



**National Student  
Engagement Programme**

Clár Rannpháirtíochta Náisiúnta  
na Mac Léinn

# RCSI Student Briefing

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**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



Union of Students in Ireland  
Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn

**HEA**

HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS



## National Student Engagement Programme

Clár Rannpháirtíochta Náisiúnta  
na Mac Léinn

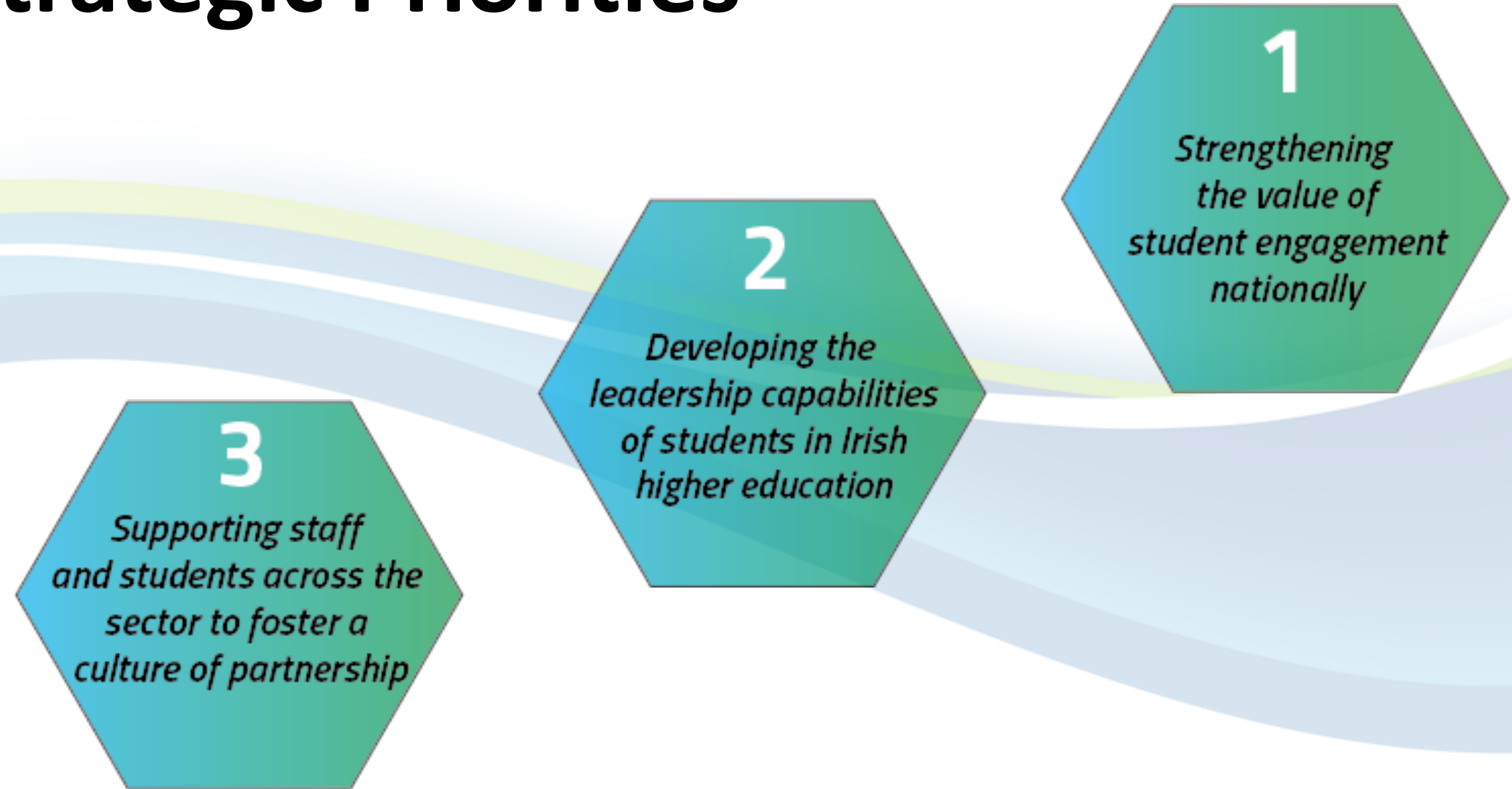
# The National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP)

- ▶ Founded in 2016 – a partnership of QQI, the HEA, and USI.
- ▶ Promotes and strengthens student engagement at a national level by:
  - ▶ Working with students, students' unions, higher education institutions (HEIs), staff, and organisations/government bodies.
  - ▶ Providing training and professional development
  - ▶ Creating resources
  - ▶ Running workshops, seminars, network events, and conferences

**NStEP is here to support you!**



# Strategic Priorities



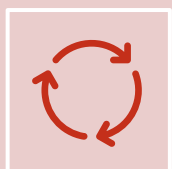
# Learning Objectives



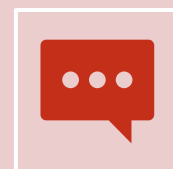
Identify and describe student engagement, and how it relates to Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement.



Describe and consider the 'Student Learning Experience' and its use as a tool for collecting and evaluating feedback.



Outline the ABCDs of Effective Feedback.



Learn more about the experience of student participation in quality review.

