

Office for
Students



OfS consultation on the future approach to quality regulation

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Webinar for students and student representatives
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Our approach to regulating quality

We want to ensure that students from all backgrounds benefit from high quality education that enriches their lives and helps them succeed in their future career paths.

We view high quality as:



courses that are well designed and are delivered and assessed effectively



academic support and resources that students need to succeed
effective engagement with students



equipping students to achieve positive outcomes after they complete their course

Current quality assessment

We currently assess quality in two ways:



Targeted assessments if we are concerned a university or college is not meeting our minimum quality requirements



Recognition of excellence through Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) assessments

Background to the consultation



Following the Public Bodies Review and discussions with stakeholders, we propose a more integrated system aimed at:

- ensuring high quality education for all students
- driving continuous improvement across the sector
- providing a clear view to students about the level of quality offered at different institutions
- supporting equality of opportunity.



We are consulting initially on the principles, scope and structure of a revised system.

We plan to run a second consultation in autumn 2026 that will look at how the new system would work in detail.

By revising the TEF we aim to improve:

Reach

- to benefit students at all providers
- in time, postgraduate taught students as well as undergraduate students

Impact

- drive improvement for students by strengthening incentives and interventions for providers
- strengthened input from students

Integration

- a more integrated system that provides a clear view to (prospective) students of quality at different universities and colleges

Responsiveness

- a more agile and dynamic system that helps us to protect students' interests by allowing us to respond to emerging risks more quickly

Overview of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

Desk-based
assessment of a
provider's student
experience and
student outcomes

OfS produces
indicators using
national datasets

Providers and their
students submit
evidence

Context accounted
for through
benchmarking and
information from
providers

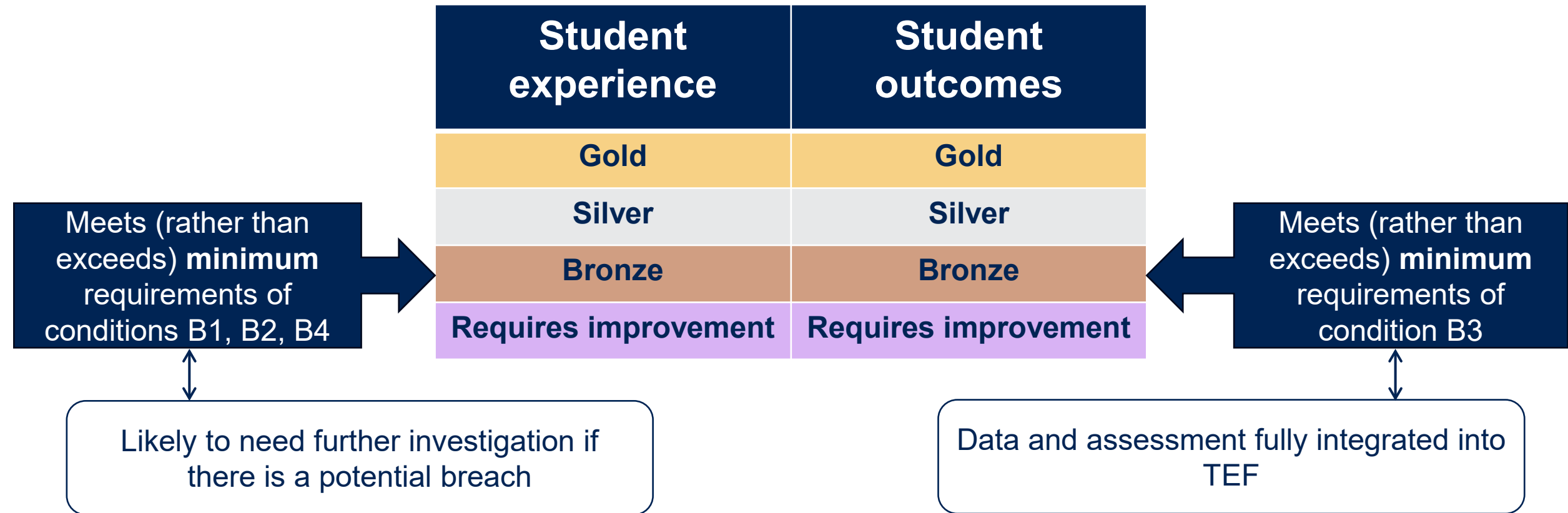
Academic and
student assessors
carry out
assessments and
award ratings

Ratings at provider-
level, but informed by
data across subjects
and student groups

Providers
incentivised to
improve or continue
delivering the highest
levels of quality

Useful information
provided to students

A more integrated system



TEF: the student experience aspect

Assessing the quality of student experience

We propose to assess the quality of:

- course content and delivery
- assessment
- academic support
- resources
- student engagement.

We propose to base assessments on:

- submissions from institutions
- an independent student submission (or an alternative)
- benchmarked National Student Survey (NSS) data.

Where there is insufficient NSS data for a provider, we would collect student views another way

TEF: the student outcomes aspect

Assessing student outcomes

First, the provider must meet minimum thresholds to achieve at least a Bronze rating.

