

# Quality Enhancement and Standards Review

University of Dundee

Review Report

April 2023



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## Introduction

This is a report of a review under the [Quality Enhancement and Standards Review](#) (QESR) method conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) as part of Phase 1 of the Scottish Quality Enhancement arrangements at University of Dundee.

The review took place in April 2023 and was conducted by a review team, as follows:

- Mark Charters (Academic Reviewer)
- Luke Humberstone (Student Reviewer)
- Dawn Martin (Coordinating Reviewer).

QESR is Phase 1 of a two-phase approach that enables the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to fulfil its statutory obligation under Section 13 of the *Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005* to ensure that provision is made for assessing and enhancing the quality of fundable higher education provided by fundable bodies for academic quality and enhancement between 2022-24. The second phase of QAA's external quality review arrangements starts in 2024-25 to coincide with the implementation of new tertiary quality arrangements.

The main purpose of this review was to:

- provide assurance about the provider's management of its responsibilities for academic standards to inform an enhancement-led full institutional review in Phase 2
- provide assurance about the provider's management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities for students to inform an enhancement-led full review in Phase 2
- report on any features of good practice
- make recommendations for action.

## About University of Dundee

The University of Dundee (the University) became an independent university in 1967, having been founded in 1881 and been a constituent college of the University of St Andrews since 1897. The University expanded between 1994 and 2001 as a result of mergers with the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, Tayside College of Nursing and Midwifery, Fife College of Health Studies, and Dundee Campus of the Northern College of Education.

In 2021-22, the University had a total of 14,547 full-time equivalent (FTE) students with 13,478 FTE students studying at one of the three campuses - the vast majority at the City Campus in Dundee, with others at the Medical School in Ninewells Hospital on the outskirts of Dundee, and a proportion of Nursing students based in Kirkcaldy. Also in 2021-22, some 1,068 FTE students were studying by distance learning. The student population comprises 11,795 undergraduates, 5,578 taught postgraduate and 729 postgraduate research students.

## Findings

From the evidence presented, the review team is confident that the University of Dundee is making effective progress in continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision to enable effective arrangements to be in place for managing academic standards

and the quality of the student learning experience.

## Good practice

The QESR team found the following **features of good practice**:

- **Implementation of institutional strategies:** There is clear alignment between strategic planning and schools' and professional services' priorities, supporting the effective implementation of institutional strategies (paragraph 3).
- **Use of student journey data for enhancement:** The University has developed a clear, accessible and integrated approach to effectively monitor and utilise data relating to access, student retention, progression and degree outcomes to inform enhancement of the student experience (paragraph 46).
- **Digital Champions:** The network of Digital Champions play a key cross-institutional role in advising on the embedding and enhancement of online, blended and technology enhanced learning and teaching practice and acting as an effective conduit for the sharing of good practice (paragraph 27).

## Recommendations for action

The QESR team makes the following **recommendations for action**:

- **Professional services review:** The University should develop a systematic approach to professional services review that complements the existing mechanisms for engaging professional services in quality processes. The University should ensure that there is appropriate engagement with staff and students, and appropriate externality, to promote high-quality learning and continuous improvement (paragraph 37).

# Institutional approach to quality enhancement

## Strategic approach to enhancement

1 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor, review and enhance its strategic approach to enhancement. The team considered a range of evidence including: the University's Strategy 2022-27 and associated sub-strategies and implementation plans; the University's annual report to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) on Institution-Led Review (ILR); the institution's annual Outcome Agreement Self Evaluation Report; and minutes from meetings of the University's Quality and Academic Standards Committee (QASC), and Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC). In addition, the team met with a range of staff and students to explore the effectiveness of strategies to direct, monitor and evaluate enhancement across the institution.