# What is Student Engagement?

*“The investment of time, effort and other relevant resources by both students and their institutions intended to optimise the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students, and the performance and reputation of the institution.”*

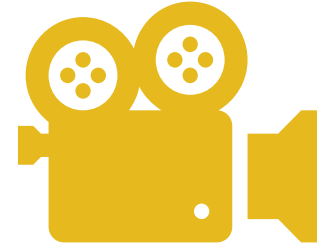
*(Trowler and Trowler, 2011)*

- ▶ What does student engagement mean to you?
- ▶ Do you think that student partnership is different from student engagement?

# What is Student Engagement?



Go to the training resources webpage at:  
<https://studentengagement.ie/institutional-review-student-briefing-resources/>



Watch the short video on Student Engagement (Resource 1)

# A Shared Understanding

## STUDENT VOICE

is the **act of students sharing** their individual and collective lived experiences, expressed through **views and perspectives**, demonstrated by formal and informal conversation, debate, feedback, and ultimately, **active listening** and being heard.

## STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

...is a **process by which students and staff seek to work together** to shape **decision-making** in higher education, building individual and collective capacity and knowledge to navigate institutional structures and cultures.

## STUDENT PARTNERSHIP

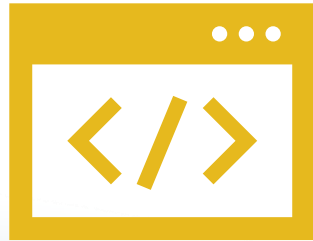
...is the practice that both drives forward and emerges from meaningful student engagement, which recognises the need to **re-balance power dynamics** in higher education and seeks to enable a culture of change through **collaboration, reciprocity and shared responsibility** between staff and students.

# What is a CINNTE Review

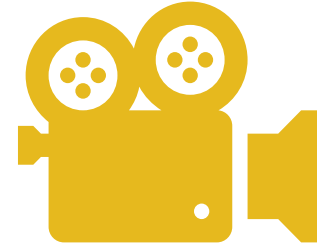
- ▶ *CINNTE Institutional Review is the name given by QQI to the round of institutional reviews of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) taking place in Ireland between 2017 and 2023.*
- ▶ *Institutional Review is an evaluation by an external Review Team of the effectiveness of an institution's internal **quality assurance** and **quality enhancement** procedures for education, training, research, and services to ensure that agreed quality standards have been met by the institution.*



# What is Quality Assurance in Ireland?



Go to the training resources webpage at:  
<https://studentengagement.ie/institutional-review-student-briefing-resources/>



Watch the short video on Quality Assurance  
in Ireland and QQI (Resource 2)

# What's Quality?

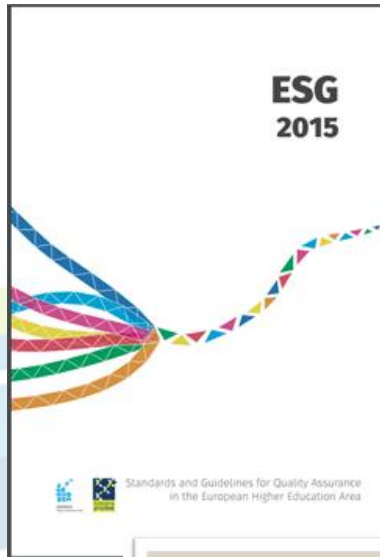
## *Quality Assurance*

- A system of setting and maintaining standards of quality for education provision
- Describes the processes that seek to ensure that the learning environment (including teaching and research) reaches an acceptable threshold of quality (QQI)

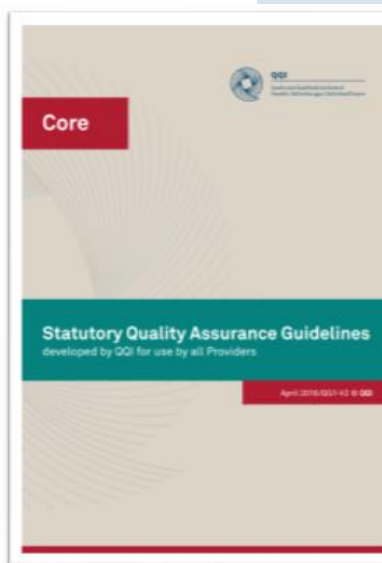
## *Quality Enhancement*

- A process of continuous improvement of the quality of education provided
- Aims to improve quality assurance, which involves promoting and spreading effective practice in an ever-evolving quality assurance system (QQI)

# Students in Quality Assurance? Who says so?



- ▶ **European Standards and Guidelines**  
Standard 1.3: 'Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.'
- ▶ **Core Statutory Standards and Guidelines (Ireland – QQI)**
  - ▶ 'Embedding a quality culture', which stipulates that the quality system within a 'provider' should be one "where all of a providers' staff and learners are involved in quality assurance, and in which quality is accepted as a responsibility for all to improve on"
  - ▶ 'Documented policies and procedures' should "include a role for learners and other stakeholders"
  - ▶ 'Policies and procedures for programme design and approval ensure that programmes are designed with the involvement of learners and other stakeholders'
  - ▶ "Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of a programme is used as an opportunity to evaluate that programme with the benefit of the experience of programme delivery incorporating feedback from staff and learners.'



# Institutional Review

QI has 5 specific measurable purposes for its institutional reviews, which are:

- ▶ To encourage a QA culture and the enhancement of the student learning environment and experience within institutions;
- ▶ To provide feedback to institutions about institution-wide quality and the impact of mission, strategy, governance and management on quality and the overall effectiveness of their quality assurance;
- ▶ To improve public confidence in the quality of institutions by promoting transparency and public awareness;
- ▶ To support systems-level improvement of the quality of higher education; and
- ▶ To facilitate quality enhancement by using evidence-based, objective methods and advice.

