How was TEF for you?

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Context: OfS under fire

GuildHE, the Russell Group, University Alliance and Million+ have written to Commons Education Committee chair Robin Walker calling for an inquiry into the Office for Students.

Independent research commissioned by OfS based on in-depth interviews with 32 accountable officers found “a demand for a more personalised, collaborative, and supportive approach” and raised concerns about perceptions of OfS relationship with government being “too close and reactive.”

On Wonkhe, Andy Westwood argued that OfS ”offers a regulated market model that is simply too narrow for all the activities and wider purposes of higher education” and suggests that Labour should commit to creating a single integrated tertiary system similar to the Welsh system – before thinking about HE funding.

Is TEF formative or summative?

Pearce review of TEF:

“The clear message from senior leaders responsible for teaching and learning is that the process of engaging with TEF has significant potential in the enhancement of provision.”

OfS TEF guidance:

“The TEF aims to incentivise a higher education provider to improve and to deliver excellence above these minimum requirements, for its mix of students and courses. We intend that TEF ratings will create this incentive by putting a spotlight on the quality of providers’ courses, influencing providers’ reputations and informing student choice.”

Navigating the tension

Shân Wareing, DVC at the University of Northampton

"The provider TEF submission, underpinned by publicly available evidence, proved to be an opportunity to write that narrative, of the lives changed and the immense, dedicated, imaginative, resilient, persistent, expert, collegiate work that goes on across the sector to support students to achieve their academic and professional goals and potential...Once surrendered to, that pressure generated focus, energy and teamwork."

Structural challenges:

- Institutional evidence base and metrics – the internal conversation
- Education gain – what are expectations?
- Authentic vs glossy – stakes and risks
- Student submission – courage

Thank you

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