



INSTITUTION-LED REVIEW (ILR) OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES (previously programme review)

CONTENTS

Outline of the procedure	2
Preparing for review	3
Engaging students in Institution-led review	6
Proposing changes to the provision	6
The school scrutiny	7
The Institution-led review panel	7
Meetings of the Institution-led Review panel	7
Selecting the Institution-led Review panel	8
Information to be made available to a programme review panel	9
The Institution-led Review Event	10
Appendix 1	13
ILR panel: Key dates and activities	13
Appendix 2	14
Indicative ILR event programme (for an event scheduled to last a single day)	14
Appendix 3	15
The ILR guide	15



Outline of the procedure

1. Institution-led review of taught programmes has been designed to meet the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and in particular the common practices requiring us to review our core practices for standards and quality regularly and to use the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement. In addition the processes set out within this section are the University's methodology for ensuring that all provision is reviewed on a cycle of not more than six years in accordance with Scottish Funding Council key characteristics of institution-led review ([SFC guidance 2017-2022](#)).
2. At Edinburgh Napier, all taught award or credit-bearing programmes must be formally reviewed in accordance with this procedure and within five academic years from the date of initial approval or, where applicable, the previous formal review event. The institution-led review of the supervision of research students and the research student experience is not within the scope of this procedure, and is overseen by processes set out within the Research Degrees Framework.
3. Institution-led review provides an opportunity to explore in-depth the contribution made by the programmes to the School and University strategic objectives, and to consider the approaches made by the programme teams to enhance the provision. Institution-led review focuses on the approach taken by programme teams to ensure that provision continues to meet the academic standard for an award of the University as defined in academic regulations, that the proposed learning, teaching and assessment approaches continue to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes and that the programme continues to provide students with access to a high quality learning experience. It is an 'enhancement-led' approach to review, meaning it is not about finding problems or criticizing individuals, but is about continuous improvement, and celebrating and sharing good practice.
4. Institution-led review has been designed to facilitate the consideration of programmes and suites of programmes. It should consider the programmes in all modes of study in which it is delivered, for example the review should consider UK-based programmes alongside the transnational education or distance-learning iterations of the programmes. In addition, if elements of the programmes are offered by the University as standalone CPD provision, this should also be considered within the scope of the review.
5. Institution-led review must be evidenced-based and take full account of the outcomes of any internal or external audit, monitoring or review activities which have taken place since the date of initial approval or, where applicable, the previous formal review event. It should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of annual monitoring and review activities and how this informs the ongoing enhancement of the provision.



6. It is unlikely that proposals from more than one subject area will be able to be considered at the same Institution-led review event.
7. Preparation for Institution-led review will commence at least twelve months prior to the review with a formal meeting to ensure that staff involved in leading the preparation for the review are clear on the process and the required outputs and to agree interim milestones and check-points to enable ongoing support to be provided throughout the preparation phase.
8. All programme specifications must be subjected to school-level scrutiny before being submitted for scrutiny and consideration by a review panel. See [Quality Framework Section 1c: Academic approval of taught award or credit-bearing provision](#) for detailed information on the school scrutiny. All modules which a student is required to successfully complete in order to gain an award title should be submitted for review as part of the Institution-led review process. It is anticipated that modules are reviewed by Schools prior to the programme Institution-led review to ensure that they continue to meet both University and external expectations.
9. The successful outcome of Institution-led review will be that all programmes under review are re-approved. The panel will agree the period of approval which must not exceed five academic years from the date of the review event. The review will also seek to identify aspects of positive practice which should be shared within the School, University and where appropriate within the wider sector. As part of an enhancement-led approach, it is anticipated that areas for further development will also be identified through the review, and programme teams will be expected to take these forward during the following review cycle, and report formally on progress a year following the review.
10. The schedule for reviews for 2019/20 to 2023/2024 academic sessions has been agreed by Quality & Standards Committee, and any deviation or changes to this schedule must be agreed in advance by the Committee, as the schedule is reported annually to the Scottish Funding Council and to the Quality Assurance Agency.

