

# Year 2 Institutional Reports

## Overview



## Introduction

1 This report provides a summary of Year 2 Enhancement Theme institutional activity based on higher education institution (HEI) end of year reports.

2 End of Year 2 reports have been submitted by all Scottish higher education institutions. This summary report and the HEI end of year reports will be made available through the [institutional Theme web pages](#).

3 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the activities institutions have been engaged in over Year 2 of Resilient Learning Communities. In addition to the project work that is managed by QAA Scotland, and work managed through collaborative clusters, the institutional work forms one of three strands of Theme activity. Each year institutions provide a plan highlighting what they intend to deliver over the next 12 months and then report on that activity at the end of the year. A summary of institution reporting helps the sector to identify common areas of interest and distinctiveness. Examples of practice in each institution are highlighted to facilitate HEI communication, networking and collaboration on topics and aspects of mutual interest.

4 In Year 2, we are moving towards completion of the current Theme and starting to look towards the future and the next Enhancement Theme. We reached out to institutions asking for their views and insights on what topics might be the focus of the next Enhancement Theme. We have a shortlist of 10 topics which we are sharing in this overview report (paragraph 65).

## Year 2 key points

5 The key points from Year 2 of Theme activity are as follows:

- Institutional work featured a diverse mix of continuing and new projects (totalling around 111) and most HEIs (17) were running multiple institution-wide and/or smaller local projects. The type of activity being undertaken has focused on testing ideas and approaches developed in Year 1 but also delivering new projects and exploring new ideas, along with evaluation and looking towards the future. Thinking about the next Theme, institutions have identified 10 potential topics, with the most popular being on wellbeing, belonging and resilience, and applying learning from the pandemic and understanding what works (learning communities, infrastructure, delivery). Sustainability, and the value and role of higher education/universities is also a popular topic (paragraph 65).
- Institutional work can be organised into 20 topic areas, covering a diverse range of activity and projects. From building communities to student wellbeing and skills development, the Themes work is getting to the heart of resilience and what it means to staff, students and institutions. Equality and diversity and understanding the needs of different students, are important and feature strongly across many institutions. Drawing on previous Themes, and connections to them, are explicitly made by several institutions (paragraphs 11-31).
- QAA-funded collaboration continued through a collaborative cluster project: *Personalised Approaches to Resilience and Community (PARC)*. The Year 1 work on *Decolonising the Curriculum in the Time of Pandemic* continued through the *Anti-Racist Curriculum Project*. Other interesting interinstitutional collaboration is taking place despite the time and resource pressures of the continuing pandemic. Institutions reported that collaboration took place in a range of ways: networking and discussion with peers, sector bodies and other organisations; contribution to,

and participation in, the June 2022 Enhancement Themes Conference; and involvement in the QAA-managed and Student-Led Projects (paragraphs 32-41).

- Institutional reporting on dissemination and engagement activity demonstrates that there is a close link between both activities. Activities used to disseminate and promote Themes work are used as an opportunity to engage staff and students with institutional Themes work. In addition, and importantly, dissemination of activities provides recognition of those who have done the work. Various approaches are tried and refined or replaced to increase staff and student engagement in Theme work and often multiple methods are used within each institution. Most institutions now have the outcomes and outputs of their activity publicly available. Some publication in refereed journals is emerging and conference presentations beyond the UK sectors, increasing the reach and influence of activity (paragraphs 42-57 and Appendix 1).
- Just over half (12) of institutions made changes to their institutional team membership over Year 2 with Theme Leaders' Group staff representatives changing in six institutions. The size of teams ranged from four to 16 members. There were 37 students and 165 staff on institutional teams across the Scottish HE sector; two institutions increased the number of student representatives on its team and two HEIs either did not have, or lost their student members. Student interns are contributing to institutional Theme work in 13 HEIs (paragraphs 7 and 8).
- Several institutions comment on learning about their Theme supporting structures and organisation, making refinements to improve Theme delivery, dissemination and staff and student engagement. Institutions also report on the impact of the capacity building support and resources developed by the Theme evaluation consultants (paragraphs 58-64).

## Year 2 institutional reports

6 Highlights from the reports are detailed in the following sections. Readers are encouraged to explore the individual institutional reports and the hyperlinks embedded within these that provide more detail about individual projects and approaches ([see Appendix 1](#)).

### Institutional teams

7 The following provides an overview of the composition of institutional teams<sup>1</sup> and changes to them over the duration of Year 2:

- 12 institutions reported changes to the composition of their institutional team over the course of Year 2 (University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, Edinburgh Napier University, University of Edinburgh, Glasgow Caledonian University, University of the Highlands and Islands, Open University in Scotland, Queen Margaret University, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Robert Gordon University, University of Stirling, University of the West of Scotland). The most significant change in team size was at the [Royal Conservatoire of Scotland](#) where the number of team members reduced from 16 to six, following the decision to have a single institution-wide topic focus.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on figures reported at the end of year

- In six institutions, the Theme Leaders' Group staff representative changed (University of Dundee, Open University in Scotland, Queen Margaret University, Robert Gordon University, University of Stirling, University of the West of Scotland).
- In two institutions, the number of students on the team was increased (University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh). Edinburgh's appointment of two PhD interns to the team was to bring a different range of skills and perspectives to the University's Enhancement Themes' work. University of Glasgow, University of Edinburgh and University of St Andrews had student interns on their teams in addition to student representatives.
- One institution was unable to appoint a student representative (Open University in Scotland) and one institution lost its student representative (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland).
- The size of teams ranged from four to 16 members with the number of students/student association/union reps ranging from zero<sup>2</sup> to four.

8 There are a number of other interesting points to note about supporting organisational structures:

- While all institutions have a team in place (not always known as the 'institutional team'), a number of institutions have complementary groups. The University of Aberdeen has an institutional team and a Community of Practice, the latter has representation from all 12 Academic Schools and Professional Service Directorates. The University of St Andrews ran an Open Forum, which provided an additional opportunity for collaboration and helped to create connections between students and staff. The University also operates working groups for its Theme activities and, similarly, Robert Gordon University has a number of project teams.
- The University of the Highlands and Islands put out an open call to staff and students seeking their Theme involvement including becoming a member of the Consultation Group, which the University has found to be a successful way of organising the Theme. Its approach of co-opting new Group members, as they become involved in Theme work, has been beneficial in Year 2.
- Edinburgh Napier University reduced the number of its team meetings, convening them if, and when, necessary. The University comments positively on progress without the requirement of additional meetings. The University also involved two student association/union staff in report production to incorporate the student voice. Conversely, the University of Dundee reported that a move to more frequent meetings seemed to help keep momentum going.
- At Heriot-Watt University, a member of the steering group is responsible for each of the strategic projects, and responsibility is shared over the University's campuses (UK and those overseas in Dubai and Singapore).
- Queen Margaret University, with its single-project approach, established a core research group to lead on the development of the mixed methods research project. The University found this approach to be of value as it ensured both subject and methodological expertise. The researchers were involved in the wider team in all key decisions, ensuring that there was a good balance of more focused work and wider engagement.

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<sup>2</sup> There were two instances of zero student representation (OUiS, RCS); all other HEIs had at least one.

- Through two staff members attending a QAA course on 'Building Confidence in Using Data and Evidence', the Open University in Scotland has rethought its approach to its institutional team and considers members in relation to their role as data subjects as well as key stakeholders.

## What are institutions working on?

9 The Year 2 report format focused on evaluation activity and asked institutions to report on each project/activity against seven questions. This followed the format established in Year 1 and used the same seven questions as the plans.

10 Appendix 1 provides summary information on the activity and projects reported by institutions. Year 2 has seen a further significant increase in activity (around 111 projects detailed in reports; around 80 projects in Year 1) despite the continued challenges of the pandemic on staff and student time. The key features of activity and projects are as follows.

