



Institutional Teaching and Learning Review 2023

ITLR Project Board on 25th May 2023

ITLR WORKSTREAM 6: EVALUATION OF THE METHODOLOGY

Executive Summary

The ITLR evaluation of the methodology seeks to determine the successfulness of the ITLR as a *process* in achieving its stated aims. A multi-method approach will be taken gathering feedback from key stakeholders. The evaluation will deliver two reports, one focused on the design, training, panels and reviews and the other on the impact of the ITLR outputs. The first report will be available over the summer, and the second will be completed by the end of the 2023.

Priorities in the evaluation workstream over the next two months are:

- To finalise the survey questions for panel members and academic departments/professional services.
- Recruit participants and run the evaluation focus groups.
- Finalise the interview scripts and conduct in-depth interviews with those who have already volunteered and offer the opportunity to further stakeholders.
- Conduct data analysis using the project records to inform the evaluation e.g. training participants, SED submissions, review meetings.

A mixed method approach is being proposed to minimise the burden on time for participants, whilst balancing the opportunity for colleagues to provide feedback. Where possible existing time commitments are being utilised through the project to illicit feedback without requesting further time.

The Project Board are asked to:

- Consider whether the evaluation questions are comprehensive.
- Review the stakeholder groups to ensure they are exhaustive.
- Comment on the planned methods & the proposed timing of the data gathering.

Introduction

This evaluation of the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review (ITLR) will focus on the process itself, measuring its success at delivering its stated outcomes. The outcomes of the ITLR, in terms of the results and findings from the exercise in total which will drive and influence Warwick's strategy and enhancement work, will be articulated and controlled under a separate project plan.

This is a process evaluation – an activity which examines the nature and quality of implementation of an intervention, in this case, ITLR.

Context

ITLR operates in a national context which has changed since the last exercise in 2017. There is now no national requirement for external review by an independent body. Prior to this, the system of Higher Education Review (HER) operated by QAA allowed a judgement to be made on, inter alia, an institution's internal review systems and processes.

ITLR is one of a number of systems in place at Warwick which can help us determine our compliance with national regulatory requirements set and operated by the Office for Students (OfS). Beyond OfS's baseline requirements, we also need ITLR to help us drive enhancement and share good practice.

In the [ITLR Blueprint](#) we set our **aims** for ITLR:

2.9 The ITLR will enable:

- a. Our plans for enhancing education at Warwick in the coming years to be based on a coherent and comprehensive assessment of our recent progress, current position and future opportunities that has drawn in a wide range of staff, student and stakeholder voices. This will inform and drive our strategic intent and enhancements going forward.
- b. Us to have created new connections and conversations across academic departments and faculties around common areas of interest that are catalysts for future collaboration.
- c. Us to be able to provide continued assurance to our students, the University's Council and our regulator – the Office for Students – that we continue to secure academic standards, deliver high-quality education and address weaknesses or risks identified.

The Blueprint also set out the ITLR **deliverables**:

- a. An objective assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of our educational provision in each of our academic departments, including external verification by subject experts.
- b. An objective assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the support of our student-facing professional services for a high-quality student learning experience, including external verification by subject experts.
- c. Identification of weaknesses in and risks to academic quality and standards and the actions needed to address these robustly.
- d. A comprehensive view of the gains and good practices established in recent years so that we can celebrate, share and embed these more widely.
- e. An assessment of progress towards the University's 2018 Education Strategy and its supporting plans (e.g. employability, widening participation, internationalisation).
- f. Thematic analyses of the review findings across academic departments to inform the work of central professional services and the development of the University's next Education Strategy

Senate approved the aims of ITLR 2023 in January 2022 and agreed that, in order to help achieve those aims, each of the departmental reviews should specifically assess:

- a. The effectiveness of the academic department's/professional service team's approach to quality assurance, (academic) governance and education leadership, and any risks arising from these.
- b. A general evaluation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the department's education provision and the student learning experience, or their support for these in the case of professional services.
- c. A specific evaluation of a thematic area determined by the academic department in relation to an area where they would value feedback. The cluster themes act as the bespoke theme.
- d. A specific evaluation of three thematic areas which will be common across all departments.

The aim of the workstream 6 is therefore to evaluate how successfully ITLR has delivered these aims.

Evaluation questions

The evaluation is designed to answer the following high-level questions. The specific questions that are asked in focus groups, interviews or questionnaires will flow from these.

1. Have all academic departments & PSS clusters drawn on a wide range of staff, student & stakeholder voices?
2. Have all academic departments & PSS clusters provided an adequate SED considering:
 - a. recent progress
 - b. current position
 - c. future opportunities?
3. Have all panels provided an adequate final report assessing:
 - a. recent progress
 - b. current position
 - c. future opportunities?
4. Have the outputs from ITLR informed the next education strategy? If so, how?
5. Have the outputs from ITLR driven quality enhancement at the university? If so, how?
6. To what extent has the ITLR process created new connections and conversations?
7. Have the ITLR outputs assured the following stakeholders of our quality?
 - a. Council
 - b. Students
8. What lessons can we learn from the organisation and operation of the ITLR?
 - o Are their benefits over and above the other ongoing quality assurance and enhancement processes (including TEG, departmental annual reviews, collaborative review, OFSTED scrutiny of degree apprenticeships, PSRB accreditation/reaccreditation) that ITLR has provided?