[Back to Contents](#)

Preparing for review

11. Each School is responsible for the oversight and management of preparation for Institution-led Review, and will be supported by the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement, and colleagues within the School Support Service. It is anticipated that the Quality & Standards Manager associated with each School should be invited to attend a meeting with Senior Staff in each School at least



once a year to discuss the forthcoming ILR schedule, and progress made following ILRs.

12. Formal preparation should commence at least twelve months prior to each review event with a preparatory meeting led by the School Head of Learning and Teaching (this may be delegated to the School Academic Lead for Quality), working closely with the Quality & Standards Manager from the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement associated with the School. The preparatory meeting is likely to include the School Academic Lead for Quality; Head of Subject and programme leader(s) for the provision (or representatives of the programme leaders as appropriate). There should also be representation from the School Support Service. Guidance to inform this meeting is available from the [Quality Framework Section 2 Forms page](#). The meeting is intended to confirm the scope of the review (to ensure all relevant provision is included) and to begin to explore the operational elements involved in preparing for the review, and define specific roles and responsibilities. Areas for discussion might also include wider engagement of the programme teams; external expertise to be drawn upon; student engagement etc. and to ensure that programme leaders responsible for preparing for the review fully understand the processes set out within this section of the Quality Framework. There will also be initial discussions regarding the possible format and duration of the review event (for example, its likely duration).
13. During the preparation meeting, a number of touchpoint opportunities will be agreed to ensure ongoing support in advance of the review.
14. Programme team(s) are required to produce a single self-evaluation report to inform the review. As programmes under review will typically have been offered to students for a period of up to five academic sessions, there will be a body of existing evidence and data to draw upon to inform the self-evaluation report. Programme leaders should draw upon and reflect on this evidence when preparing the self-evaluation report. This evidence will be made available to the panel on SharePoint in advance of the review and will include:
 - module and programme annual monitoring outcomes;
 - analysis of student progression, retention and achievement data, including employability data;
 - changes made to provision during the review cycle; minutes from programme meetings (such as Boards of Studies and Student Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs));
 - external examiner reports; industry liaison panels;
 - analysis of feedback from students, including from the Student Experience reports (NSS/PTES and module evaluation) and SSLCs.



A template to support the production of the report is available from the [Quality Framework Section 2 Forms page](#) and includes further detail regarding the evidence-base. The report should be reflective and self-critical and evaluative, rather than descriptive.

15. During the preparation phase ahead of the review, the programme team should 'step back' and use the evidence base to reflect upon what is working well with the programme and on areas for development which would be helpful to explore during the review. To support this reflection during the preparation phase the following is an indicative list of topics which programme teams may wish to consider when reflecting on the programme(s). It is neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive:
- a) the continuing purpose of the programme within the context of the University's Strategy.
 - b) the continuing alignment of the programme against specific aspects of the UK Quality Code, for example Subject Benchmark Statements; the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Frameworks (SQCF) and confirmation that the programme design and learning outcomes are consistent with these external reference points .
 - c) the continuing currency and validity of the programme in light of developments in research, professional and industry practice and pedagogy (including the use of technology in learning and teaching).
 - d) the continuing effectiveness of the mechanisms to enable students to provide the programme team with systematic feedback on their student learning experience.
 - e) the continuing quality of learning resources including provision of information technology, library or specialist equipment.
 - f) the contribution and role of professional support services to the quality of the student experiences
 - g) changes in the external environment such as requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies.
 - h) whether students are attaining the intended learning outcomes and whether the assessment regime enables this to be appropriately demonstrated.
 - i) ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes and that consideration has been given to inclusive LTA approaches.



- j) the effect of changes made to the programme since its formal approval and how student learning has been enhanced as a result.

