

Learning from ELIR 2003-07

**Managing assurance and enhancement:
evolution and progress**



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Contents

Preface	1
Background	3
Executive summary	5
General conclusions.....	5
Future development of approaches to managing assurance and enhancement.....	5
Introduction	8
Leadership and the role of senior and middle managers.....	10
Restructuring and refocusing of committees	12
Reconfiguration of central services.....	14
Institutional enhancement strategies: development tools and drivers of change.....	15
Integration of enhancement function in quality assurance processes.....	19
Interconnectivity between quality and strategic planning processes	21
Strategic engagement between institutions and student associations	23
Enhancement-led approaches to staff engagement	25
Conclusion	28
Annex 1	29

Preface

In 2003 Scotland adopted a new approach to managing quality and standards in higher education. The enhancement-led approach is now attracting significant international interest. Its key features include: a focus on improvement; important roles and responsibilities for students; and partnership working between Universities Scotland, QAA Scotland, the National Union of Students in Scotland (NUS Scotland), the national independent student development service, student participation in quality scotland (sparqs), the Higher Education Academy and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

In addition to Enhancement-led institutional review (ELIR), the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (QEF) comprises a rolling programme of national enhancement themes, institution-led review at the subject level, student engagement in quality management, including support provided through sparqs, and the inclusion of student reviewers as full members of institutional review teams.

Scottish higher education institutions have made significant progress in developing their approaches to the management of assurance and enhancement. Institutions' success is apparent in the published ELIR reports from the first cycle, 2003-07. Institutional systems continue to be judged rigorous and robust in assuring the quality of provision and the maintenance of academic standards. Individual institutions have taken the enhancement agenda forward according to their particular strategic priorities and mission, supported by a common sector-wide framework. With growing insight into the management of enhancement, institutions have made very effective structural, systemic and process changes designed to encourage a culture of critical reflection on learning and teaching, and the wider aspects of the student experience.

These various changes combine to create a synergy that reinforces and strengthens the drive for enhancement. The growing focus on the student experience has led institutions to foster wider student engagement in quality and enhancement processes, with external support for the training of student representatives being provided by sparqs. The independent external evaluation of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (2007) stated that the QEF 'brought right to the fore the simple and powerful idea that the purpose of quality systems in higher education is to improve student experiences and, consequently, their learning' and concluded that 'the approach to quality that we review(ed) here is ambitious, distinctive and, so far, successful.'

QAA Scotland commenced the second cycle of ELIR in autumn 2008, using a revised method which will build on these achievements in a number of ways: integrating ELIR more fully with other aspects of the QEF; sharpening the focus on the enhancement of the student learning experience through the three fundamental principles of quality culture, student engagement and high quality learning; and drawing more on good practice, not only across the UK, but internationally (including through the inclusion of an international member on future ELIR review teams).

Having excited considerable interest since its inception, both in the UK and internationally, the enhancement-led approach to managing quality in Scotland now finds resonance with approaches in a number of other countries, most notably

Ireland, Finland, New Zealand and increasingly, in the United States of America.¹ QAA Scotland continues to develop these and other international links to inform the ongoing development of the enhancement-led approach in Scotland.

This report updates an earlier interim report published in June 2007, providing an overview of emerging approaches to the management of assurance and enhancement over the period 2003-2007. It explores a number of different aspects, including:

- leadership and the role of senior and middle managers
- systemic changes to support the enhancement-led approach, including restructuring and refocusing of committees, and of central services
- the role of enhancement strategies as a driver for change, and the development of a more reflective, learner-centred approach in quality processes
- the importance of inter-connectivity, between structures and processes, to create a synergy behind institutional strategies
- emerging approaches to student and staff engagement, including strategic partnerships between institutions and student associations, the role of centres for academic practice in aligning staff development with enhancement strategies
- policy changes relating to recognition and reward for excellence in teaching.

It is one of a series of six reports addressing a range of topics relating to the enhancement-led approach in Scottish higher education over the last five years. The companion reports address institution-led quality review at the subject level; student engagement with quality assurance and enhancement; the impact of virtual learning environment (VLE)-based and other information technologies on quality enhancement; employability and personal development planning; and the alignment of enhancement strategies with staff development. These reports collectively provide evidence of the impact to date of the enhancement-led approach, to inform national and international debate and, more particularly, to support the ongoing development of the enhancement-led approach and the embedding of a quality culture across the Scottish higher education sector.

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¹ In 2005, QAA Scotland commissioned Jane Denholm of Critical Thinking to undertake a global scan and to prepare a background paper for the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee, identifying other national systems of higher education that are taking an enhancement-led approach to quality assurance. In a survey of 49 countries, only two other systems, Ireland and New Zealand, were directly comparable to the integrated and coherent Scottish quality enhancement model in terms of there being a clear strategic relationship involving a conscious balance between quality assurance activities and enhancement activities, but several examples of practice were identified which encompassed one of the other four features of the Scottish approach, namely: a national thematic approach to issues; strong and meaningful student involvement; a focus on learning rather than just teaching; and partnership working among key stakeholder groups.

Background

The Scottish Government's Lifelong Learning strategy recognises the need to develop a quality framework which is 'fit for purpose', and which puts learners' needs at the centre of educational systems.² The enhancement-led approach to quality in the Scottish higher education sector is consistent with this. For the purposes of ELIR, enhancement is defined as **taking deliberate steps to bring about continuous improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experience of students.**

The Scottish higher education sector is small but diverse, containing within it a wide range of institutions of varying missions and sizes, cultures and organisational complexity, including (at the time of the first ELIR cycle) three designated small specialist institutions. Across the sector, institutions have approached the enhancement agenda from a variety of starting points and perspectives. The ELIR method has the flexibility to address this diversity while systematically addressing key aspects of managing provision.

ELIR reports are structured around three main sections:

- internal monitoring and review of quality, standards and public information
- the student experience
- the effectiveness of the institution's strategy for quality enhancement.

The factual evidence of the overviews is complemented by the more discursive commentaries that provide deeper insight into the effectiveness of the various systems, processes and strategies, and the way in which they interact to support quality assurance and quality enhancement.

This analysis is based on a detailed examination of 21 ELIR reports, conducted during the first cycle of ELIR, 2003-07 (see Annex 1 below). It draws primarily on evidence compiled from the sections addressing internal monitoring and review of quality, standards and public information and the effectiveness of the institution's strategy for quality enhancement, together with the final summary. Draft versions were circulated for comment to members of the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee, the QAA Scotland Committee, and to QAA Scotland officers, all of whom provided valuable and constructive feedback.

