



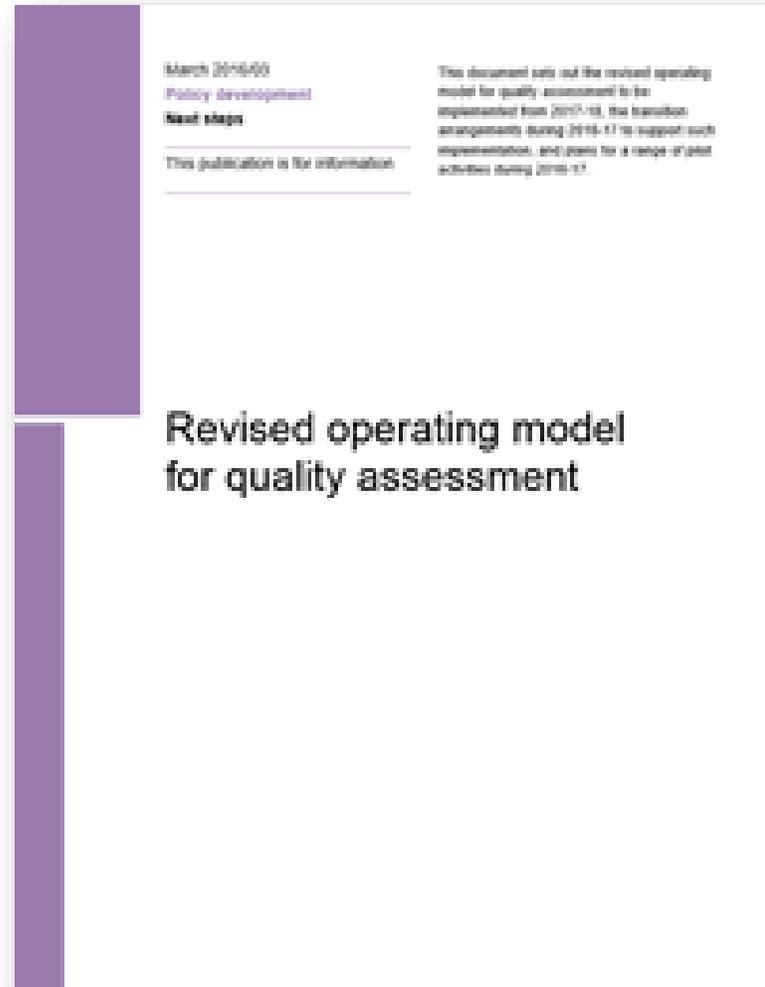
A Revised Approach to Quality Assessment in Higher Education

Dr Amanda Wilcox

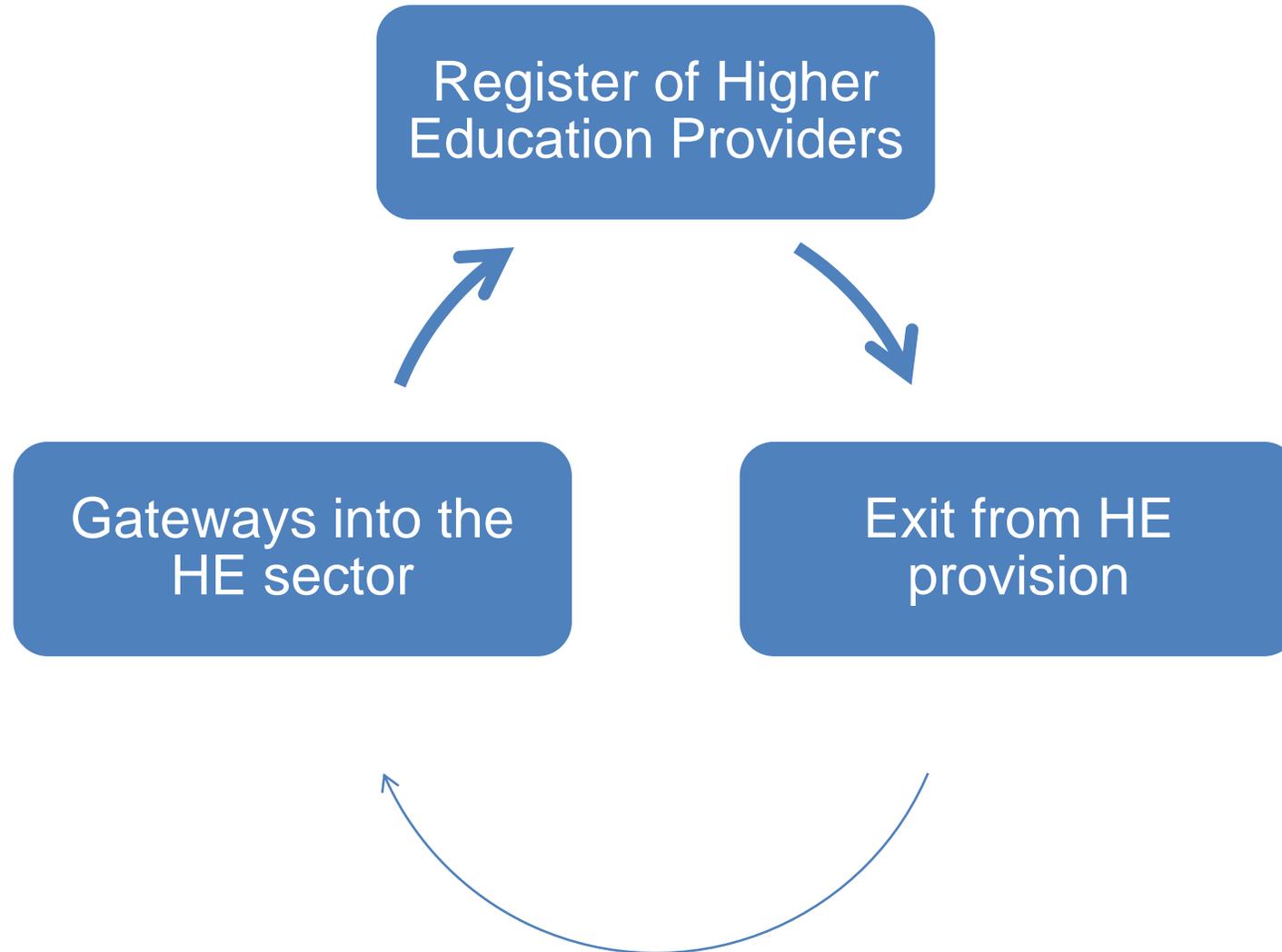
Regional Consultant, Yorkshire, the Humber and the North East

