertaken through an audit of all programme Canvas sites undertaken at the end of semester 1 of session 2022/2023. This audit has been helpful in understanding our NSS Organisation and Management scores institutionally as well as identifying areas for focused attention and enhancement. Results from the audit were reported to our Learning & Teaching Group in February 2023 with a series of recommendations to support programme teams and establish greater commonality across Canvas sites scheduled for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Student communications strategy

ELIR 12 & SCS 1 Communication and consultation - review (as planned), develop and implement a comprehensive and effective communications strategy, which includes all key stakeholders. In particular, in partnership with students, establish and embed effective and accessible communication channels which are responsive to student comment and engagement, and which foster a culture of mutual respect, openness and information sharing.

Re-Review 2 Communication - while continuing to foster a culture of mutual respect, openness and information sharing, GSA should develop and implement, by the end of academic year 2022-23, its planned Communication Strategy in order to ensure that effective and accessible communication channels which are responsive to student comment and engagement are established and embedded across the School.

52. The development of our Student Communications Strategy aims to establish a clear set of values that underpin our approach to communication and sets out our ambition to foster a culture of trust and mutual respect with our student community.

53. The strategy identifies the need to reduce the volume of communications to students in favour of more targeted dialogue, ensuring that our approach to communications is transparent, timely, focused and engaged, using appropriate channels and establishing trusted sources. The strategy also sets out a framework to support student and staff awareness of their roles and responsibilities in effective communication, fostering a culture of two-way communication and feedback on the student learning experience.

54. To enable this culture, the strategy sets out the different channels and methodologies that all parts of the GSA employ to communicate effectively with students across the full spectrum of their experience, from pre-application through to graduate and alumnus encompassing academic information, student engagement and voice, extra-curricular information, and sources of support and guidance.

55. The strategy has been developed in consultation with students and staff utilising key forums to shape and inform its development. This has included the Senior Leadership Group, Student Partnership Group, School management teams and student focus groups with representation from international, WP and articulation cohorts, and undergraduate and postgraduate. The strategy was approved in June 2023 by the Senior Leadership Group with work to enhance student communications undertaken alongside and aligned to the strategy's development. Key enhancement projects taken forward in session 2022/23 include:

    - **Mapping communications channels**: Building upon previous mapping work in session 2021/22 to develop a single source approach to information, the Marketing and Communications team have continued to develop existing staff and student intranet content, improving wayfinding and navigation, and ensuring content is accurate and accessible. Work has also progressed to ensure all academic Schools and professional services are fully represented on the intranet with clear channels for guidance and standard templates being devised for use at the start of academic session 2023/24.

- **Accessibility audit**: A review and accessibility audit of the intranet in collaboration with Library Services is underway with outcomes and recommendations expected to be reported by summer 2023, with actions incorporated into the Student Communication Action Plan 2023-2024.

- **Enhancing communications across the student learner Journey**: In collaboration with the Head of Programme Development and Academic Registry, the Marketing and Communications team have worked to enhance consistency of language and content across a range of student communications to facilitate smoother transitions for students. This has included enhancements to pre-enrolment and induction information alongside enhancements to the GSA Student Handbook and Student Intranet (see paragraph 50).

- **Visual identity, rollout and promotion of channels:** Development of a visual map of the key communications channels and an accompanying visibility and amplification campaign is in progress at time of writing to be rolled out along the new student journey over summer 2023, in consultation with the Head of Programme Development. This highly visual campaign will be rolled out in phases across digital and print channels from summer 2023 to our audience of staff, continuing students and incoming students. The channels campaign will include a comprehensive series of guides for staff and students regarding wayfinding and effective, accessible communication (staff) and support (students).