While each ELIR report covers broadly the same aspects of provision, it represents the outcome of an engagement with the institution, which will necessarily address the institution's own state of evolution and particular strategic priorities to promote enhancement, with differing emphases from one institution to another. This overview is a synthesis of information drawn from ELIR reports from the first cycle, not a snapshot at a single point in time. Its primary purpose is to illustrate developments across the sector over the period 2003-2007 to the end of the first ELIR cycle. QAA Scotland is conscious of the ongoing evolution and development of institutional approaches to enhancement, particularly in institutions that were reviewed early in the cycle, as well as the importance of institutional context. Consequently, the particular examples of practice cited here have not been attributed to institutions, but are offered as a stimulus to reflection and further development, rather than as

² *Learning to improve: quality approaches for lifelong learning*, Lawrence Howells, Scottish Executive, Edinburgh 2005.

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exemplars of good practice in themselves. However, QAA Scotland will be pleased to facilitate enquiries relating to specific examples, by referring them to the relevant institution. Please contact t.barron@qaa.ac.uk.

Executive summary

The 21 ELIR reports published between March 2004 and May 2007 show that institutions in the Scottish higher education sector have demonstrated a growing insight into how best to manage enhancement. They have made very effective structural and systemic changes, designed to foster a culture of critical reflection on learning and teaching, and the student experience. These changes have combined to create a synergy between quality processes and systems, and strategic planning, which is helping to build a greater dynamic to effect cultural change and drive enhancement forward.

General conclusions

From the evidence of the first cycle of ELIR, the following general conclusions emerge:

- institutional quality management processes continue to provide robust assurance of quality and academic standards, while increasingly assuming an enhancement function
- institutional strategies for quality enhancement are driving policy development and practice that is increasingly focused on the student experience
- institutional management structures and central services have been widely reconfigured to support a more collegiate approach to quality enhancement that can more effectively address the student experience
- interconnectivity between institutional quality processes and strategic planning processes helps to drive enhancement
- the institution-led subject review process provides confidence of institutions' ability to manage quality and maintain standards at the subject level (excepting the very few cases where the process was under development) as well as being a key mechanism for enhancement
- strategic partnerships between institutions and student associations have provided a focus for effective student engagement towards enhancement of the student experience
- policy changes relating to induction and training of new academic staff, and the revision of criteria for academic staff promotion to include excellence of teaching creates a framework to raise the status of teaching
- structural, systemic and process changes combine to foster the development of a culture of critical reflection in learning and teaching.

Future development of approaches to managing assurance and enhancement

Collectively, the ELIR reports identify a number of aspects where good progress has been made and where a continuing focus would serve to strengthen the approaches to managing assurance and enhancement. These relate in part to the need for further systemic change to support sustainable development and in part to the need to

foster the wider engagement of staff and students to support the development of a reflective culture.

Principally, institutions need to continue to strengthen the enhancement focus of quality assurance processes, develop more effective approaches to monitoring of progress and evaluation of impact in the implementation of enhancement strategies, and, in one or two cases, for assessing and managing risk, and bring about a closer alignment between staff development provision and enhancement strategies.

The wider engagement of individual practitioners remains a challenge, although institutional centres for academic practice have an important mediating role to support the embedding of enhancement and help to promote cultural change. Similarly, while much progress has been made over recent years, there is scope for institutions to further improve approaches to student engagement, not just in quality processes, but more generally in the development of the effective learner.

Evidence from the annual discussions confirms that individual institutions are addressing a range of issues as part of their follow-up response to ELIR. In the wider context, the identification of some of the more challenging aspects of managing quality assurance and enhancement will inform continuing work to develop cross-sector strategic support for the embedding of enhancement by the partners in the QEF.

From the evidence of the ELIR reports, key areas relating to the management of assurance and enhancement that were identified for future consideration fall into the following broad areas:

- **Strategic planning and development**, including strategic implementation of enhancement strategies; evaluating the impact and effectiveness of enhancement strategies; assessing and managing risk in innovation and improvement; targeting resources to support enhancement; sustaining the enhancement-led approach.
- **Organisational structures and quality processes**, including restructuring and strategic linkage between institutional-level committees; balancing priorities between subject level and institutional strategic level; continuing to strengthen the enhancement focus of annual and periodic review processes; systematising reporting procedures for programme monitoring; using centres for learning and teaching more effectively to support institutional enhancement strategies.
- **Staff development**, including engaging individual staff with the enhancement-led approach; responding to staff development needs for the delivery of enhancement; linking enhancement strategies, staff development and academic promotion procedures; identifying mechanisms for the effective dissemination of good practice; using peer review of teaching as a staff development tool.
- **Student engagement**, including improving consistency of approaches to student feedback and management of learning opportunities (with particular regard to postgraduate research provision); improving student representation at a strategic level; improving representation of postgraduate students on committees; developing more effective systems for the election of class representatives; improving systems for student feedback, including closure of feedback loops.

- **Development of the effective learner**, including implementing Personal Development Planning and progress files; improving effectiveness of academic advisory systems; improving provision for non-campus based students; improving equity of provision in multi-campus institutions; improving progression data; improving consistency of approaches to grading; improving the timing of feedback provided to students on their academic performance; improving the transparency of information on grading issued to students.

Introduction

1 The aim of this report is to provide an overview of evolving approaches to the strategic management of assurance and enhancement in the Scottish higher education sector. In particular, it looks at the systemic changes and developments that have taken place during the period of the first cycle of ELIR to support and strengthen the enhancement-led approach, demonstrating how different institutions have taken enhancement forward according to their own strategic priorities and mission, but within an overall shared framework. To this end, it explores a wide range of aspects, including:

- institutional leadership, especially the role of senior and middle managers in developing, implementing and embedding the enhancement-led approach
- the restructuring and refocusing of committees to support a holistic approach to enhancement of the student experience
- reconfiguration of central services to develop a more integrated approach to the enhancement of learning and teaching
- the use of institutional enhancement strategies as a development tool and driver for change
- management and assessment of risk in innovation
- the integration of an enhancement function in quality processes and the development of institution-led subject review
- the importance of interconnectivity between different elements of quality systems, and between quality processes and strategic planning processes, including greater alignment between institutional and college/faculty/school planning processes to drive enhancement
- increasing student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement, particularly strategic partnerships between institutions and student associations
- approaches to staff engagement in enhancement.