12 July 2016

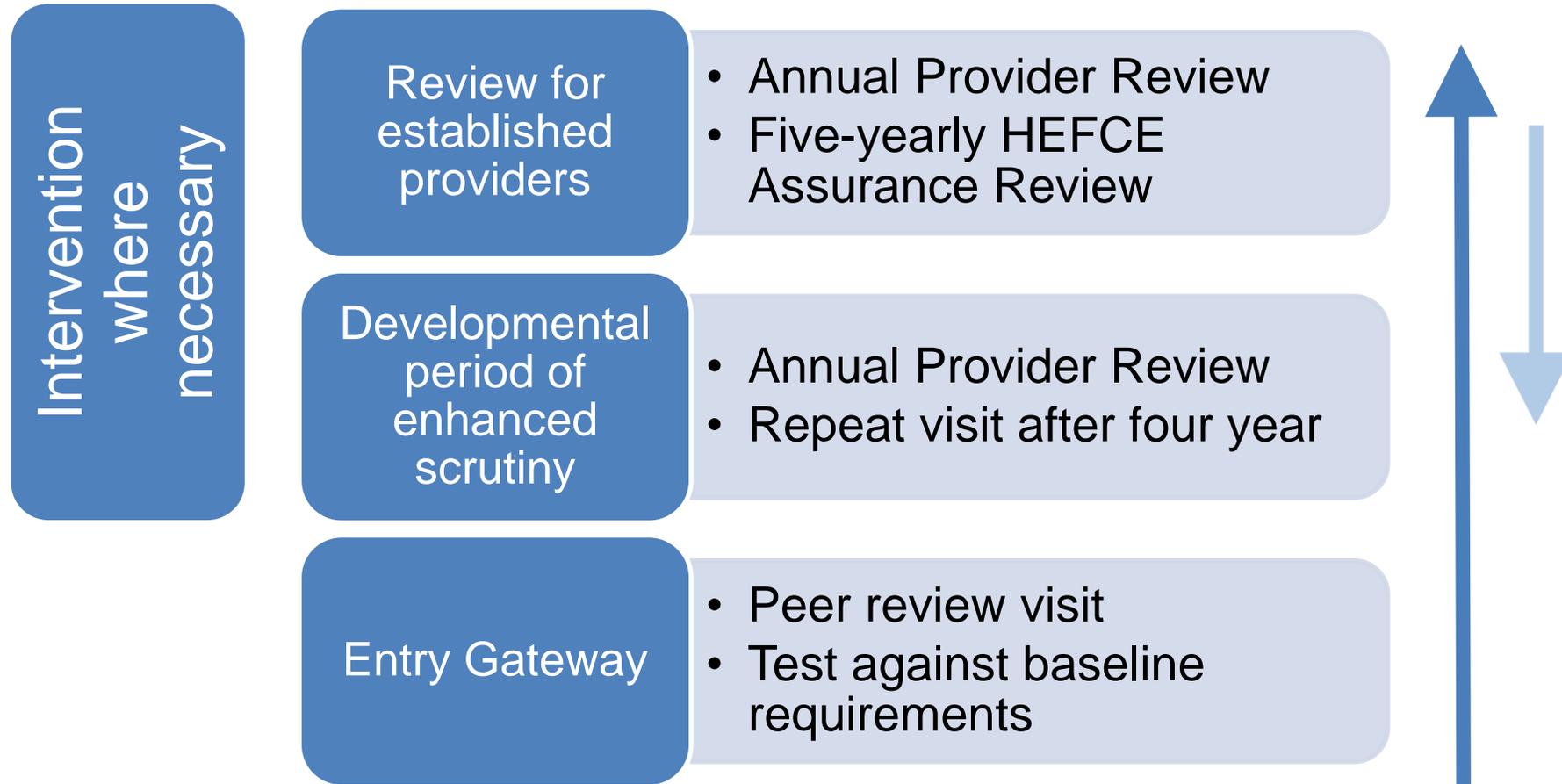
www.hefce.ac.uk/reg/review/



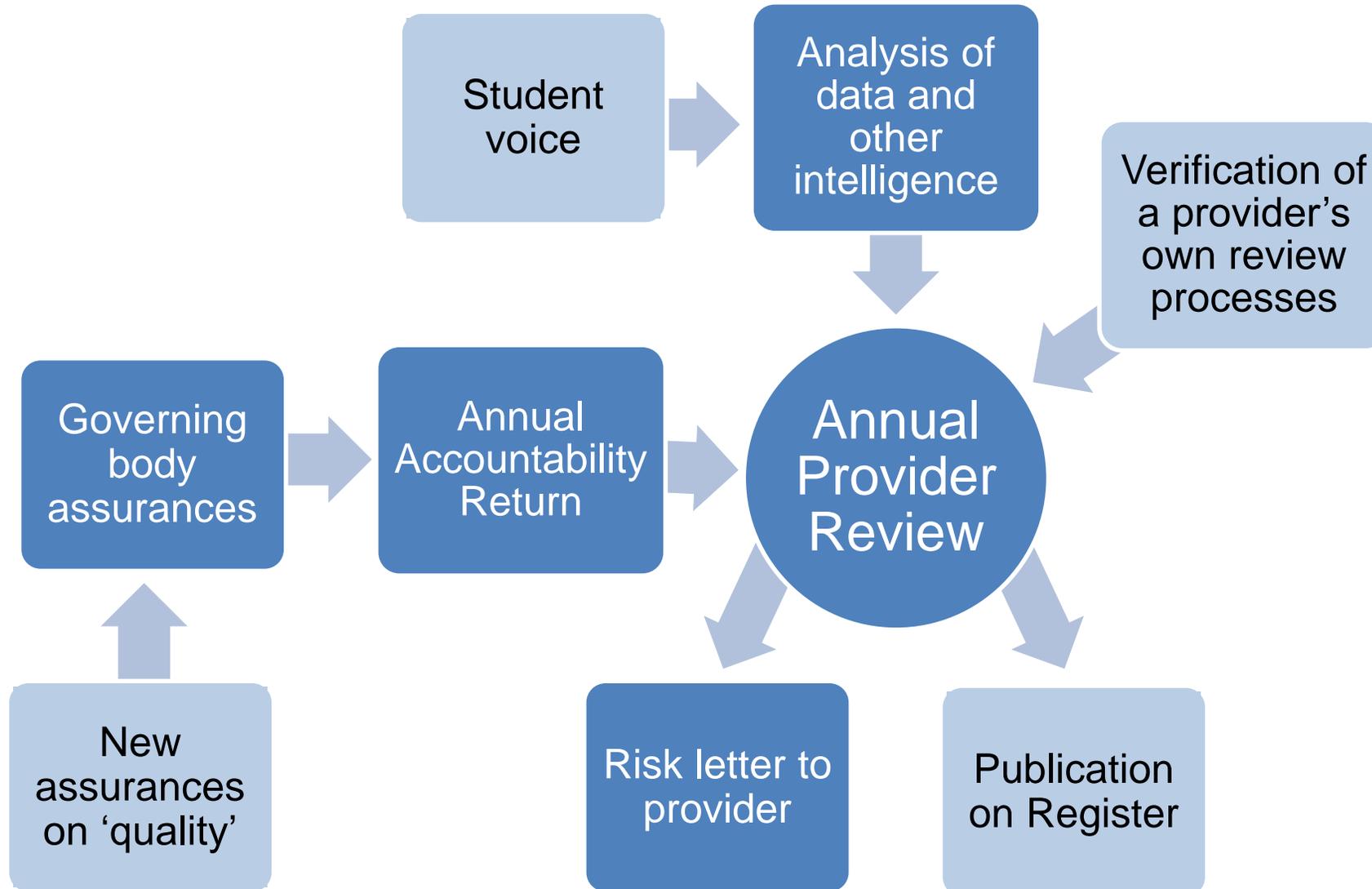
The regulatory landscape



Quality assessment from 2017-18



Annual Provider Review



Annual Assurances

- Relying on the effective oversight by governors of the student academic experience and student outcomes.
- Building on existing assurances.
- Provide support and guidance.



Assurance: Current process

- Annual returns submitted
- Assurance Gained
 - compliance with Code of Governance
 - compliance with Memorandum of Assurance and Accountability
 - quality and student experience
 - regularity
 - risk Management, Internal control, Governance, Value for Money, data



Quality Assessment: familiar ground

- MAA- ‘ Has an effective framework – overseen by its senate, academic board or equivalent – to manage the quality of learning and teaching and to maintain academic standards’.
- Higher Education Code of Governance- ‘ The governing body receives assurance that academic governance is effective by working with the Senate/Academic Board or equivalent as specified in its governance instruments in order to maintain quality’.