- The Year 2 work comprises a mix of a continuation of Year 1 work and new projects, some of which will have a duration beyond the end of Theme funding (that is, beyond June 2023). Activities in Year 2 have included: testing ideas and approaches developed in Year 1; continuing existing projects; starting new projects; evaluating and looking towards the future.
- Most (16) institutions have been running multiple projects with two institutions reporting on one single project. Queen Margaret University's work is exploring loneliness and learning during the pandemic lockdown. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Year 2 activity has been focused on investigating coaching resilience. Both single projects will continue into the institutions' Year 3 activity.
- Activity around 'transitions' continues to feature in the current Theme's work (projects at University of Aberdeen, Abertay University, Edinburgh Napier University, University of Glasgow, Heriot-Watt University, Robert Gordon University, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde).
- Institutional projects are a mix of whole-institution and small-scale at local-level. Several institutions report that they award funding for small-scale, localised projects through competitive funding schemes (University of Aberdeen, Abertay University, Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, Robert Gordon University).
- 13 institutions have had work supported by student interns, ranging from undergraduates to PhD students (Abertay University, University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, Glasgow School of Art, University of Glasgow, Heriot-Watt University, Robert Gordon University, Scotland's Rural College, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde, University of the West of Scotland).

## Institutional project topics

11 Figure 1 lists the main topic headings under which institutional projects and activity can be categorised. This section of the report provides more detail on institutions' work under these topic headings.



**Figure 1: Topic headings for institutional work**

Assessment	Skills development including resilience
Building communities and community building	Sharing practice
Curriculum enhancement and development	Staff
Definitions of resilience	Student-to-student peer support
Discipline specific	Students giving feedback
Employability	Student representation
Equality, diversity and inclusion	Student success/progression
Interns	Student wellbeing
Micro-credentials	Types of students
Remote, online learning, hybrid delivery	University strategy

12 **Skills development including resilience** - exploring, building and developing the quality of resilience in students is a focus of activity at the University of Aberdeen and Heriot-Watt University. Four HEIs report on projects about other skills. A project in Abertay University (part of the [PARC collaborative cluster](#)) is focused on diagnostic testing of students and ameliorating skills gaps through a suite of micro-credentials. Students' digital competence is being explored at Robert Gordon University and Heriot-Watt University is embedding information literacy skills in the flipped classroom. The University of Aberdeen is developing students' reflective thinking and writing. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is undertaking work on coaching resilience.

13 **Micro-credentials** - four institutions have project work on this topic including Abertay University, as mentioned above under Skills Development. The University of the Highlands and Islands is undertaking desk-based research to establish current practice internally and externally in relation to micro-credentials and is developing two micro-credential courses on Data Protection and Accessibility. 'Moving from surviving to thriving' is the University of Aberdeen's micro-credentials course development, which is designed to help students build resilience. The University of the West of Scotland is developing an institutional micro-credentials framework.

14 **Assessment** - academic integrity is the focus of project work at both Heriot-Watt University and the University of Stirling. Heriot-Watt University has developed a suite of new resources related to Assessment for Learning and academic integrity. The University of Stirling has developed an academic integrity module, which is delivered through the virtual learning environment and was launched in autumn 2021. All new students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) were invited to complete the module, and all existing students have access to it. The module consists of six units, which introduce expectations at university, introduction to writing and using sources, academic integrity and plagiarism, referencing, the first assignment and feedback. The focus is on understanding academic

conventions and adopting a positive approach to writing and referencing. At the University of Aberdeen, project work on assessment is exploring standardised assessment rubrics and feedforward and building resilience through timely and effective feedback. The University of St Andrews is exploring how extension policies can be applied to best support student success.

15 **Definitions of/defining resilience** - this topic featured strongly in the work of Year 1 of the Theme and continues, but in fewer HEIs. This is possibly because Year 1 of any Theme tends to be exploratory and looks at issues of definition and scope and, by Year 2, activity starts to shift focus to implementing change. The University of St Andrews is exploring the definition of resilience from a student perspective.

16 **Sharing practice** - four HEIs have identified projects aimed at sharing practice/raising awareness ([see also Dissemination](#)):

- 'Steps to Resilience' (University of Aberdeen) is building a bank of student-generated content relevant to the concept of resilience in a variety of accessible formats (podcasts, vlog, blog, testimonial, images) to explain resilience and illustrate activities designed to support resilience. This resource will be made available across the University - for example, for inductions, workshops, student messages.
- The University of Edinburgh is sharing practice on community building activities to learn what activities make a positive impact to inform policy and/or practice.
- Activity at the University of the Highlands and Islands has involved gathering, creating and promoting staff and student engagement with a range of resources to support student resilience. Events have also raised staff and student awareness of ways to support and develop both student and staff resilience.
- Enhancement Theme Open Forum (University of St Andrews) - students and staff were invited to attend this half-day hybrid event where they were: introduced to the Enhancement Themes; and heard about the work achieved to date on the current Theme and about a funding call. Attendees also had an opportunity to network and brainstorm new ideas and initiatives that they might want to engage with going forward.
- Scotland's Rural College student interns were investigating how their students' association could improve its processes to get more students involved in setting up communities.

17 **Community building/building communities** - this was a popular topic in Year 2 with activity reported in eight institutions (Glasgow School of Art, Heriot-Watt University, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, Robert Gordon University, Scotland's Rural College, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling). Heriot-Watt University has two projects on 'space and place' looking at community and resilience through the connections between spaces, places and people.

18 **Employability** - this is a topic with projects at the Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen. At the University of Aberdeen, a toolkit resource has been created for all levels of students on the topic of resilience in the context of employability.

19 **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)** - in Year 2 there is a continued strong emphasis on EDI and the following aspects are being explored:

- toolkits for supporting disabled students to transition to, and thrive, at university (University of St Andrews)
- intersectionality and inclusive education (University of Aberdeen)
- focus on male students (Robert Gordon University)
- accessibility and mathematical teaching content (University of Aberdeen)
- creating accessible maths-based resources (Heriot-Watt University)
- addressing misogynistic behaviours (Edinburgh Napier University)
- increasing awareness and inclusivity of Gender-Based Violence support services at the University (University of Dundee)
- decolonising the curriculum (Abertay University, University of Stirling), anti-racist approaches (Abertay University), race equality (University of Strathclyde)
- care experienced students (Edinburgh Napier University)
- features linked to health, wellbeing, productivity and resilience among non-traditional student groups (Glasgow Caledonian University)
- further Investigation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students' Views on their student experience (Glasgow Caledonian University).

20 **Types of students** - several institutions have project work focused on particular types of students:

- mature students' support (Robert Gordon University)
- advanced entrants/articulating students (University of Aberdeen)
- international students (University of Aberdeen, Heriot-Watt University)
- postgraduate researcher students (Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh Napier University, University of Edinburgh, University of Strathclyde)
- postgraduate taught students (University of Dundee, Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University).

21 **Remote/online learning/hybrid delivery** - the impact of online learning on students is being examined by the University of St Andrews and University of Stirling (generally) and Edinburgh Napier University (lecture capture). Robert Gordon University has four projects focused on teaching, learning assessment and online delivery. Heriot-Watt University is exploring the idea of resilient pedagogies. The University of Dundee has a project on 'Liquid learning and blended delivery; hybridised learning for hybridised lifestyles'. Learning analytics is a particular area of interest for the University of the Highlands and Islands.

22 **Interns** - while most institutions have involved student interns in project work, Scotland's Rural College and the University of Edinburgh have projects focused specifically on how student interns themselves are engaged in Themes work.

23 **Staff** - four institutions have projects that focus on supporting specific staff/staff roles: Heriot-Watt University (leadership); Robert Gordon University (Course Leaders); Scotland's



Rural College (Year Tutors); University of Strathclyde (Learning, Teaching and Technical staff). At Strathclyde, the University is working with a cohort of 10-15 technical staff in a 'peer network' to support them in reflecting on their role in learning and teaching, and to submit applications for Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

24 **University strategy** - one HEI reported that it is embedding resilience within its Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (University of the Highlands and Islands).