2 The Strategy 2022-27, approved in April 2022, sets out three key institutional priorities for education: ensuring academic excellence; growing reach, particularly in widening access, social inclusion and internationalisation; and transforming the University to be a truly digital community. The Strategy 2022-27 is supported by five sub-strategies focused on: Education and Students; Research and Impact; Engagement and Enterprise; People and Talent; and Digital. Each strategy has a sub-strategy lead and Strategy Implementation Planning Board with delivery monitored through an implementation plan overseen by the University Executive Group and University Court. At the time of the review, the QESR team learned that the University was in the process of developing equality, diversity and inclusion work aligned to the People and Talent strategy, and postgraduate research work aligned with the Education and Students, and Research and Impact strategies.

3 In meetings with university staff, the QESR team heard positively how school and professional services are supported to implement strategies at local level. Staff within professional services outlined how strategies had informed service delivery such as Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (CTIL) prioritising work against the Strategy and working with Digital Champions (paragraph 27) to understand school priorities and how investment funds could be channelled to achieve institutional objectives. Staff within academic schools told the team that they are supported by the Strategic Planning team through an annual one-day planning meeting focused on establishing priorities in response to university strategies, and refining University Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for implementation at school level. In addition, the team learned from staff, the role of the strategy in informing objective setting through staff annual reviews. Staff recognised and valued school-specific discussions focused on the relationship between university KPI's and school priorities, as a supportive and tailored planning mechanism, and welcomed the responsive and nuanced use of data to support enhancement within the planning process. The team viewed the approach as a feature of **good practice**, recognising the clear alignment between strategic planning and schools' and professional services' priorities, supporting the effective implementation of institutional strategies.

4 A key priority for the University through its Strategy 2022-27 and sub-strategy for Education and Students, is curriculum transformation. This project is informed and driven by the University's development and implementation of their Curriculum Design Principles. These principles establish a core set of values and design elements that underpin programme development and review, and were developed in consultation with staff and students. The University has committed that all programmes should review and align curriculum to these principles by the end of the strategic planning round in 2027 with schools required to complete curriculum review within their Periodic Programme Review (PPR) cycle. Staff who met with the QESR team confirmed progress with curriculum transformation,

providing examples of curricular changes through recent PPR processes, and examples of engaging students in the mapping of curriculum to the Curriculum Design Principles. Staff recognised the value in developing and embedding the Curriculum Design Principles, establishing clear expectations for knowledge, skills and capabilities for programme development, and supporting and future-proofing curriculum and learning for students. Students who met with the team had not been involved in the development process and had limited awareness of the Curriculum Design Principles, and the curriculum transformation project. However, they were clear as to the intended outcomes including development and embedding of digital skills and graduate attributes to support employability.

5 In support of the University's educational ambitions, the University has committed to establish an Education Academy. This Academy will work with schools to deliver excellence in teaching and scholarship, supporting digital skills for students and staff, and strengthening a culture of high-quality and innovative learning design and digital enhancement. At the time of the review, the University confirmed progress in establishing the Academy with the aim of launching in session 2023-24. The Academy was recognised by a range of staff as being a key vehicle for taking forward the University's educational ambitions and strategies and supporting key priorities.

6 Based on the evidence provided and in meetings with staff and students, the QESR team considered the University as having a systematic approach to enhancement, underpinned by clear, well-embedded strategies and planning processes, and supported through effective quality assurance and enhancement arrangements.

## **Student partnership**

7 The QESR team is confident that the institution has an effective approach to engaging with its students. The team considered the Student Partnership Agreement (SPA), a progress update on the Dundee University Students' Association's (DUSA) Student Voice Support Officers' pilot scheme, and the Student Officers' Manifesto and Action Plans. The team explored student engagement further in meetings with staff and students.

8 The University sets out a strong commitment to partnership with its students in the Strategy 2022-27. The institution has a clear and detailed SPA covering all aspects of shared priorities, principles, fora, elections and responsibilities. These align with the Student Officers' Manifesto and Action Plans. Examples of shared priorities include the 'Engaging our Community' SPA priority which is reflected in DUSA manifestos as a 'Fostering Community' goal and the 'Student Voice' priority which is reflected in the 'Revitalise Representation' goal. Progress on the SPA is monitored formally by the Student Experience Executive Group (SEEG). A separate operational group has been established to provide a forum for more regular liaison between DUSA and the University in relation to implementing the SPA.

