



**QAA  
Scotland**

**Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee  
QAA Scotland**

**International Benchmarking:  
Postgraduate Research Degree Student Experience**

**Advance Notification of forthcoming conference  
30 April 2010  
Venue and timings TBC**

**QAA Scotland**, with the **Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) International Benchmarking Working Group** (chaired by Professor Dominic Houlihan, VP Research at University of Aberdeen) is undertaking an exercise to benchmark student experiences of research degrees in Scotland with reference to learning from practice internationally, including the rest of the UK. The purpose is to support the higher education sector in enhancing the postgraduate research degree student experience.

The conference on the 30<sup>th</sup> April will provide an opportunity for the sector to consider and offer comment on several topics which the Working Group have identified as key to enhancing and developing the research degree student experience in Scottish HEIs. The Working Group will then use sector feedback to refine and explore these topics for the Benchmarking exercise.

The conference will consist of a series of plenary sessions with invited key speakers, on areas relevant to developing and enhancing research degree student experience. Workshops will also be held, addressing the following potential themes:

- Standards, Quality Assurance and Reviews (including student participation and HEI practice)
- Enhancing the experience of part-time and international research students
- Graduate Schools and pooling
- Research students' experience of the intellectual climate/environment and the experience of postgraduates who teach

**Please keep this date free if you are interested in attending, or pass on to interested colleagues. Expressions of interest should be sent to Frances Morton in the first instance: [f.morton@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:f.morton@qaa.ac.uk)**

**Further details including booking form and details of venue and timings will be forwarded in due course.**