25 **Curriculum enhancement and development** - three institutions report on curriculum enhancement and development work. Edinburgh Napier University's ENhance strand of work aims to strengthen the culture of curriculum enhancement at the University. The University of the Highlands and Islands is hoping that enhanced student support through: more timely interventions; enhanced and more resilient student engagement; and enhanced learning and teaching, including through improved and more effective use of blended and online approaches, will be achieved through its learning analytics activity. The University of the West of Scotland is creating a Masters in Professional Development. The portfolio of Postgraduate Professional Development awards will introduce a fully flexible master's award, which underpins all master's provision, where students can opt-in at any stage of their studies or enrol directly. The University anticipates that this reimagining of its approach to CPD will be truly student-led and have significant employer input. The programme offers employers opportunities to address skill shortages by tailoring it to the needs of their workforce, and offers individuals the opportunity to create a bespoke qualification specific to their career and learning needs.

26 **Student-to-student peer support** - six institutions are exploring different aspects of peer support:

- University of Aberdeen - work is focused on developing student-led content to provide peer support for advanced entry students (psychology subject area)
- Edinburgh Napier University - continued a collaborative project between the Student Association and the School of Computing in algorithmic matching of 'student buddies' based on preferences and interests
- Heriot-Watt University - has a peer mentoring scheme for engineering students
- Scotland's Rural College - is continuing with a project on digitalisation of peer support
- University of Glasgow - peer-enabled activity is an institution-wide project seeking to support the development of a strong student community; one facet of the activity is the development of peer-assisted study schemes - the University has invested additional resource by employing a Peer Learning Facilitator, peer learning Graduate Teaching Assistants, and peer learning student interns
- University of Stirling - in Year 2 Stirling Students' Union has been building on the success of two existing schemes: a peer mentoring scheme (STEER) and a befriending scheme (Pandemic Pals); the former operates in law and philosophy with psychology more recently becoming involved; Pandemic Pals emerged from feedback that some students would prefer a small group rather than one-to-one peer support to increase their social interaction and chances of connecting with their peers.

27 **Student representation** - effective global student representation is part of Heriot-Watt University's Theme activity. The University of Edinburgh has established a postgraduate researcher representative roundtable.

28 **Students giving feedback** - the University of Edinburgh is refreshing a guide it produced under the previous Enhancement Theme - Evidence for Enhancement. Through the updating of the guide, the University realised that another version for postgraduate research students was needed and this was subsequently developed.

29 **Student success/progression** - three institutions are focused on improving student success and progression: Abertay University (Student Success Officers); University of Glasgow (particularly in maths/numeracy); and Robert Gordon University (through inclusive practice). At Abertay University, Student Success Officers work with Student Academic Advisers, an academic post in each School, to analyse student engagement data and make personal interventions to re-engage students with their learning. Glasgow's maths/numeracy gap analysis project seeks to understand if a data science approach could be used to understand the importance of maths, alongside other variables, in predicting student progression outcomes. Robert Gordon University's approach is three-stranded and includes developing staff awareness of, and skills in, inclusive curriculum design and delivery, including the accessibility of digital learning.

30 **Student wellbeing** - continues to feature strongly in Themes work with several institutions having one or more projects focused on this topic:

- University of Aberdeen has developed an online, micro-credential short course (zero-credits) designed to enable students to manage adversity, both academic and personal, using a variety of key strategies. Helping students to understand resilience and why it is important, is anticipated to facilitate students with their wellbeing, progression through university, and support their academic achievements.
- Glasgow Caledonian University has been exploring the features linked to health, wellbeing, productivity and resilience among non-traditional student groups.
- Inspiring institutional conversations around community, belonging and wellbeing has allowed Heriot-Watt University to engage in conversations around enhancing the HWU learning community and what that means in its global context.
- At Edinburgh Napier University, two local small-scale projects focus on mental wellbeing: the student-led design of a mural on the theme of mental wellbeing; and a student-led project seeking to assess the impact of pre-recorded lectures on students' university workload and wellbeing.
- Queen Margaret University's institution-wide project explores student experiences of loneliness and isolation, and identifies strategies that may have been used, and may be used in the future, to manage these experiences.
- Robert Gordon University has extended a project in Year 1, focused on bringing together and adding impetus to a range of related enhancement activities being undertaken across the University, on themes including student wellbeing.
- The University of Strathclyde has a project evaluating the efficacies and challenges in developing a self-sustaining postgraduate research student community of peer support to promote mental wellbeing and resilience.
- The University of Dundee has a project that is using technology to deliver a school-specific, on-demand mentorship programme for students who may need general guidance and support during their time at university. This is being used to combat anxiety related to remote study and anxiety about post-university career. A second project is focused on forensic practitioners who will potentially experience

traumatic experiences during their careers. This project aims to examine existing research and resources available and develop educational content for forensic practitioners to build resilience and promote good mental wellbeing.

31 **Discipline specific** - many of the small-scale projects take place at local level in specific courses/subject areas and may provide opportunities for potential collaborative working. Some highlighted in this report are, for example: Edinburgh Napier University School of Arts and Creative Industries has a project on student wellbeing and Glasgow School of Art has two projects focused on belonging. Similarly, University of Aberdeen, University of Glasgow, Heriot-Watt University and University of Strathclyde all have projects linked to numerical disciplines. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's institution-wide topic focuses on coaching and the University of Glasgow's project on retention (numerical disciplines) also features coaching.

## Collaboration

32 In Year 2 of the Theme, the *Personalised Approaches to Resilience and Community* (PARC) collaborative cluster project, led by Abertay University, continues to run. Decolonising the curriculum in the time of pandemic, which had been a cluster project in Year 1, was embedded within the *Anti-Racist Curriculum Project*. The work was led by Edinburgh Napier University and engaged several institutions.

33 Presentations on the clusters at the 2022 Enhancement Conference generated further interest in the cluster topics from the Scottish HE sector. Three institutions expressed an interest in joining the PARC cluster following the conference.

34 There is still interest across Scotland's HE sector in the programme leadership and student mental wellbeing collaborative clusters that were completed in Year 1. Robert Gordon University Course Leaders have benefitted from being engaged in cross-institutional action learning sets facilitated by the former cluster and external communications have continued. Institutions have continued to have an interest in exploring student mental wellbeing (for example, University of Aberdeen).

35 Despite the time and resource pressures of the pandemic, institutions reported that they continue to undertake cross-sector collaboration outwith the formal collaborative clusters and this takes place in a number of ways.

36 Networking and discussion have taken place among colleagues from different institutions (both within Scotland and beyond):

- The University of Stirling has shared its academic integrity module with the University of Edinburgh, who are considering a similar development.
- Inviting speakers from outwith institutions to present at internal events has been an activity reported by: the University of the West of Scotland inviting the *Decolonising the Curriculum Project* lead to speak at its internal symposium. Heriot-Watt University and Edinburgh Napier University collaborated to share practice on their 'mini-projects' at the former's Learning & Teaching Symposium. The session was well attended and gave an overview of the scope of what can be achieved through this approach.
- An interesting development has seen the Theme leads at Abertay University and the University of Dundee come together to consider how the universities might work together to support all students coming to Dundee. This has also involved the key partners of the students' associations at each university. The four partners have had two meetings and will continue to develop plans over the summer and Year 3 of the Theme to better understand what is possible.

- The University of Glasgow has made new connections with a variety of institutions across the UK in discussion of the implementation, development and enhancement of peer-enabled activity. This has ranged from informal email communications (for example, a friendly forum for question-asking and problem troubleshooting) to more formal work on the potential for joint projects (for example, working alongside private companies to look at promotion of sense of belonging and mattering among its student body).
- The University of the West of Scotland has engaged with a colleague from Middlesex University to help shape thinking on its forthcoming student success hub and plans for incorporating personal tutoring within the curriculum.

37 Networking and discussion have also been apparent with other sector bodies and organisations:

- Abertay University is collaborating with an organisation to explore how it might build confidence and set expectations for direct entrants that are not built into the curriculum. The organisation works with young people, and the adults that support them, to change the way they think, and so radically improve the outcomes they achieve.
- The University of Glasgow and the Staff and Educational Development Association.
- The University of Stirling and AMOSSHE The Student Services Organisation.
- The Open University in Scotland with: the Scottish Refugee Council and Bridges Programmes Glasgow; Connecting Scotland; Hub for Success (a collaboration of local authority, HE, FE and third-sector partners involved in access and participation for care experienced people); Scottish Community of Access and Participation Practitioners (SCAPP).

