Overview of Year 3 Institutional Plans

Executive Summary

Introduction

1   This report provides a summary of planned Year 3 Enhancement Theme institutional activity drawn from higher education institution (HEI) plans. This summary report and individual HEI plans will be made available on the [institutional Theme web pages](#).

2   The key points from Year 3 plans are as follows:

- The balance of activity is moving from implementing and progressing projects to consolidating work, sharing learning, promotion and dissemination activity, and on the evaluation of impact.

- Overall, the range of topics of projects is similar to that of Year 1 and 2 but with fewer new projects commencing. New elements or phases of existing projects are being taken forward in the final year of the Theme. New external challenges, particularly the cost of living crisis and its impact on students, has begun to feature in Theme activity.

- The connection between Theme activity and institutional strategies/priorities is important, highlighted by 17 of 19 institutions.

- Student involvement in Themes' work is still strong with many institutions continuing to appoint student interns and appointing students to institutional teams. Students are not only working with their student peers but also with staff. For example, the new 'Mind the Gap' collaborative cluster, led by the City of Glasgow College, has interns delivering focus groups with both student and staff participants. Another interesting development is a student intern self-organised, student-led working group at the University of Glasgow.

- In addition to institutions evaluating Theme projects, they are also reflecting on Theme organisation, and supporting structures and processes, which is typical at this stage of Theme delivery.

Contextual information

3   This report provides an overview of the institutional work planned for Year 3 of the current Theme. 17 HEIs highlighted alignment between strategy/priorities/plans/policy and Enhancement Theme activity. In addition, both Abertay University and Glasgow School of Art have referred to recent ELIR 4 activity and its relationship to enhancement activity. Abertay University reports that the outcomes of its ELIR 4 review have helped to strengthen its enhancement-led approach. The University highlighted its ongoing work to address issues around retention that will embolden it to move forward to continue that improvement and address other issues of value to the University and sector. Glasgow School of Art reports that its Year 3 Theme work is focused on topics that align with its strategic plan and builds on enhancement work within its ELIR 4 review. Several HEIs emphasised that external factors, such as Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic, continue to impact upon the student experience. HEIs have enhancement activities that are responding to the cost of living crisis, aimed at supporting students. Partnership working with students features strongly in Year 3 plans with topics such as community and belonging frequently highlighted.

Year 3 priorities and activities

4   In the final year of the Theme, activity is shifting towards an emphasis on consolidating and applying learning from the first two years of work, implementing recommendations from previous years and an increasing focus on evaluation activity. The

dissemination and promotion of outcomes and lessons learned are a prominent feature of institutional plans. While many institutions are continuing to progress projects started in previous years, there are fewer new projects being initiated in Year 3 of the Theme. The volume of work will be approximately half of that of Year 2 with around 57 projects running. This number may change as some institutions are still to confirm the number of competitively funded projects being run.

5   The appendix lists projects and activity by institution. Common topics and distinctive work and activity are highlighted below:

- **Student transitions:**

    - Abertay University and the University of the Highlands and Islands continue with their work on diagnostic testing of students as they transition into university.

    - Glasgow Caledonian University is aiming to develop and pilot a digital 'Student Transitions Resource' to support transition through university.

    - One of Glasgow School of Art's new key work strands is in preparing students for studio learning - fostering community and student academic skills in the transition to art school; a dedicated student consultant will help co-create transition resources.

    - Heriot-Watt University's continuing 'WELCOME' project focuses on supporting new staff as they transition into teaching at the University.

    - Through its continuing 'Supporting Whole Person Education Throughout the Learner Journey' project strand, the Robert Gordon University places emphasis on enhancing support at key moments of transition, promoting student wellbeing and resilience, and strengthening communication and awareness of available support.

    - In continuing work, a micro-credential in social sciences aims to test out a new type of teaching model within the University of the Highlands and Islands. When delivered, this will assist with the transition and retention of students into HN programmes within the social sciences.

    - The University of St Andrews is developing resources to support students as they transition back to in-person teaching so that they can make the most of the learning opportunities provided to them.

- **Building community and a sense of belonging:**

    - The University of Edinburgh is working on several activities relating to resilience, including a review of examples of good practice, which continues activity from previous years. The examples will be used to develop a guide, which will support embedding good practice in community building into institutional strategic projects and activities. The University is also continuing to develop community building activities for postgraduate research students.