- Has the process has been unnecessarily burdensome, or proportionate in its demands on staff?
- Have the ITLR outcomes have informed strategic development, and can this can be confirmed in the longer-term once the process has completed?
- Has the process operated consistently across the university, whilst respecting differences across departments, subjects, modes and levels of study?
- Has the ITLR operated sufficiently transparently?
- Evaluation of the student input, and specifically co-creation (IATL have paid for our co-creators and we committed to them we would make this a stand-alone part of the evaluation piece).

Outputs and dissemination

We will produce an evaluation report for each phase, with clear outcomes in terms of recommendations for the next institutional process in whatever form that will take. For a record of the events (e.g. training, focus groups etc) that helped frame and support the process, we will create a infographic timeline of the entire ITLR.

The first phase report will be available at the end of the summer ahead of the committee circuit in the new term. The second will be available in the latter half of 2023/24. The project team will disband over the summer as the project draws to a close, but we would like to disseminate the evaluation findings to stakeholder groups via a non-committee mechanism where this is most appropriate.

It is worth thinking at this stage about how ITLR's impacts on the new Quality Framework and next Education Strategy can be traced. For instance, we may be able to mark or 'colour-code' the aspects that were added as a direct result of ITLR, or summarise them in a companion document. The intention is to show the wider university and future staff that ITLR had a direct impact on these key resources.

Stakeholder Groups

Academic Departments	Professional Services	ITLR Project	Panel Roles	Strategic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ITLR Lead •ITLR Admin Lead •ITLR Student Lead •Head of Department •Director of Education •Senior PS admin •SED contributors •Review contributors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cluster lead •Deputy cluster lead •Cluster Admin lead •SED contributors •Review contributors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EPQ Project Team •Student co-creators •Review Sponsors •Project Board •Advisory Board •Common Theme co-leads •Training leads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Chair •External •Internal •Student •Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Council & Senate •Education Executive •Student Union •Faculty representatives •STEM & Social Science Grand Challenges •Warwick Transformation •ARC •Social Inclusion •Inclusive Education Team •WP Team •IATL

Methods

The evaluation will use a mixed methods approach – data analysis, surveys, roundtable discussions/focus groups, targeted interviews will generate information for analyses leading to a final report for Council, Senate, and senior university leadership. The methods are designed to answer the Key Evaluation Questions. Where possible, for example in surveys, anonymous responses will be sought but where this is not possible (in interviews of focus groups) informed consent will be secured prior to participation.

The Evaluation will be split into two phases:

- Phase 1 - Evaluation of the design, training, panels and reviews
- Phase 2 - Evaluation of the impact on strategy and programme delivery.

Below is an indication of the proposed timescale and methods for capturing the views of the ITLR stakeholder groups.

Method	Stakeholder Group	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Surveys	Panel Roles	■					■					
	Academic Departments											
	Professional Services							■				
	Students (all roles)				■	■	■	■				
	Strategic										■	■
Focus Groups	Panel Roles					■	■					
	Academic Departments					■	■					
	Professional Services							■	■			
	ITLR Project						■	■				
Interviews	Panel Roles					■	■	■				
	Strategic										■	■
	ITLR Project							■	■			
Data Analysis	N/A			■	■	■	■					

We are prioritising evaluating the student contributions to ITLR 2023, being mindful of their other commitments, as we want to capture them before they either leave the university or break for summer.

In terms of the specific methods we have taken feedback from the Project Board and Advisory board and are trying to balance the opportunity for those who would like to give feedback to do so, with asking any more of colleagues in terms of time. Specifically:

- We have gathered video testimonials from panel members at the end of review two, this has been an opportunity to reflect on their experience, and to provide some evaluative content. The panellists had scheduled time in their diary already for the review so no further time commitment was required.
- We are offering opportunities to provide video testimonials during other ITLR related events, to again capitalise on time already committed. For example, we ran a professional services cluster reflection event in May where this was offered and will do the same during the Warwick Education Conference where ITLR is represented.
- Invitations to the interviews and focus groups will be sought via 'thank you' emails sent to all panel participants, and direct messaging to other stakeholder groups via Teams.
- The intention is to offer a number of modes to stakeholders by which they can offer their feedback, be that survey, focus group or interview (online or in-person) so they can choose what suits them. We will reflect as part of the evaluation on the representativeness of our stakeholder groups.

Specific questions have been built into the process steps themselves to gain data for the evaluation and to encourage self-reflection. For example, the Post Review 1 Summary forms featured a 'Feedback and evaluation' section, asking two open questions - 'what has worked well for you', and 'what could have been better' - as well as an option for providing any other feedback.

Focus groups with students will be co-led with students themselves, relying on a 'friendship conversation' method, rather than traditional focus groups approaches, to encourage free conversation. This has been suggested by ITLR student co-creators in collaboration with IATL and helps to further embed students as co-creators within the broader project.

Next Steps

Priorities in the evaluation workstream over the next two months are:

- To finalise the survey questions for panel members and academic departments/professional services.
- Recruit participants and run the evaluation focus groups.
- Finalise the interview scripts and conduct in-depth interviews with those who have already volunteered and offer the opportunity to further stakeholders.
- Conduct data analysis using the project records to inform the evaluation e.g., training participants, SED submissions, review meetings.

Acknowledgements

This plan has been informed by:

UK Government's [Magenta book](#) on evaluation methodologies

[BetterEvaluation](#) (the knowledge platform of the [Global Evaluation Initiative](#) (GEI))

'Theory of change' model from [TASO](#)

QAA Quality Code's advice and guidance on [Monitoring and Evaluation Universities UK Framework for programme reviews](#)