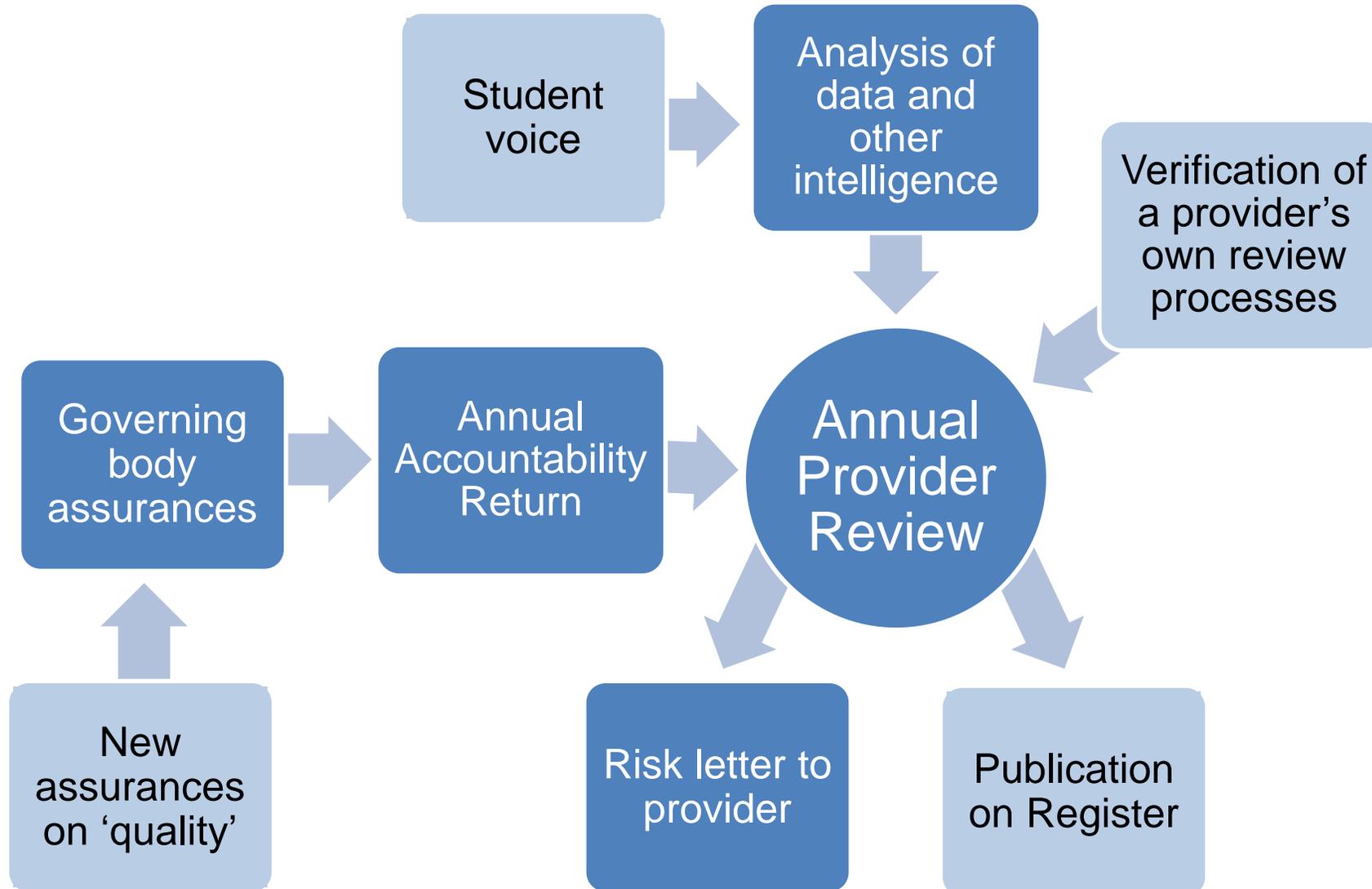
Quality Assessment: suggested wording

- ‘The governing body has received and discussed a report and accompanying action plan relating to the student academic experience and student outcomes, including the evidence from the institution’s own periodic review processes which fully involve students and external expert advice.’
- ‘The governing body has received the outcomes of continuous improvement activity relating to learning and teaching and challenged the executive where necessary.’
- ‘The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust and appropriate.’
- The governing body has received a report that confirms that the provider continues to meet the Standards of Part 1 of the ESG (2015).’

And for providers with degree awarding powers:

- ‘The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately set and maintained.’

