
12TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

A BETTER QUALITY FUTURE

Thursday 7 – Friday 8 September 2017

Aston Business School Conference Centre, Birmingham

The transformation of the quality management landscape is proceeding with great rapidity – Year 2 Teaching Excellence Framework results have been published, the HE Funding Council for England’s HAR and APR reviews have commenced, all signalling a new emphasis on data and metrics in quality assessment. New forms of TNE continue to emerge and familiar features – degree classification methods, external examining and marking calibration – have also been reviewed. The Office for Students is being established and the ‘Designated Quality Body’ will be named shortly.

These changes have radically altered the quality world and our conference will provide sessions that will support us in engaging with all of them. However, our conference will also consider the question that the changes also beg of us, as senior quality professionals: in the midst of this, what can we do to help ensure there is a better quality future, for our students and our institutions?

To help develop our response to this, QSN has established a partnership with Wonkhe which is producing substantial pieces of work we will receive at our conference, on the new quality world and how we can influence it, and on the evolution of our roles and what we might do to support our development as quality professionals.

To help set the scene and spark discussions, we will be joined by Gordon McKenzie, GuildHE CEO, and Ant Bagshaw and Sue Rivers from Wonkhe. The student perspective has never been more important, and we will welcome Cal Davies, a student TEF reviewer, Ellie Russell from the Student Engagement Partnership, Omolabake Fakunle of the University of Edinburgh and Debra Macfarlane from the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland to help ensure we maintain focus on the people our organisations serve. Leading expert on international education Neil Kemp will provide workshops on TNE. We will also benefit from the contributions of colleagues from a range of HE providers and from key agencies which work with us: the Department for Education, Universities UK, QAA UK, the HE Strategic Planners Association, the HE Academy and the Council of University Chairs.

I look forward greatly to welcoming new and returning delegates to our 12th Annual Conference.

- Jack Aitken, Chair of QSN

Programme:**Day One – Thursday, 7 September**

1400	Arrival & Registration
1430-1450	QSN Annual General Meeting
1500	Opening of Conference - Welcome from the Chair of QSN, Jack Aitken
1505-1535	Keynote speech – Gordon McKenzie, CEO, GuildHE
1535-1600	Ant Bagshaw, Deputy Editor, Wonkhe The future of quality management – report for QSN
1615-1715	The future of quality management: Panel discussion – Gordon McKenzie, CEO, GuildHE Cal Davies – Student TEF Assessor Ant Bagshaw
1720-1820	Workshop: The future of Quality management <i>Delegates will join small groups for the workshop. Group discussions will be facilitated by members of the QSN Executive</i>
1915	Champagne Reception in Bar
1945	Conference Dinner After dinner reflections

Day Two – Friday, 8 September

0910-0945	Quality professionals: who we are and how our identity is evolving – report for QSN - Ant Bagshaw and Sue Rivers, Wonkhe
0945-0955	New QSN Website - Lee Jones, Deputy Chair, QSN

1000	Parallel facilitated workshops <i>See below for topics</i>
1100	Refreshment break and interaction with workshop outcomes in the lounge
1145	Parallel facilitated workshops (repeated)
1245	Final Conference Plenary, highlighting key issues for QSN. Closing remarks
1315	Lunch and departure

Parallel elective workshops - Regulation and a risk-based approach

Friday, 8 September – 1000, repeated 1145

No.	Workshop title	Indicative Content
1	Degree standards: external examining developments and calibration initiative	The Higher Education Academy (HEA) are leading on two related pieces of work concerning degree standards: exploring approaches to the professional development of external examiners and piloting calibration methods with subject associations and professional bodies. QSN's symposium in March received an update on the project work, and this session will follow up on that, with contributions from Trish Barker, Head of Academic Quality and Standards at the University of Liverpool (one of the pilot providers), and from Erica Morris who is leading on the degree standards work at the HEA. The sessions will be led by Katie Akerman, University of Chichester, and Sue Gregory, University of Plymouth, both of whom are QSN Executive members.
2	Data in quality management – TEF, APR, ELIR and beyond	The use of data and metrics to aid quality assessment and institutional enhancement increases steadily. There is a correspondingly increased need for quality managers to collaborate with colleagues in planning departments and to understand how data interfaces with other quality assurance processes. This session will be led by Dr Helen Galbraith, Academic Registrar and Director of Planning and Academic Administration, Keele University, and member of the HESPA Executive.