2 The diverse institutions of the Scottish higher education sector have approached enhancement from a variety of starting points. Individual institutions have benefited from having in place robust structures and processes for assuring quality, most of which could readily be modified to increase the focus on enhancement. For a number of small institutions whose provision is accredited by other institutions in the sector, engagement with the enhancement-led agenda has afforded an opportunity for more fundamental restructuring and development of new internal processes. Indeed, the ELIR process itself is reported to have been a valuable developmental tool in this regard, where institutions have been able to align internal strategic planning processes with institutional reflection on enhancement, in preparation for their ELIR review. The impetus thus far has been predominantly 'top-down', with increasing strategic involvement of middle managers. The challenge for the future is to secure wider engagement at all levels within the institution.

3 Over the last five years, institutions have demonstrated a growing insight into how best to affect the management of enhancement. Strategic leadership, at different levels within institutions, has been critically important in implementing an enhancement-led approach and enhancement strategies have become a very visible demonstration of institutional commitment to enhancement, which, towards the end of the cycle, show varying degrees of alignment with the sectoral Enhancement Themes. Institutions across the Scottish higher education sector have made very effective structural and systemic changes, designed to foster the development of a culture of critical reflection on learning and teaching, and to provide a focus on the student experience. Institutions have made significant advances in student representation and engagement in quality assurance and enhancement, such that by the end of the first ELIR cycle, a majority of institutions have included a student member on internal subject review panels. Criteria for academic promotion procedures have been revised to include excellence in teaching, the impact of which will need to be evaluated over a longer period.

Leadership and the role of senior and middle managers

4 Institutions recognise that to effectively support the strategic management of enhancement, key roles need to have clear remits and responsibilities. Clarity in areas of responsibility and authority, particularly between officers at different levels, is important for decisive action. Typically, institutional leadership for the development and implementation of the enhancement-led approach is located at vice-principal level (or equivalent): the Vice-Principal for Learning and Teaching chairs the relevant senior university committees, and works through a hierarchy of senior and middle managers to take forward development and implementation of policy.

5 In addition to the crucial role exercised by vice-principals in providing strategic leadership at institutional level, deans and vice-deans (learning and teaching), or their equivalent, play a key strategic role in supporting enhancement, by linking colleges/faculties/schools and departments with the institution. In faculty or school-based structures, deans have a significant strategic role in supporting enhancement, both in terms of top-down and 'bottom-up' processes. Similarly, where the institution has a collegiate structure, heads of colleges working with their directors of learning and teaching are key channels of 'up and down' communication between the institution and the schools within their colleges.

6 Deans increasingly are members of senior management teams, thereby assuming a corporate role in strategic planning and management of funding, which enables them to play a more authoritative corporate role, both in influencing institutional policies and in encouraging their adoption at the local level, as well as encouraging a flow of information and dissemination of good practice in both directions. Through their participation in university committees, they have a key role to play in linking institutional and local enhancement initiatives, and in optimising the strategic management of resources and support for academic staff to promote quality enhancement at the local level. As a group, they also have a key role in promoting consistency of policy and practice across the institution.

7 In some cases the link between deans and the implementation of institutional policy is explicit. For example, in one of the smaller institutions, there are appointed deans with responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement, who are likely to play a more authoritative, corporate role. In a medium-sized institution, two elected deans have a specific remit to support quality and standards at institutional level. At one large institution, a new dean's post has been established, as head of the restructured Department for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Assessment, with key responsibility for enhancement. At the largest institution, deans have been appointed with institution-wide responsibilities in undergraduate and postgraduate areas, to provide the link between institutional level policy, and the practical implementation of policy and procedures within colleges and schools.

8 The ELIR reports also indicate that, in at least four cases, a senior post has been created to focus on student engagement and the student experience, and to work with student representatives and the Students' Association to highlight student issues. These posts variously comprise two deans of students, a Student Champion, and a Vice-Principal (Student Experience/External Relations).

9 Vice-deans (learning and teaching). or their equivalent, have a pivotal role in institutional policy development and implementation at the local level, through their membership of key standing committees and working groups, and through their work in coordinating and leading all quality assurance and enhancement activities (including monitoring and oversight of quality assurance processes at the college/faculty/school level.) They mediate the gap between the individual and the college/faculty/school, and the college/faculty/school and the university; indeed, the absence of such a function at the faculty level is perceived as leading to relative inactivity at that level. As a group, they are an effective vehicle for maintaining operational consistency in the implementation of policy, and for the sharing of good practice across faculties/schools.

10 While vice-deans have a key role in managing quality assurance processes, enhancement has become an increasingly prominent element of their work, partly through the developing links between assurance and enhancement at local level, and partly through their participation on central committees dealing with quality matters. Working closely with the Vice-Principal (or equivalent) for learning and teaching, they also have a key role in the implementation of quality enhancement strategies. In some institutions, the significance of this role has led to the development of small, informal cross-university groups with a deliberative function, which helps to promote sharing of policy and practice, as well as facilitating the implementation of institutional strategic goals.

11 Heads of department have a key role in implementing enhancement-led approaches at the subject level, in promoting a culture of critical reflection and in supporting effective engagement with students and their representatives. They oversee the implementation of monitoring and review processes and have a key role both in the development of new staff and in the identification of staff development needs. Through their involvement in the subject review process, they need to be able to produce, or coordinate the production of, a detailed and self-critical evaluation of their department's programme delivery, which also engages with the institutional enhancement strategy. It is from this cohort that vice-deans are normally recruited. Indeed, in one institution, where restructuring has placed considerably greater responsibility on heads of department to deliver the university's enhancement strategy, specific development in strategic leadership is provided for heads of department through an annual management conference. At least one other institution has identified a need to invest in the development of leadership skills at this level, and has rolled out a leadership development programme for its heads of department.

12 In one institution, the role of Learning Enhancement Coordinator within schools formed part of a hub and spokes model, linking schools with the restructured central Department of Enhancement, Learning, Teaching and Assessment. In another institution, where the faculty structure has been discontinued in favour of a direct reporting line between departments and the university, the new post of departmental Learning and Teaching Officer (LTO) assumes a significant administrative role involving oversight of quality assurance procedures. To meet these expectations, the ELIR report notes that these LTOs will require a clearly defined role with the authority to drive change and to implement enhancement initiatives.