    - Through a new project, Glasgow Caledonian University is exploring belonging and engagement for international students.

    - At Heriot-Watt University, there are three projects that focus on connection, collaboration, and learning and teaching in the context of a multi-campus organisation.

- 'Developing Student Communities' is a new project aiming to address the structures and processes that can act as a barrier to the establishment of student-led clubs and societies at Scotland's Rural College.

- The new 'Resilient Communities' project at the University of Stirling will seek to establish an understanding of the perspectives of lecturers, students and other university stakeholders on the concept of a 'resilient learning community' and the value that it holds for each group.

- In new work, the Open University in Scotland is updating the 'Sense of Belonging' toolkit (created as part of the Evidence for Enhancement Theme) to take account of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly issues around student loneliness and isolation. The University is also continuing with its 'Big Blether Series' - getting students together in an informal environment to help foster a sense of belonging and to support the development of a student identity.

- **Staff and students supporting students is being explored at five institutions:**

  - The University of Glasgow is continuing to expand peer-led activities across the University to further develop the creation of new student communities.

  - 'Digitalisation of Peer Support' is a new project at Scotland's Rural College and aims to review the Moodle page to ensure that it best meets its key purposes: staff and student engagement, training of volunteers, disseminating information about the groups and explaining how students can get involved.

  - In new activity, a Royal Conservatoire of Scotland coaching model aims to connect existing coaching provision in a meaningful way to enhance the resilience of staff and students, and help them successfully navigate learning and development challenges.

  - In a new Year 3 project, the personal tutoring scheme at the University of Stirling (in place since 2014) is being reviewed using student and staff views to establish the best approach to pastoral support in the current context.

  - Through new work, the University of the West of Scotland is supporting staff engaging with its new Personal Tutoring approach (ASPIRA Advisers) by putting in place a comprehensive development pathway for them. This will include a review of personal tutoring support and staff development across the higher education sector.

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) continues to feature in the work of several institutions:**

  - A new project to improve the experience of students with disabilities (Health in Social Sciences) is in progress at the University of Edinburgh.

  - Two new projects at Edinburgh Napier University are focused on EDI: the 'ARC Project - Creation of Student Voices Digital Artefact'; and inclusion through curriculum (re)design.

  - Promoting retention and success through inclusive practice is a continuing project, aiming to further promote inclusive curriculum design and delivery at the Robert Gordon University to enhance student retention and success.

  - The new 'Inclusive Curriculum' project at the University of Stirling will make

resources and events available to staff to enable them to consider inclusive practice and reflect on their own practice and curriculum content.

- In new work, the Open University in Scotland's 'Forced Migration' project is aimed at addressing gaps in provision for forced migrants. Another project is supporting students from deprived backgrounds by increasing the University's engagement with people who may not consider university as an option. The EmployAbility programme - a collaboration between a not-for-profit organisation and 10 Scottish HEIs - offers activities to support disabled students and alumni to better support them in achieving positive career and personal development outcomes.

- **Student mental wellbeing and enhancing resilience:**

  - 'Snack Sized Self Care in the Curriculum' is one of Glasgow Caledonian University's new Year 3 projects.

  - Queen Margaret University's three-year 'Lonely learning and learning to be lonely' project is continuing to explore student resilience and challenge during and after COVID-19 lockdown.

  - The University of the Highlands and Islands' new activity to introduce Schwartz rounds[1] is aimed at reducing stress and increasing wellbeing for staff. In another new project, a toolkit and webinars are being developed to encourage staff to innovate in their practice to encourage student resilience.

- **The student learning experience features in the work of:**

  - Edinburgh Napier University, through its new 'Storying ENU' work, will reflect on and analyse the range of student learning and teaching experiences and creation of resources for staff development.

  - The University of the Highlands and Islands, through its implementation of a new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, aims to provide an excellent student learning experience aligned to its 10 strategy values.

  - RGU Teaching and Learning Futures is a continuing multi-dimensional strand of activity that supports the University in defining Robert Gordon University's future model of teaching, learning and assessment to provide an optimal and equitable learning experience for its diverse student body.

