

DEAR CRITICAL FRIENDS,

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to you for your continued support and collaboration, without which, it would not be possible for UWS continue to deliver a quality student experience.

We would also like to extend a welcome to our new externals this session. We thank you for joining the UWS family and look forward to working with you. We hope you have been provided with all of the necessary information through the induction material and if there's anything else that we can provide please let us know.

As we approach Term 2 we wanted to provide you with an update on recent events at UWS and some of the key projects for 2025/26.



STRATEGY 2030

The University's new [Strategy 2030](#) launched in 2025/26, setting the direction of travel for the next five years, aligning the strategic focus to create impact in the areas that matter most to us.

OUR GOALS

Driven by our purpose and aligning with our values, Strategy 2030 sets out [three key goals](#), which are supported by the implementation of related Enabling Plans, relating to:

- Maximising our students' success
- Creating and applying new knowledge
- Growing our global impact

OUR VALUES

Together, the four [UWS values](#) guide how we work as a community to achieve our goals and purpose:

- Integrity ~ we uphold integrity through transparency, adherence to values, and sound decision-making, even in challenging times.
- Respect ~ we treat everyone with dignity, act with awareness, collaborate effectively, and respect our environment.
- Inclusivity ~ we promote inclusivity by celebrating diversity, amplifying voices, and empowering communities through shared knowledge and skills.
- Accountability ~ we foster accountability, take pride in our work, trust each other, and own our actions to achieve shared goals.

UWS ACADEMIC QUALITY

FRAMEWORK

In 2024 Scotland introduced a new approach to quality assurance and enhancement, **Scotland's Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework**, or 'TQEF'. The Framework is designed to support the Scottish Funding Council's statutory duty as required in the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 to 'secure coherent, high-quality fundable further and higher education provision, and to ensure provision is made for assessing and enhancing the quality of this provision.' The Framework is the mechanism for giving assurance on academic standards, the quality of the student learning experience and ensuring accountability for public investment in tertiary education.

The UWS Academic Quality Framework or 'AQF' is the University's prime delivery mechanism for the TQEF. It underpins our shared responsibility for maintaining and enhancing quality and academic standards allowing our students to thrive and succeed. Effective application of the AQF will also preserve the reputation of UWS awards and, more widely, Scottish tertiary education. Outputs from the monitoring and review activity in the AQF are core to wider elements of TQEF such as annual engagement and reporting, and periodic institutional review (TQER).

The AQF, which replaces the UWS Quality Handbook, provides an overview of our quality processes and their interrelationships, along with more detailed procedural guidance to support colleagues and students involved in quality assurance and enhancement processes. Currently the AQF is hosted on the University's internal website, and a version is being prepared for sharing with our key partners and stakeholders, including external examiners. We will let you know as soon as it becomes available.

TERTIARY QUALITY

ENHANCEMENT REVIEW

The Tertiary Quality Enhancement Review or 'TQER' is one of the key Delivery Mechanisms within the new TQEF, comprising of an external institution-level peer-led review of colleges and universities managed by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). It operates on a seven-year cycle to cover review of all Scotland's tertiary institutions and covers all credit bearing provision and any other provision funded by SFC. The full methodology and sector guidance is available on the **QAA website**. UWS was the second university to undergo TQER, with the main review visit in October 2025. This independent process will report on the University's effectiveness in managing academic standards, enhancing the quality of the learning experience and enabling student success. The outcome report is due to be published by the QAA in early 2026 and will be shared with external examiners.



SUPPORTING THE EXTERNAL EXAMINER ROLE

External examiners are reminded of the key information and documentation available to support the role on the **External Examiner Induction website**. This includes links to the University's Regulatory Framework for 2025/26, the Assessment Handbook and a refreshed **External Examiner Handbook**. The External Examiner Handbook has been updated to reflect the introduction of the TQEF, the UWS AQF and the 2025/26 Regulatory Framework, as well as a streamlining of content to remove duplication, and a review of language to align with the University's Style Guide.

EXTERNAL EXAMINER REPORT

Your annual External Examiner Report is a crucial part of our Enhancement and Annual Monitoring process and we thank you for your submissions. Schools have reflected on the reports and have used them to inform the review of modules, programmes and processes for the assurance of academic standards and will provide their response to you soon. QuEST is also reviewing all reports to prepare an institutional thematic report, which will identify the themes related to positive practice and areas for development across the institution.

Again, thank you for your continued support, feedback and positive contributions.

Kindest regards

The Quality Enhancement and Standards Team

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