# ACADEMIC QUALITY POLICY & PRACTICE 2024 V1.6

## Section 4: Enhancement Led Internal Subject Review

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## 4.      ENHANCEMENT-LED INTERNAL SUBJECT REVIEW

### 4.1      Introduction

Enhancement-led Internal Subject Review (ELISR) is a key element of the Quality Enhancement Framework which provides public assurance about the security of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities at Scottish HEIs.

The ELISR process meets the expectations of the  QAA Quality Code for Institution-led Review and the Scottish Funding Council guidance on Quality in Scotland's universities.

Reviews follow a five-year cycle, will normally take place at subject level and will subsume programme approval/review activity.

The Department of Quality Assurance and Enhancement will be responsible for the organisation and facilitation of the review process.

### 4.2      Characteristics

**Reviews will:**
- encourage dialogue on areas which can be enhanced and in which quality might be improved, identify excellence in practice, and promote evaluation and critical reflection on practice
- take full account of student feedback and report on partnership working
- articulate the student voice
- provide a mechanism for professional dialogue around the practice of teaching and learning
- provide an objective review of provision, based on an understanding of national and international good practice
- take full account of  Subject Benchmark Statements and the QAA Quality code and, where appropriate, the requirements of professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies
- take full account of Strategy 2030 and alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals
- take full account of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
- reflect on the effectiveness of annual monitoring arrangements and follow-up actions
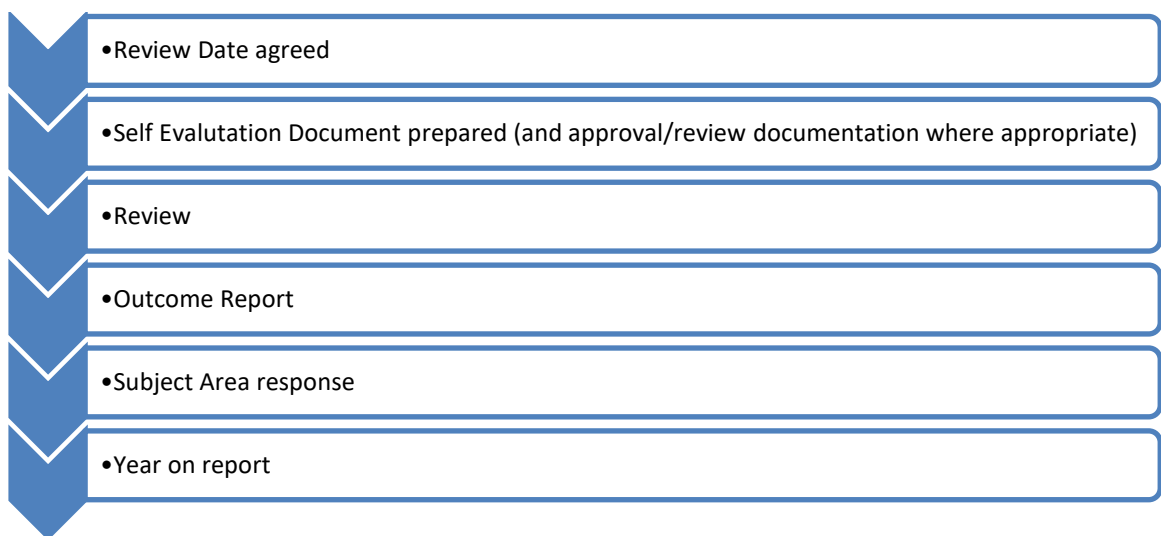
### 4.3      Scope

The scope of the review will encompass:
- the student experience and quality of student engagement
- teaching, learning and assessment
- analysis and reporting on performance data such as admission, retention, progression and achievement, completion statistics, RPL, articulation, NSS, ISB
- QAA Enhancement Themes

- CPD activity resulting in enhanced professional reputation such as Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) qualification of staff including Advance HE recognition at Associate Fellow, Fellow, Senior Fellow, and Principal Fellow levels
- research-student supervision
- the extent to which research/scholarly/professional activity informs the curriculum
- collaborative provision with internal and external stakeholders including PSRBs (professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies)
- impact of central and school-based student support
- impact of professional services
- international students on and off campus
- any other provision leading to the award of credit.

**4.4    ELISR Process**

- Review Date agreed
- Self Evalutation Document prepared (and approval/review documentation where appropriate)
- Review
- Outcome Report
- Subject Area response
- Year on report

**4.5    Format**

**4.5.1    Timeline**

The Department of Quality Assurance and Enhancement maintains the University's forward programme of ELISR activity and provides a detailed timeline for each review.

The date of each ELISR will be agreed, in consultation with the subject area, before the end of the academic year preceding the Review.  The review period will be determined by the extent of the provision being reviewed and will normally be conducted via a series of online meetings and correspondence.

**4.5.2    Composition of ELISR Panel**

The Review will be chaired by an appropriate senior academic from GCU and, as a minimum, will include student representation, cross-Department/School representation, appropriate academic and professional external peers and other appropriate stakeholders (e.g. student services)

Panel composition will ensure that a sufficient number of externals with the appropriate breadth of experience are appointed to adequately cover the subject provision in the timeframe available.

Further guidance is provided in [Guidance on the Appointment of Panel Members.](#)

### 4.5.3    Review Documentation

The subject area will prepare a self-evaluation document which demonstrates that the subject discipline has undertaken robust self-evaluation in a constructively self-critical manner. The self-evaluation process should promote dialogue on areas for enhancement, identify good practice for dissemination across the institution and should encourage and support critical reflection on practice.

Self-evaluation should discuss both the strengths of the provision and areas where enhancement and improvement are necessary, as perceived by the staff and students of the School. The document is an opportunity for the School, through the process of evaluation, to demonstrate how the strengths of the provision identified in previous subject reviews or accreditation events have been built upon, and how any areas for enhancement and improvement identified have been addressed. **Where areas for enhancement remain, plans for addressing these via an enhancement plan should be summarised.**

Reference points for the evaluation will include benchmark statements, [QAA Quality code](#), the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#) and the requirements of professional, statutory bodies and regulatory bodies. Further guidelines on the content of the self-evaluation documentation are given in the [ELISR Guidance Document](#).

### 4.6    Outcome Report

The ELISR process will culminate in an outcome report highlighting strengths and achievements and including recommendations for change that are aimed at strengthening provision and enhancing the student experience.

The subject areas are required to produce a response in the form of an enhancement plan which will, following initial approval by the Panel Chair, be submitted together with the outcome report to the Learning Enhancement Sub-committee (LESC) for consideration and approval on behalf of the Education Committee (EC) and Senate.

Any actions requiring University level consideration will be considered by EC. In the event of any serious issues arising from the report, EC will draw these issues to the attention of Senate.

The conclusions of the report and the action plan must be made available to the students within the subject provision reviewed via GCU Learn

### 4.7    Follow-up Action

A year-on update will be prepared by the subject area documenting progress on the approved enhancement plan. This will be reviewed by the Chair of the Panel, a

representative from the Department of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, the Head of Department, and the Dean of School.

LESC will be informed at that stage if there are any either difficulties in securing the year-on report from the subject area under review or alternatively problems with action plan implementation.

Thereafter (two years and onwards) the progress of the action plan will be monitored through the annual monitoring and school planning processes.