# Review Team Membership

Role	Description
<b>Chairperson</b>	Leader of the Review Team
<b>Coordinating Reviewer</b>	Secretary to the Team (and a full Review Team member)
<b>Student Reviewer</b>	Represents the student voice in the Review Team
<b>Industry Representative (IoTs)</b>	Brings an industry perspective to the Review Team
<b>External Representative (DABs)</b>	Brings a 'third mission' to the review team

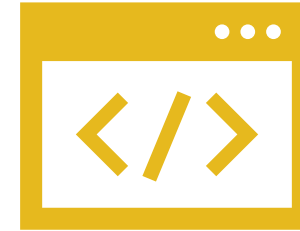
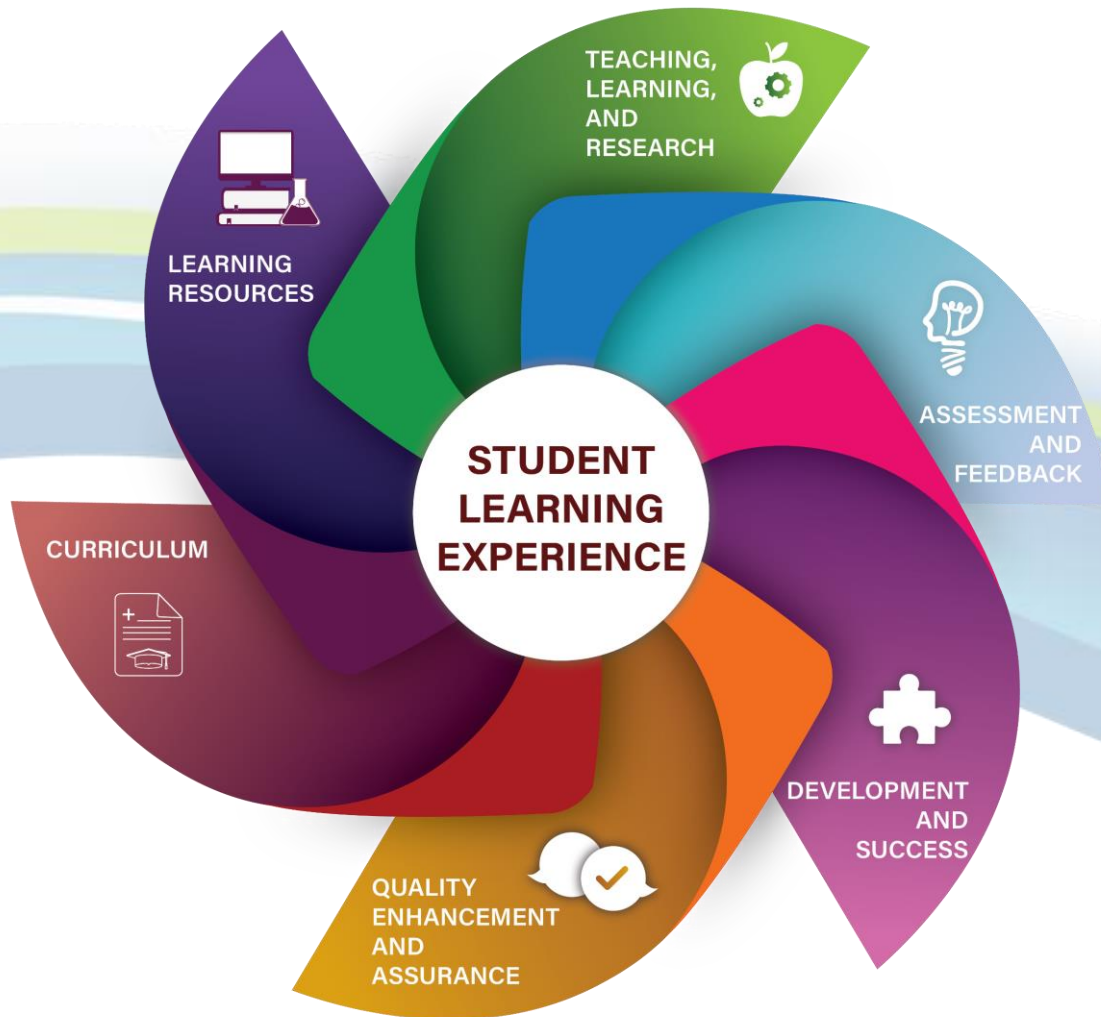


**Let's Meet the Review Team!**



- Prof. Ann Griffin (Chair). Deputy Director of UCL Medical School, United Kingdom.
- Ms. Maureen McLaughlin (Coordinating Reviewer). Academic Registrar at Northumbria University, United Kingdom.
- Mr. David Willey (External Representative). Former higher education board member and executive, United Kingdom.
- Ms. Beatriz Atienza Carbonell (Student Reviewer). PhD student in Medicine at Universitat de Valencia, Spain.
- Prof. Pól Ó Dochartaigh (Irish Representative). Deputy President and Registrar of the University of Galway.
- Dr. Dujeepa Samarasekera (International Representative). Senior Director of Centre for Medical Education at the National University Singapore's School of Medicine.

