

# Enhancing the Student Voice

Strategies to engage students in institutional reviews  
and other quality assurance activities

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# Who...

- Is a student?
- Works in quality management at an institution?
- Works at a quality assurance agency?
- Is a university teacher?
- Other?

# Welcome!

- Introduction: The role of UKÄ and SFS in QA in Sweden
  - Challenges to student participation
  - Case: Independent student submissions in institutional reviews
  - Discussions!
- 
- We hope to leave you with some new ideas and a list of strategies or tools to engage students in institutional reviews and other QA activities.

# We have 90 minutes to...

- Discuss how to enhance the student voice in QA-activities at QA agencies and HEI's.
- Become aware of challenges for student participation.
- Learn more about the development and use of independent student submissions in Swedish institutional reviews.
- Share different approaches to involve students at site visits and in interviews.
- Explore new ideas on how to promote student participation in QA.



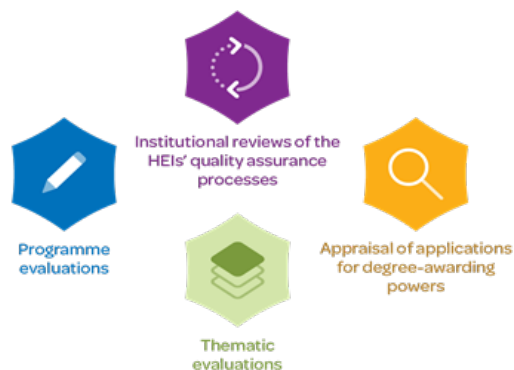
# The Swedish National Union of Students (SFS)

- Member organisation for student unions at Swedish universities and university colleges.
- Representing students' interests since 1921.
- Represented in UKÄ:s advisory council and reference groups.
- Cooperation with UKÄ to recruit students as assessors in panels.

The logo for the Swedish National Union of Students (SFS) is displayed in a large, bold, orange serif font.

# The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (UKÄ)

- Quality assurance of higher education and research
- Appraisal of the degree-awarding powers



# UKÄ cont.

- Legal supervision of higher education
- Monitoring efficiency
- Follow-up and horizon scanning
- Responsibility for statistics in the higher education sector



# The Higher Education Act

- **Section 4**

- The operations of higher education institutions shall be arranged to ensure that high standards are attained in courses and study programmes and in research.
- The resources available shall be used effectively to sustain a high standard of operation.
- Quality assurance procedures are the **shared concern of staff and students** at higher education institutions. Ordinance (2013:119).

