

Heriot-Watt University, Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR)

Action Plan

This Action Plan summarises the response from Heriot-Watt University to the two formal recommendations emerging from the University's Quality Enhancement and Standards Review (QESR), which took place on 29-30 April 2024. An additional Action Plan provides a summary of actions being taken in response to all issues identified in the [QESR Report](#) and by the University in its QESR preparations. Progress towards the Action Plan is monitored jointly by the University Committee for Quality and Standards and the University Committee for Learning and Teaching.

Recommendation	Action	Responsible Person/Group	Status and Notes	Timescale	
1.1 External Examiner Reports: Awareness of, and Availability to, Students	Recommendation 1: Students the QESR team met were unaware of external examiner reports and how to access them The University should review its processes to ensure that external examiner reports are easily and routinely made available to students, including those who do not hold representative roles.				
	1.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a student-focused infographic illustrating all the forms of externality (incl ExEx Reports) which informs programmes. Publish and promote at multiple levels, incl. Portal, Canvas and local sites, and include in student induction 	AQ, SESG, UCQS	Completed – infographic produced in collaboration with Student Reps and School Directors of Academic Quality and disseminated in November 24	October/ November 2024
	1.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Examiner Reports to be posted on Canvas Discipline sites as well as continuing to maintain links in Student Handbooks and student webpages 	AQ, AcOps (RAS); LAS (IS)	Completed – all EE Reports now on Canvas	September 2024
	1.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SSLCs to present summary of Ex Ex reports and actions (guidance to be provided by AQ) 	AQ	Completed – guidance produced in October 2024 and to be circulated with new SSLC guidance. Part of wider SSLC Policy	February 2025
	1.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek advice from other Scottish HEIs and QAAS on additional approaches to raising student awareness of EE Reports 	HAQ	Completed - Consultation with other HEIs; their approaches are in line with HWU's; many HEIs experience similar challenges with student awareness	May 2024
1.2 Risk Management and Ownership of Collaborative Provision: Schools Staff	Recommendation 2: the team noted that the reports of both academic audits conducted in 2023 had required schools to document risks related to collaborative provision in a risk register. One academic audit report had also commented that the University's expectations in relation to risk management for partnership activity were not clearly articulated, though the QESR team received from the University extensive documentation detailing its requirements in relation to risk management and ownership for collaborative provision. The team recommends that the University ensures that its requirements in relation to risk management and ownership for collaborative provision are understood by all School staff concerned with the management of collaborative provision.				
	1.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management and ownership to be incorporated into training and development programme for PMAG and AE/Ds (I+P) 	AQ, ID, GALS	Completed – following discussions with HW Assurance Services re: potential training/briefing for key staff, initial refresher training session on 22 Jan, In Progress - further sessions to be arranged, eg DLTs, DAQs, Programme Directors (note: QESR team did not meet with School staff responsible for collaborative provision)	Jan 2025 2024/25 ongoing
	1.2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear process to be developed collaboratively by AQ, ID and GALS for new, ongoing and renewed partnerships (and for different types of partnerships) relating to identification and ongoing review of risks, addressing current disconnects, lack of clarity over process and lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities (related to RSM Internal Audit recommendation) 	AQ, ID, GALS For approval by PMAG and UCQS	Completed – new TNE Framework for partnerships, endorsed by Audit + Risk Committee in Sept 24, sets out in clearer format the assessment and mitigation of risk captured in Risk Register	

				Completed - process for new and renewed TNE collaborative partnerships has been redeveloped; partnership types/definitions have been reviewed. Roles of PMAG and UCQS have been clarified. All complete and awaiting PMAG approval.	February 2025
	1.2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mechanism to be developed to assure HWU of Schools' ongoing management of risk in relation to collaborative provision 	AQ, ID, GALS	Completed – part of review of roles of PMAG and UCQS, with all Schools to submit partnership risk registers to institutional committees for consideration once per year as part of enhanced monitoring of partnerships. New form of annual reporting to PMAG, combined with revised PAMR and revised Academic Audit (now wholly focused on partnerships)	February 2025
	1.2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In planned review of Academic Audit to take place in 2024-25, redefine the risks/risk management to be evidenced by the School and considered by the Audit Team 	AQ, GALS For approval by UCQS	Completed - Review of Academic Audit due to commence in Jan 2025. New format of Academic Audit, wholly focused on partnerships, approved by UCQS in Nov 2025 for implementation from 2025/26	June 2025