Engaging students in Institution-led review

16. The University is committed to ensuring that students are provided with opportunities to engage in formal and informal dialogue on the enhancement of their learning experience and to engage with, and inform preparation for the review.
17. Programme teams need to consider how best to involve students and alumni during the development of the programme review self-evaluation report and information set. Guidance for students involved in preparing for review is provided within the [Quality Framework Section 2 Forms page](#). For on-campus students, good practice includes utilising student focus groups or student-staff liaison committee meetings to review and receive feedback on programme material, or to issue bespoke questionnaires to students to elicit feedback and suggestions on programme enhancement. It is good practice to differentiate between the views of different categories of students where these are likely to be significant, for example part-time and full-time students; or the views of direct entrants etc. Where appropriate, programme teams are strongly encouraged to reflect on how to ensure that off-campus students are given an opportunity to contribute to and comment on the programme review information set. Programme teams may find the guidance published by SPARQS a useful resource: <http://www.sparqs.ac.uk/resource-item.php?item=228>.
18. Students' views gathered during the preparation for programme review should be explicitly included within the self-evaluation document.

Proposing changes to the provision

19. Institution-led Review is intended to explore how programme teams manage the ongoing enhancement of the provision. It is possible that in preparing for review, programme leaders may identify enhancements that they wish to make to the programme specification or module descriptors to be considered and approved as part of the review. These changes should be clearly identified and referenced within the self-evaluation report. It is also acknowledged that programme teams may wish to use the review to explore potential enhancements for the future with the review team (as part of an ongoing enhancement-approach), and these should be included within the five year plan set out within the self-evaluation report. There is no requirement for programme teams to present substantive



changes to programmes coming forward for review, if the evidence indicates that the provision is operating well and providing a high quality student experience in-line with University strategy.

20. Programme teams are however responsible for ensuring that the programme specification(s) and module descriptors for the provision are complete and up-to-date and are in accordance with University requirements in advance of the review. These must have been subject to school scrutiny.

[Back to Contents](#)

The school scrutiny

21. The purpose of the school scrutiny is to ensure that the programme specification(s) and constituent module descriptors are complete and accurate and meet University expectations. The School may choose to use the scrutiny to offer peer-feedback on the self-evaluation report, prior to it being signed off by the Head of Learning & Teaching, or may decide to focus the scrutiny on matters relating to Quality Assurance.
22. The outcome of the scrutiny event helps to reassure the programme team, School Academic Lead for Quality and the School Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee that the quality and standard of the proposed taught award or credit-bearing programme meets academic regulations and Quality Framework expectations.
23. To enable the documentation to be finalised after the scrutiny, it is recommended that the scrutiny takes place a minimum of 60 working days before the date of the Institution-led Review event. See [Quality Framework Section 1c: Academic approval of taught award or credit-bearing provision](#) for detailed information on the composition of the school scrutiny panel.
24. There is no requirement for formal minutes to be taken at the school scrutiny, though a record of actions agreed as part of the scrutiny should be retained and made available as part of the evidence-base for the review.

[Back to Contents](#)

The Institution-led review panel

Meetings of the Institution-led Review panel

25. When scheduling the review, it is important that consideration is given to the timing of the review event to ensure that students are able to engage with the review (for example, within term-time).



26. The convenor of the review panel, in liaison with the Convenor of Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee, the Convenor of the relevant School Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee and the Head of Quality & Enhancement, reserves the right to cancel an Institution-led review event should inadequate or incomplete documentation be available 20 working days before the agreed date for the event.

Selecting the Institution-led Review panel

27. The School Academic Lead for Quality and the School Support Service, in consultation with the Head of Quality & Enhancement will appoint a review panel to consider programmes from their school. The School Academic Lead for Quality will liaise with the school Quality & Standards point of contact to arrange for individual review panel members to be briefed on their role, although an online course intended for all panel members is also available for self-enrolment via this [link](#).

28. A standard programme review panel must consist of:

- a) a convenor (typically a senior member of academic staff from another School) who has undertaken training in convening review panels offered by the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement
- b) at least one external academic peer with subject expertise relevant to the programmes under review
- c) a student representative
- d) an academic peer from another subject area (typically a member of an Academic Board sub-committee or a colleague who has achieved fellowship of the HEA)
- e) a professional service colleague (typically a member of an Academic Board sub-committee or a colleague who has achieved or is seeking fellowship of the HEA (including Associate Fellowship)
- f) a member of the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement, nominated by the Head of Quality & Enhancement, who serves as an active panel member and report author

If a programme team would find it beneficial to have additional members of the panel, for example representatives from industry or the professional, statutory or regulatory body, this should be discussed during the preparation for the review.