9 In meetings with staff and students, the QESR team learned of a number of partnership approaches and initiatives - for example, to develop National Student Survey Action Plans and community building events (see paragraph 17). The team was unable to meet with students who had been directly involved in institutional projects to gauge their contribution and the University's approach. The team saw evidence of DUSA representatives' engagement in committees with a remit for policy and developing arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement. Student and staff awareness of the SPA appeared to be somewhat limited. While acknowledging that the University and DUSA have successfully implemented enhancements aligned with the SPA, the team would encourage the University to raise awareness of the SPA more broadly. This would help further embed the existing approach to championing partnership activity with students within the schools and professional services, and strengthen reflection and evaluation of progress

against the priorities within the SPA.

10 The institutional approach to student representation is articulated through the Student Voice and Representation Agreement, and associated reference points which provide accessible guidance on all components of student voice and engagement activity. At academic school level, student representation is through Class Reps, School Presidents and Vice-Presidents. The team explored the extent to which students at satellite campuses are engaged in representation. Through these conversations the team learned that students generally feel connected to the University despite some challenges. The team viewed positively the steps being taken to improve sense of belonging and connection (both for staff and students), including regular visits from the senior team and DUSA.

11 The QESR team found that student engagement was evident in PPR panels, module reviews, through Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLC), and through professional services' student surveys and consultations. The team found that there are appropriate mechanisms in place for taught and research postgraduate students to provide feedback. The team learned how postgraduate student feedback was acted on and that postgraduate research student feedback led to improvements in inductions, mental health services, assessment and networking. The team found that feedback was captured and responded to appropriately with examples offered by staff and students in meetings with the team, including the co-creation of new modules and actions taken in respect of response times to student queries and equity of access on satellite campuses (paragraph 47).

12 Through reviewing documentation and meetings with staff and students, the team learned positively of enhancements to the support for student engagement through the introduction of the DUSA Student Voice Support Officers (SVSOs). This innovative practice employs students in roles to deliver training for class reps as well as leading on a range of enhancement projects and student consultations. The QESR team viewed positively the range of projects being undertaken by SVSOs in areas including mental health and social media communications, and the increased opportunities for enhancement and engagement afforded by the role.

13 Based on the meetings with staff and students, and the documentation provided, the QESR team considered that the University had an effective approach to student engagement and representation with clear examples of how student feedback is considered.

## **Action taken since ELIR 4**

14 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor and review its actions taken in response to ELIR 4. The team considered the ELIR 4 action plan; ELIR follow-up report; ELIR Steering Committee papers; Collaborative Partnership Code of Practice; Adviser of Studies Handbook; Annual Programme Review and Periodic Programme Review reports; and minutes from meetings of the Quality and Academic Standards Committee (QASC). The team also explored the institution's ELIR 4 response in meetings with staff and students.

15 The QESR team was satisfied that the University had responded appropriately to the three recommendations made by the ELIR 4 team, as well as responding to additional comments from the team that were contained within the Technical Report. The institution's responses were monitored through an ELIR Action Plan Steering Committee and an ELIR 4 action plan. All three recommendations set by the ELIR 4 review team - relating to institutional oversight of collaborative activity, online distance learning, and widening participation and flexible entry - had been identified by the University as complete at the time of the QESR.