- These thresholds are for the percentage of its students that continue and complete their studies.

Then, we propose to assess how good students' outcomes are, using a set of benchmarked data indicators for:

- continuation and completion
- progression to skilled employment (or further study)
- graduates' use of what they learned in higher education
- salaries three years after graduation.
- Benchmarks take account of the institution's mix of students and courses.
- The provider could also submit further contextual information.

Where there is insufficient outcomes data for a provider, we would not rate student outcomes

Student evidence and involvement

Student evidence

- NSS responses – or an alternative if the data is insufficient
- Graduate Outcomes survey responses on how far they are using what they learned in higher education
- Independent student submissions – or an alternative where this is impractical for students

Student assessors

- Students jointly assess and decide TEF ratings alongside academic assessors (paid position)
- We aim to increase student assessors from small, specialist and college-based providers

Student submissions

- In the previous TEF, students had the option to contribute their views in a submission compiled by the TEF student contact, on behalf of their university or college's students.
- In the future, we propose:
 - To gather independent student input from **all** universities and colleges
 - Student input should focus on the **student experience** aspect
 - We would encourage students to make a **written submission** where this is practical. We will provide guidance, and your university or college should also provide support.
 - Where a written submission is impractical, we would gather student input another way, for example through focus groups.

Incentives and interventions

To drive improvement for students, we propose rewarding institutions that are delivering the highest quality and using stronger mechanisms to motivate improvements where quality is lower.

Ratings and incentives	
Rewards: • reputational benefits • assessed less often • potential eligibility for some kinds of funding in future.	Gold
	Silver
Mechanisms to motivate improvement: • assessed more frequently • may become ineligible for some kinds of funding or applications for new or extended degree awarding powers • could face limits to future growth in student numbers • intervention where necessary to require actions from the institution to improve	Bronze
	Requires improvement

Risk monitoring



We would continue to monitor all providers between TEF assessments, using a new tool to help us identify where students are at risk of receiving poorer quality.



Where we have significant concerns outside the TEF assessment cycle, we may investigate them.

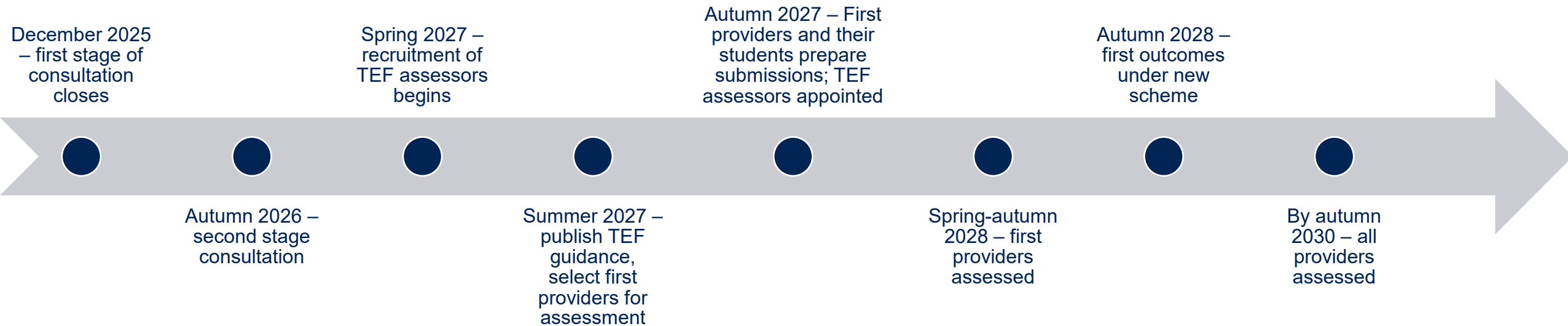


We would expect to carry out a number of investigations each year and to prioritise them according to risk.

TEF timeline and assessment cycle

- We propose to assess all institutions for the first time over a three-year cycle
- Timing of reassessment linked to the institution's rating and ongoing risk monitoring:

Gold: 5 years **Silver:** 4 years **Bronze:** 3 years **Requires improvement:** case by case



Regardless of when your institution is being assessed, student reps will play an important role in continually building the evidence base for submission

Tell us what you think

We want to hear your thoughts about our proposals.

We are particularly interested in hearing what you think about:

- Are we planning to assess things that you view as important in relation to quality?
- The scope of the student submission
- Gathering student views in alternative ways
- Who should carry out the assessments?
- How can we increase the numbers of student assessors from small, specialist, and college-based institutions?
- Any reflections about how to incentivise institutions to improve

Further information

Read the consultation

- A quick guide and the full proposals are at:
www.officeforstudents.org.uk/reforms-to-quality-regulation

Consultation feedback events

- In-person feedback event: Tues 18 November, 1000-1300, Coventry
- Online feedback event for students: Tues 25 November, 1300-1430
- Register at: www.officeforstudents.org.uk/events

Keeping in touch

- Further queries can be directed to us at TEF@officeforstudents.org.uk

Thank you for listening

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