The event will also be supported by a member of the School Support Service who will have a coordinating role, and may provide additional support during the ILR itself.

In the spirit of transparency and to support colleagues preparing for review, each Institution-led review event will also permit one observer to sit alongside the panel members. The observer would typically be a programme leader from an area preparing for review during the next 12–18 months. While the observer will receive the same data set as the panel and will attend the same meetings, this individual is not a member of the review panel and is not involved in the decision-making processes.

29. Given the purpose of programme review the event will always be arranged as a physical event, typically lasting between one and two days. The School Support Service will ensure that all panel members have the opportunity to consider all comments made by each panel member before the event as part of the collective decision-making process.

[Back to Contents](#)

Information to be made available to a programme review panel

30. School Support Service will circulate the following information set to panel members a minimum of 20 working days before the agreed date for the review event:
 - a) an agenda for the meeting of the programme review panel
 - b) a list of panel members
 - c) the following documents which have been approved for circulation by the Head of Learning & Teaching:
 - i) a self-evaluation report for the provision under consideration
 - ii) programme specifications for all provision under consideration which meets University expectations
 - iii) Electronic access should also be provided for the evidence base on which the self-evaluation report draws upon
 - d) the record of actions following the school scrutiny, and confirmation that these have been addressed.
 - e) the meeting minute from the original approval event or, where applicable, the outcome of the previous programme review event



- f) the [Institution-led review guide](#).
31. A minimum of five working days before the agreed date for the review event, panel members will provide the School Support Service with a list of points they would wish to explore in greater depth as part of the review meeting. This list should be informed by the Institution-led review guide, which is attached as [Appendix 3](#). These comments should be shared with the convenor.
32. Panel members' individual written comments should not be shared with the programme team, but may be shared with other panel members in advance of the review event at the convenor's discretion.

The Institution-led Review Event

33. A typical Institution-led review programme should include:
- a) a meeting with current students and recent alumni
 - b) a meeting, or series of meetings, with the programme teams (which may include the programme administrator; subject librarian or other colleagues directly involved in the delivery and support of the programme) and school representatives as appropriate to clarify any points arising from panel members' initial scrutiny
 - c) a tour of specialist learning and teaching facilities relevant to the proposal (if appropriate)
 - d) a series of private meetings of the panel to discuss and plan topics for discussion with students and staff, and to agree the outcome of the review
 - e) a meeting with the programme teams to provide initial feedback on the outcome of the review.
34. The actual agenda for each Institution-led review event will be produced by the School Support Service, in consultation with the Convenor following agreement by the School Quality & Standards point of contact and the School Academic Lead for Quality based on the indicative visit programme attached at [Appendix 2](#).
35. The Institution-led Review event provides an invaluable forum for the discussion of curriculum and the quality of the student experience with subject experts. It is intended to provide an opportunity to showcase areas of strength and innovative practice within the programme(s). The review should also explore areas where there could be improvement and to support the programme team(s) in taking this work forward, as part of an enhancement-led approach. The meetings within the



review should be conducted in a professional and collegiate manner in the spirit of support.