Annual Provider Review



Data: current approach

- HEIs submit a range of data: used by HEFCE and other stakeholders for a range of purposes

Higher Education Students Early Statistic (HESES) survey

HESA Student Record

Destination of Leavers from Higher Education survey

National Student Survey

Key Information Sets and Unistats website

- Institution-level outputs:
benchmarks



Data: UK Performance Indicators

“...reliable information on the nature and performance of the higher education sector in the UK... a consistent set of measures... contribute to greater public accountability... policy decisions can be made on the basis of consistent and reliable information”

- Established 1998
- Widening participation, Non-continuation, Employment, Research
- Owned by the powers of the four UK HE funding bodies
- Official Statistics
- UK Performance Indicators Steering and Technical Groups
- Until now, HEIs only

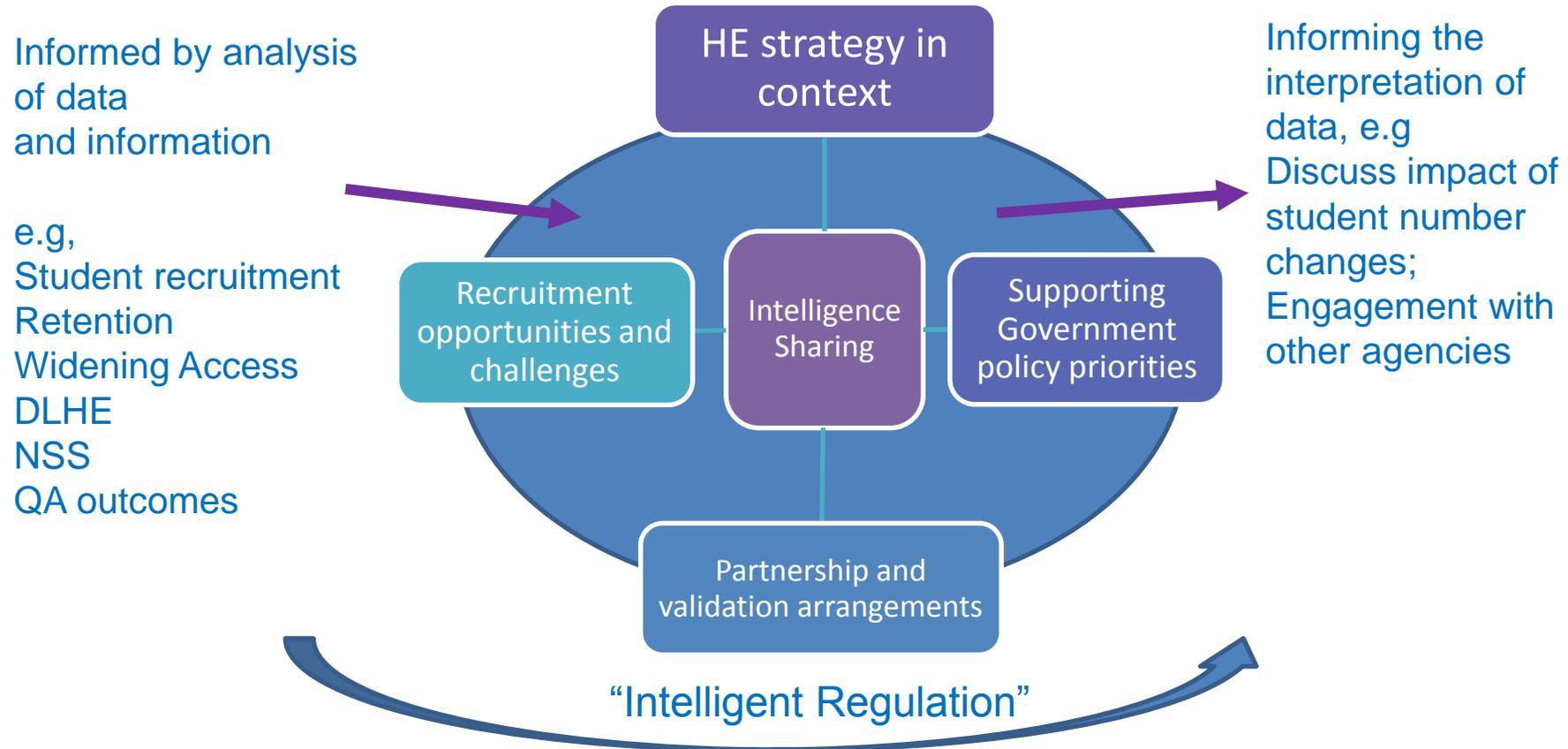
Data: quality assessment and ongoing work

- Quality after the removal of student number controls
- Pre-existing measures, set in appropriate context, to provide intelligent understanding
 - Past performance
 - Scale and significance
 - Institutional profile
 - Institutional intelligence
- Broader potential within underlying data sources
 - Understanding of performance and context
 - Policy interests
 - Scope and coverage

Intelligence gathering and sharing: current engagement

- Institutional teams at HEFCE
- Meetings with a range of institutions
- Engagement with sector groups
- Participation in regional meetings
- Data returns – analysis and interpretation
- Dialogue with other agencies

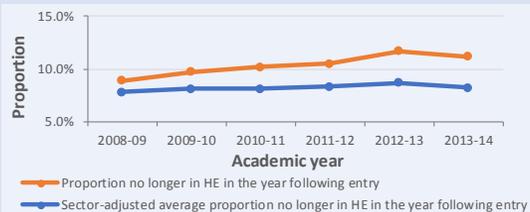
Intelligence gathering and sharing: Our engagement with institutions