16 The University has made significant progress on the recommendation to improve its oversight of collaborative activity and arrangements for identifying and mitigating academic risk through the development of a new Collaborative Partnership Code of Practice (the Code). The Code clearly sets out requirements for institutional oversight of the approval, operation and review of collaborative partnerships through a risk-based model. The Code outlines the role of the Global Partnerships team in supporting academic schools through the development and approval of partnerships and leading the process for annual review of sustainability. The Quality and Academic Standards team supports schools in the ongoing quality review of partnerships through established quality processes for Annual Programme Review and Periodic Programme Review. In meetings with the QESR team, staff at the University recognised the impact of the new Code in enhancing oversight of collaborative provision and in reviewing documentation provided by the University. The team was satisfied that collaborative provision is appropriately considered through annual and periodic quality processes (paragraph 30).

17 In response to the recommendation on online distance learning, the QESR team found in documentation provided by the University, and heard from staff and students that the University and DUSA have progressed significant enhancements to student engagement, representation and support for distance learners. The University has developed a toolkit to cultivate a greater sense of belonging for students and has worked to enhance consistency in the use of its virtual learning environment through the development of a 'module baseline' which provides a common format when accessing core module information (paragraph 24). In addition, the University has worked to mainstream developments in online and distance learning made through the institution's COVID-19 response and DUSA has worked to provide a range of on-campus and virtual events to support student belonging and community building, including moving the Student Representative Council to a hybrid model and the creation of forums for specific student groups. Staff and students who met the team recognised that engagement with distance learning students, in particular, remains challenging and this continues to be an area of development for the University. In discussions with staff, the team were reassured that appropriate arrangements were in place to ensure students studying at distance can provide feedback on their experience, and that feedback is appropriately responded to (paragraphs 10-11). The arrangements for distance learning students include module and pulse surveys, student representation and informal contact with staff in order to identify areas of good practice and development.

18 The University has also worked to improve its system for Adviser of Studies through a revised handbook incorporating lessons learned from online distance learning programmes. The QESR team heard positively from staff of enhancements to the Academic Adviser system helping guide practice and promote consistency. The team also heard views from students who valued the Adviser of Studies role as a clear source of support; however, some students identified differing experiences, noting that not all Advisers of Studies were proactive in their meetings with students as set out within the revised handbook. The University would benefit from continuing to monitor implementation of the Adviser of Studies handbook in order to improve consistency of experience for all students.

19 In response to recommendations relating to widening participation and flexible entry - which asked the University to reflect upon arrangements for reviewing the wide range of positive initiatives to support fair access and flexible entry routes - the University has established a new Widening Access sub-committee of the Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee (SRAC). This sub-committee aims to help identify, develop and share best practice within the wider university community, and strengthen widening access opportunities and support at school and institutional level.

20 The QESR team was assured that the University has robust processes in place for monitoring actions in response to ELIR recommendations and that all ELIR recommendations had been appropriately responded to. The documentation submitted allowed the team to conclude that the University has also continued to enhance and embed the six commendations made within ELIR 4.

## **Sector-wide enhancement topic**

21 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor and review its approach to defining and delivering an effective and inclusive digital and blended learning offering. The team considered: the institution's Tertiary Enhancement Topic reflective summary; Digital sub-strategy and associated implementation plan; the Dundee module baseline; minutes from key institutional committees; and meetings with staff and students exploring their experience of, and support for, online, blended and technology enhanced learning and teaching.

22 The Strategy 2022-27 priority to transform the University to be a truly digital community, is supported and enabled through the Education and Students, and Digital sub-strategies which recognise and support staff and students to develop the skills and capabilities needed to learn in a digital world. The establishment of the Education Academy (paragraph 5) and implementation of the curriculum transformation project (paragraph 4) are key initiatives in meeting the University's ambitions for digital education.

23 The University recognises that its response to COVID-19 and moves to online learning have accelerated engagement with online and digital approaches to education and has continued to build upon these developments through the implementation of its Digital sub-strategy. Recent works have focused on infrastructure investments and enhancements, including: upgrading over 50 classrooms to support hybrid/dual mode teaching and mobile hybrid units to support studio/lab-based teaching; investment in lecture capture capability; and a review of the University's video hosting platform.