- There **are** several sector projects aimed at **supporting staff:**

  - In new work, Glasgow Caledonian University is running Programme Leader Resilience Workshops.

  - The University of the Highlands and Island's Assessment and Feedback Symposium aims to encourage staff to innovate in their practice. In addition, a continuing series of webinars and writing workshops on reflective practice aims to encourage staff to become reflective practitioners.

  - Robert Gordon University's continuing activity on 'Supporting RGU's Course Leader Community' will facilitate opportunities for Course/Programme Leaders to come together as a community to enrich colleagues' work in this important

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[1] Conversations with staff about the emotional impact of their work

role, support their professional development and enhance the overall student experience.

- Developing a 'Year Tutor Learning Community' is a continuing project at Scotland's Rural College that aims to support Year Tutors so that they feel that their concerns are being taken seriously by senior staff and that real change is taking place at a systemic level.

- Three institutions have projects on **assessment and feedback**:

  - In new activity, Edinburgh Napier University is encouraging bids for funding to develop mini projects capable of making sustainable and impactful changes to assessment and feedback practices.

  - Research into student experience of assessment is new work that will help the University of the Highlands and Islands to understand the impact of assessment patterns on student learning and engagement.

  - 'Assessment Feedback Literacy' is continuing work through which the University of St Andrews believes that change can be made in both academic and student practices. The project aims to raise awareness about new approaches and how they can benefit the learning community in St Andrews. The project is also an opportunity to establish a foothold in research on this topic

- **Online learning** forms part of Robert Gordon University's Year 3 plan through its continuing project on 'Digital Learning - Evolving RGU's Approach to Online Learning'. Activity is focused on developing the University's institutional approaches to online learning, enhancing staff guidance and learning technologies. The University of St Andrews is progressing a continuing project on understanding the impact of online learning during the pandemic. The project aims to help the University better understand its students' learning experiences during the pandemic, allowing St Andrews to identify positive aspects of online learning that it could take forward and use in future teaching and learning.

- **Work and employment-focused** activity is in the workplan for both the University of the Highlands and Islands and the University of the West of Scotland. The former is continuing to support students' transferable skills development and confidence building in approaching the workplace through its careers and employability pathway resources. In new work, the latter is introducing routes for experiential learning to be recognised within the curriculum.

- In **discipline-specific** activity, the University of Glasgow is continuing its 'Gap Analysis for Mathematical/Numeracy Skills' project. Glasgow Caledonian University is exploring, for the first time, the role of disrupters as role models in STEM.

- Work is also being taken forward on the following themes:

  - University of Edinburgh is focusing on the **student voice** and is producing, and evaluating, Giving Feedback Student Guides.

  - The University of the Highlands and Islands' continuing **learning analytics** work aims to provide staff with data about student engagement and the design of learning and teaching activities within and across modules and programmes.

  - The University of St Andrews is continuing to explore the **purpose of higher**

education. Their project aims to analyse the validity of a survey instrument that sought to better understand the purpose of higher education through the lens of students and staff. The survey tool will be revised accordingly and then deployed.

- Through its continuing **conflict resolution in the classroom** work, the University of St Andrews aims to equip its students with the skills necessary to navigate and manage conflict that may arise in group settings (university and employment).

- In new Year 3 work, and in recognition of the **financial challenges** students face, especially in light of the cost-of-living crisis, the University of the West of Scotland is giving further consideration to how the University could mitigate some of these challenges through its 'Hidden costs of study' (student-led) project.

Institutional teams

6   Institutional team details are still to be finalised in some institutions - for example, where student interns are linked to specific projects but have not yet been recruited. Currently, there are 30 students confirmed across the 19 HEI institutional teams - ranging from undergraduate students to PhD candidates, and student association staff are also included (three staff from three HEIs in Year 3). The current number of students engaged in institutional teams has fallen from 33 in Year 2. The largest change in student representation was at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland with a reduction from five to one student representative; in Year 2 there were a number of team members at the Conservatoire who held both dual student and staff representational roles (PhD and MEd candidates). In total, in Year 1 there were 26 student representatives. Team sizes vary from between three and 21 members. There are seven institutions that have teams with two or more student members - down from 11 in   Year 2. The number of institutions that have student association/union staff on teams to support continuity of the student voice has remained relatively low (four HEIs in Year 1 and three HEIs in Years 2 and 3). We know from Year 2 institutional reports that HEIs have continued to review and change institutional team structures in tandem with development of institutional Themes projects.[2]

7   Outwith the core institutional team members, student involvement in Theme work is achieved in several ways. While the use of student interns was an innovative way for institutions to engage students in Theme activity in Year 1, it is now quite common practice across the sector. However, novel approaches to the use of student intern-style roles do continue to appear at several institutions. In Year 2 of its work, the University of Glasgow offered a master's student on the MSc Statistics with Placement course, a placement in its Planning Insights and Analytics team and their work will include contribution to a Theme project.