Institution-level metrics: UK Performance Indicators

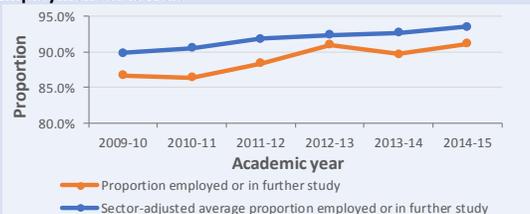
Cohort under consideration: Full-time, UK-domiciled, undergraduate populations

Non-continuation rate



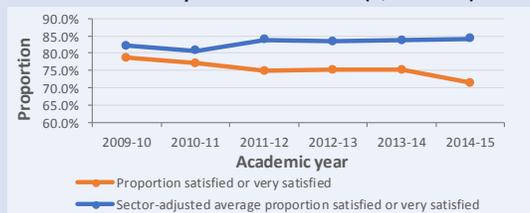
Source: UK Performance Indicators

Employment of leavers



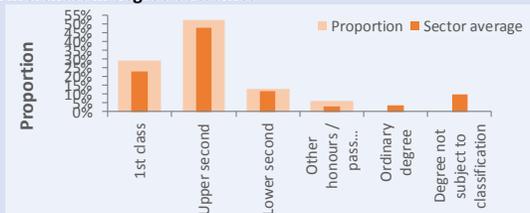
Source: UK Performance Indicators

National student survey: Overall satisfaction (Question 22)



Source: National Student Survey responses

Differences in degree outcomes



Source: HEFCE analysis of HESA student data

Themes emerging from comments included in responses to the National Student Survey

Theme: Aspect of prominent concern (if identifiable)

Dissatisfaction with:

- + Course organisation and management: information provision, timetabling
- + Facilities and support structures: lecturer availability
- + Feedback and assessment: timeliness, detail, transparency

Satisfaction with:

- + Union and societies: sporting fixtures, entertainment facilities
- + Location and locality: accommodation costs, local amenities, nightlife

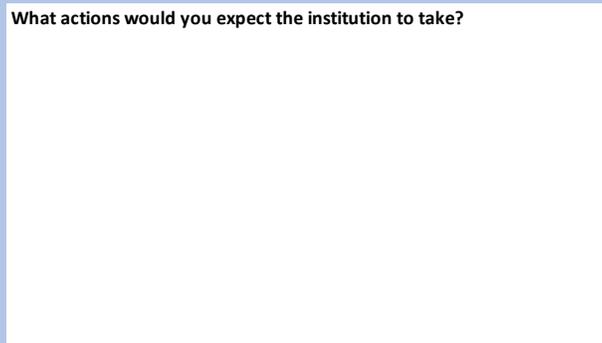
Institutional intelligence and insights

Most recent HEFCE institutional team visit date: 21 November 2016
 HEFCE regional consultant: Joe Smith

+ Senior team were not able to engage in discussion about implications of data trends or the assessments necessary to support further growth in student numbers.

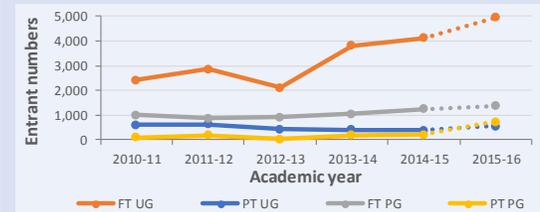
+ No evidence has been provided that the institution has a credible action plan to address the general pattern of performance

What actions would you expect the institution to take?



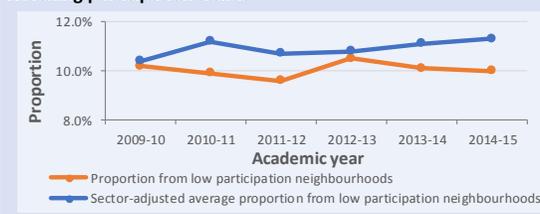
Contextual data

Recruitment trends



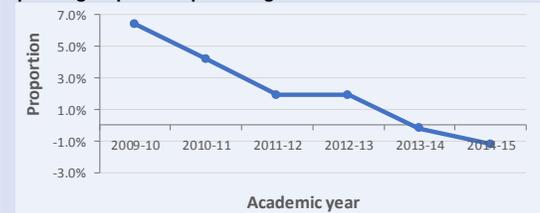
Source: HEFCE analysis of HESA student data and HESES returns. UK, EU and International entrants