38 Contribution to, and attendance at, the 2022 Enhancement Themes conference resulted in two student interns from the University of St Andrews being invited to contribute to a podcast organised by Edinburgh Napier University. Robert Gordon University colleagues presenting on 'The Male Student Experience: Closing the Gap' welcomed conference delegates' valuable comments and observations about the project.

39 *Anti-Racist Curriculum Project (ARC)* - Queen Margaret University has shared the ARC resources with 14 colleagues who are actively working on decolonising the curriculum within their disciplines. Colleagues have reported very positively on both the resources and the QAA webinar they attended on that topic. The University of St Andrews reports that having two staff contributing to the 'decolonising the curriculum' project has helped internal meetings and discussions maintain the institution's focus on this area. The outputs from phase 1 of the ARC project feature in the University of Aberdeen's Year 2 Theme plans and are being used as part of the University's own strategic workstream on decolonising the curriculum.

40 Micro-credentials and Recognition of Prior Learning projects - one of Queen Margaret University's Senior Leadership Team has engaged with outputs from the project, and some of the recommendations in these have indirectly influenced how the University has developed its internal process for operational/quality management of this provision. The University of Aberdeen reports that the benefits from collaborating with others on the Micro-credentials and Recognition of Prior Learning projects include: enabling the University to build expertise in this area for its own on-demand short courses, and helping to agree a common micro-credential terminology across stakeholders for these small units of learning. The University of the Highlands and Islands comments that it has found these projects and

PARC cluster very useful in informing its institutional position on these topics.

41 Contributing to the Year 2 Student-Led Project, the University of Aberdeen benefitted from having a wider range of staff from across the University contribute to, and engage with, the Theme. The project has also helped academics to think more about equity-minded teaching and how to cultivate a sense of belonging in their own student cohorts.

## Supporting staff and student engagement

42 Various approaches are tried and refined or replaced to increase staff and student engagement in Theme work and often multiple methods are used within each institution. Some activities have been aimed specifically at students, some developed with staff as the key beneficiaries but most seeking to reach out to, and benefit, both. We do not necessarily capture the entirety of Theme engagement as institutions - particularly large, complex HEIs - do not log or record every instance of staff and student engagement. Interesting practice and observations from the institutional reports follows.

### Reaching out to staff and students

43 Many initiatives have been aimed at both staff and students:

- Competitively-funded, local 'mini-projects' are a common way to engage staff and students, often collaboratively and student-led (featuring in reports from University of Aberdeen, Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, Robert Gordon University and University of St Andrews). The University of Aberdeen has found success with its Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP) projects. Matching Theme funding, the University now has 13 projects underway with participation from all 12 academic schools. Prospective applicants to the University of St Andrews' projects are supported by a meeting with the Theme Lead to address questions (12 projects funded to date).
- Conferences and symposia are also widespread in attracting staff and students to Theme work (for example, University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh, University of the West of Scotland). Existing networks (for example, Directors of Teaching Network, University of Edinburgh) serve an important role in engaging a wider community as do practice sharing community groups (University of Aberdeen, Community of Practice). The efforts of institutional team members are also influential in encouraging and promoting engagement opportunities. At Heriot-Watt University a member of the Theme Steering Group is responsible for each of the strategic projects, and responsibility is shared over its campuses. Heriot-Watt reports that this ensures that each of the University's locations feels that they are part of the Enhancement Themes activities for the institution. Many institutions use their governance structures to share and promote their Theme plans and reports, and this is an important way to connect with others ([see paragraph 58](#)).
- The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland changed its approach to engagement in this Theme by reaching out to all staff and students, inviting those with an interest in the Theme to become involved. Previously, staff were invited as representatives of their departments. The change has resulted in establishment of a core team with a vested interest in exploring the strategies that were most likely to make an active difference. The Open University in Scotland has also been exploring improving the effectiveness of its institutional team to counteract a dropping off in meeting attendance.
- Using multiple means of engagement has meant that Scotland's Rural College's staff and students have engaged in the way best for them (answering project surveys and

questionnaires, taking part in face-to-face and remote meetings, and by using asynchronous collaboration tools like Padlets). This has resulted in two further staff volunteering for the College's institutional team and one further potential offer from the Students' Association.

- At the University of the Highlands and Islands, an open call went out to staff and students to become involved with the Theme - either by aligning their activities to the work of the Theme, becoming a member of the Consultation Group, attending relevant events, or proposing a project for Years 2 and 3 of the Theme. While no funding was attached to involvement in Theme activities, colleagues have been supported by the additional expertise of the Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA) to plan and evaluate their work, and the LTA has also provided a channel to share outputs via its calendar of events.
- Staff and student consultation has been a core feature of many of Robert Gordon University's Year 2 activities, including a range of focus groups connected to project strands.
- Encouraging Enhancement Theme project teams to present their projects in the HWU Learning and Teaching week (an approach over the past two years) has led to over 90% of projects being shared. It has led to an increase in external dissemination and is part of a culture change within Heriot-Watt University as it encourages staff to become more engaged in enhancement-focused scholarly activities.
- As one of the few 'one-project' institutions, all Queen Margaret University's staff and students were invited to engage with the current Theme through questionnaires on loneliness and isolation. Interestingly, the University also used the 2021-22 [Focus On event on Professional Service Review](#) to plan (involving a team of staff and students) a Theme project on its Personal Academic Tutor system. The University of Edinburgh reported that one of its PhD interns made use of the 2016-17 Focus On materials [Building a research community for PGRs](#) in their Theme work.
- Both the University of Glasgow and the University of the West of Scotland reiterate comments made previously about the importance of the alignment and relevance of Theme activity to institutional strategy and priorities.
- At the University of Strathclyde, all Theme projects are participating in an internal micro-CPD programme aimed at removing the barriers associated with engagement in the Enhancement Themes, by sharing outcomes and outputs, lessons from the application process and any tips/tricks for colleagues unfamiliar with enhancement activity, but with an interest/passion for staff-student collaboration. In addition, an internal collaboration space and resource library is in development that is intended to act as an easily accessible space for colleagues to find resources/outputs/advice and collaboration partners for future enhancement activity. Included in the archive will be the outputs of the Theme's activity, as well as activity from previous Themes.

## Reaching out to students

44 Activity specifically targeted at students included the following:

- The student stories strand within Edinburgh Napier University's ENhance Curriculum Framework. In addition, funding was specifically allocated to the Students' Association to support it in embedding the 'Student Buddying Scheme'.



- Regular project meetings and presentations with project mentors and staff have supported students to engage in the Enhancement Themes Year 2 project at Glasgow School of Art.
- Through its 'Summer Teams Enterprise Programme (STEP)', the University of St Andrews is working with seven students to develop resources to support students as they return to in-person teaching. STEP supports the development of graduate attributes and interdisciplinary teamwork among students.
- Abertay Students' Association and University have worked together to create a 'Students as Partners Board' which will agree funding for co-created projects. At the University of the Highlands and Islands, student engagement has been managed by its Students' Association, which has aligned many of its activities to the different strands of the Theme. Similarly, the University of Stirling has worked closely with its Students' Union and other student networks to support engagement. At the University of the West of Scotland, the Enhancement Theme funding was used to develop the University's new institutional model of student support in a number of ways. One of those was through a student-led project on scoping, understanding and redesigning a collaborative personal success adviser. The project captured the lived experiences of the University's student community that was representative of students' journeys, cultures, ethnicity, gender and diversity through the medium of film.
- University of Glasgow, Robert Gordon University and Heriot-Watt University are three of an increasing number of institutions funding paid opportunities for students to support Theme activities. The University of St Andrews supports its student interns through mentoring by institutional core team members.
- Heriot-Watt University's 'Student Action for Resilience' subtheme is specifically aimed at student activities, and encompasses work done by the Students' Union and Students' Associations under the Student-Partnership Agreement.

