



Mapping the Regulatory Landscape for Higher Education in Scotland

Introduction

The slide deck is intended to give governors and staff an overview of student-related regulation in Scottish higher education. There are a series of slides that give a graphic summary of the relation of government departments, regulatory agencies, main regulatory requirements and university obligations.

1. Higher Level Regulatory Structure

This slide shows the key structural elements involved in Scottish HE regulation along with their primary responsibilities:

- The Scottish Government's Lifelong Learning Directorate is responsible for developing higher education policy and overseeing the higher education sector.
- The Scottish Funding Council is a non-departmental public body, directly accountable to the Scottish Government via the LLD. The SFC is responsible for implementation of government policy, which includes translation of policy into a regulatory framework and monitoring progress against stated outcomes.
- There are other Scottish public bodies who have specialised regulatory roles such as oversight of training for teachers and health-related professionals.
- The UK Government regulates areas such as immigration which are outside the devolution settlement.
- Universities are accountable for quality and compliance with regulations
- The slide also shows additional players such as Professional Bodies (who have their own specific requirements and regulations) and Sector-Owned Bodies (e.g. the Higher Education Statistical Agency) who help Universities by facilitating accountability returns and providing advice on regulatory compliance.

2. Structural Overview

This slide gives more detail on the main agencies responsible HE regulation.

- The Scottish Funding Council regulates the sector via the Outcomes Framework (see further slide) and undertakes monitoring and institutional engagement either directly or via agreements with sector bodies.
- The two main sector bodies in this context are
 - Quality Assurance Agency Scotland – engage with and support institutions to enhance student learning, monitor and review standards and quality on behalf of SFC
 - Higher Education Statistics Agency – collects data from institutions on all elements of higher education (e.g. students, graduates, finance, staff) and disseminates to multiple statutory/regulatory bodies.
- Other Scottish public bodies involved in regulation include:
 - Scottish Public Service Ombudsman – last port of call for student complaints when institutional processes exhausted
 - Disclosure Scotland – undertakes disclosure and barring checks for students and staff on course which involve contact with children and vulnerable groups
 - General Teaching Council for Scotland – funding and regulation of initial teacher training
 - NHS Education for Scotland – management of courses for medicine, dentistry, nursing and other health-related professions.
- There are a number of UK-wide public bodies who play a role in Scottish regulation, including:
 - UK Visas and Immigration (report to the UK Home Office)
 - Competition and Markets Authority
 - Student Loans Company
 - General Medical Council and the Nursery Midwifery Council – set and monitor professional standards for health professions (similar to Professional Bodies, but have a public status)
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3. *SFC Outcomes Framework*

This slide lists the objectives of the SFC's Outcomes Framework.

4. *SFC Main Monitoring Mechanisms for Student-Related Outcomes*

This table lists the main accountability returns, gives a brief description of their nature and purpose, and lists the relevant outcomes from the SFC Framework that they are used to monitor.

5. *Timing of Accountability Returns which require significant university input*

The top half of this slide shows the timing of the main accountability returns required from higher education providers. The lower half shows other important returns (e.g. Graduate Outcomes, NSS) that are survey-based and are undertaken by SFC/HESA (or others) using contact data supplied by universities. Some areas of regulation also require year-round transactional reporting e.g. higher education providers are required to report non-attendance of international students to UKVI.

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