24 In response to recommendations from ELIR 4, the University has developed and adopted the Dundee module baseline to provide a common format for all modules in order to enhance consistency with the virtual learning environment. The QESR team heard in meetings with university staff, that the baseline continues to be developed in response to student and staff feedback, with recent developments including options for programme teams to provide discipline-aligned information in module templates. Audits of modules have identified good practice and areas for development with a new process of peer review for modules being introduced to enhance practice, and identify and share good practice.

25 The University has introduced a range of measures to support students' digital learning experience, including a laptop loan scheme, enhancements to digital accessibility, and continued growth in online e-resources and e-books to support access to learning resources. Students who met with the QESR team were confident in knowing how to access support and guidance for engagement, and use of technology to support their learning.

26 Support for staff in the use of digital tools and technologies, to enable and enhance learning and teaching, is delivered through the Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (CTIL) which offers a range of professional development activities. In meetings with staff, the QESR team heard that staff felt supported and able to access appropriate support for digital tools and technologies. The University also aims to strengthen support for digital skills through the establishment of the Education Academy (paragraph 5).

27 In meetings with staff, the QESR team learned of the important role of the Digital Champions in embedding and enhancing digital provision. The Digital Champions,

established during the University's COVID-19 response, play a key cross-institutional role in advising and guiding enhancements, and sharing best practice within and across academic schools and professional services - including support for embedding online learning, and peer review of online and blended learning. Staff who met the team, valued these roles and the team recognised their contribution to the University. The QESR team viewed as **good practice**, the network of Digital Champions that play a key cross-institutional role in advising on the embedding and enhancement of online, blended and technology enhanced learning and teaching practice, and acting as an effective conduit for the sharing of good practice.

28 In reviewing quality assurance reports, the QESR team was assured that students' learning experience through online and blended learning was appropriately considered and enhanced. The team recognised the University identification of student experience surveys, including the use of pulse surveys, as a key reference point for evaluating students' experiences with digital tools and technologies, and their experience of online and blended learning (paragraph 48).

## Academic standards and quality processes

### Key features of the institution's approach to managing quality and setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards

29 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements for the monitoring and review of its approach to managing quality, and to setting, maintaining, reviewing and assessing academic standards. The team met with staff and students and considered a sample of quality process reports, relevant policy and guidance documents for Periodic Programme Review (PPR) and Annual Programme and Module Review (APR), and minutes from institutional committees.

30 The QESR team found that the University's arrangements for managing quality and setting standards meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) and align with the guidance issued by the SFC (paragraphs 40-42). Comprehensive procedures are in place with flexibility to accommodate all provision. Periodic and annual review of collaborative provision follow the standard approach for on-campus programmes but with more requirements, including a three-year interim review for each new programme and a site visit where credit-bearing delivery physically takes place outside the boundaries of existing University of Dundee campuses. The team was able to view examples of collaborative PPR and APR reports confirming consistency of approach.

31 Taught PPRs are conducted on a six-year cycle by a panel that includes internal and external academic peers, professional services staff and student reviewers. For programmes delivered by distance learning, there is an extra requirement for the panel to include an academic with relevant experience. Where appropriate, PPRs are conducted in conjunction with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) with Quality and Academic Standards Committee (QASC) oversight. The QESR team heard from academic staff that data for the PPR evidence base is provided in a standardised format and that this is helpful in terms of accessibility and evaluation.

32 A new process for reviewing postgraduate research provision has been developed for implementation from 2023-24 to complement the existing arrangements for the Annual Review of Research Degrees. The QESR team heard that the new methodology is expected to enhance opportunities for sharing practice and that it will also support and inform scholarly and teaching activity.

33 PPR outcomes include good practice, areas for development and suggestions. The QESR team heard from staff that there is a well-understood distinction between mandatory and advisory outcomes. Following each PPR, a six-week action plan is submitted to QASC followed by a year-on report. The team heard from staff that the six-week timeline is helpful to focus efforts and decide longer term objectives to be addressed through the year-on report. From the team's review of QASC minutes, there was good evidence of careful scrutiny of the action plans and year-on reports, including instances of QASC referring matters back to the schools for further deliberation.