## Reaching out to staff

45 Staff-focused activity included the following:

- The University of Strathclyde is developing an internal collaboration space and resource library that will act as an accessible space for colleagues to share and find resources/outputs/advice and collaboration partners for future enhancement activity.
- Staff development events, taking place as part of the RGU Future of Teaching, Learning and Assessment initiative, have fostered staff engagement.
- At Queen Margaret University, staff are guided to the Themes, in some cases, as an outcome from the Performance Enhancement Review process. This has led to at least one new member joining the institutional team. Staff are also encouraged to engage with the Themes through the University's Annual Monitoring and review processes.
- One approach used by the Open University in Scotland to increase staff engagement was to cascade the learning from a six-week QAA course delivered by the Theme evaluation consultants (*Building Confidence in Using Data and Evidence*). Through two staff members attending this course, the University has rethought its approach to its institutional team and considers members in relation to their role as data subjects as well as key stakeholders. Queen Margaret University has also commented positively on staff engagement in the Theme through staff attending the evaluation consultants'

capacity building sessions ([Using Creative Methods in Evaluation and Sensational Surveys](#)).

## Dissemination

46 Institutional reporting on dissemination and engagement activity shows there is a close link between the two, with activities used to disseminate and promote playing a role in engaging staff and students. In addition, and importantly, dissemination of activities provides recognition of those who have done the work. The hyperlinks in Appendix 1 provide access to institutions' publicly-available information on their Theme activities.

### External dissemination

47 The University of St Andrews, the University of the Highlands and Islands, and the University of Aberdeen have highlighted the role of the Theme Leaders' Group (formal group and networking sessions) in supporting dissemination activity. The Robert Gordon University notes that participation in the Theme Leaders' Group has provided useful opportunities to share practice and insights with other institutions, which have then influenced the operation of the Theme at the University.

48 The Enhancement Themes Conference was a way for disseminating institutional activity and making contacts and networking with colleagues from other HEIs (reported by Abertay University, University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, Heriot-Watt University, University of the Highlands and Islands, Queen Margaret University, University of St Andrews, University of Strathclyde).

49 The University of Glasgow and Queen Margaret University have been seeking journal publication. Themes work has also been presented (or in progress for presentation) at other UK and international conferences, extending the reach of the Theme:

- Abertay University - European First Year Experience Conference April 2022<sup>3</sup>
  - Edinburgh Napier University - Society for Research in Higher Education's Annual Conference, December 2021; Irish Learning Technology Association's Annual Conference May 2022
  - Glasgow School of Art (GSA) - International Journal of Art and Design Education Conference, November 2022. The conference focus is on the theme of 'belonging', which is well-aligned with GSA's focus on belonging within the context of the Enhancement Themes, Year 2 work ([www.nsead.org/courses-advice/ijade-conference-2022](http://www.nsead.org/courses-advice/ijade-conference-2022))
  - Heriot-Watt University - Improving University Teaching International Conference, July 2022 ([www.iutconference.com](http://www.iutconference.com)); Research and Applying Metaphor Conference, September 2022; LILAC: The Information Literacy Conference 2023
- 50 Presentations to other sector bodies/groups features in the work of:
- Scotland's Rural College (to the College Development Network, Landex and Education Scotland)

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<sup>3</sup> In June 2023, Abertay University will host the European First Year Experience Conference.

- University of Glasgow (discussions at the Scottish Higher Educational Learning Developer Network) and 'Creating Accessible Maths Resources' has been shared with the Scottish Maths Support Network
- Heriot-Watt University has shared aspects of its Theme work with Information Literacy Community of Practice group (a cross-sector network for librarians); Heads of Chemical Engineering UK; and at a QAA event - 'Managing Risk and Enhancing Quality Webinar: The TNE Student Experience'.

51 The Student-Led Project, the collaborative cluster project and QAAS-managed projects have enabled a two-way flow of information between project groups and institutions, facilitating HEIs' contributions to outcomes and output, and catalysing local developments in institutions. For example, the University of Edinburgh's participation in the QAAS managed project on 'Decolonising the Curriculum in the Time of Pandemic', led to development of the institution's 'Decolonising the Curriculum Hub'. The Hub outlines how to make a start on decolonising the curriculum alongside supporting resources and case studies.

52 Most institutions have, or are developing, website/intranet or other digital spaces to showcase their Themes work and help share practice for internal/external use (University of Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art, University of the Highlands and Islands, Queen Margaret University, Robert Gordon University, Scotland's Rural College, University of Stirling). See Appendix 1 for hyperlinks to the HEIs' work.

### **Internal dissemination**

53 Institutions host a range of activities promoting discourse on Theme activity: learning and teaching conferences; symposia; seminars; workshops; focus groups; poster presentations; fika<sup>4</sup> sessions (University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Edinburgh, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh Napier University, Glasgow School of Art, Heriot-Watt University, University of the Highlands and Islands, Open University in Scotland, Robert Gordon University, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde, University of the West of Scotland).

54 Established committees, networks and groups have a key role in communication and dissemination (University of Aberdeen, University of Dundee, University of Edinburgh, Queen Margaret University, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Robert Gordon University, University of Glasgow, Scotland's Rural College, University of St Andrews, University of Strathclyde). In some institutions, bespoke Theme groups have provided a focus for Theme activity - for example, the Resilient Learning Community of Practice at the University of Aberdeen.

55 There are specific staff roles that are particularly influential in communicating and promoting Theme work: Retention and Transition Officers (University of Glasgow); Theme Champions (Queen Margaret University and Robert Gordon University - they are the institutional team members); School Directors of Education (University of Aberdeen; University of Strathclyde Theme project leads). Edinburgh Napier University's recruitment of a Research Fellow to its Digital Support Partnership research project helped to disseminate that work. The University of St Andrews highlighted the importance of the Vice-Principal Education (Students' Union/Association) in communicating with student representatives.

56 Digital communication methods continue to feature in institutions' dissemination approaches: email; social media; e-zines; newsletters; blogs; on-campus screens; interactive webinars. The Open University in Scotland is analysing its social media activity to enhance its

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<sup>4</sup> Fika (Swedish) means making time for friends and colleagues to share a cup of coffee (or tea) and a little something to eat; a time to refresh (specific to Open University in Scotland).

effectiveness. There is still a role for traditional poster campaigns - the University of Stirling and its Students' Union worked collaboratively on one to convey messages to students on academic integrity and contract cheating.

57 The University of Strathclyde's 'Collecting Stories' project produced an e-booklet outcome and a micro-CPD course, which were disseminated to all staff across the institution as a way of fostering collaborative conversations and initiating discussions on successful (and less successful) adaptations as a result of the new learning and teaching environment. The University hopes that these future conversations will remove the stigma attached to discussing 'failed' projects in the hope of achieving a greater collaborative/innovative workplace.

## Processes

58 We asked institutions how their Year 2 report is being used/distributed within their institutions. Typically, institutions share their report through their committee structure, reported by 13 institutions (University of Aberdeen, Abertay University, University of Dundee, University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, University of the Highlands and Islands, Queen Margaret University, Robert Gordon University, Scotland's Rural College, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling, University of Strathclyde, University of the West of Scotland).

59 Five institutions highlighted the role of the Year 2 report in informing Year 3 planning (University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Open University in Scotland, St Andrews University). The University of the West of Scotland will also be using the report to inform the development of its refreshed 'Student Partnership Forum'.

60 Six institutions report on several other interesting points around report distribution and use:

- Edinburgh Napier University is working towards ensuring that Theme work is shared on its dedicated Enhancement Themes staff intranet page and with announcements to be made through its Learning & Teaching Network, alerting colleagues to outputs from the work.
- In addition to institutional team members sharing the report with their teams, it is also shared with the Senior Staff Group and Open University Students' Association.
- Queen Margaret University shares the report, by email, to all staff and students and publishes the report on its Enhancement Themes intranet site, which is accessible to all staff.
- Scotland's Rural College shares the report through its Leadership Teams and other usual communication mechanisms (for example, blogs, intranet site and emails) and forums. SRUC's institutional group's networks help with dissemination. The College is hoping to create a short video summary of its Theme work for sharing with staff and students.
- The University of St Andrews will share key aspects of its report on its webpages and showcase some of the work at its next Open Forum.
- The University of the West of Scotland will use the report as the basis of its 2022 Enhancement Theme Newsletter, which will be shared across the University through its all-staff e-bulletin.

61 Institutions have reported what they are learning from the processes, approaches and structures they are using to support the Resilient Learning Communities Theme. A

number of interesting points are emerging on: partnership with students; evaluation and impact activity; supporting structures and organisation.