Restructuring and refocusing of committees

13 The ELIR reports indicate widespread revision of committee structures, particularly of institution-level committees to facilitate better strategic links, but also in order to promote more effective communication with local committees to support development and enhancement. This is being achieved in a variety of ways: through reporting links, cross membership, and extended membership to include representation from key service areas. These changes serve to underpin and make explicit the linkage between quality assurance and quality enhancement, and thereby strengthen the strategic drive for enhancement.

14 While the approach in each institution is slightly different, there appears to be a common trend to separate the responsibility for the strategic management of enhancement from the monitoring and review of institutional quality assurance processes, including responsibility for academic standards. In one institution, this distinction is viewed as the separation of an academic audit function from the bodies that establish and operate the policy and procedures. One perceived benefit is improved monitoring of performance at institutional level and below. Where these two functions reside within a single committee, there is recognition that the remit needs to explicitly separate the strategic role from the quality assurance role.

15 The committee with responsibility for strategic management often has a senior position to the committee(s) that perform(s) a monitoring and review function, from which it receives reports. This allows a logical distinction to be made between strategic management of quality and enhancement and the operation of monitoring and review functions. However, these two foci need to be linked, through common membership and lines of reporting, to ensure the required flow of information. Central standing committees are often replicated in committees systems at faculty or school level, which again, eases the flow of business bottom-up and top-down.

16 The ELIR reports show how institutions have revised committee remits to enable a focus on the student experience. In some institutions, what would once have been the 'Welfare Services' Committee has been extended and refocused as a 'Student Experience' Committee, often with substantial student representation, to identify and discuss matters of material interest to students and their support services. Similarly, another institution has established a 'Learning Infrastructure sub-committee'. These are student-focused committees, without necessarily being student-driven, but nevertheless demonstrate a more proactive approach to addressing student needs.

17 For the largest institutions, the focus on the student experience tends to be achieved through structural change. Thus, for example, at the time of its ELIR, one of the largest institutions was considering whether a different committee structure, which allowed a separate focus on the differing issues arising from taught and research postgraduate provision, would enhance overall institutional consideration of postgraduate matters and of teaching (both undergraduate and postgraduate) more generally. Another of the larger institutions has disbanded Faculty Boards, and established Faculty Quality Enhancement Committees, with a remit to consider the enhancement of the student experience on taught programmes in the Faculty, while giving deans greater executive authority in respect of quality assurance processes,

where they occupy a key position in terms of annual monitoring and review of courses and programmes.

18 In two examples, institutions have sought to strengthen the link between the development of learning and teaching and staff development. One small institution found that its new Quality Enhancement Committee had less impact than anticipated, and has disestablished both the Quality Enhancement Committee and the Staff Development Committee. They have been replaced with a new Organisational Enhancement Committee, the extended terms of reference for which will support developments in the related areas of organisational development, quality enhancement and implementation of human resource strategy. In the second example, the institution has established an Educational Development Sub-Committee to help coordinate work in staff development, learning technology and learning to study.

Reconfiguration of central services

19 The ELIR reports provide evidence of widespread restructuring of administrative and support services to support the enhancement agenda and to make services more learner-centred, with more substantial reconfiguration in some cases.³

20 In one example, a much bigger integration brings together the Library Service, Communication and Information Technology Services, Student Services and a range of other units to form the 'Learning Services Department', in order to effect a shift of focus from teaching to learning. In another case, the establishment of 'Student Support Services' represents the integration of the Career Development Centre and Student Information and Support Services, although the ELIR report also notes close working with Student Learning Services, the Centre for Learning and Teaching, the Graduate School and the Students' Association.

21 In a number of examples, the integration of centres for educational development with departments of e-learning, demonstrates a clear desire to foster the development of e-learning and blended learning, by bringing together pedagogy and technology, although, in one case, the merger includes support for student learning in addition to academic staff development and development of e-learning. It appears that such merged units are well-placed to coordinate the activities within their remit, to act as a central channel of information about external teaching developments (including the Enhancement Themes), and have a key role in determining and implementing the institution's enhancement strategy. Such a unit can embody links between quality assurance and quality enhancement. For example, in one institution, staff from the reconfigured 'Department for Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Assessment' are directly involved in certain quality assurance processes, including internal subject review and programme approval. This puts the staff in a prime position to advise on aspects of the academic infrastructure, to promote consistency of practice, identify and disseminate good practice, including from external sources, and to further develop the institution's approaches to enhancement.

22 Central administrative units to support quality assurance and enhancement have a key role in supporting both policy development and the implementation of enhancement-led approaches. Their main impact is through the development of handbooks and on-line guidance on process and procedures, the development of templates that expressly connect local and institutional strategic priorities, and through their coordinating role across and down the various institutional levels. Working with key senior and middle managers (for example, the Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching) and the vice-deans (or equivalent)), they support the development and shaping of the institution's enhancement policy and the work of key central committees with responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement.

³ For further details, see *Learning from ELIR 2003-07, The emerging impact of information and communication technologies (including virtual learning environments) on quality enhancement*, QAA 2009, pp 10-11, 'Management of integrated information services' at www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/learningfromreviews/LFseries.asp.

Institutional enhancement strategies: development tools and drivers of change

23 Enhancement strategies are a very visible demonstration of institutional commitment to enhancement, which can communicate key institutional priorities for action to colleges/faculties/schools/departments and individual staff. They are a key management tool and driver of change, supporting a more integrated approach to strategic planning in which linkage between strategies for different areas of operation enables a more holistic approach to enhancement of the student experience. This approach is helping institutions to develop a culture of continuous improvement, through annual monitoring and evaluation of action plans.