# The Student Learning Experience (SLE)



Go to the training resources webpage at:  
<https://studentengagement.ie/institutional-review-student-briefing-resources/>

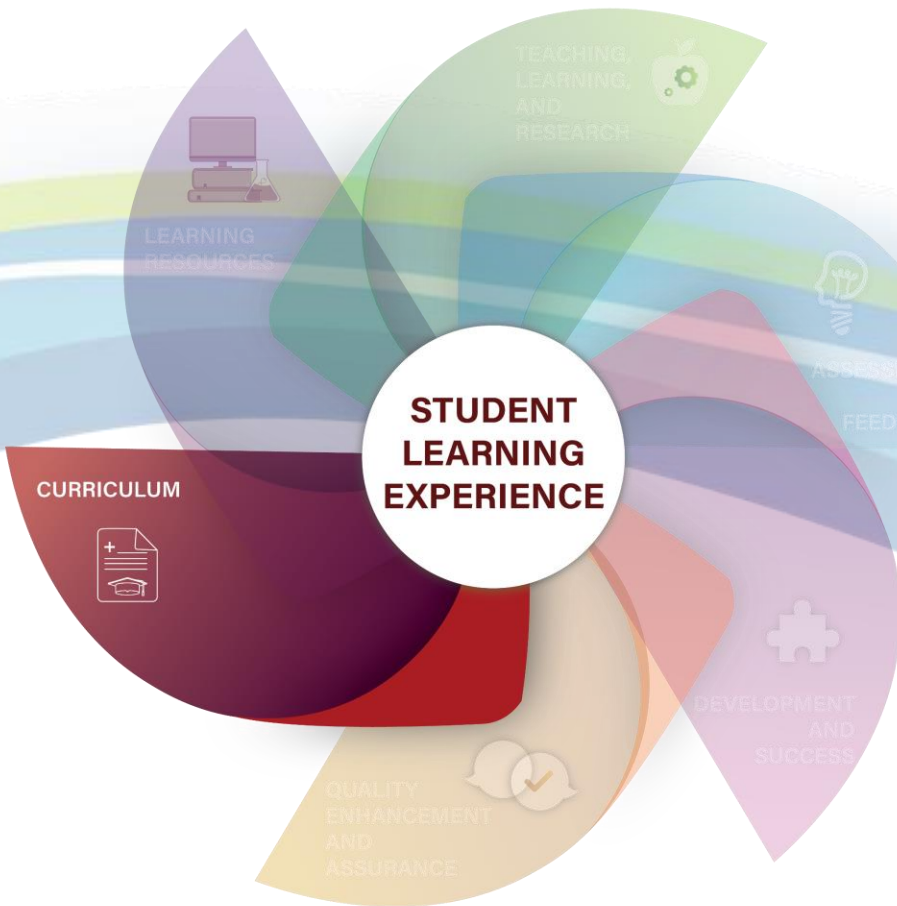


Watch the short video on The Student Learning Experience (Resource 3)



# Curriculum

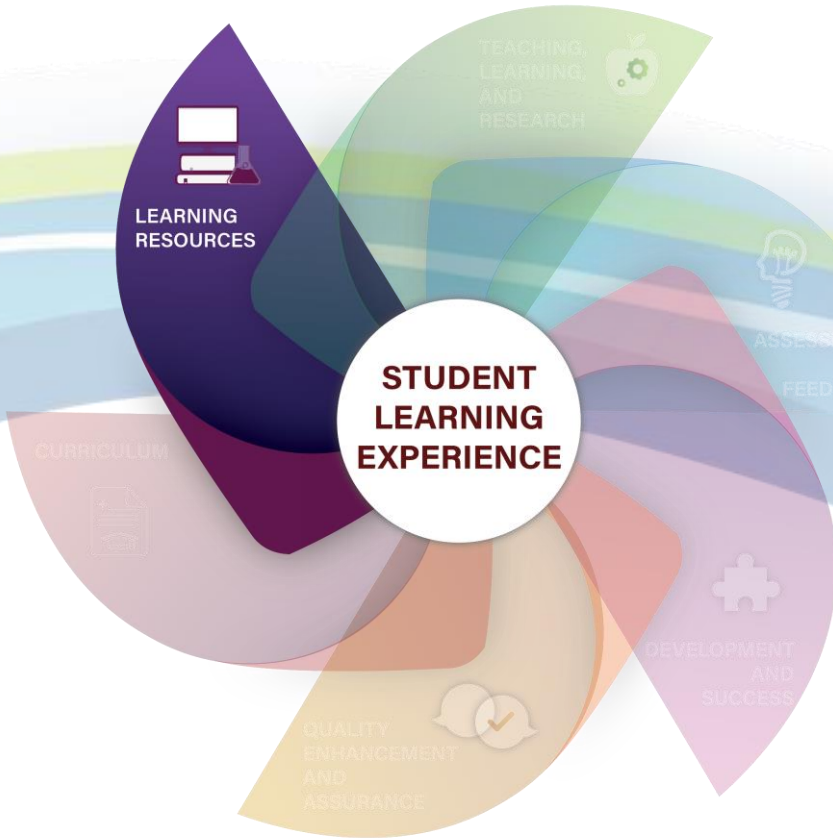
*The way content, projects, and learning is organised on your course and modules*



- ▶ Is there an appropriate balance between theory and practice (including work placements), or between learning and research?
- ▶ Is sufficient time and support built into the curriculum for research or work placement?
- ▶ Is it clear what is required to progress through, and ultimately complete, the course/programme?
- ▶ How well are students supported in their transition to study at postgraduate level?