62 **Partnership with students** and the involvement of students in Theme activity is an area of focus for all institutions. Four comment particularly positively on this topic and have provided insights into the benefits of close working with students:

- The University of Aberdeen reports on adopting different forms of student engagement and students contributing to a wide range of activities, in terms of the benefits to students (confidence building, skills development, enhancing employability), and to staff (helped to develop their ideas about teaching and supporting learning, to enhance educational practice and the student learning experience). The University is keen to establish a sector-wide network for student interns in Year 3 to further encourage student engagement with the Resilient Learning Communities Theme.
- The positivity around student engagement is also echoed by the University of Glasgow, reporting that: 'the use of interns is considered to be highly successful. It provides an excellent opportunity for students to gain experience - enhancing their future graduate attributes and employability, and also brings a fresh approach and energy to our project work'.
- Glasgow School of Art has actively developed closer partnership working with students. Selected staff are acting as mentors to the student projects. Through a trialling of this closer partnership working model, GSA is aiming to focus on the significant opportunities that informal learning brings to both students and staff particularly when they are engaged together in community-based project work. The aim is to develop a shared understanding of each other's experiences of working in this manner to form a working 'blueprint' for future partnership project work at GSA.
- The University of St Andrews refers to greater student involvement as 'the highlight of the year'. The University engaged two student interns, a PhD student joined the core team, and many funded projects involved, or were being led by, students with the University's STEP team.

63 The influence of the [Theme evaluation consultants' work](#) is evident in the following:

- The University of Edinburgh has developed a theory of change model to support its Theme work.
- Glasgow Caledonian University has adapted the evaluation checklist from the Theme consultants' *Guide to Basic Evaluation in Higher Education* (Jones-Devitt, S, & Austen, L (2021)) which forms part of a suite of tools to support evaluation and evidencing impact. These tools are intended to increase the quality of evidence available to demonstrate the efficacy of interventions and to support staff in their professional development.
- Glasgow School of Art is using a template aligned with the Theme HEI reporting template for internal interim and final reporting.
- To fully capture the impact of its Theme work, Heriot-Watt University envisages closer working with colleagues to enable them to understand what the University means by 'impact' and work with colleagues during their projects to embed effective and appropriate evaluation for the scale of the work being undertaken (a proportionate approach). The University has found the Theme resources on evaluation approaches useful in informing its institutional and project approaches.

- Queen Margaret University has welcomed the publication of [The Guide to Effective Evaluation in HE](#), and has used this to inform its Year 2 projects. At a broader institutional level, staff and students involved in its Student Experience Committee projects are being directed towards this resource to help the institution build evaluation into all of its activities.
- The University of Stirling has found the evaluation support useful to focus its efforts on impact.

64 Several institutions comment on learning about their Theme **supporting structures and organisation**:

- The University of the Highlands and Islands reports that its consultation group continues to be a successful way of organising the Theme work and its approach of co-opting new members as they become involved in Theme work has been beneficial this year.
- Queen Margaret University has established a core research group in addition to having the wider institutional team.
- The Open University in Scotland has learned that there is a wide range of work happening across the University to support resilience within its student body and it is important to have structure in place to make explicit the work that is happening within the organisation.
- Robert Gordon University has identified several learning points around the value of:
  - involving multiple 'voices' and perspectives in project management and delivery
  - planning time for 'discovery' at the outset of projects and stakeholder engagement
  - maintaining flexibility to accommodate the dynamic nature of enhancement and fluidity created by the pandemic
  - sharing learning and resources across projects and institutional areas
  - having the confidence to commit to longer-term initiatives as well as short-term projects.
- Scotland's Rural College has learned that although some systems and processes are working well, there is always room to revisit existing practice, (this includes good practice) and refine or use what is working well, seeing if it is transferrable or could be tweaked given the changes since the pandemic. The College has also learnt the importance of aligning to a strategic approach - for example, identifying projects through wider activities, including previous Enhancement Theme work and its other quality enhancement activities (for example, annual monitoring). The College has found working with other institutions around clubs and societies has been invaluable as this has opened up opportunities for future collaborations, suggesting that further collaboration should be developed through future Theme projects and activities.
- The University of St Andrews is delighted with the wide range of projects that it has been able to fund and sees this as a vital part of its work. The University recognises it has been ambitious, but overcommitted, and taken action to focus on a smaller number of projects to focus efforts more fully and giving projects the level of attention necessary.
- The University of Strathclyde is continuing work to standardise an enhancement infrastructure that will allow for greater/faster dissemination of work, resources and opportunities for engagement.



- The University of the West of Scotland's key lesson has been about including the right people at the right time in terms of ensuring engagement and achievement of goals. The effect of staff absences and the lack of availability of resources and input from key areas due to vacancies has impacted on progress. The importance of 'winning hearts and minds' was highlighted particularly when considering the resulting large institutional cultural change; 'it takes time to bring everyone on the journey'. The University comments that it, 'began this journey pre-pandemic, but now having to look through a different lens, there is a real excitement with the changes going on across sector'.

## The next Enhancement Theme

65 In the Year 2 HEI reports, we asked institutions to let us know about the discussions, hot topics and issues that are emerging in their practice and gaining increasing attention, with a view to using this information to inform development of the topic and scope of the next Enhancement Theme. Here are the main points emerging from our analysis of responses:

- Some HEI responses are based on individual personal perspective and some are based on more formal discussion within committees/groups.
- There are both multiple and single topic suggestions from HEIs.
- 10 topics emerged which are listed below, with the number of HEIs suggesting the topic in brackets. The topics are listed with those relating most closely to the current Theme appearing first:
  - continue with the current Theme (one HEI)
  - micro-credentials (one HEI)
  - applying learning from the pandemic and understanding what works (learning communities, infrastructure, delivery (nine HEIs)
  - wellbeing, belonging, resilience (nine HEIs)
  - EDI, specific student groups (four HEIs)
  - assessment (six HEIs)
  - sustainability, the value and role of HE/universities (seven HEIs)
  - employability/skills (three HEIs)
  - the new tertiary approach (three HEIs)
  - student transitions (two HEIs)
  - other suggestions (two HEIs) - these were two topics that did not 'fit' with any of the above.