Learning from other institutions

8   This penultimate section of the report draws together, and details, some aspects of practice where sharing may be beneficial to transferring good practice across the sector. With this aim, this section of the report focuses on: the use of Theme resources from sector projects; and dissemination activity, and supporting staff and students to engage with Themes' activity.

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[2] The numbers reported are as per submitted HEI plans and each year there are a number of HEIs that have team members to be confirmed - for Year 3, this was four HEIs. Consequently, the number of students involved as reported in the annual report is likely to be marginally higher.

9   With regard to the former, 17 institutions have reported how they have been using/intending to use resources that have been developed through sector-level projects. It is helpful to share how resources are applied in different institutions and contexts to encourage further use, and development, of them. Some examples of institutions using/anticipating using resources are provided below:

- Edinburgh Napier University has used the Anti-Racist Curriculum materials to help start institutional conversations and connections among staff, that will be developed in the coming year. The University of Aberdeen has used the Anti-Racist Curriculum Project materials to start tackling some fundamental matters such as raising awareness around language. The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland is using the Anti-Racist Curriculum Project materials in curriculum re-development activity, addressing questions such as: 'How do we create a curriculum that engages learners with a diverse range of cultural, social and political perspectives?'

- At the University of Edinburgh, the Decolonising the Curriculum in the Time of Pandemic collaborative cluster has led the institution to develop its own Decolonising the Curriculum Hub to support thinking and action on decolonising the curriculum. The Hub outlines how to make a start at decolonising the curriculum alongside supporting resources and case studies

- The University of Aberdeen is using QAA's Micro-credentials Characteristic Statement and Micro-credentials Glossary (produced by the Understanding Micro-credentials and Small Qualifications collaborative cluster) in developing its broader ongoing work on flexible and accessible learning. The University of the West of Scotland is likely to make use of the cluster resources in the development of its Professional Postgraduate portfolio. Similarly, Edinburgh Napier University will be using the resources for benchmarking and supporting its institutional strategic aims with respect to diversifying its curriculum and continuing to support the development of flexible routes into the University's taught provision.

- The student-led project work into building digital student communities has been utilised by Scotland's Rural College in a project (Digitisation of Peer Support). Similarly, the student-led work into developing equitable learning opportunities has informed the creation of the College's Moodle course to best promote accessibility for all potential volunteers. The Top Tips resource produced by the student-led project (Promoting the Equity of the Student Learning Experience) has been identified as a useful evaluation resource for the one of Glasgow Caledonian University's Strategy for Learning Innovation Fund projects (EDI-Student Reps), which aims to, 'raise the profile of EDI at a programme level and facilitate hearing the student voice on EDI and related issues'.

- Resources from the Student Mental Wellbeing project are likely to be used by the University of the West of Scotland in the development of its Student Success Hub.

- Heriot-Watt University reports that the Programme Leadership collaborative cluster work has continued beyond the timeframe of Theme funding, with spin-off research and development work underway to produce a Programme Leadership Manifesto.

10   We have also received feedback on the utility of our evaluation consultants' Theme evaluation resources:

- On the Building Confidence in Using Data and Evidence for Enhancement[3] six-week programme offered by QAA, the Open University in Scotland comments: 'we had two staff members attending this course and the value was evident in relation

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[3] This was a course run by our evaluation consultants through QAA Membership and was not Theme-specific.

to understanding how to better evidence impact of our enhancement activity. This was a hugely valuable course and run alongside the independent sessions on survey design[4] and the individual feedback sessions provided by the external evaluators, this focus on evaluation has had a huge impact on our approach'.

