

# Learning from the experience of implementing Quality Assurance systems – a UK university perspective

Mark Wainman  
Head of Academic Standards & Quality Enhancement  
Sheffield Hallam University, England  
[m.wainman@shu.ac.uk](mailto:m.wainman@shu.ac.uk)



Sheffield  
Hallam University

SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

# Introduction



- Brief introduction to Sheffield Hallam University
- My role there
- Purpose of my talk
- Contribution to Bologna process action line on co-operation in Quality Assurance



# Outline



Consider our experience against the ENQA 7 standards for internal QA in HE

☑ Identify features of good practice

☠ Identify areas of challenge

# UK Quality Assurance framework context



- National academic infrastructure
- External quality assurance – Funding Councils, Quality Assurance Agency, Professional Bodies, Research Councils
- Public information
- Current concerns regarding academic standards

# ENQA Standard 1 - Quality Assurance Policy



- ☑ External requirements embedded in internal systems
- ☑ Integrated management framework for Quality
- ☑ Clear signposts to advice for all staff

☠ Volatile external policy environment including funding pressures

☠ Staff ownership of policy at all levels

☠ Policy implementation gap

# ENQA Standard 2 - Programme approval, monitoring & review



- ☑ Faculty-led, centrally-supported course approval process
- ☑ Comprehensive, multi-level, wide-evidence based Annual Quality Review process
- ☑ Enhancement-focused periodic review process
  
- ☒ Promoting genuine student engagement
- ☒ Balancing speed & responsiveness of processes with rigour
- ☒ How to make all processes more enhancement-led, cost-effective & risk-based

# ENQA Standard 3 - Management of assessment of students

- ☑ Standard assessment regulations and associated processes for all undergraduate & postgraduate students
- ☑ Faculty-owned Assessment Boards focusing on quality enhancement as well as quality assurance
  
- ☒ Consistency between regulations, academic practice, processes & systems
- ☒ Transparency of decision-making affecting academic standards
- ☒ Heavy expectations placed on external examiner system



# ENQA Standard 4 - Quality Assurance of teaching staff




- ☑ Comprehensive professional development framework for staff
- ☑ Central Learning & Teaching Institute supporting academic staff through changes in practice
- ☠ Developing policy & procedures to manage poor teaching & reward good teaching

# ENQA Standard 5 - Learning Resources & Student Support



- ☑ Programme learning resources agreed & monitored through course approval & Annual Quality Review
- ☑ Comprehensive student support framework
- ☑ Central Student & Learning Services department
  
- ☒ Meeting needs of an increasingly diverse student population
- ☒ Availability of local support – personal tutors etc

# ENQA Standard 6 - Information Systems



- ☑ Corporate student management system
- ☑ Central staffs dedicated to support of Information Strategy/Information Technology
- ☑ Significant investment in hardware & software
  
- ☒ Development of systems serving external and internal needs
- ☒ Development of corporate systems to better support programme management within faculties including systems integration

# ENQA Standard 7 - Public information



☑ Comply with all relevant external requirements

☒ Promoting understanding & debate on academic standards & how they are managed

# Conclusions



☑ Effective internal Quality Assurance systems

☒ Developing cost-effective systems which can continue to meet changing external & internal needs

# References



- Sheffield Hallam University website: [www.shu.ac.uk/](http://www.shu.ac.uk/)
- ENQA European Standards & Guidelines:  
[www.enqa.eu/files/ENQA%20Bergen%20Report.pdf](http://www.enqa.eu/files/ENQA%20Bergen%20Report.pdf)
- Higher Education Funding Council for England website:  
[www.hefce.ac.uk/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/)
- Quality Assurance Agency website: [www.qaa.ac.uk/](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/)
- Research Councils website: [www.rcuk.ac.uk/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/)
- Unistats website: [www.unistats.com/](http://www.unistats.com/)

**¡Gracias!**

Any questions?