24 The ELIR reports indicate that, in general, enhancement strategies are developed, monitored and reviewed by a standing group led by the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning (or equivalent) and, typically, include a range of senior and middle managers and student officers. They may also include representation from relevant service areas. Such groups generally report to a central committee for learning and teaching. Enhancement strategies generally describe the principles used to guide quality enhancement activities at all levels, identify the bodies, procedures and specific actions required, and are most frequently reported to be effective when accompanied by a systematic implementation plan, including provision for evaluation and measurement of success. ELIR reports towards the end of the cycle point to a need for further development of approaches to the measurement of progress, particularly in terms of the impact of different initiatives.⁴

25 As management tools, quality enhancement strategies are seen to facilitate a synthesis of separate existing strategies, including staff development, research, flexible provision, the use of information technology in learning and teaching, employability, assessment and responsiveness to student needs. The commentaries in these reports indicate that to be fully effective, enhancement strategies need to articulate with institutional structures and quality processes at different levels, so that enhancement is planned and strategically directed. In some institutions, this articulation is clear, in others where greater emphasis is placed on the role of the individual practitioner in supporting enhancement, the systemic linkages are less clear.

⁴ The Joint Quality Review Group, a working group set up by the Scottish Funding Council to review quality assurance and enhancement, commissioned a project to develop Indicators of Enhancement, as part of the activities of the Scottish higher education sector during the interim year in 2007/08. With the support of QAA Scotland, the indicators were developed by a working group, chaired by Professor Peter Easy, then Senior Vice-Principal, Edinburgh Napier University. They were designed primarily to facilitate informed discussions at all levels within institutions about the enhancement of the student experience, not as a check-list for ELIR or as a set of performance indicators. Further information may be found at www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/Indicators.

26 Institutions have taken a variety of approaches to the development of enhancement strategies, and the approach continues to evolve. In some, quality enhancement is integrated within the institution's strategic plan. In others, it sits as a related but separate strategy, focusing on improving the student learning experience, informing both the institution's overarching strategic plan and, in some cases, the learning and teaching strategy. In other institutions, it is more narrowly focused on learning and teaching, either as learning and teaching strategy per se, or as a component of the learning and teaching strategy. Where no formal learning and teaching strategy has previously existed, the development of an enhancement strategy appears to act as a stimulus to develop a separate learning and teaching strategy.

27 It is clear that the formulation of such strategies has helped institutions to develop their understanding of quality enhancement and, thus, how best to develop existing quality frameworks to be more enhancement facing. For example, the ELIR report for one institution affirms that the development of a strategy is linked with restructuring to promote 'a deliberate coherent process of university-wide change, which is intended to be achieved through a culture of critical reflection on learning and teaching and joined-up thinking and action.' In another case, the ELIR report highlights how the institution's approach encapsulates the link between quality assurance and enhancement, noting that 'the enhancement of the student learning experience has two key drivers: planned strategic development through which the institution aims to anticipate and respond to the needs of the students it recruits, and a structured process of continuous review and reflection on current practice and provision.' In one institution, the enhancement strategy for learning and teaching complements the strategy for research development, the development of a 'community of learners' being central to both. Two institutions explicitly differentiate between strategic enhancement and activities involving good practice, innovation and experimentation. In their view, for an activity to be truly enhancement-led, it must result from the implementation of a defined strategy.

28 The ELIR reports indicate that to be fully effective, strategic approaches to enhancement have to reflect the nature and structure of the organisation, with actions designed at both institutional and operational levels. The reports also provide evidence of the impact of achieving a balance between top-down and bottom-up initiatives in order to effectively engage academic and support staff. This is also seen to be important in facilitating collaborative initiatives that bring together different groups of staff, as well as developing effective partnerships with students and students' associations. Reviewers conclude that the greatest impact is achieved where institutional-level actions are complemented and supported by a range of initiatives and projects at institutional, intermediate and subject levels to form an integrated and coherent plan. Where the institutional structure is devolved, and particularly where the culture is seen to be more collaborative in nature, it is likely that development will progress at different rates in different subject areas. In these circumstances, one report counsels that the institution should take steps to assure itself that the strategic implementation of enhancement is at least meeting a minimum threshold across the institution.

29 It is clear that enhancement strategies, which are themselves aligned with institutional strategic plans, are helpful in bringing about greater alignment of college/faculty/school strategies with institutional objectives and priorities. This collaborative approach is widely viewed as a strength, although achieving alignment is viewed as an ongoing challenge.

30 The largest institution has a collegiate structure, in which each of three colleges has a separate learning and teaching strategy, which is consistent with the institution's approach to learning and teaching as outlined in the institution's strategic plan, and aligned with the institution's quality enhancement strategy, which runs in parallel. The institutional quality enhancement strategy is seen as providing leadership and ensuring a cohesive but not necessarily uniform approach to quality enhancement across the institution. While some developments in learning and teaching will be guided by the learning and teaching strategies of individual colleges, the function of the institutional quality enhancement strategy is to provide a focus for debate at the college level, addressing issues that can only be effectively managed at university level.

31 By contrast, in a much smaller institution the institutional enhancement strategy is encapsulated in an overarching quality enhancement implementation project, 'White Space', which provides a conceptual framework for the institution's enhancement agenda. This project aims to include a mixture of pedagogy, new learning spaces, staff development, enterprise, and other generic skills, student engagement and research. The institution envisages that it will serve as a catalyst for the development of new pedagogies and new curriculum design. In this context, the institution recognises the need for strong and effective institutional leadership of this enhancement activity, and the importance of systematic management and evaluation of this complex set of projects.

32 Reports from the later part of the ELIR cycle show that enhancement strategies have developed into an important development tool, drawing together disparate strategic initiatives and strategies and focusing on the holistic student experience. They are now evolving into sophisticated drivers of enhancement, with closely defined objectives, associated action plans with attribution of responsibility for specific actions to identified agents, SMART targets, and milestones for implementation. Institutions are developing their approaches to annual monitoring of progress and evaluation of impact.

33 The ELIR reports also demonstrate increasing engagement of institutions with the work of the Enhancement Themes to date, namely Responding to Student Needs, Assessment and Integrative Assessment, Flexible Delivery, Employability, The First Year and Research-Teaching Linkages. The later ELIR reports, especially, show varying degrees of alignment between institutional enhancement strategies and the Enhancement Themes, and provide rich examples of how the published outputs or work in progress from particular themes have been used to inform strategic developments or enhance practice.

34 While the link between institutional and college/faculty/school strategic planning has been strengthened, the extent to which strategic enhancement is a priority for individuals remains a challenge. However, as institutional enhancement strategies

become more embedded in college/faculty/school plans, and enhancement becomes more embedded within quality assurance processes, over time the associated cultural changes should encourage greater individual engagement with quality enhancement.