34 The QESR team learned of the ongoing review of the arrangements for PPR and APR. The review of PPR has a focus on efficiency with particular consideration being given to the unit of review and is being conducted with due regard to the Quality Code.

35 Annual Monitoring Quality Enhancement Reports are produced at module and programme level. School Boards or School Quality and Academic Standards Committees consider any issues that arise from APRs and ensure that these feed into school Learning and Teaching Enhancement (LTE) reports, which also inform school operational plans.

36 The University prepares comprehensive and informative overview reports of PPR outcomes and school LTE reports. These reports are considered at school and institution-level committees with a remit for quality. The QESR team learned from staff that Associate Deans have oversight of these analyses, as well as individual PPR and school LTE reports, and that Associate Deans have monthly meetings with the Vice-Principal (Education) through which they can share and reflect on their experiences. The team heard that these mechanisms facilitate wider dissemination of the good practices emerging through quality processes. Staff meeting the team also reported significant benefits for individual PPR panel conveners and members - both for professional development and transfer of practice across schools.

37 The QESR team learned that review of engagement with, and support from, professional services is incorporated into PPRs and annual LTE reports. During the visit, the team learned of stakeholder engagement activities conducted to inform enhancements - for example, in relation to the Library and induction. The team also learned of investment in professional services in response to analysis of student data - for example, changing demographics. There is currently no separate review process in place to evaluate the effectiveness of professional services and their contribution to the student experience. However, this falls within the scope of the ongoing review of PPR and, taking into consideration the outcomes from the University's ongoing review of its Periodic Programme Review process and reflecting further on the Scottish Funding Council Guidance on Quality, the QESR team **recommends** that the University should develop a systematic approach to professional services review that complements the existing mechanisms for engaging professional services in quality processes. The University should ensure that there is appropriate engagement with staff and students, and appropriate externality, to promote high-quality learning and continuous improvement.

38 At the time of the QESR, the University was reviewing its assessment policies, having recently also updated its guidance on academic misconduct. The QESR team heard that a comprehensive programme of activity was underway. An important focus of the review is to separate policy and guidance. The University is also reflecting on the post-Covid assessment environment and challenges associated with the emergence of artificial intelligence models. The QESR team heard that discussions around the balance and format of on and off-campus assessment are ongoing as part of the annual Learning, Teaching and Enhancement review process and in consideration of Access, Retention, Progression and Outcomes Committee (ARPOC) data and the assessment review. The team considered this

to be an effective and holistic approach to developing current approaches.

## **Use of external reference points in quality processes**

39 The QESR team is confident that the University has effective arrangements in place to monitor and review its approach to the use of external reference points in quality process. The team considered the mapping of institutional policy and process against the Quality Code, minutes from key institutional committees, the annual overview of external examiner reports, annual SFC reporting, and met with staff and students with responsibilities for quality assurance, enhancement and academic standards.

40 The University makes effective use of the Quality Code in the development of its policies and procedures for quality assurance and enhancement. The University provided the QESR team with a detailed map of how the Quality Code informs the institution's policies, procedures and principles, demonstrating clear alignment with the Expectations and Core and Common practices of the Code.

41 The QESR team found clear evidence of external reference points informing quality processes and programme development. The institution's Curriculum Design Principles (paragraph 4) require consideration of the *Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework*, Subject Benchmark Statements, and other subject-specific reference points, including relevant PSRB requirements.

42 All teams participating in PPR are required to include an Annex demonstrating how they have mapped their programmes against the reference points noted in paragraph 41, and there are similar expectations to align with reference points within the new Postgraduate Research Review Policy and Guidance and APR guidance. In addition to the mapping exercise, teams are required to consult with employers and other external advisers when preparing their Reflective Analysis for PPR. All PPR panels include one external specialist as a minimum. The QESR team learned also that there is provision for PPR panels to meet with employers, placement providers, service users and carers, and other external stakeholders, where appropriate.

