

Summarised consultation responses on the annual assurance statements from governing bodies

General (1 respondent)

Points raised

- Welcoming the development of the Quality Assurance Framework in Wales

Question 1: Do you think we should include the statement that: The governing body has received and discussed a report and accompanying action plan relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes. This included evidence from the provider's own periodic review processes, which fully involve students and include embedded external peer or professional review. (10 respondents)

Agree (including with caveats): 6

Disagree: 2

Inconclusive: 2

Points raised

- This might not be necessary given the external quality assessment review
- It might be more appropriate to include a statement to confirm that the governing body has received a report following the external quality assurance review, and that an action plan has been put in place as appropriate
- The assurance statements are designed to assure the governors as much as HEFCW, so the statement seems appropriate
- The importance of understanding the differences in reporting and regulation on FEIs in relation to HE
- Concerns about the burden of reporting and regulation on FEIs
- The statement would duplicate other questions, and duplicates activity such as the triennial assurance review
- The statement would assist peer review teams conducting institutional level cyclical review

Question 2: Do you agree that we should include the statement that: The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust and appropriate. (10 respondents)

Agree (including with caveats): 10

Points raised

- As statements 1 and 2 relate to the student academic experience and student outcomes, they could be combined
- The statement could be amended to read: The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust, appropriate and are kept under review.

- As the statement is about processes, after the first year governing bodies should only need to receive a report highlighting any changes to methodologies
- It was important to demonstrate that sound evidence had been used to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes

Question 3: Do you agree that we should include the statement that: The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately (set and) maintained. (10 respondents)

Agree (including with caveats): 9

Inconclusive: 1

Points raised

- The distinction between standards being set and being maintained was welcomed, as setting was more often the role of the HEI rather than the FEI
- the 'and set' should be removed, as the external quality review will consider the standards for setting of awards and therefore the emphasis should be placed on maintenance of the standards between external reviews.
- The statement for providers without degree awarding powers as standing alone implies responsibility for standards, eg by rephrasing as 'the college has appropriately maintained standards for awards which it delivers on behalf of awarding bodies and/or organisation
- Providers with degree awarding powers may collaborate with another awarding body, eg for RDAPS

Question 4: Do you think that we should include the statement that: The governing body has received a report that confirms that the provider continues to meet the standards of Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines (2015). (10 respondents)

Agree (including with caveats): 3

Disagree: 6

Inconclusive: 1

Points raised

- External quality assurance review will provide this confirmation in Wales
- It might be possible for providers to meet Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines in a way that made comparison between institutions difficult to compare
- Brexit might impact on this statement in the future
- To ensure comparability with England we do think it is important that the ESG are referenced at some point in the assurance statements

Question 5: Do you agree that we should include the statement that: The governing body has considered a report on the annual dialogue between the institution and the student body, scrutinised student survey outcomes, and put action plans in place in partnership with the student body. (10 respondents)

Agree (including with caveats): 10

Points raised

- the governing body should be assured that the university has undertaken these actions but should not necessarily do this itself
- the statement could be rephrased to state that 'The governing body has considered a report on the annual dialogue between the institution and the student body and the scrutiny of student survey outcomes, and has received confirmation that action plans have been put in place in partnership with the student body'
- the statement would help to extend and strengthen student engagement and deepen partnership working between providers and their student body
- the NSS does not cover all the institution's provision, so it would be useful to confirm the scope of this statement

Question 6: Do you agree that we should include the statement that: The governing body has received a copy of the relationship agreement between the institution and the student union, and a copy of the student charter, both of which have been reviewed within the past year. (10 respondents)

Agree (including with caveats): 9

Inconclusive: 1

Points raised

- it would be useful to rephrase as 'The governing body has received a copy of the relationship agreement between the institution and the student body, and a copy of the student charter, both of which have been reviewed within the past year,' to reflect that not all institutions had student unions, but still engaged with the student body
- the governing body should either review the documents (or a summary of the changes/ developments), or should receive confirmation that they have been reviewed

Respondents

Aberystwyth University
Bangor University
Cardiff Metropolitan University
Coleg Cambria
Colegau Cymru
Wrexham Glyndŵr University
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
Swansea University
University of Wales
University of Wales Trinity Saint David