- Scotland's Rural College comments that: 'one of the most useful QAA resources in Years 1 and 2 (and that we anticipate being extremely helpful in Year 3) has been the ongoing sessions on evaluation design, as well as opportunities such as the QAA Enhancement Themes Conference. These sessions have been invaluable in guiding and informing our approach to evaluation, which has developed significantly since Year 1. They have also facilitated connections across the sector, and the sharing of best practice.'

Dissemination and supporting staff and students to engage with Themes' activity

11   With regard to dissemination activity and supporting staff and students to engage with Themes' activity, there is a close relationship between the two; they often happen in tandem and are mutually supportive. A summary of staff and student activities reported by HEIs is shared below and may help in broadening staff and student engagement, a challenge frequently reported by institutions:

- Employing student interns on Theme projects and including interns in institutional team memberships in addition to other student representatives. Students who have been involved in Themes' work can be great ambassadors. Scotland's Rural College reports that its interns want to develop an alumnus network of student interns.

- Providing staff and student funding for small-scale local-level projects through a competitive bidding process is adopted by several institutions to encourage and support engagement.

- Encouraging staff and student presentation at external conferences through provision of travel and subsistence, and payment of conference fees.

- Using the Student Partnership Agreement to help support student engagement and involvement in Themes' work.

- Regular meetings with student representatives and sabbatical officers.

- Dissemination of learning from the Themes' work can be a really positive driver to engage other colleagues (staff and students).

- Theme 'champions' and staff that actively promote Themes' work (often the institutional team members) have a really important role in encouraging and supporting engagement. Similarly, academic development/enhancement department often provide a focal point for encouraging and supporting Theme engagement.

- More formal structures and processes play a role in some institutions, such as annual staff performance schemes and annual course monitoring processes.

- Having multiple means of engagement and actively considering and addressing barriers to engagement is an approach that has been very valuable for Scotland's Rural College.

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[4] Resources from all the Themes' online workshops are on the Themes' evaluation web page: www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/evaluation-of-the-enhancement-themes

Conclusion

12   In reviewing the HEI plans for the final year of Resilient Learning Communities, there are a number of observations:

- The shift in the balance of activity, including an emphasis on continuing work rather than starting new activity, is typical of that seen in previous Enhancement Themes entering the final year of delivery.

- The broad scope and flexibility of the Theme has allowed new topics to be explored by institutions as new challenges and external pressures have emerged - for example, responding to pandemic lockdowns and, more recently, the increasing financial hardship experience by students.

- While student engagement has continued to be strong, particularly the involvement of student interns, some aspects of student engagement have dropped marginally - specifically, the number of student representatives on institutional teams.

- Collective reflection on processes and supporting structures is important as universities and colleges look ahead and plan for an effective and successful tertiary sector enhancement activity.

Appendix

Summary of institutional activity Year 3

The entries below focus on new activity or continuing activity, where the latter is more predominant.

Sector/institution work	Activities and projects
Abertay University	- Evaluation is key in Year 3 - Diagnostic testing of students through engaging micro-credentials to develop successful student attributes ('MySuccess') - Student Success Officers - three new appointments to monitor student engagement in the micro-credentials and their programme-specific modules - Curriculum redesign through block delivery of learning - continuing to develop the approach - New approaches to orientation and the 'relentless welcome' - continuing this development - Enhancement Theme learning and teaching projects (a suite of local projects)
University of Aberdeen	- Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme (holistic evaluation of the process and projects funded over the course of the three-year Theme) - Continued growth of its Enhancement Theme community of practice - Continue to explore aspects of learning to learn/learning to teach during a pandemic, considering how these changes will transform learning communities post-COVID-19 - Awareness-raising around decolonising the curriculum - Continuing to engage in micro-credentials and student mental wellbeing work - The bridge between: Arab voices and stories of coping - Exploring the experiences of articulation students' transition to university - Understanding, developing and demonstrating resilience in the context of employability - Building student resilience through course development - moving from surviving to thriving - Investigating solutions to make mathematical teaching content more accessible