Widening participation trends



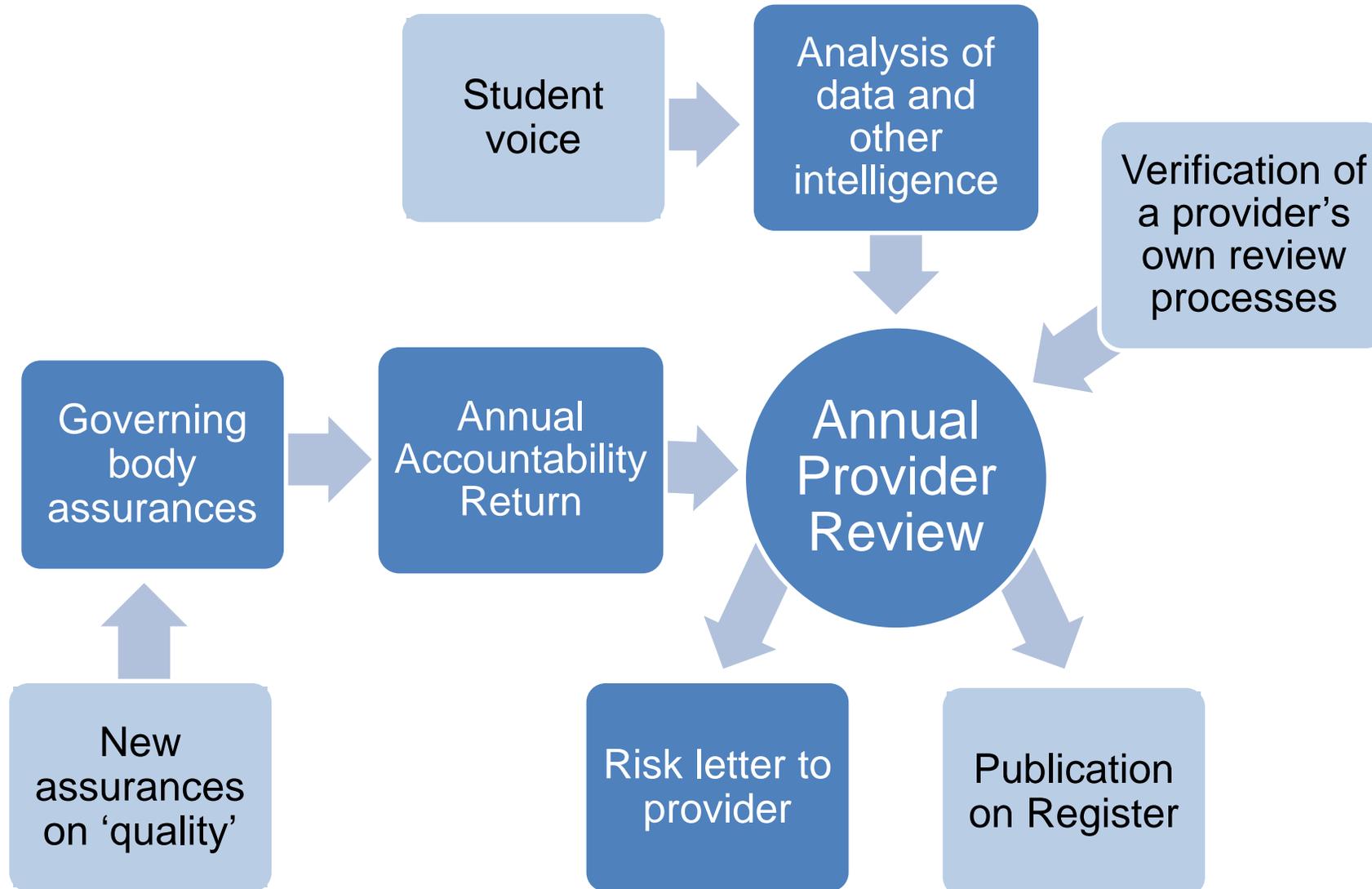
Source: UK Performance Indicators. Young entrants from low participation neighbourhoods. Students with known home postcode, based on POLAR3 method.

Operating surplus as a percentage of total income



Source: HEFCE analysis of HESA finance statistics record

Annual Provider Review



What does this mean for institutions?

A robust approach to internal periodic review

Continuous improvement through the Annual Provider Review

Ensuring effective governance to improve the quality of the student academic experience



Pilot activities during 2016-17

Annual Provider Review

- support for governing bodies
- new 'quality' assurances
- student voice
- verification of approach to internal review
- risk letter process
- revised approach to the HEFCE Assurance Review

Degree standards

- training for external examiners
- calibration of marking practices
- degree classification algorithms



The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Year 2

Aims of the TEF

- Clear information to students about where the best provision can be found.
- Encourage providers to improve teaching quality... stretching the best and placing pressure on those with variable quality to improve.
- Help to drive UK productivity by ensuring a better match of graduate skills with the needs of employers and the economy.
- Better outcomes for all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Year 1 (Outcomes in 2016)

- 'Meets expectations' rating for all providers with successful QA reviews
- Full inflationary fee/loan cap uplift for 2017-18

Year 2 (Outcomes in 2017)

- Voluntary: provider-level assessment of metrics and submissions
- Differentiated ratings: 'Meets expectations', 'Excellent' or 'Outstanding'
- Full inflationary fee/loan uplift for all participants (meeting the QA threshold)