43 External examiner reports inform the Reflective Analysis submitted for PPR. There is also an expectation that examiner comments are considered through APR, and the review team saw examples of this in the sample of reports considered. The QASC considers an annual summary of external examiner feedback. The 2021-22 summary report includes procedural recommendations for schools, demonstrating a reflective approach to the process in addition to the outcomes. QASC members are asked to disseminate the report to encourage sharing of practice and enhancement. During the review visit, the QESR team viewed positively the confirmation from students that external examiner reports are made available to them. The team would encourage the University to continue with this practice to support students' understanding of the role of external experts in quality assurance and enhancement.

## **Use of data and evidence to inform self-evaluation and decision-making**

44 The QESR team is confident that the University effectively manages and analyses the data that it gathers and uses this to inform its decision-making and the development of policy and practice. The team considered a range of documents including: the Outcome Agreement Self-Evaluation Report; the Access, Retention, Progression and Outcomes Report; the Academic Appeals and Discipline Report; the Complaints Handling Report; and National Student Survey (NSS) data; Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research

Experience Survey (PTES and PRES) data. The team also discussed the use of data and evidence with staff.

45 The QESR team found an evaluative and lessons-learned approach to the use of data as demonstrated using evidence from annual complaints reports to identify actions and monitor progress. Actions included making amendments to webpages to improve clarity of information, development of guidance on communicating bad news to students and communicating with applicants, and reviews to processes such as the admission process. The reflective approach was also seen in the approach to quality processes and analysis of outcomes (paragraphs 31 and 36).

46 The University has recently revised its approach to evaluation of student achievement, progression and attainment across the student journey. The established reporting and governance arrangements, including the recently constituted Access, Retention, Progression and Outcomes Committee (ARPOC) - which considers data across the student journey and enables actions to be identified and shared across the institution, provide extensive opportunity for sharing practice and effecting change on multiple levels. The institutional report is supplemented by school appendices. School data is considered at school Learning and Teaching Committees and shared with all staff. Associate Deans present the data at school level to ARPOC, identifying opportunities and challenges to enable appropriate school interventions by protected characteristics and SIMD quintiles. The QESR team learned of significant scrutiny of data and level of activity arising enabling an integrated school and institutional approach of reporting and actioning to inform enhancement activities. Actions put in place following consideration of the ARPOC data, in conjunction with data from other sources, include initiating the roll-out of automated messages to students once disengagement has been detected and Advisers of Studies being informed of disengagement to allow for staged interventions. The team also learned of developments in the use and analysis of data on retention, progression and awards to better understand differences between students who hold different protected characteristics and to inform enhancement. The University is continuing to develop dashboard functionality to further enhance the ways in which data is made available. The QESR team viewed as **good practice**, the clear, accessible and integrated approach to effectively monitor and utilise data relating to access, student retention, progression and degree outcomes to inform enhancement of the student experience.

47 The QESR team found effective use of NSS data both on an institutional level - through a detailed analysis and action plan considered by Senate and with local plans at school level - and by DUSA. The team also considered reports and outputs from PTES and PRES data and considered positively the 'You Said, We Did' PRES publication. Resulting from NSS feedback, specific challenges were identified by the University about assessment and feedback, including timeliness of feedback, and this was identified as a priority action for all schools. Staff reported to the team that student work was now mostly being returned on time within three weeks, and, where this was not possible, staff were expected to communicate the revised deadline in good time. The team heard from students that they were mostly satisfied with the quality and timeliness of feedback, although there was some variability across schools.

48 The QESR team found good use of Student Pulse surveys in understanding student feedback at various points throughout the academic year. The team considered the pulse survey analysis to be a useful means of gauging student ongoing satisfaction to celebrate success and inform enhancements across a range of matters.

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