

Approach to external quality assurance, engagement, and enhancement by HM Inspectors AY 2023-24

Please share this information with staff

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Arrangements for external quality assurance, engagement, and enhancement for AY 2023-24

During AY 2023-24, HM Inspectors will undertake the following activities in colleges:

1. On-going engagement with a link HM Inspector

Link HM Inspectors will continue to engage with all colleges to provide tailored support and challenge in the coming year. This may be undertaken either virtually or through in-person visits as required.

2. Annual Engagement Visits

HM Inspectors will undertake an annual engagement visit (AEV) in all colleges during AY 2023-24.

2.1 Approach to AEVs

AEVs will be short, light touch visits lasting up to two days. AEVs will be undertaken by the college link HM Inspector, supported by HM Inspector colleagues, Associate Assessors (AAs), and Student Team Members (STMs) as appropriate.

2.2 What do HM Inspectors focus on during an AEV?

AEVs will explore the following themes;

- Learner progress and outcomes,
- Approaches to assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching including professional updating, and
- Learner engagement.

Where we requested a progress report as a result of our engagement in AY 2022-23, this will also be reviewed during the AEV.

2.3 Notification of the AEV

AEV dates will be planned collaboratively between the college and the link HM Inspector.

2.4 How do we share our findings?

On conclusion of the AEV, the team will provide a verbal report of their findings to the college. It will provide assurance of the quality of the learning experience and may identify aspects requiring further improvement. For multi-college regions, a representative of the Regional Strategic Body (RSB) will be invited to attend.

2.5 What happens after the AEV?

Following our internal quality assurance processes, a written report will be produced and shared with the college and SFC. The college will have the opportunity to check the

report for factual accuracy. Within eight weeks of completion of the AEV, a final written report will be provided to the college and the college link Inspector will make arrangements to share the report with the college Board. For multi-college regions the report will also be shared with the RSB. At this point, a short statement confirming the outcome of the AEV, and any next steps will be published on Education Scotland's website. AEV outcomes will inform future engagement approaches with individual colleges.

3. Thematic reviews

In order to support improvement in aspects of college sector performance, HM Inspectors will undertake a programme of thematic reviews. These will evaluate the following;

- One regional thematic review focussing on learner progress and outcomes;
- One national subject review of Care, and
- One national thematic review focussing on approaches to meeting the additional needs of all learners.

We anticipate that colleges will each participate in at least one thematic review during AY 2023-24. We will contact colleges during September 2023 to discuss and agree involvement. The footprint and timing of each thematic review will be adjusted to take account of scale and reach of institutions. This will support the evaluation of approaches and impact, providing depth of intelligence about the individual organisations involved, along with providing information to inform capacity building and future approaches to improvement and enhancement. Thematic reviews will provide opportunities for collaborative working with partner quality bodies, for example QAA Scotland and sparqs, in evaluating the quality of provision and capacity for improvement.

Thematic reviews will strengthen the collective knowledge of providers to meet current and projected economic priorities at local, regional, and national levels. The findings of HM Inspectors and other bodies will be instrumental in developing the focus and scope of reviews. The approach also seeks to build, incrementally, the capacity of practitioners across tertiary organisations to engage collaboratively in implementing future arrangements to improve outcomes for learners.

HM Inspectors will also seek to identify and share examples of highly effective practice during thematic reviews, highlight what is working well, and make recommendations about what needs to improve.

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