3	HEFCE Annual Provider & Assurance Reviews	This session combines inputs from the perspectives of students and governing bodies. Contributors are Ellie Russell, The Student Engagement Partnership, and John Rushforth, Executive Secretary, Council of University Chairs. <i>As matters stand, we understand that there have been no HAR exercises under the new arrangements – any further information that delegates have will be much appreciated.</i>
4	Present and future TEF: TEF 2 implementation; subject-level update	Year 2 results have been published and subject-level TEF is under development. This workshop will provide the opportunity to discuss the TEF process as it has developed and where it may go in future and will be led by Sam Meakin, Subject-level TEF Lead, Department for Education, Cal Davies, student TEF reviewer, Chris Payne, Quality Assurance Manager, University of Buckingham, and Angela Taylor, Head of Quality at Rose Bruford College and QSN Executive member.
5	Algorithms review outcomes	Sam Roseveare, UUK, will present the findings of the HEFCE-commissioned project on classification algorithms.
6	Quality and the PGR experience	There is increasing interest in and concern for how quality management helps support research students. This session will give an overview of the QAA Scotland project and its outcomes and also give delegates a chance to focus specifically on postgraduates who teach (PGWT), presenting the findings of a research project commissioned by QAA Scotland. Incorporating a national and international scan of policy and practice, an overview of key issues, and the production of a Statement of Expectations, the project identified a number of deliberate steps institutions, schools/departments, and postgraduates themselves can undertake to best support PGWT. This session will focus on the Statement of Expectations, inviting you to engage with its recommendations and consider their relevance and applicability in your own context. There will be an opportunity to discuss the project with two project members, Omolabake Fakunle (University of Edinburgh) and Debra Macfarlane (QAA Scotland).
7	The future direction of the UK Quality Code	This workshop provides the opportunity to hear about and contribute to the work that QAA have been doing to shape the future direction of the Quality Code. The session will be provided by Cathy Kerfoot, QAA.

8	The role of the quality professional	This workshop, led by Ant Bagshaw and Sue Rivers, will build on the findings of the report commissioned by QSN and presented at the plenary given earlier on 8 th September.
9	TNE: Exploring the opportunities, understanding the challenges	This session will be led by Neil Kemp and will review areas of engagement for transnational delivery and explore the complex mix of inter-relationships that underpin success and assess possible future directions.
10	Academic Integrity: Update on the guidance and strategies for dealing with the threat of Essay Mills	This workshop will explore the key issues and research findings and discuss the draft guidelines in relation to implementation UK-wide. This work was requested by the HE Minister and developed by a Task and Finish Group led by QAA. This group included UUK, GuildHE and NUS, working alongside a UK Advisory Group. The session will be provided by Simon Bullock, QAA.

Conference Fee:

Free to holders of QSN Season Ticket 2016/17* (one member per institution, see below)

£240 for delegates from member institutions

Unsubsidised fee of £350 for representatives from institutions that have not subscribed as members of QSN

The fee includes the Conference dinner, and overnight accommodation at the conference centre for the night of Thursday, 7 September. Places are limited so early booking is advised to avoid disappointment. Booking is not restricted to the institutional representative - a nominee can attend in his/her place.

QSN Season ticket 2016/17

The Network offers a QSN Season Ticket.

For an annual fee of £495, you receive:

- Institutional membership of QSN
- One free QSN Conference place
- Subsequent Conference places at Member rates
- A free place at (a minimum of) two Symposium events during the year, and member rates for subsequent Symposium delegates.

Any additional events during the year (such as extraordinary meetings to consider specific developments) will also be available at a preferential rate. The place is allocated to the institution, and is not tied to a named individual.

* Where institutions joined with a Season Ticket during 2016/17 but after the 2016 Conference, the Executive has agreed that these institutions can use the free place which this Season Ticket generated for the 2017 Conference.