## Appendix 1

### Summary of institutional activity in Year 2 and HEI hyperlinks

Sector/institution work	Activities, projects and hyperlinks
<a href="#">Abertay University</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diagnostic testing of students through engaging micro-credentials to develop successful student attributes</li> <li>• Student Success Officers (SSO) for a personalised approach to student interventions</li> <li>• EnAbLE project funding (a suite of local projects)</li> <li>• New approaches to orientation and the 'relentless welcome'</li> <li>• Abertay's vision for embedding EDI within the curriculum and institution: building on decolonising and anti-racist approaches <b>(new)</b></li> </ul>
<a href="#">University of Aberdeen</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardised assessment rubrics: help or hindrance to feed forward? <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Embedding intersectionality: the pathway to an inclusive education <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Enhancing resilience through supportive reflective thinking and writing <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Steps to resilience (This project will build a bank of student-generated content relevant to the concept of resilience in a variety of accessible formats (podcasts, vlog, blog, testimonial, images) to explain resilience and illustrate activities designed to support resilience.) <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Developing a reflective practice toolkit: a scoping study to enhance the resilience of staff and students within diverse communities of learning <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Developing resilience of advanced entry students through peer and academic support <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Building resilience through timely and effective feedback <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Supporting students and building resilience through regional community volunteering and internship opportunities <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• The bridge between: Arab voices and stories of coping</li> <li>• Understanding, developing and demonstrating resilience in the context of employability</li> <li>• Investigating solutions to make mathematical teaching content accessible</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring the Experience of Articulation Students' Transition Through University</li> <li>• Building Student Resilience through Course Development - Moving from Surviving to Thriving</li> </ul> <p><u>Hyperlinks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme 2021-22</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Annual Academic Development Symposium: Global Communities: Building Communities and Improving Collaboration</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Symposium poster webpages</a>, including <a href="#">Best Judged</a> and <a href="#">Highly Commended</a> posters</li> <li>• Under the umbrella of the University's Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education Framework, a number of <a href="#">discussion panels</a> involving staff and students have been hosted, which strongly relate to the Theme</li> <li>• Theme Leaders' Group event: In April 2022, the <a href="#">Building Student Resilience Through Course Development - Moving from Surviving to Thriving</a></li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">University of Dundee</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Mentorship Platform for Student Experiences in Computing <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Liquid Learning and Blended Delivery; Hybridised Learning for Hybridised Lifestyles <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Forensic Practitioners and Exposure to Trauma: No longer a 'stiff upper lip' approach <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• The Future is Multi-modal: Speculating on Desirable Future Learner Experiences - following a design fiction methodology, this project will co-create, print and digitally publish a zine that imagines and critically explores future learning experiences <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Increasing Awareness and Inclusivity of Gender-Based Violence Support Services at the University <b>(new)</b></li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">University of Edinburgh</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather examples and reflect on good practice examples of community building activities from across the University and Students' Association</li> <li>• Appoint two PhD Interns to support Theme work and new activity (gathering evidence to understand what works for student and staff in community building) <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Progress specific recommendations from the 2020/21 PhD Internships (implement a postgraduate researcher representative roundtable and updating <a href="#">Giving Feedback: A Student Guide</a> <b>(new)</b>)</li> <li>• Abstract and reports of Principal's Teaching Award Scheme projects on the theme of learning communities: <a href="#">Learning communities   The University of Edinburgh</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and academic community are established tags on the <a href="#">Teaching Matters blog</a>. Recent blogs on building community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Introductory post</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">PhD Intern post</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Building community theme tag</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• A blog post for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Teaching Matters theme: <a href="#">Prioritising equality, diversity and inclusion activities through the Enhancement Themes - Teaching Matters blog (ed.ac.uk)</a></li> <li>• University's <a href="#">Learning and Teaching Conference</a></li> <li>• The <a href="#">Decolonising the Curriculum Hub outlines how to make a start at decolonising</a> the curriculum alongside supporting resources and case studies</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Edinburgh Napier University</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student-staff collaborative mini projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building flexible curriculum around Midwifery community of care models <b>(new)</b></li> <li>- Lions Gate Design Intervention - involves the student-led design of a mural on the theme of mental wellbeing for the Lions Gate Garden at our Merchiston Campus <b>(new)</b></li> <li>- Building International Learning Communities - sought to use Lego Serious Play to explore aspects of resilience and transition to UK HE to two groups of postgraduate students (on two of our campuses) and apply the resilience doughnut in the design of the tasks <b>(new)</b></li> <li>- Building resilient learning communities through global connections - sought to identify approaches to connecting students on undergraduate biology programmes delivered in Edinburgh, Hong Kong and Sri Lanka <b>(new)</b></li> <li>- Examining the impact of recorded material on student learning - sought to assess the impact of pre-recorded lectures on student's university workload and wellbeing, and highlight possible issues that might arise from the shift to remote learning <b>(new)</b></li> <li>- Developing dialogue to improve the student experience for care experienced students at Edinburgh Napier University - built upon work undertaken in year one and provides the opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of the support and learning needs of care experienced students at Edinburgh Napier University</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Film for Positive Change - seeks to foster the development of a student charter to address misogynistic behaviours and support positive change through the development of a co-created film <b>(new)</b></li> <li>- Heads Together: PGR Learning Community - sought to develop and evaluate a university-wide PGR forum to foster positive mental health among research students <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Enhance strand (including student stories) - incorporating Enhancement Theme activity into work on our new ENhance Curriculum Framework, which aims to strengthen the culture of curriculum enhancement at ENU</li> </ul> <p><u>Hyperlinks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Student buddying scheme</a></li> <li>• Zike, J and Drumm, L (2021), Title: 'Radically reconfigured or just broken? How emergency online teaching has altered staff conceptions of learning and teaching', Society for Research in Higher Education's Annual Conference, 8th-10th December 2021 <a href="http://www.slideshare.net/louisedrumm/radically-reconfigured-or-just-broken-how-emergency-online-teaching-has-altered-staff-conceptions-of-learning-and-teaching">www.slideshare.net/louisedrumm/radically-reconfigured-or-just-broken-how-emergency-online-teaching-has-altered-staff-conceptions-of-learning-and-teaching</a></li> <li>• Zike, J and Drumm, L (2022), Title: 'Evolving ecologies in digital education - A perspective from Scotland' Irish Learning Technology Association's Annual Conference 'EdTech 2022', University College Cork, 26th-27th May 2022 <a href="http://www.slideshare.net/louisedrumm/ilta-edtech22-presentation-zike-drummv5pptx">www.slideshare.net/louisedrumm/ilta-edtech22-presentation-zike-drummv5pptx</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Enhancement Themes staff intranet page</a></li> </ul>
<p><a href="#"><u>Glasgow Caledonian University</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further Investigation of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Students Views on their Student Experience at GCU</li> <li>• The Evidencing Impact Model <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Features linked to health, wellbeing, productivity and resilience among non-traditional student groups</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#"><u>University of Glasgow</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer-enabled activity aims to support the ongoing development of a strong student community through the expansion of peer-enabled activity across the institution</li> <li>• Maths/numeracy gap analysis seeks to understand if a data science approach could understand the importance of maths, alongside other variables, in predicting student progression outcomes</li> </ul> <p><u>Hyperlinks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Showcasing peer-enabled activity</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Peer-enabled activity published article</a></li> </ul>

<p><a href="#"><u>Glasgow School of Art</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Log Book Collective</b> - a four-month long intensive art and design participatory project to connect communities at the GSA and Forres Campus involving the development and implementation of community based art workshops focusing on ecology (water), connecting communities, and creative practices (papermaking, origami making)</li> <li>• <b>Moving to GSA: Place identification and expression through participatory action research</b> - by using participatory design methods under a mixed theoretical framework from cultural geography and current research about developing belonging (as it relates to studying in an art school), students are involved in identifying the challenges and opportunities with hybrid learning in order to give them an opportunity to articulate their experiences and to help shape learning relating to hybrid learning</li> <li>• <b>Ways of Being (collaborative)</b> - a three-week residency opportunity for a student (recently awarded) at the Forres Campus taking place in August 2022. This residency will be used to facilitate the development of various group-based creative activities and practices to help create conscious relationship building within collaborative working environments with a particular focus on 'belonging'</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#"><u>Heriot-Watt University</u></a></p>	<p>Overall outcome is for staff and students to have an enhanced sense of being part of a global community, and the practical means to facilitate such a community; four priority areas support the aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a focal point for institutional conversations around community, belonging and wellbeing</li> <li>• create special interest clusters and to advance targeted projects related to resilience, community and wellbeing across our Schools and campuses</li> <li>• develop a longitudinal evaluation to map how our global learning community is evolving over time; this will also provide insight into our progress towards <i>Strategy 2025</i> and our <i>Inspiring Learning, Learning and Teaching Strategy</i></li> <li>• engage with sector activities and explore external collaboration and practice sharing opportunities</li> </ul> <p>Specific projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspiring institutional conversations around community, belonging and wellbeing</li> <li>• Resilient pedagogies: enhancing understanding and practice in teaching and assessment transformation</li> <li>• Resilient teaching teams: supporting leadership and collaboration across HWU's global community</li> <li>• Student action on resilience: supporting student representation in a global context</li> <li>• Enabling resilience, creating connection and community: spaces, places and people</li> <li>• Strengthening our global learning community: a longitudinal evaluation of change</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 <a href="#">mini-projects</a> funded (all <b>new</b> for Year 2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strengthening learning community: enhancing international student experience</li> <li>- Engaging the campus and its community as an authentic learning context: Impact on engagement and experience of built environment UG students</li> <li>- Planetary boundaries: embodiment of sustainability in accounting education</li> <li>- Linear algebra: building sustainable global community of learners</li> <li>- Understanding academic integrity at Heriot-Watt</li> <li>- Lothian learners</li> <li>- Building community through pedagogical research - a workshop for researchers, students and practitioners to explore a collaborative approach to metaphor translation</li> <li>- Creating accessible maths-based resources</li> <li>- The student and staff view: what makes a resilient postgraduate research community?</li> <li>- Buddy Network: student-led peer mentoring systems for resilience</li> <li>- A collaborative approach to student scholarship skills: embedding information literacy skills in the flipped classroom</li> <li>- Wellbeing, engagement, learning, collaboration, opportunities, mind-set, education (WELCOME) in global teaching teams</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Hyperlinks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme work shared through the <a href="#">Learning and Teaching Academy blog</a></li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">University of the Highlands and Islands</a></p>	<p>Three-strand approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating resilient students: Aims to develop a student body of resilient learners and resilient graduates, able to adapt to a changing world of education and employment</li> <li>• Facilitating resilient staff: Aims to develop a staff body of resilient educators able to adapt to a changing world of education and employment</li> <li>• Creating a resilient institution: Aims to examine the policies, processes and structures within the University to ensure that they are fit to serve the changing needs of the staff and student body</li> </ul>