# Learning Resources

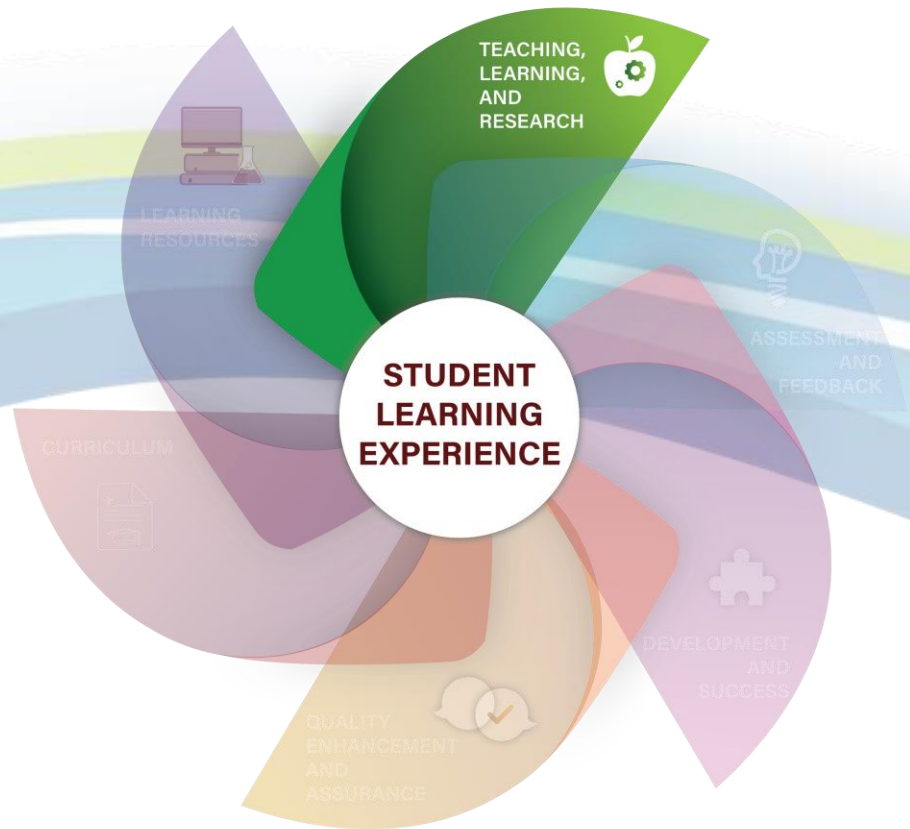
*Everything needed to learn and conduct research effectively and independently*



- ▶ Are there adequate learning resources available (e.g. textbooks, up-to-date materials, digital repositories and eLearning materials, access to research infrastructure?)
- ▶ Is there sufficient access to necessary materials (e.g. lab equipment, art materials, computer software, health and safety equipment)?
- ▶ Do students know what resources are available and how to use them?
- ▶ Are there adequate supports and services for postgraduates struggling with a particular subject or skill?

# Teaching, Learning, and Research

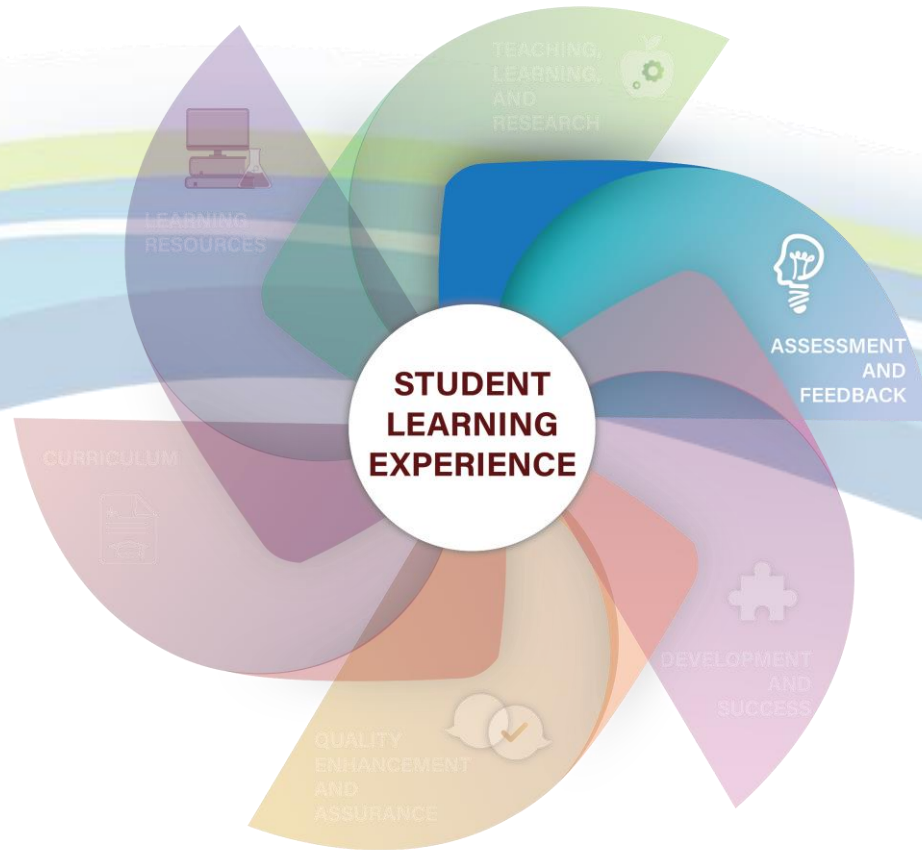
*The way content and skills are taught, as well as how students learn and grow as researchers*



- ▶ Are students guided in the development of technical, digital, academic, and transferable skills?
- ▶ Are students supported in their transition to more independent learning and research?
- ▶ Are expectations and timelines for work placements or research projects clearly outlined?
- ▶ Is teaching material up-to-date and represent current academic, industry, or professional trends or standards?