35 In Scotland to date, the Enhancement Themes have mitigated the risk involved in innovation, because of the collective involvement of institutional staff in sector-wide development projects, which are closely aligned with institutional enhancement strategies. The Themes represent key issues identified by the sector as a whole and the outputs draw on international best practice, which institutions can then tailor to their own requirements. More recently, the revised approach to the management of the national Enhancement Themes, including regular meetings with institutional contacts, and institution-led projects, has provided a stimulus for concerted institutional engagement with Enhancement Theme topics. The involvement of staff across the sector as project directors or members of steering committees provides an added driver for the alignment of institutional enhancement strategies with the Enhancement Themes.

36 In general, the ELIR reports do not identify major issues involving the assessment or management of risk associated with transformational change. However, two ELIR reports describe sets of circumstances, which, in different ways, increased the risk arising from the development of VLE-based provision, with likely or actual detriment to the student experience. In a third ELIR report, the risk lies in the absence of an evaluation framework. An institution's overarching quality enhancement implementation project, to effect a transformational change to learning and teaching, and to build a learning organisation was seen to provide a 'conceptual framework' for the institution's quality enhancement agenda. However, it lacked an accompanying evaluation framework, to enable the progress of current initiatives to be properly assessed, to identify transferable principles and good practice to facilitate the implementation of similar initiatives in other parts of the institution, and to provide a framework for measuring the effectiveness of this kind of approach.

Integration of enhancement function in quality assurance processes

37 In the majority of institutions the enhancement function is rooted in robust and pre-existing quality assurance procedures, which are shifting their emphasis from teaching to the learning experience, in order to more effectively address improvement of the overall student experience. The more reflective and evaluative approach evident in much internal reporting is helping to nurture the development of a more reflective and learner-centred culture. Thus, for example, evidence from the ELIR reports indicates that annual programme and course reviews are becoming more evaluative and action driven, so that over time they provide a rich source of evidence to inform reflective analyses for institution-led quality review at subject level. In addition, these processes are becoming an effective mechanism for the capture and dissemination of good practice.

38 It is evident that forward-looking, evaluative annual reports, often incorporating action plans, can readily interface with and inform strategic planning processes at faculty/school level. Such reports can more effectively support and inform planned strategic enhancement at the institutional level, while also providing a mechanism for bottom-up comment on institutional strategies for enhancement. Likewise, top-down planning processes can be used to promote strategic alignment with the institution's enhancement agenda; one report in particular describes how institutional objectives are reflected in faculty strategic planning templates. In a few cases, ELIR teams noted where internal processes were not yet delivering the kind of evaluative and forward-looking reports required to fully support the development of an enhancement culture.

39 In a small number of institutions where there is an established practice of undertaking institution-wide thematic reviews, this mechanism has been readily adapted to support enhancement, with evidence of some alignment with national enhancement themes.

40 Institution-led reviews at the subject level, which take place on a five to six year cycle, are becoming more focused on the student experience.⁵ Indeed, by the end of the first ELIR cycle, a majority of institutions have included a student member on subject review panels (and by 2010, all but one). Institutions are developing a variety of approaches for engaging students in the process, both in terms of input to or comment on the reflective analysis, as well as in terms of meetings between panel members and student representatives. The ELIR reports show that increasingly, staff from centres for educational development are involved in subject review, either on the panel itself or to support subject-based staff in drafting the reflective analysis, which draws upon and responds to the institutional enhancement strategy. In addition, the involvement of staff from centres for educational development can facilitate the dissemination of good practice, as well as affording advice and support for particular issues or development needs identified. One ELIR report noted that

⁵ For further details, see (i) *Learning from ELIR 2003-07, Emerging approaches to institution-led quality review at the subject level: combining assurance with enhancement*, QAA 2009, and (ii) *Universities Scotland Teaching Quality Forum Project, Good practice in internal subject review*, QAA June 2009, at www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/learningfromreviews/LFseries.asp.

'Staff who have been directly involved are particularly positive about the benefits of the [subject review] process in leading to quality enhancement, and a shift from the perceived compliance culture engendered through previous processes.'

41 Increasingly too, senior managers and administrators are taking oversight of the collective annual outcomes of internal subject reviews, producing annual overview reports, which can interface with the ongoing institutional enhancement strategy and strategic planning process.⁶ In this way, a more effective synergy is developing between monitoring and review processes and strategic planning processes, which supports and informs the strategic enhancement agenda.

⁶ Since the establishment of the Quality Enhancement Framework in 2003, institutions have been required to provide the Scottish Funding Council with an annual report on the outcomes of the institution-led quality reviews at subject level and professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) reviews. Although outside the timeframe of this report, it is worth noting that, with effect from academic year 2008-09 and beyond, these reports are required to be endorsed by the governing body. The Scottish Funding Council has, with effect from 2009-10, commissioned QAA Scotland to produce an annual overview of the outcomes of the institutional annual reports.

Interconnectivity between quality and strategic planning processes

42 To be fully effective, the enhancement-led approach requires interconnectivity between the different operational levels: between committees, through cross membership and reporting links, between quality assurance processes, to establish a continuum for assurance and enhancement, linking to strategic planning, and between key senior and middle managers, providing a vertical and horizontal communication link. Alignment of the institutional enhancement strategy with faculty and school strategic plans creates a powerful dynamic to advance identified institutional priorities, further supported through cross institutional networks and formal or informal managerial groups. This connectivity has been further reinforced by restructuring and reconfiguration of support services.

43 Centres for academic practice have an important contribution to make to particular quality processes, such as institution-led subject review, or programme development and approval, to ensure full cognisance is taken of external reference points, including the Academic Infrastructure, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), and the Enhancement Themes, to identify and disseminate good practice, as well as to support staff in addressing identified areas for improvement, and staff development needs.

44 They also support the formation of practitioner groups in relation to specific areas of development and innovation. For example, one institution has established a 'Learning Enhancement Network', comprising members of its Centre for Academic Practice and faculty representatives. The ELIR report notes that this network has been designed to afford a dynamic vehicle for identifying and bringing together incremental improvements in departmental practice, and aligning these with institutional strategies. This, in turn, facilitates the sharing and dissemination of good practice, as well as identifying areas where support and advice are required. At another institution, the Teaching and Learning Service was planning to embark on support level agreements with faculties, thus providing the basis for a strategic link between individual initiatives and institutional strategy. Yet another institution has adopted a distinctive regional approach, having extended in-house seminars and discussion forums for sharing initiatives and good practice to include staff from neighbouring institutions.

