

Outline of Institution-Led Review

Every taught programme at Edinburgh Napier University is subject to Institution-Led Review (ILR) on a 6-year cycle (in line with Scottish Funding Council expectations and the requirements of the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)). Edinburgh Napier operates an enhancement-led and collegiate approach to ILR. It is a University-level activity, undertaken by a panel, which includes a student, academic and professional experts from within the University and at least one external peer. The panel meets to discuss a reflective document and evidence base provided prior to the review, then meets with students on the programmes, with the programme teams and other key contributors before deciding a review outcome.

ILR determines:

- whether each programme continues to meet the required academic standard for an award of the University;
- that the learning, teaching and assessment approaches continue to enable students to achieve the learning outcomes and;
- that the programmes provide students with access to high quality learning experiences.

The process is set out in detail in the [University's Quality Framework, Section 2b, Institution-Led Review](#)

The convenor

The convenor will typically be a senior member of academic staff from a different School to the programmes under review, and will have undertaken ILR panel member training offered by the Department for Learning & Teaching Enhancement.

The convenor is specifically expected to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the requirements of the Quality Framework; Curriculum Enhancement Framework (ENhance) and the Academic Regulations as relevant to the programmes under review;
- liaise with the report author (Quality & Standards Manager), and approve the agenda prior to circulation to panel members;
- prepare, in advance of the review event, a brief written commentary of points they wish to explore with the programme teams during the meeting (informed by the Institution-Led Review Guide, Quality Framework, Section 2b, Appendix 3);
- in advance of the review, read and identify key themes from the comments received from each panel member, and meet with the report author (Quality & Standards Manager) to discuss and prepare a detailed plan for the event;
- welcome and introduce panel members and participants and foster an environment where all have the opportunity to contribute and share views in a collegiate and respectful manner, ensuring in particular that the student panel member is treated as a full and equal member of the panel;
- provide an independent and objective view of decisions taken in relation to the programmes under consideration;
- take a holistic view of the programmes, considering all iterations of the programmes (including online, transnational/collaborative provision), and consider the contribution of the modules to the programmes as a whole (note that if a significant issue is identified in relation to a module, this may be explored);
- ensure that the panel collectively reaches an outcome decision in accordance with the Quality Framework, Section 2b, and that commendations, recommendations and conditions are accurately noted and verbally conveyed to the programme team at the final meeting, ensuring that a deadline date for conditions to be met and the submission of the updated Programme Enhancement plan to be submitted is agreed and recorded;
- convey thanks to all participants on behalf of the University;

- comment on and approve the draft review report (a record of discussions and decisions) and sign off the updated Programme Enhancement plan and any conditions once these have been met.

Restrictions regarding appointment of a convenor

As the role of all panel members is to provide an independent and objective view, the following restrictions apply:

An individual who has been involved in the design or delivery of the provision under review, or who has been involved in any research, consultative or collaborative work relating to the programmes under review, is not generally permitted to participate in an ILR event which considers programmes owned by that School.

The student panel member

The student panel member is a full and equal member of the ILR panel, appointed to bring the student perspective to the entire review. The involvement of students in ILR aligns with Scottish Funding Council guidance and reflects the University's commitment to student engagement articulated in the University-ENSA Student Partnership Agreement. The student panel member is recruited by the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement through a competitive process and invited to participate in at least one ILR event per year. They will have undertaken ILR panel member training offered by the Department for Learning & Teaching Enhancement.

Through participation in the ILR, student panel members gain an insight into the University's quality assurance and enhancement processes and gain experience of a professional panel environment, working in partnership with staff.

Student panel members are specifically expected to:

- attend student panel member training offered by the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement and an additional briefing meeting in advance of the review;
- bring the student perspective to the entire review;

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- read documentation in advance of the event;
- identify key issues in the documentation to formulate themes for discussion during the event;
- actively participate in the review, by asking questions of the students and programme teams and engaging in discussions;
- comment on the draft review report produced after the event (a record of discussions and decisions).

Restrictions regarding appointment of a student panel member

The appointed student will be from a different subject area to the programmes under review. The Quality & Standards Team will liaise with to the School Support Service member of staff supporting the ILR event prior to appointment to confirm there is no conflict of interest.

The role of the external peer

The external peer will be a subject expert from academia or industry and will be able to demonstrate breadth and depth of experience in the design and delivery of higher education provision, and relevant, current knowledge and expertise of development in the subject area, at the level of the provision being considered¹.

The external peer is specifically expected to:

- provide an independent and objective view of decisions taken in relation to the programmes under consideration;
- draw on their own experience in leading and designing programmes, and on industry experience, to comment constructively on the provision under review;

¹ Representatives from the professional, statutory or regulatory body may also serve on the ILR panel. This information note has been produced by the Quality & Standards Team in DLTE. For further information or to provide feedback, please contact us at quality@napier.ac.uk
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- provide comment and feedback on the academic standard and the quality of learning opportunities associated with each programme, and whether these meet sector expectations;
- prepare, in advance of the review event, a brief written commentary of points they wish to explore with the programme teams during the meeting (informed by the [Institution-Led Review Guide, Quality Framework, Section 2b, Appendix 3](#));
- take a holistic view of the programmes, considering all iterations of the programmes (including online, transnational/collaborative provision), and considering the contribution of the modules to the programmes as a whole (note that if a significant issue is identified in relation to a module, this may be explored);
- contribute to deciding a review outcome, and comment on the draft review report (a record of discussions and decisions).