	<p>Year 2 projects <b>(new)</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resilience resources - gathering together, creating and promoting staff and student engagement with a range of resources to support student resilience</li> <li>• Resilience events - we have held a number of events to raise staff and student awareness of ways to support and develop both student and staff resilience</li> <li>• Micro-credentials - aimed at expanding the University's offering by creating an agile and flexible range of courses which can serve the needs of a wider range of potential students, thereby increasing institutional resilience</li> <li>• Learning analytics - developing UHI's learning analytics practices and processes</li> <li>• Embedding resilience within the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES)</li> </ul> <p><u>Hyperlinks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Overview</a> of UHI Theme activity</li> <li>• Self-study mental health <a href="#">modules</a> for PGR students and their supervisors</li> <li>• Micro-credentials <a href="#">blog post</a></li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Open University in Scotland</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to people: forced migration - in partnership with the Scottish Refugee Council and Bridges Programmes Glasgow we have run a pilot programme for two cohorts of learners from a forced migration background, providing study support from an OU tutor to develop readiness for higher education</li> <li>• Sense of belonging toolkit refresh - an existing resource (a collaborative cluster project developed under Evidence for Enhancement) being updated with learning from COVID <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Supporting students from deprived backgrounds - aimed at reaching out more effectively to students from deprived backgrounds</li> <li>• EmployAbility programme - continued work on this collaboration between a not-for-profit organisation and 10 Scottish HEIs offering activities to support disabled students</li> <li>• Big Blether Series is about getting students together in an informal environment to discuss issues of interest and concern; particular focus on mental health</li> <li>• Student community and computing club - re-establishing a previous initiative for students with an interest in this subject area (no activity this year due to personnel changes)</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Queen Margaret University</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lonely learning and learning to be lonely: a study of student resilience and challenge during COVID-19 lockdown</li> </ul>

<a href="#"><u>Royal Conservatoire of Scotland</u></a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching Resilience: The effectiveness of the small-group Developing Coaching Practice sessions involving teaching staff at RCS, and the identification of potential development of coaching systems and the rollout of practice across the institution (<b>new</b>)</li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u>Robert Gordon University</u></a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Learning Programme - Evolving RGU's Approach to Online Learning</li> <li>• Supporting whole-person education throughout the learner journey - aims to further embed integrated support for whole-person learning throughout the student journey at RGU, with an emphasis on enhancing support at key moments of transition, promoting student wellbeing and resilience, and strengthening communication and awareness of available support</li> <li>• Promoting retention and success through inclusive practice - aims to further promote inclusive curriculum design and delivery at the University in order to enhance student retention and success by: developing staff awareness of, and skills in inclusive curriculum design and delivery, including the accessibility of digital learning in accordance with Public Sector Bodies' Accessibility Regulations; interrogating institutional data and working in partnership with students and staff to identify further opportunities for impactful enhancement; planning and implementing targeted enhancements to promote parity of participation in priority areas</li> <li>• Supporting RGU's Course Leader Community - Aims to scope and facilitate opportunities for Course Leaders to come together as a community to enrich colleagues' work in this pivotal role, support their professional development and enhance the overall student experience</li> <li>• Emerging Stronger Enhancement Award Projects - in Year 1, staff and students were invited to bid for £500 funding through the Emerging Stronger Enhancement Award Scheme to take forward a project of their choosing. Six award winners were selected and, as a result, the following projects were progressed in Year 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborative Online International Learning - COIL (School of Creative and Cultural Business)</li> <li>- Digital Community (Law School)</li> <li>- Education for Sustainability (Employability and Professional Enrichment/Gray's School of Art)</li> <li>- Student Digital Competence (School of Creative and Cultural Business)</li> <li>- Supporting Mature Undergraduate Students (Law School)</li> <li>- Virtual Labs (School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• RGU Future of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (<b>new</b>) - the multi-dimensional strand will support the university in defining RGU's future model of teaching, learning and assessment to provide an optimal and equitable learning experience for our diverse student body (has a three-year duration)</li> </ul>

<p><a href="#"><u>Scotland's Rural College</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness and develop student communities (<b>new</b>)</li> <li>• Develop a Year Tutor learning community</li> <li>• Digitalisation of peer support</li> <li>• Student intern engagement</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#"><u>University of St Andrews</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating the impact of online learning on students during the pandemic: longitudinal survey project</li> <li>• Investigating the impact of online learning on students during the pandemic: Digital Storytelling Project</li> <li>• Enhancement Theme Open Forum</li> <li>• Toolkits for supporting disabled students to transition to and thrive at University</li> <li>• How can extension policies be applied to best support student success? Assessing extension procedures across departments and institutions</li> <li>• Defining resilience: a student-centred perspective</li> <li>• Making St Andrews a place to belong: A day with Dr Greg Walton, Stanford University</li> <li>• Online learning community in the COVID-19 era: Examining community in a large first-year psychology cohort</li> </ul> <p><u>Hyperlinks</u></p> <p><a href="#">Presentation</a> to 2021 Higher Education Institutional Research Conference on elements of our teaching that help develop student community</p>

<p><a href="#"><u>University of Stirling</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decolonising the curriculum - identifying what this means at Stirling, creating resources for staff and planning further events <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Peer support - our Students' Union built on the success of our peer mentoring scheme (STEER) and our befriending scheme (Pandemic Pals), by transitioning that support out of the pandemic context into mainstream activity and expanding its reach</li> <li>• Hybrid learning - introducing the technology and support pedagogy to deliver hybrid teaching</li> <li>• Student Life - we have extended our BeConnected Programme into a full student life programme on campus and online for the whole university community</li> <li>• Transitions - increased resources in our Student Learning Services (SLS) team to boost central support and to offer a hub and spoke style support structure for students in faculties</li> <li>• Academic Integrity Module: A 'module' for online delivery in which all students can participate, which focuses on writing at university, avoiding academic misconduct, and referencing; aimed at reducing the anxiety associated with academic writing</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#"><u>University of Strathclyde</u></a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Race equality internship - a collaborative university/union initiative employing a student intern in a supportive role to raise awareness, build community and support practice amongst our students and staff in decolonising, anti-racist, and inclusive curriculum approaches <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Looking at retention - the exploratory project will utilise available relevant data to: identify relevant literature on student retention, identify factors that may relate to increased retention, identify appropriate methodological approaches, and to implement/share any findings across the faculty, wider university and the sector (where relevant) <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• A mismatch in mathematics and statistics - the overall goal of the project is to ease the transition of students coming into the university, as a result of changing curricula at school level <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• Learning, teaching and technical staff - work with a cohort of 10–15 technical staff in a 'peer network' to support them in reflecting on their role in learning and teaching and to submit applications for Associate Fellowship of the HEA <b>(new)</b></li> <li>• PGR resilience and wellbeing - evaluates the efficacies and challenges in developing a self-sustaining PGR community of peer-support to promote mental wellbeing and resilience</li> </ul>

[University of the West of Scotland](#)

- A Curriculum Incubator project for the development of the Masters in Professional Development (**new**)
- Creation of clear policy on the recognition of RPL, CPD and Micro-credentials (**new**)
- [Healthy Body Healthy Mind Bronze Award](#)

Hyperlinks

- [UWS Active Community](#)

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