56. Implementation of the Student Communications Strategy is overseen by the Marketing and Communications team. Evaluation of progress and impact of the strategy is undertaken through review and reporting on a series of measures including: feedback through the internal SES; Student Staff Consultative Committees; and monitoring of student engagement with key communication channels. Together these measures will inform annual enhancements, developments and campaigns articulated through an annual action plan produced by the Marketing and Communications team and reporting to the Student Partnership Group and then Education Committee. In implementing the Student Communications Strategy, we have now mainstreamed our response to ELIR and re-review recommendations (ELIR 12, SCS 1, & Re-Review 2) with future reporting being taken forward through monitoring of the strategy.

Estates strategy

ELIR 13 & SCS 010 Studio space and workshop provision - ensure that processes to align the demands of curricula and the resources available to support students in achieving learning outcomes are effective and equitable. In parallel, establish and make clear to students before entry, minimum levels of studio availability and technical support that can be expected on each programme of study to ensure consistency and equity of provision.

SCS 008 Accessibility - GSA provides QAA with regular updates (once every six months) on the progress being made with the delivery of the Access Review and associated actions. In the interim, recognising the timescales associated with the Access Review, GSA should monitor how well it is meeting the UK Quality Code core practice to provide sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience for all students.

57. GSA's Estates Strategy, approved in June 2022 by the Board of Governors, sets out a number of high-level principles and objectives by which our estate will be developed over the current strategic planning cycle. The strategy has at its core a policy of inclusive design by which all estates development must adhere ensuring that our building and facilities are as inclusive as is reasonable for our community of students, staff, and visitors.

58. Following completion of access audits for all GSA building in 2021/22 a series of inclusive design interventions and improvements have been taken forward as part of the Estates Strategy's

implementation in session 2022/23. Specific initiatives and enhancements have included: enhancing signage and information on accessibility of the campus; identification and modification of supportive spaces on campus for faith and belief, a sensory room and silent reading room, and a wellbeing room; review and addition of accessible and gender-neutral toilets across a number of buildings; and provision for catering within the recently refurbished Stow building. At time of writing further enhancements to improve campus accessibility and information as to the accessibility of the campus are currently being costed between Estates and Finance with approval sought by the Board of Governors in June 2023. These works will continue annually aligned to the Estates Strategy.

59. In addition to the above works key developments within the strategy's implementation has been the development of a Space Management policy and a Storage and Room Bookings policy to support School and professional service space needs. The Space Management policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Group on the 18th April 2023 and sets out clear processes by which Schools and professional services can identify space requirements aligned to pedagogic and service need. The policy along with the Storage and Room Bookings policy now provides GSA with a clear process by which to identify space requirements for academic provision, and a process by which to monitor space usage and enhancements as we progress with the Estates Strategy's implementation.

60. Ongoing oversight and monitoring of the Estates Strategy and its implementation are undertaken by Business and Estates Committee with annual reports on progress aligned to the Strategic Plan lead indicators to the Board of Governors. Through implementation of our Estates Strategy and the embedding of our inclusive design principles we have now concluded our response to ELIR and SCS recommendations relating to campus accessibility (ELIR 13, SCS 010 & SCS 008).

7. Conclusions and next steps

61. Our significant programme of ELIR recovery work is now coming to fruition having been tackled with purpose and pace over the past two years. We are confident that the actions taken address the full range of ELIR and SCS recommendations and when taken together act as an enabling programme of work that will support our future strategic enhancements and initiatives.

62. We have taken care to progress this work at pace whilst working carefully to take staff and students with us, engaging our community in meaningful consultative dialogue and co-creation. We recognise that there is still a journey to travel in relation to a range of projects set out in this follow up report and are committed to ensuring that this work delivers on our ambitions as well as meeting the recommendations of our ELIR and SCS outcomes.

63. Our Strategic Plan 2022 to 2027 sets out our ambition in relation to learning, teaching and the student experience, and core to this has been delivering a positive outcome through external quality review. As such, moving forward we have consolidated our ongoing works to meet ELIR and SCS recommendations through our Education Strategy, approved in May 2023. The strategy sets out our future ambitions for education, enhancement and the student experience and will continue to deliver on our ELIR and SCS commitments over the strategic planning round.