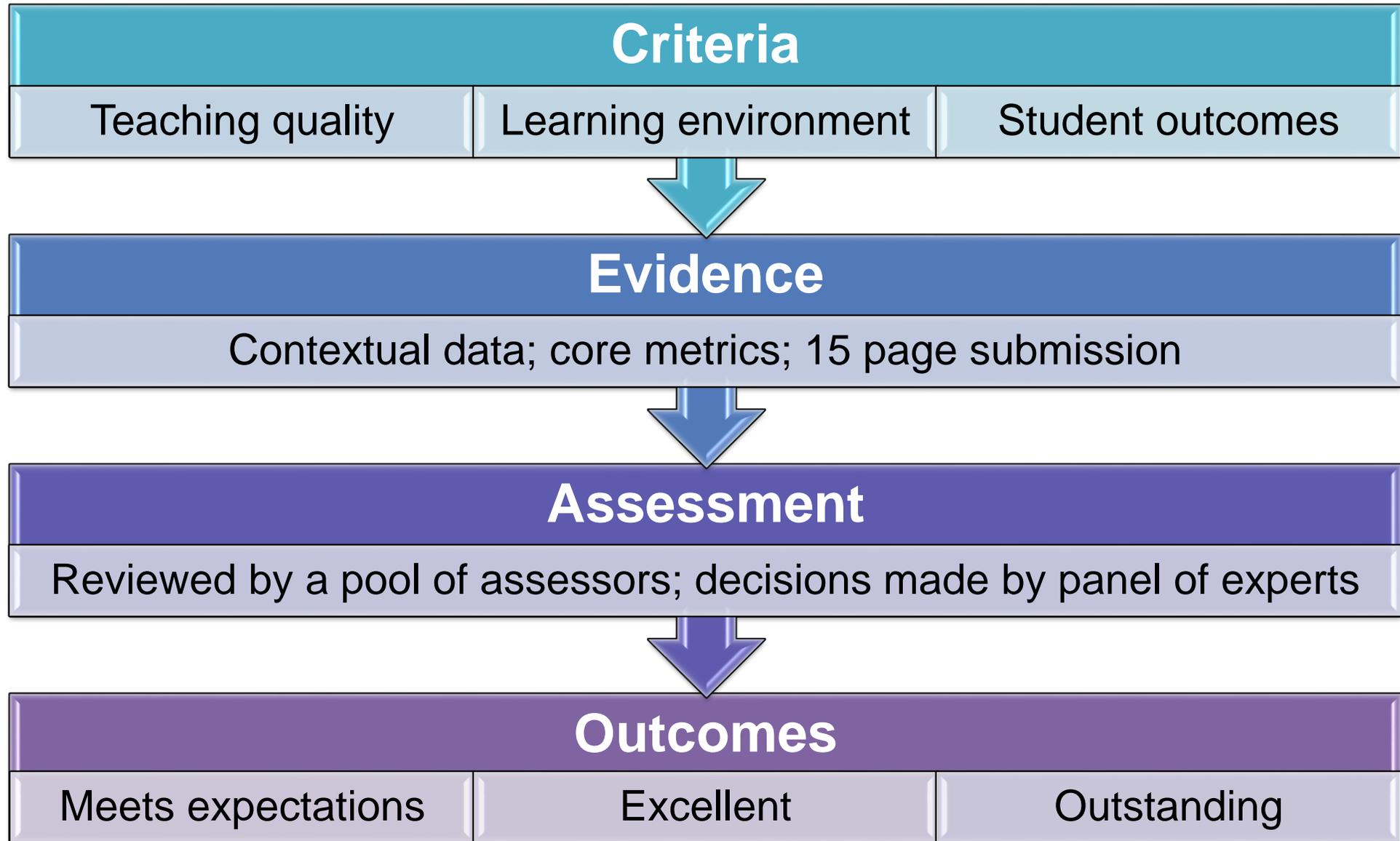
Year 3 (Outcomes in 2018)

- Same approach to assessment with updated metrics
- Differentiated ratings and fee/loan cap uplifts
- Piloting of discipline-level assessment and new metrics

Year 4 (Outcomes in 2019)

- Discipline-level assessment
- Possibly including PGT

Year 2 proposals



Year 2 metrics

Teaching quality

- NSS - The teaching on my course
- NSS - Assessment and feedback

Learning environment

- NSS - Academic support
- Non-continuation

Student outcomes

- Employment/further study
- Possibly: highly skilled employment

- Three year averages; split by various characteristics
- All metrics to be benchmarked as per PIs, with lower thresholds for flagging differences
- Providers will have the opportunity to view their metrics in advance
- Minimum set of metrics is required to be assessed; providers without metrics to be awarded 'Meets expectations (procedural)'
- Development of additional metrics for the future

Anticipated timescales

May To Sep 2016 **Policy formation and project set-up**

- BIS technical consultation
- Establish TEF team
- Appoint panel members and assessors
- Establish key provider contacts
- Provide indicative metrics to institutions
- Resolve UK participation

Autumn 2016 **Submissions**

- Guidance and briefings
- Preview metrics and amendments
- Panel and assessor training

Spring 2017 **Assessment**

- Calibration exercise
- Individual assessment of submissions
- Assessors agree recommendations
- Panel agrees outcomes
- Publish outcomes



Thank you for listening

Questions?