36. Using the Institution-led Review guide the panel will assess, using their academic and professional experience and judgement, whether University expectations for the academic standard and quality of the student learning experience for a taught award or credit-bearing programmes are met. The panel will also provide comment and feedback on the overall appropriateness, quality and standard of the provision under review. In confirming the re-approval of the programme(s), the panel may decide to make conditions or recommendations where necessary. Conditions would need to be met and signed off by the panel convenor within an agreed time-period. In the unlikely event that the panel deems that a programme cannot be re-approved the panel will provide the programme team with precise feedback on the matters to be addressed before the decision can be reconsidered. In such cases the Panel convenor will provide the Dean of School, Head of Learning & Teaching, and the School Support Service with the reason for this decision being made and precise feedback on the matters to be addressed before the decision can be reconsidered at a re-convened review panel. Should the School take the decision to withdraw the programme, then the procedures set out in Section 3 of the Quality Framework would apply.
37. The Panel will agree commendations as an outcome from the review, identifying and confirming areas of positive and innovative practice and will explore how these might be effectively share these within the School, University and wider sector. In addition, the Panel will make recommendations, identifying areas for future enhancement.
38. The draft report will be produced by the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement within 10 working days of the review event and issued to the Convenor for approval to circulate. The draft report will then be circulated to the other members of the ILR panel and to the programme team for feedback on factual accuracy. Following confirmation by the Convenor, the final report should be considered by the School Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee. The Committee will discuss identified areas of good or innovative practice, strengths and achievements or areas for further development. Schools should also consider the most effective mechanisms to share the reports with students on the programme(s), for example discussion at SSLCs.
39. The final report will also be presented to the University Quality & Standards Committee by the School representative with a view to disseminating relevant information University-wide. Key themes from the reports will be drawn out for inclusion in the annual report to the Scottish Funding Council.



40. Each Institution-led Review will be subject to a follow-up event around 12 months following the review. A small panel (2-3 members) comprised of members of the University Quality & Standards Committee will meet with the Programme Leader(s), School Head of Learning & Teaching (or School Academic Lead for Quality) and other relevant members of the programme team(s) to discuss progress made following the review and ongoing development. Notes from this meeting will be taken by the Quality & Standards Manager, reported to Quality & Standards Committee and retained alongside the report.

[Back to Contents](#)



Appendix 1

ILR panel: Key dates and activities

This table has been produced to provide a quick reference point of the key dates and associated activities leading up to a meeting of an institution-led review (ILR) panel.

DATE	ACTIVITY
A minimum of 12 months prior to the anticipated ILR panel	Preparation Meeting The Quality & Standards point of contact, with the School Head of Learning & Teaching and School Academic Lead for Quality, will meet with programme leader(s) and other key members of staff to discuss the process and its expectations, and consider specific roles and responsibilities. This is intended to be a supportive conversation to ensure that review is as effective as possible.
Periodically during the following 10-12 months	Touchpoints agreed during the preparation will ensure that the programme team(s) remain on track.
A minimum of 60 working days before the date of an ILR panel.	The programme specifications and module descriptors for provision under review undergoes internal scrutiny overseen by the School Academic Lead for Quality.
A minimum of 20 working days before the date of an ILR panel.	The Head of Learning & Teaching authorises the release of the programme information set to panel members. The School Support Service ensures that this information set is available to all panel members via SharePoint or alternative secure method.
A minimum of 5 working days before the date of an ILR panel.	ILR panel members send their comments on the proposal to the School Support Service point of contact to share with the convenor.
Day 0.	ILR event.
A maximum of 10 working days after the date of an ILR panel.	Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement (DLTE) ensures that the report is drafted and sent to the convenor for approval.
A maximum of 30 working days after the date of an ILR panel.	DLTE ensures that a final report has been sent to panel members and the programme team(s) for comment on matters of factual accuracy.
A maximum of 30 working days after the date of an ILR panel.	DLTE issues the final report, and liaises with key stakeholders regarding any outstanding conditions or actions to be met.
12 months following ILR event	A small panel meets with the programme team(s) to discuss activities undertaken following the ILR

[Back to Contents](#)



Indicative ILR event programme (for an event scheduled to last a single day)

0900	The review panel convene.
0900-1100	The panel meet to confirm the topics to be covered during the event and content for the final report.
1100-1230	The panel meet with a representative sample of students and recent alumni from the programme(s) under review (maximum of 12 individuals).
1230-1300	Working Lunch - The panel meet to discuss the outcome of the meeting with students and to confirm topics to be covered during the meeting with the programme team(s).
1300-1330	Tour of specialist learning and teaching facilities relevant to the proposal if required.
1300-1500	The panel meet with the programme team(s) to discuss the proposal(s).
1500-1645	<p>The panel meet to reflect on the outcome of the meetings with staff and students. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• considering whether the matters highlighted by panel members during the initial meeting have been addressed appropriately• identifying possible achievements, areas of good and innovative practice and strengths to be included in the review report• identifying possible conditions or recommendations to be made in the review report.
1645-1700	The panel meet with the programme team(s) to provide initial feedback on the outcome of the review.