# Assessment and Feedback

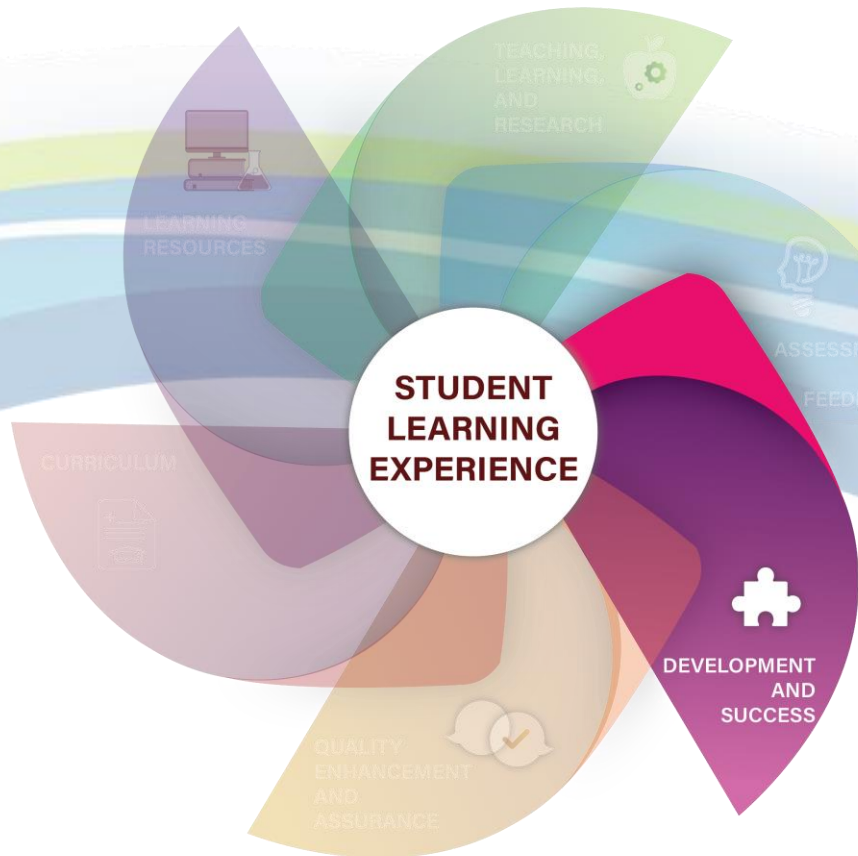
*How learning is measured, and results are communicated back to students*



- ▶ Are assignments staggered across different modules to prevent overload?
- ▶ Are assessments marked fairly and do lecturers / tutors all mark to the same standard?
- ▶ Is feedback provided promptly, and with enough time for students to identify areas for future improvement?
- ▶ Are assessment, project, work-placement, or dissertation procedures clearly communicated?

# Development and Success

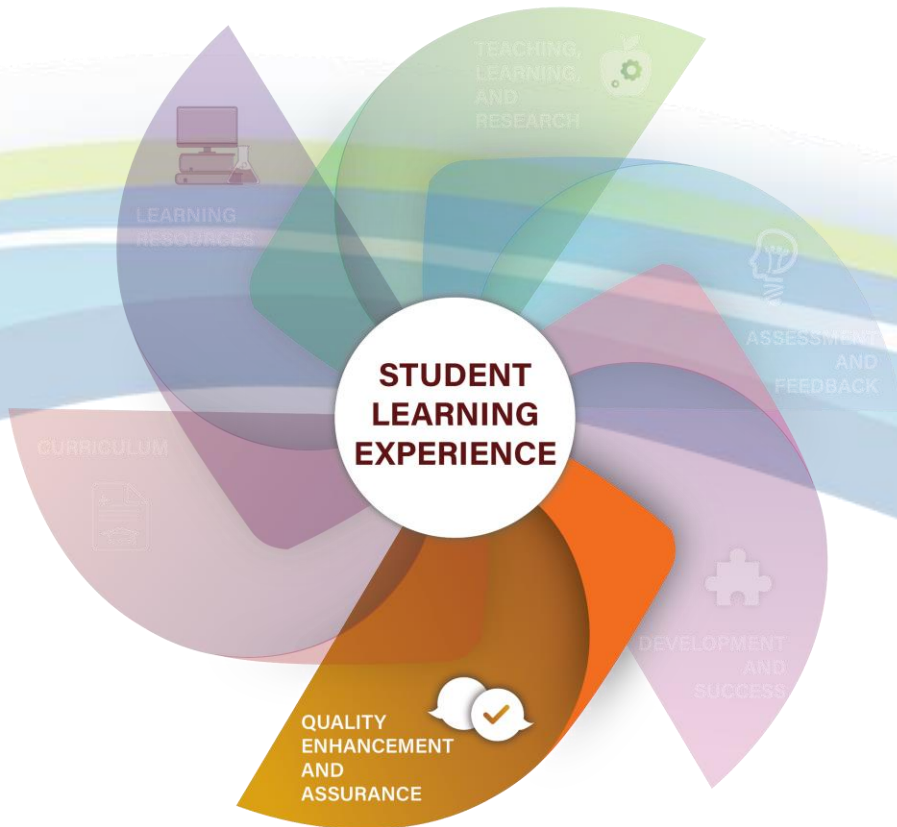
*A learning experience that embraces diversity and wellness, and encourages students to develop new perspectives and future goals*



- ▶ Are students aware what career or further study options are available after completing the course?
- ▶ Are there networking opportunities for students to meet peers, academics, and industry leaders from within their institution and beyond?
- ▶ Does the college actively work to remove obstacles to student achievement and participation?
- ▶ Is student diversity recognised through curriculum and learning supports, and are students encouraged to engage in discussions whereby diverse perspectives can be accommodated?
- ▶ Are students encouraged to become active members of the academic community and develop an academic identity and expertise within their subject area?