University of Dundee	- Programme of workshops and seminars alongside the sharing of resources across the University and with relevant stakeholders regarding resilient learning communities (RLC) - Continuation and development of RLC projects - RLC enhancement theme working group meetings and collaborations within university (including new academic school) and potential external collaboration
University of Edinburgh	- Evaluation of specific projects/activities We expect these to be: - Community Champions (Moray House School of Education and Sport) - Project to improve the experience of students with disabilities (Health in Social Sciences) - Postgraduate researcher community building activities - Giving Feedback Student Guides - Community building guide A review of good practice examples to identify what works in community building for sharing in a guide with the aim of embedding it within the University's strategic projects and activities - Explore community building and sense of belonging with Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program students - A continuing exercise to gather and reflect on good practice examples of community building activities from across the University and Students' Association - Appointing PhD interns to support Theme work (including projects on analysing student feedback, working with the Students' Association to align actions with student representative structures, support pilot projects to test interventions to reduce attainment gaps - links to ELIR) - Progressing specific recommendations from the 2020-21 student intern activity
Edinburgh Napier University	- Evaluation of institution-wide mini projects - Year 3 - Storying Edinburgh Napier University Year 3 - ARC Project - Creation of Student Voices Digital Artefact - Creation of Strategic Enhancement Project funding around two main themes of Inclusion and Assessment, and Feedback Through Curriculum (Re)Design

Glasgow Caledonian University	• Snack Sized Self Care in the Curriculum • GCU Undergraduate Learner Transition Tool • The role of disrupters as role models in STEM • Belonging and Engagement for International Students • Programme Leader Resilience Workshops
University of Glasgow	• Institutional programme of Peer Assisted Learning/Study Support - creation of new initiatives within the Student Learning Development team and within priority Schools/Colleges that focuses on a variety of elements of peer learning • Gap Analysis for Mathematical/Numeracy Skills - on the basis of a data insights report, actions will be identified to offer programmes of maths/numeracy support to new entrants across a range of academic disciplines accommodating a range of maths/numeracy ability/qualifications
Glasgow School of Art	• The Consolidation and Dissemination strand of work will: enhance awareness of our Enhancement Themes work; identify and celebrate good practice examples in partnership working with students; and develop guidance and support for future partnership working in Schools and Professional Services • The Preparing for Studio Learning: Fostering community and academic skills in the transition to art school is aimed at supporting student transitions into the institution and enhance opportunities for connection, community and belonging
Heriot-Watt University	• Consolidation of Enhancement Theme Work: Global Resilience - this work will help the University in knowing what is valued (and what is not) in creating stronger connections between campuses, communities and contexts • Evaluating Impact of the Heriot-Work Thematic Work (scaling up learning) - will help the University to have a stronger understanding of how effective collaboration works in the context of its multi-campus university • Evaluating the impact of the Enhancement Theme mini projects - supports staff and students with projects that represent interventions in teaching and learning which benefit teachers and students, reach out to the wider community, or make connections between campuses
University of the Highlands and Islands	• Facilitating resilient students strand has three projects: - Exploring resilience: Toolkit and webinars (new) - aims to encourage staff to innovate in their practice to encourage student resilience

	- Careers and employability pathway resources (continuing) - aims to give students transferable skills and confidence in approaching the workplace
	- Diagnostic testing (continuing) - aims to gauge the effectiveness of a more personalised approach to student support
	• Facilitating resilient staff strand:
	- Assessment and Feedback Symposium (new) - aims to encourage other staff to innovate in their practice
	- Implementation of new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES) (new) - aims to provide an excellent SLE aligned to the 10 values in the LTES
	- Webinars and writing workshops relating to reflective practice (continuing) - aims to encourage staff to become reflective practitioners
	- Schwartz rounds[5] (new) - aims to reduce stress and increase wellbeing
	• Creating a resilient institution:
	- Micro-credential in social sciences (continuing - aims to test out a new type of teaching model within UHI; when delivered, this will assist with the transition and retention of students into HN programmes within the social sciences
	- Research into student experience of assessment (new) - aims to help the University understand the impact of assessment patterns on student learning and engagement
	- Learning analytics (continuing) - aims to provide staff with data about student engagement and the design of learning and teaching activities within and across modules and programmes
Open University in Scotland	• Forced Migration project development is aimed at addressing gaps in provision for forced migrants
	• Sense of belonging toolkit - updating the OpenLearn resource (created as part of Evidence for Enhancement Theme) to take account of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly issues around student loneliness and isolation
	• Supporting students from deprived backgrounds is aimed at increasing the University's engagement with people who may not consider university as an option
	• EmployAbility programme - a collaboration between a not-for-profit organisation and 10 Scottish HEIs offering activities to support disabled students and alumni to better support them achieving positive career and personal development outcomes