45 Centres for academic practice also have an important coordinating role in supporting the institutional enhancement strategy through funding of targeted incremental small projects at the individual or faculty/school level that are consistent with and advance the institutional priorities. Such projects can help engender a sense of ownership of the enhancement agenda, while preserving a balance with local autonomy. Hub and spokes models in some institutions link centres of academic practice with local vice-deans or enhancement coordinators, to help identify and spread good practice and to address staff development needs.

46 The drive for enhancement appears to be most effective when a number of different aspects of the institution's quality framework are working together in synergy:

- the effective interlinking of quality processes and flow of quality-related information to institutional level
- the refocusing of committees and support services to enable a holistic approach to the student experience
- the appointment of 'leaders' at different levels of the institution to support policy development and implementation, and drive forward enhancement
- a balance of top-down and bottom up initiatives within agreed strategic parameters
- the use of an enhancement strategy as a tool for linking different strategies, driving change and encouraging innovation
- the alignment of institutional strategic planning with college/faculty/school/department strategic planning
- the alignment of staff development with quality processes and strategic planning
- effective engagement with student representatives, and the wider student body, combined with strategic partnerships with student associations.

Strategic engagement between institutions and student associations

47 From the evidence of the ELIR reports, it is clear that since the inception of the Quality Enhancement Framework, there has been significant development in student representation generally and more particularly in student engagement at the strategic level. On the whole, ELIR reports indicate that institutions have an open and strong partnership with their students' associations, which is often greatly assisted by a proactive approach on the part of the students' association.

48 With the shift in emphasis in quality management systems to promote the enhancement of the student experience, institutions have rapidly understood the importance of building more effective strategic partnerships with their students' associations. The students' associations have a key role in promoting student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement, both at an operational level, through facilitation or delivery of training for student representatives and in policy development, through the representational role of sabbatical officers on senior institutional committees, in both of which they are supported by student participation in quality scotland service (sparqs).⁷

49 The ELIR reports also show the emergence in some institutions of more strategic partnerships between institutions and student associations, focused on student issues particular to the institution, such as student representation, employability and personal development planning, and the introduction of a VLE. Such partnerships can add a powerful dynamic in the development and implementation of student-focused initiatives, or indeed in some cases even drive change. Embedding this approach could help to develop a more sustainable model of student engagement.

50 The lack of continuity in sabbatical officer posts is seen as limiting the extent to which student associations can engage in strategic decision-making. With this in mind, one institution highlights the importance of the contribution that students make to short-term working groups, because their focus, small size and short duration are more in tune with the perspective and experience of student participants, but which do enable them to shape longer term strategic development. Some institutions endeavour to counter the lack of continuity in sabbatical officer posts through the appointment of deans of students and student champions (See paragraph 8).

51 The ELIR reports confirm that Scottish higher education institutions have made significant progress in promoting student engagement. Over the period of the first ELIR cycle, institutions have been working in conjunction with student associations to build capacity and to promote effective student representation. The successful implementation of student reviewers on ELIR review teams was swiftly followed in a majority of institutions by the inclusion of student members on institution-led subject review panels and attempts to improve engagement with students in the subject area. More targeted approaches to student feedback are delivering better information

⁷ student participation in quality scotland service (sparqs) is a service which is funded by the Scottish Funding Council to assist and support students, students' associations and institutions to improve the effectiveness and engagement in quality assurance and enhancement in institutions across Scotland. For more information, see www.sparqs.ac.uk.

to support strategic planning, often assisted by virtual learning environment-based technology. These achievements provide a strong basis for continuing future development to extend and deepen the engagement of the wider student body in quality assurance and enhancement.⁸

⁸ For further information on student engagement, see *Learning from ELIR, 2003-07, Emerging approaches to student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement*, QAA 2009, at www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/learningfromreviews/LFseries.asp.

Enhancement-led approaches to staff engagement

52 Senior managers have adopted a variety of approaches to encourage staff to proactively support enhancement: by seeking to create a sense of ownership of institutional enhancement strategies; by running staff development days and annual enhancement events; by holding open discussion forums, on matters of learning and teaching; by encouraging the formation of specialist practitioner groups; by using internal development funds for projects at intermediate and subject level; and more recently, by seeking to align staff development strategies with enhancement strategies. These activities are further supported by the considerable progress that institutions have made in improving provision for induction, training and development of new academic staff, including through Higher Education Academy (HEA) accredited postgraduate certificate programmes.⁹

53 Some ELIR reports have noted a correlation between involvement in the formulation of the institutional enhancement strategy and a purposeful sense of ownership. This applies to staff and, in particular, to students. In the case of the latter, reports indicate the desirability of engaging with the wider student body rather than relying solely on student representatives on committees and working groups.

54 The growing impetus in quality assurance processes to identify and disseminate good practice (for example, in annual faculty/school reports, and in internal subject review reports) is leading to the development of annual staff development events and conferences. In addition, the growing alignment between institutional and faculty/school strategic planning is encouraging the formation of more specialised practitioner groups within institutions, as fora not only for the exchange of good practice but also to drive specific initiatives. Some smaller institutions in particular have taken deliberate steps to involve staff more through planned staff development days and annual enhancement events. In one larger institution, the ELIR report noted that the institutional group responsible for developing and driving the enhancement strategy held open forums with different groups of staff including, for example, programme and course leaders, to discuss common themes in teaching and sharing of good practice. Many institutions continue to focus on the development of effective means of disseminating and implementing good practice.

55 Positive steps to increase the emphasis on enhancement within the annual quality assurance processes reinforce staff's awareness of enhancement as a consequence of quality assurance. For example, one institution reported how the development of a template for Quality Enhancement Implementation Plans (QEIPs) for schools and departments afforded an opportunity for fruitful discussion on the nature of enhancement and how to encourage wide ownership of the concept of enhancement activity and its implementation. The institution described to the ELIR team how, following an early attempt to introduce an element of 'bottom-up' input into the institutional QEIP that met with mixed success, guidance was provided to heads of school in identifying appropriate quality enhancement activity that could be mapped onto the components of the institution's Teaching and Learning Strategy.

⁹ For further information on emerging approaches to staff engagement, see *Learning from ELIR, 2003-07, aligning enhancement strategies with staff development*, QAA 08/09 at www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/learningfromreviews/LFseries.asp.