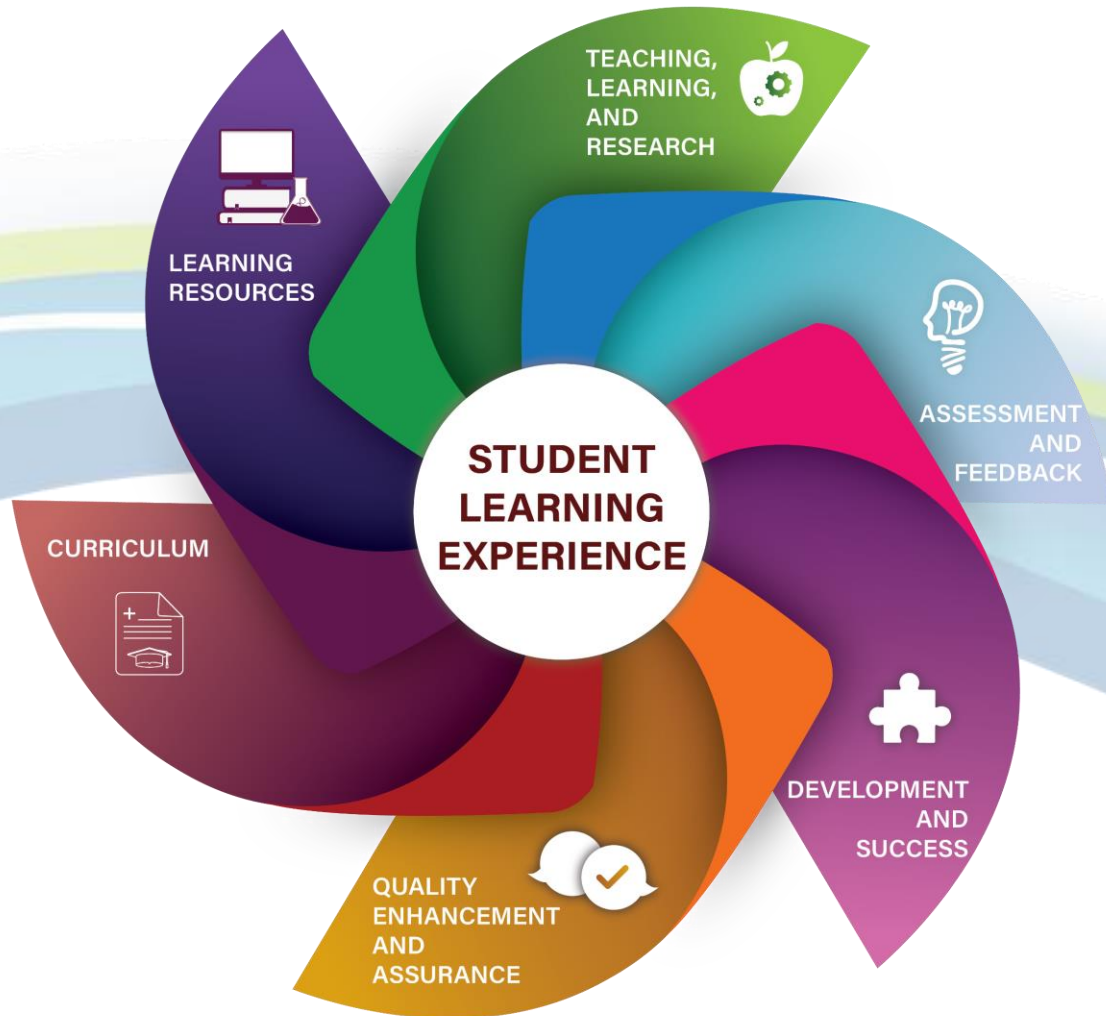
# Quality Enhancement and Assurance

*Institutional processes to monitor, evaluate, and improve the course/programme*



- ▶ Are students actively involved throughout the decision-making process, or merely consulted?
- ▶ Are students told what changes have been made to their course as a result of feedback?
- ▶ Are students invited to sit on committees or get involved on working /focus groups?
- ▶ Are students invited to co-create surveys and feedback forms?