The external peer is not expected to:

- scrutinise the contribution of the programmes to the University's Strategy;
- re-approve existing modules, which have been scrutinised, or approved, in advance of the review by the School.

Restrictions regarding appointment of the external academic peer

As the role of the external peer is to provide an independent and objective view, the following restrictions apply:

- An individual who has been involved in the design or delivery of the provision under review, or who has been involved in any research, consultative or collaborative work with the School, is not permitted to participate in an Institution-Led Review event;
- Current external examiners cannot be appointed as an Institution-Led Review external panel member (a former external examiner may be considered for the role if five academic years have passed since they ceased their appointment).

The academic peer

The academic peer will be an experienced individual, able to draw on their own teaching and subject experience to consider provision from another area. They will typically be a member of an Academic Board sub-committee or a colleague seeking or having achieved Fellowship of Advance HE. They should be able to demonstrate breadth and depth of experience in the design and delivery of higher education provision and be familiar with documentation relating to programme design at Edinburgh Napier, including principles of the Curriculum Enhancement Framework and will have undertaken ILR panel member training offered by the Department for Learning & Teaching Enhancement.

The academic peer is specifically expected to:

- provide an independent and objective view of decisions taken in relation to the programmes under consideration;
- draw on their own experience in leading and designing programmes to comment constructively on the provision under review;
- provide comment and feedback on the academic standard and the quality of learning opportunities associated with each programme, and whether these meet sector expectations;
- prepare, in advance of the review event, a brief written commentary of points they wish to explore with the programme teams during the meeting (informed by the [Institution-Led Review Guide, Quality Framework, Section 2b](#), Appendix 3);
- take a holistic view of the programmes, considering all iterations of the programmes (including online, transnational/collaborative provision), and considering the contribution of the modules to the programmes as a whole (note that if a significant issue is identified in relation to a module, this may be explored);
- contribute to deciding a review outcome, and comment on the draft review report (a record of discussions and decisions).

Restrictions regarding appointment of the academic peer

As the role of all panel members is to provide an independent and objective view, the following restrictions apply:

An individual who has been involved in the design or delivery of the provision under review, or who has been involved in any research, consultative or collaborative work with relating to the programmes under review, is not generally permitted to participate in an ILR event which considers programmes owned by that School.

The professional services panel member

The professional services member will typically be a member of an Academic Board sub-committee or a colleague who has achieved or is seeking fellowship of Advance HE (including Associate Fellowship) and will have undertaken ILR panel member training offered by the Department for Learning & Teaching Enhancement.

The professional services panel member is specifically expected to:

- provide an independent and objective view of decisions taken in relation to the programme/s under consideration;
- draw on their own experience and knowledge of the University's professional support services in supporting students' learning, and comment constructively on the provision under review;
- take a holistic view of the programmes, considering all iterations of the programmes (including online, transnational/collaborative provision), and considering the contribution of the modules to the programmes as a whole (note however, that if a significant issue is identified in relation to a module, this may be explored);
- provide, in advance of the review event, a brief written commentary of points they wish to explore with the programme teams during the meeting (informed by the [Institution-Led Review Guide, Quality Framework, Section 2b](#), Appendix 3);

contribute to deciding a review outcome, and comment on the draft review report (a record of discussions and decisions).

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The report author

The report author will be a member of the Department of Learning & Teaching Enhancement, normally a Quality & Standards Manager. The report author is a full and equal member of the ILR panel.

The report author is specifically expected to:

- provide guidance on the agenda to the School Support Service member of staff supporting the ILR event, liaising with the convenor to ensure the agenda is approved prior to circulation to panel members;
- in advance of the review, read and identify key themes from the comments received from each panel member, and meet with the convenor to discuss and support the preparation of a detailed plan for the event;
- support the convenor and panel members during the event, offering expert guidance on the application of the Quality Framework, Curriculum Enhancement Framework and Academic Regulations;
- participate in the ILR as an active panel member;
- support the convenor to ensure that the panel collectively reaches an outcome decision in accordance with the [Quality Framework, Section 2b](#), that commendations, recommendations and conditions are accurately noted and verbally conveyed to the programme team at the final meeting, and that a deadline date for conditions to be met is agreed and recorded;
- produce and circulate the review report (a record of discussions and decisions) in accordance with the [Quality Framework, Section 2b](#) (draft for approval by the panel, to programme teams for factual accuracy, and final report to key colleagues for wider circulation)

retain oversight of any conditions to ensure these are met as required and by agreed deadlines and are signed off by the convenor.

As a guide, [The Quality Framework, Section 2b, Institution-Led Review](#) includes a list of topics which may be considered when reviewing the programme documentation (Appendix 3).

An [online course has been developed to support ILR Panel members 'Institution-Led Review \(ILR\) Panel Essentials'](#) and is available on Moodle Community [here](#).