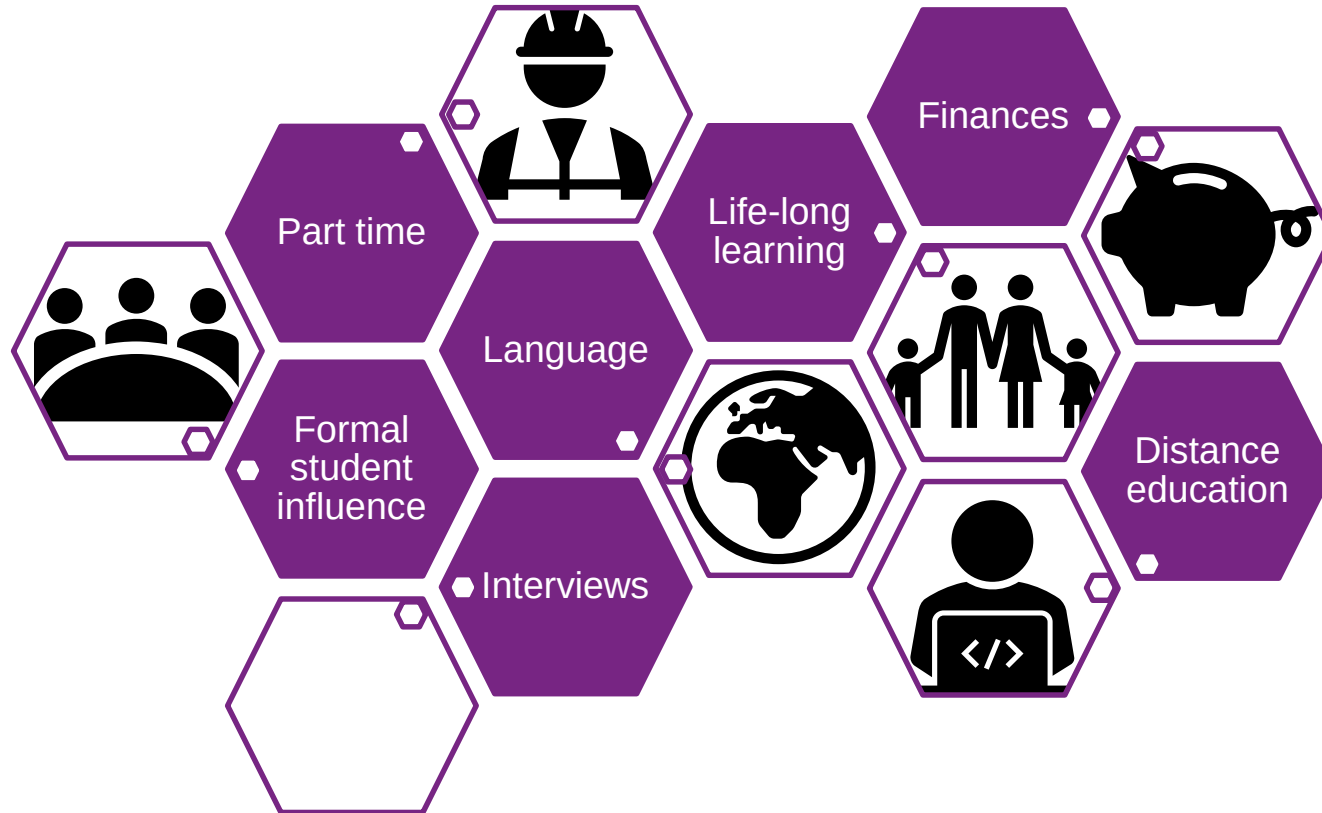
- **Section 4a**

- **Students shall be entitled to exert influence** over the courses and study programmes at higher education institutions.
- Higher education institutions shall endeavour to **enable students to play an active role in the continued development** of courses and study programmes. Ordinance (2000:260).

# Students in Evaluations and Reviews at National Level

- Students are engaged as assessors in all evaluations and reviews performed within the Swedish framework for QA of HE
- Students are interviewed at site visits and other external QA activities.
- Independent student submission in institutional reviews
- Student representatives in our reference groups
- "Student Union Day"

# Some challenges



**Discuss!**

**3+5 minutes**



- Do you face similar issues in your QA context?
- Are there other challenges you have identified?

# Case: Independent student submissions in institutional reviews

- Introduced in the previous cycle (2017-2022)
- Written submission, voluntary for student unions
- Key elements: QA from a student perspective
- Submitted after the self evaluation report (SER)
- Popular with student unions and useful for assessors
- Further developments partly based on report by SFS

# Strengths and weaknesses

- **Strengths**

- Encourages student participation
- Engages local students broadly ahead of the review
- Makes the student voice clear and concise

- **Weaknesses**

- Undermines student involvement in SER
- Sometimes shifts focus to broader concerns beyond the scope of the review
- Workload
- Language barriers for international students

- Further developments: Biannual information meetings, more focus on assessment criteria and Canvas course

Be creative!



# The way ahead?

- Share examples of measures your institution or organisation has taken to enhance the student voice in institutional reviews and other QA activities.
- Based on the challenges we have identified together, what methods and further improvements can you think of?

List the group's **three** best strategies or tools to engage students in institutional reviews and similar QA activities.

# Summary of group discussions and workshop feedback

# Thank you!

If you have further feedback or questions about the independent student submissions, please contact:

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# Strategies to promote student participation in institutional reviews and other QA activities: (RESULTS)