# The Student Learning Experience (SLE) Activity



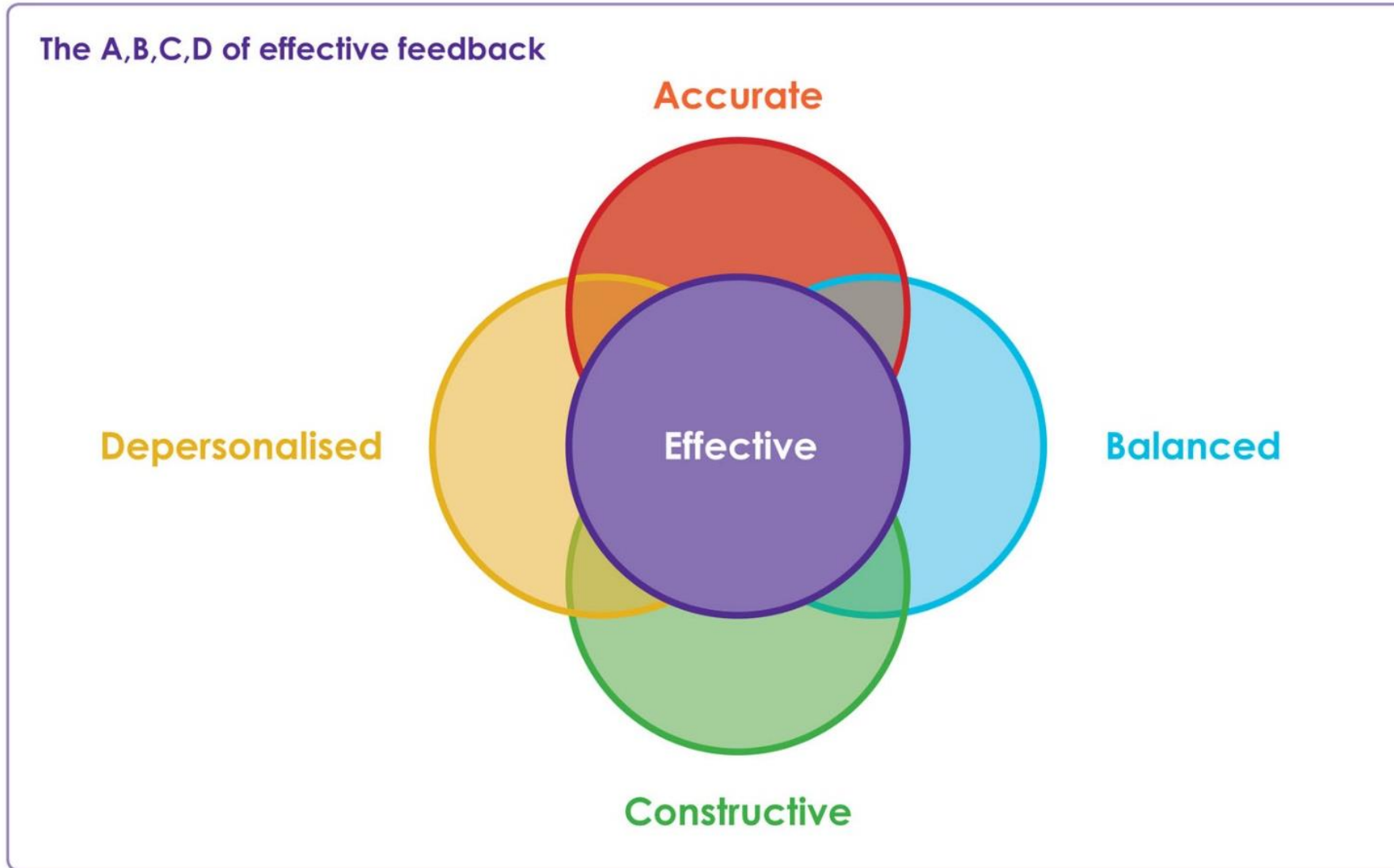
Using the SLE, identify one example of something you may give feedback on relating to your own personal learning experiences.

After you've done this, consider the following:

How do you think your experience compares with others on your course/programme?

What can you do to try to represent the broader student voice when it comes to feedback?

# The A,B,C,D of Effective Feedback





# A is for Accuracy

- ▶ You will have been provided with a wealth of information for a review. You should reference the source materials (e.g., college website, self-evaluation report, etc.)
- ▶ Avoid sweeping generalisations or emotional language. If you have an impression about something, be sure to explain it is your impression of the situation.
- ▶ Where possible include information about the scale of the issue if you have come across it – you may have been given facts in a meeting or document
- ▶ Use examples as evidence to illustrate your points

# B is for Balanced

- ▶ Quality is not about complaining – it is about improvements!
- ▶ When giving feedback be sure to indicate good practice as well as areas that you feel could be improved upon.

# C is for Constructive

- ▶ Reviews are not just to identify the problems, but also to help find solutions.
- ▶ Think about what might be done differently to improve or address the issues you raise.

## D is for Depersonalised

- ▶ Avoid being overly negative or dismissive. You may meet staff or students which are overly negative or dismissive. It is important to take their views on board and give feedback in the same manner you would for anyone else.
- ▶ Don't comment on a specific member of staff directly, talk instead about the impact on your learning experience.
- ▶ Aim to represent the shared student experience when addressing an issue. Consider if your feedback is something that is unique to your own experience, or something that is likely to be experienced by students more generally.

# Perspectives on Participating in Quality Reviews

Sinead Lynch

NStEP Student Trainer & Student QA Reviewer

# Some Practical Advice

- ▶ Think about the feedback you are giving and what purpose it serves.
- ▶ Be constructive where you can.
- ▶ You might feel rushed – but this isn't a personal thing. The time will go very quickly.
- ▶ Don't be worried about not knowing something or giving a 'wrong' answer – there aren't any wrong answers!
- ▶ Don't be afraid to speak up - the review team are there to listen!
- ▶ Think about the change you would like to see.
- ▶ Everything is completely anonymous.



# Thank you so much for listening and engaging!



## Questions?

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