

Response ID ANON-NHMS-54N8-5

Submitted to **Teaching Excellence Framework: Technical Consultation for Year Two**

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Introduction

What is your name?

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What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Quality Strategy Network

Please select the option below that best describes you as a respondent to this consultation

Organisation type:

Representative Body

Additional details (if required):

Consultation Questions (page 1 of 4)

Q1: Do you agree with the criteria proposed in Figure 4?

Not Sure

Question 1 further detail:

criteria would benefit from greater detail to give institutions more guidance. It is not clear how these criteria will be used to measure excellent teaching. The criteria don't include anything about engaging with students in terms of teaching excellence: students are just presented as passive recipients. We suggest that engagement with students should be added as a criterion. We also suggest that there is a criterion missing relating to staff engagement with ongoing professional development relating to teaching, be this a teaching qualification, HEA membership or other. We suggest this would be better as an explicit criterion rather than simply covered under institutional culture. We are not sure how GPA demonstrates that graduates are prepared for their personal and professional lives and why it is included in the criteria. We also note an element of overlap with QAA Higher Education Review methodology in terms of consideration of the learning environment and suggest that previous QAA (or equivalent) reports on institutions should form part of the contextual information available to Assessors, recognising that these represent a snapshot in time and unless completed recently would not necessarily be as relevant as other sources of information We also note that there is not currently an agreed definition of Learning Gain which makes it difficult to comment on the appropriateness of this. From a student perspective, the criteria are passive, they do not recognise that higher education requires input from students for them to be successful In this way the metrics and criteria. proposed are poor proxies for teaching quality and could be improved by a greater focus on student learning engagement.

Q2: -

Q2a:

these should be used carefully. The consultation document recognizes some flaws in the SOC groups 1 to 3. In addition, other SOC groups contain some jobs which could be considered highly skilled and for which graduate entry is the norm. Using groups 1 to 3 may therefore be particularly problematic for some specialist providers if their graduates are generally employed in professions outside groups 1 to 3. these should be used carefully. The consultation document recognizes some flaws in the SOC groups 1 to 3. In addition, other SOC groups contain some jobs which could be considered highly skilled and for which graduate entry is the norm. Using groups 1 to 3 may therefore be particularly problematic for some specialist providers if their graduates are generally employed in professions outside groups 1 to 3.

Not sure

Not sure

Question 2 further detail:

C) The use of this metric does not capture those students already in work and using study to enhance their career prospects. The place of Degree and Higher Apprenticeships within this metric is ambiguous and given the government agenda for these it should be considered alongside self-employment and engagement with entrepreneurial activity. The metric should reflect the breadth of the student body and reflect those studying part time, especially if they are already engaged in highly skilled employment or in life situations which preclude certain occupations.

Q3: -

Not sure

Yes

Question 3 further detail:

Needs to be sensitive that national satisfaction scores for NSS are high across the sector and that differences are minimal. HESA benchmarks and TEF benchmarks need to be the same. The use of ethnicity, gender and disability for the benchmarking of non-continuation metrics should be included and disability should be included in benchmarking of employment metrics. If the TEF is about providing an excellent experience for all students then these factors should be included in the benchmarking.

Consultation Questions (page 2 of 4)

Q4: Do you agree that TEF metrics should be averaged over the most recent three years of available data?

Not sure

Question 4 further detail:

average should be weighted to more recent results as these would have more relevance and would indicate where institutions are taking steps to improve the student experience. We would also recommend that the data for all three years is available to panels for consideration.

Q5: Do you agree the metrics should be split by the characteristics proposed?

No

Q5 further detail:

We agree with the splits proposed but also suggest that gender should be included

Q6: Do you agree with the contextual information that will be used to support TEF assessments proposed?

Yes

Question 6 further detail:

data maps could be useful information for institutions and are important in enabling providers from different mission groups to contextualise their TEF performance. When discipline-based approaches are piloted, care needs to be taken to ensure that the data maps allow for joint subject areas i.e. English and History.

Consultation Questions (page 3 of 4)

Q7: -

No

No

Question 7 further detail:

approach is too regimented, a large provider given their internal diversity may find it difficult to provide a suitable commentary. Small specialist provider may feel constricted by the rigid format. B) it is too rigid. May be difficult to contextualise metrics with the splits in the page limit. We would suggest that there should be a sliding scale of maximum submission lengths to allow for the subject mix and complexity of the provider to be taken into consideration. We would recommend that subject is also defined within the guidance for providers. We would also suggest that the submission is clearly divided into contextual information to guide the panel's understanding of the metrics and a separate section on evidence of excellence beyond those metrics.

Q8: Without the list becoming exhaustive or prescriptive, we are keen to ensure that the examples of additional evidence included in Figure 6 reflect a diversity of approaches to delivery. Do you agree with the examples?

No

Question 8 further detail:

effectiveness and impact is difficult to quantify. External examining is not the only indicator of quality. Anticipate that a lot of universities would need to produce this documentation rather than using extant evidence sources. Most universities consider the management of the process as well as considering the impact. Institutions will inevitably be tempted to try to evidence all of the areas suggested, thereby resulting in a significant burden of activity. It is important to clarify how the evidence will be used and whether it will all be read. It will also be important to clarify the weighting attached to the metrics vs the commentary, especially if metrics are below the benchmark but the commentary clearly outlines why this is the case. It would be a matter of concern if TEF judgments were being made based on unverified assertions in the institutional submission.

Q9: -

Not sure

No

Question 9 further detail:

We are currently unconvinced of the value of commendations or whether the TEF method would provide a sound basis for their award. If the TEF's purpose is to differentiate between institutions do you need to offer commendations? What wider use would be made of the commendations? How do institutions apply for them? How long do they last for and can you gain a commendation with 'meets' or only 'excellent/outstanding'? Some of these commendations would be difficult to demonstrate across a large multi-disciplinary institution i.e. business engagement. It is also unclear on what basis a commendation would be awarded: we note that the term excellent is used in para 124 which is also one of the TEF outcomes so this could be confusing. It is unclear what the relationship between the commendations and the overall judgement would be. Given the lack of clarity, it would make sense to fully embed the TEF before proceeding to issuing possible commendations. There are particular risks associated with awarding commendations on the basis of untriangulated information in an institution's contextual submission

Consultation Questions (page 4 of 4)

Q10: Do you agree with the assessment process proposed?

No

Question 10 further detail:

10. There should be a majority of practising academics on the panel. We are surprised that Professional Support staff with expertise in Learning, Teaching and Quality are not included as potential members of panels as these staff have significant cross-institutional experience and expertise in the areas being reviewed. The timescale is very tight between when the guidance is published and the submission is due. We suggest that the deadline for submissions should be extended.

Q11: Do you agree that in the case of providers with less than three years of core metrics, the duration of the award should reflect the number of years of core metrics available?

Yes

Question 11 further detail:

Q12: Do you agree with the descriptions of the different TEF award ratings proposed in Figure 9?

No

Question 12 further detail:

The descriptions don't actually describe what each outcome looks like. There is a complete lack of differentiation between excellent and outstanding so it is unclear on what basis these would be awarded, especially if commendations are included. Needs more granularity and would suggest an assessment criteria approach. This would also allow providers to understand how their submissions will be judged. The relative value of the metrics and the submission should be articulated - do they have equal weighting? If metrics showed that a provider had multiple flags and was outside of the benchmarks would they be able to achieve an 'excellent' or 'outstanding' rating?