Please note, this schedule is indicative and timings will vary depending on the number of programmes and scope of the review.



The ILR guide

This guide provides ILR panel members with a list of topics to be considered when assessing, using their academic and professional experience and judgement, the overall appropriateness, quality and standard of a proposal to re-approve a taught programme. It also provides panel members with themed headings which may be used to set out the points they wish to discuss with the programme team and students during meetings.

Panel members may find it helpful to enrol on the University Moodle Course which has been developed to support panel members:

<https://moodlecommunity.napier.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=265#section-1>

As external panel members may be unable to access the Moodle course, we have produced supplementary guidance specifically for external panel members and this is available to access from the [Quality Framework's related resources page](#).

1. General comment and feedback on the Self-Evaluation Report and programme documentation.

- a) first overall impression of the provision, for example, anything that you think is missing or anything that has pleased, surprised or disappointed you
- b) any perceived areas of good or innovative practice, strengths and achievements
- c) any areas where you consider further development or improvement would be of benefit
- d) any concerns relating to the accuracy of the published information relating to the programme(s) under review.
- e) any comments or reflections on how the programme team(s) have prepared for the review
- f) any additional information that you would like to request in advance of the review.

2. Specific comment on the following:

- a) **How has the programme team demonstrated the programme's contribution to the implementation of the University Strategy**

Specific points the panel may wish to consider include:



- i) Do you have a clear sense of the programme(s) with local ownership and a holistic view of the student journey from enquiry to completion?
- ii) How clear are the programme(s) contribution to key strategic deliverables, which could include:
- developing strong links with business
 - encouraging articulation from partner colleges
 - providing placement and enterprise opportunities for all students
 - providing international study opportunities and increased outward mobility for all students
 - encouraging student engagement with Edinburgh Napier Students' Association to enhance experience, engagement and volunteering
 - encouraging effective programme representation and peer mentoring
 - embracing innovation in learning and teaching and the use of technology to support learning
 - adopting a pedagogic approach based on active learning and principles of assessment for learning
 - Incorporating an inclusive approach to learning and teaching

b) How has the programme team demonstrated its approach to safeguarding academic standards?

Specific points the panel may wish to consider include:

- i) How have the programme team(s) demonstrated that they take appropriate account of external reference points in setting the academic standard of the provision?
- [The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland](#)
 - relevant qualification and/or subject [benchmark statements](#)
 - professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements where appropriate.



- ii) The appropriateness of the intended learning outcomes required to achieve the final award (and any exit awards available to students who do not complete the programme).
- iii) The extent to which the proposed learning, teaching and assessment approaches enable students to achieve the programme and exit award learning outcomes.
- iv) Has sufficient evidence been provided with relation to the effectiveness of the approaches in place for Quality Assurance and Enhancement for the provision under review?

c) How has the programme team demonstrated the quality of learning opportunities for students?

Specific points the panel may wish to consider include:

- i) The overall quality of the proposed student learning experience including academic and pastoral support and students' wider educational needs.
- ii) The mechanisms to enable students to provide the programme team(s) with systematic feedback on their learning experience, and in closing the feedback loop with students accordingly.
- iii) The mechanisms to ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes.
- iv) How effective is the proposal in supporting the strategic objective of providing students with a personalised learning experience through individual support?
- v) How do the programme team(s) ensure that students develop graduate attributes and employability skills during their programmes of study?

d) How has the programme team demonstrated the impact of professional service departments on enhancing provision?

Specific points the panel may wish to consider include:

- i) To what extent do the programme team(s) utilise resources and expertise beyond the programme team to the benefit of their students?
- ii) The mechanisms in place to work in partnership with the professional service departments to support the enhancement of provision and support.