56 Another large institution holds an annual monitoring and enhancement event to consider the outcomes of school events, which includes sharing school SMART targets, considering school progress in implementing the institutional enhancement strategy, and which provides an institution-wide report with an action plan for the Learning and Teaching Board. The ELIR team described this approach as 'an evolutionary and dynamic approach to enhancement activity, which is developing a culture of reflection and commitment to improving the student experience.'

57 The ELIR reports also indicate the importance of recognising in the quality enhancement strategy the development needs and professional aspirations of individual practitioners. To this end, in numerous institutions, mediating initiatives have been effective drivers for change where internal development funds are being used to support projects at intermediate and subject level, the topics of which can be scoped to harmonise with the institutional strategy, and which provide opportunities for individual development, aligned with institutional strategic objectives. The reports also show that a small number of institutions are using internal subject review as a tool to support staff development.

58 The ELIR reports demonstrate how institutions' approach to staff development is becoming more closely allied with support for learning and teaching, and more directly linked to the implementation of institutions' strategic objectives. In this regard, institutions have made considerable progress in improving provision for induction, training and development for new academic staff, including through HEA accredited postgraduate certificate programmes, and are adopting a variety of approaches to the provision of continuing professional development (CPD) for experienced staff.

59 Some ELIR reports note the difficulty of persuading staff to take part in CPD activity, but set this in the context of ongoing enhancement strategies that seek to foster an academic culture where engagement with higher education pedagogy becomes a necessary and normal part of academic life. However, other reports indicate that a significant proportion of staff are members of the HEA.

60 Over the period of the first ELIR cycle, a majority of institutions had recently revised or were about to revise arrangements for staff appraisal and performance review pending the outcomes of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff Framework Agreement, for the modernisation of pay structures. The information available in the ELIR reports on performance review systems is, therefore, uneven, but the later reports contain more substantive comment on appraisal and performance review systems as one means of identifying staff development needs. Where revised systems had been introduced, they appear to have included more reflective, developmental aspects, but it was too early to comment on their impact on the enhancement of learning.

61 All institutions in the Scottish higher education sector have revised their academic promotion criteria to recognise and reward innovation and excellence in teaching. New promoted posts such as Teaching Fellow and Senior Teaching Fellow allow for teaching-based career progression, with the possibility in some institutions of personal chair appointments. In at least two institutions, the role of Teaching Fellow has assumed a much greater strategic significance for the dissemination of good practice,

where teaching fellows have a closely defined strategic role within a reconfigured service for the support of learning and teaching.

62 While there have been a small number of appointments to reader/professorial level posts, based on excellence in teaching, there is still a general perception among academic staff that career progression is dependent on research performance. However, there is some evidence of developments that may over time help to raise the profile of teaching. One such initiative is the 'Caledonian Academy', which aims to foster excellence in teaching by bringing together teaching experts drawn from across the university to work collectively to help shape and develop the university's learning, teaching and assessment policies and practices.

63 Moreover, the increasingly important role of middle managers, such as vice-deans, at faculty or school level, and of directors of teaching and learning and local 'enhancement coordinators' at subject level, in managing quality and enhancement processes, and in providing a key link with institutional policy development and strategic planning, may help to shape an alternative career path, based on teaching excellence.

64 The revision of academic promotion criteria to recognise excellence in teaching, together with the policy developments relating to induction and probation of new lecturers, and HEA accredited training and development provide a framework for raising the status of teaching. These developments are further supported by the increasingly important role played by centres for learning and teaching in disseminating good practice, and in taking forward a more coordinated approach to staff development.

Conclusion

65 The ELIR reports confirm the significant progress made by the Scottish higher education sector over the four years of the first ELIR cycle in putting in place organisational structures designed to create a synergy around enhancement. There has been considerable progress in the development of reflective cultures. Quality assurance processes have been re-engineered to focus on enhancement, and link more effectively with strategic planning processes. Institutional enhancement strategies are now providing a vehicle for unifying disparate strategies and initiatives, and driving change more effectively, by promoting alignment at the faculty/school/college level. Reports from the latter part of the cycle suggest a gathering momentum, with systems, processes and structures geared to work more effectively together to support the enhancement-led approach, with increasing focus on the student experience.

66 There has also been considerable progress in raising the status of teaching, through promotion criteria for academic staff, which include excellence in teaching, and through the increasingly prominent leadership roles of senior and middle managers in supporting enhancement. Equally, there has been significant progress in student engagement, particularly in terms of strategic partnerships with student associations on specific issues. But, institutions face the continuing challenge of achieving wider engagement of staff and students, if they are to make further progress in the development of quality cultures.¹⁰

67 Institutional enhancement strategies now need to focus on sustainability, in terms of how to embed initiatives more securely across colleges/faculties/schools/ departments, how to recognise and reward excellence in teaching, how to engage staff at the grass roots in supporting the enhancement agenda, and how to promote greater student engagement with learning and teaching. In view of the pivotal role of senior and middle managers in providing leadership for the enhancement-led approach, institutions need to consider succession planning, and the developmental needs arising from that, to sustain the momentum that has begun.

¹⁰ At the end of the first ELIR cycle, the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) and QAA Scotland commissioned a study on the general and key question of how to create and nurture cultures of quality enhancement in learning and teaching activities within higher education institutions. This briefing paper, *Cultures of Quality Enhancement: a short overview of the literature for higher education policy makers and practitioners* by George Gordon and Catherine Owen, is available at www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/QualityCultures.

Annex 1

This interim report draws on the evidence of the following ELIR reports:

University of Aberdeen	April 2005
The University of Abertay, Dundee	May 2007
Bell College*	January 2004
Bell College (Follow-up review)*	November 2005
University of Dundee	November 2004
The University of Edinburgh	November 2006
Edinburgh College of Art	March 2005
University of Glasgow	April 2004
Glasgow Caledonian University	December 2005
Glasgow School of Art	February 2005
Heriot-Watt University	February 2006
Napier University	April 2006
University of Paisley*	April 2006
Queen Margaret University College (now Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh)	May 2004
The Robert Gordon University	May 2007
Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama	March 2004
Scottish Agricultural College	May 2005
University of St Andrews	March 2006
The University of Stirling	November 2006
University of Strathclyde	April 2005
UHI Millennium Institute	May 2007

* Note: The University of Paisley and Bell College have subsequently merged to form the University of the West of Scotland

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