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[5] Conversations with staff about the emotional impact of their work

	• Big Blether Series - getting students together in an informal environment to help foster a sense of belonging and support them in forging their student identity
Queen Margaret University	• Lonely learning and learning to be lonely: a study of student resilience and challenge during and after COVID-19 lockdown (continuing); key objectives: to raise awareness of the student experience; to enhance staff and student understanding; to promote and signpost to existing resources and approaches; and to develop new resources and interventions to mitigate loneliness and isolation where these are detrimental to the individual
Robert Gordon University	• RGU Teaching and Learning Futures (continuing) - a multi-dimensional strand of activity that supports the University in defining RGU's future model of teaching, learning and assessment to provide an optimal and equitable learning experience for its diverse student body • Digital Learning (continuing) - Evolving RGU's Approach to Online Learning (continuing) - developing the University's institutional approaches to online learning, focuses on enhancing staff guidance and learning technologies • Promoting retention and success through inclusive practice (continuing) - aims to further promote inclusive curriculum design and delivery at the University to enhance student retention and success • Supporting RGU's Course Leader Community (continuing) - aims to facilitate opportunities for Course/Programme Leaders to come together as a community to enrich colleagues' work in this important role, support their professional development and enhance the overall student experience • Enhancing for Impact Award Scheme (new) - aims to fund opportunities to promote the Resilient Learning Communities' Theme, widening access to staff and students who have not directly been involved in the first round of projects
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	• An RCS Coaching Model - aims to connect existing coaching provision in a meaningful way to enhance the resilience of staff and students and help them successfully navigate learning and development challenges
Scotland's Rural College	• Project 1: Developing Student Communities - aims to address the structures and process barriers that can act as a barrier to the establishment of student-led clubs and societies • Project 2: Develop a Year Tutor Learning Community (continuing) - aims to support Year Tutors so that they feel that their concerns are being taken seriously by senior staff and that real change is taking place at a systemic level • Project 3: Digitalisation of Peer Support (continuing) - aims to review the Moodle page to ensure that it best meets its key purposes: staff and student engagement; training of volunteers; disseminating information about the groups and explaining how students can get involved

University of Stirling	• Inclusive Curriculum at Stirling - resources and events are being made available to staff to enable them to consider inclusive practice and reflect on their own practice and content of the curriculum • Resilient communities - the project will set out to establish perspectives of lecturers, students and other university stakeholders around what a resilient learning community looks like and the value it holds for each of the incumbent groups • Personal tutoring - the University's current personal tutor scheme has been in place since 2014; a review will be undertaken of the views of students and staff on the best approach to pastoral support in the current context
University of St Andrews	• What is Higher Education Anyway? Stakeholders' beliefs about the purposes of higher education in the 21st century - a project that investigates what secondary school students, university students and university lecturers consider the purposes of higher education to be • Understanding the Impact of Online Learning during the Pandemic - aims to gain a better understanding of student experiences with online learning • Assessment feedback literacy - challenges traditional approaches to feedback and includes a workshop and establishing a feedback literacy community • Identifying the needs of our diverse student communities - evaluating the data gathered from across the University on what is currently known within schools and units about the needs of diverse student groups • Enhancement Theme Open Forum - for students and staff to work collaboratively, brainstorming new ideas and initiatives
University of Strathclyde	Year 3 for the university will focus on reviewing the work that has been undertaken so far and exploring potential frameworks for embedding activities and structures that facilitate, support and enhance its learning communities. The University has not completed its competitive bidding process for mini-project funding so specific projects are not yet confirmed
University of the West of Scotland	• Personal Tutoring (ASPIRA Advisers) - a comprehensive development pathway for ASPIRE Advisers including a review of personal tutoring support and staff development across the higher education sector • Experiential Learning - introduction of new routes for experiential learning to be recognised within the curriculum • Hidden costs of study (student-led project) - increased recognition of the financial challenges students face, especially in light of the cost-of-living crisis; further consideration of how the University could mitigate some of these challenges