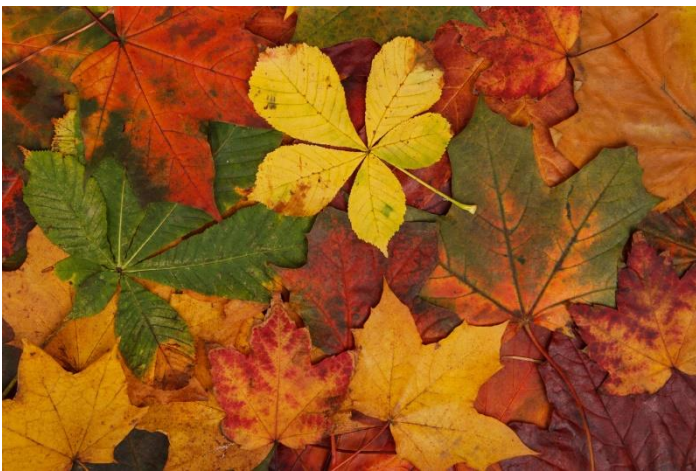




TLG Bulletin, October 2021 – Hello Year 2!

Welcome to the TLG Bulletin - your quick guide to the activity of the Theme Leaders' Group (TLG). Please feel free to share this with any colleagues who might find it valuable.



It's the start of the second year of our Resilient Learning Communities Theme. Everyone has been working hard over the summer months completing year 1 work and preparing plans for year 2. Our Theme Leader, Professor Clare Peddie, welcomed colleagues to the first Theme Leaders' Group of session 2021-22 and particularly staff and students new to Themes work and participating for the first time. We had a short briefing session with new student representatives before the main TLG

meeting to reassure our student colleagues that TLG is a Group that really values students' contributions and participation. We were delighted to have our new Student Theme Leader present, Ondrej Kucerak, from the University of Aberdeen, who described TLG as a 'welcoming and open environment' that encourages him to think about what he can give from, and take back to, his own institution.

In an opening presentation, Professor Peddie highlighted the following:

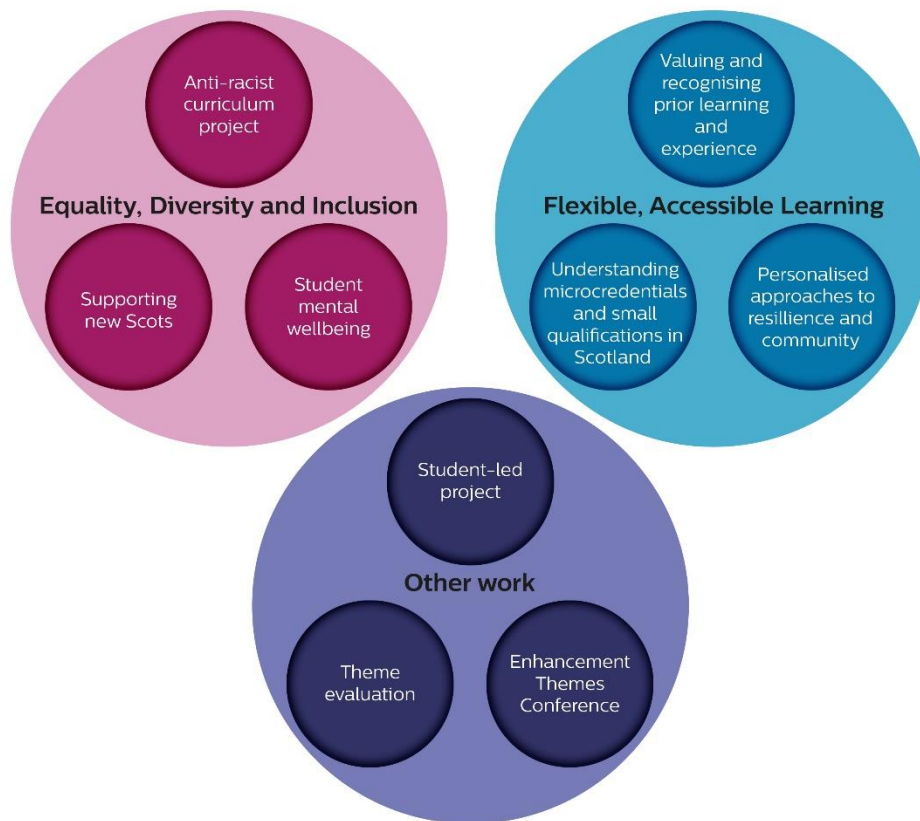
- we're at an exciting time as we move further in Theme work from exploration and discovery to implementation
- Themes evaluation work is gathering pace and will continue to be a key focus over years 2 and 3... and beyond
- we continue to learn lessons from the past 18 months, and will use the Theme to help the sector move forward in a positive and proactive way in response to the pandemic
- year 1 achievements; priority topics and focus for year 2; the role of TLG members; and QAA Scotland's role in supporting institutions and TLG members.

We ended the presentation with a viewing of the Enhancement Themes short explainer film. Please do [take a look](#) at this and also the short guide, *An Introduction to the Enhancement Themes*. They provide key information on Theme activity and, importantly, how to get involved.

Despite the pandemic there has been significant activity in year 1 of the Theme, which is evident in year 1 [institutional reports](#) and in the outputs across the range of [project work](#).

The year 2 focus and priority topics are outlined in the diagram below. The two priority topics are Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Flexible, Accessible Learning, which will take forward work started in year 1 and some exciting new projects.

Year 2 priority topics and focus



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has three projects. The Anti-Racist Curriculum project continues its work from session 2020-21. The Student Mental Wellbeing project progresses the work of the year 1 collaborative cluster and focuses on a topic that continues to be a priority across the sector. Supporting New Scots starts this year and will examine the needs of learners with experience of forced migration.

Flexible, Accessible Learning brings together two substantial, related projects: Understanding Microcredentials and Small Qualifications in Scotland, and Valuing and Recognising Prior Learning (RPL) and Experience. As part of its work, the RPL project will renew the RPL National Framework in Scotland. The Personalised Approaches to Resilience and Community (PARC) work continues, with several institutions working in partnership trialling pre-entry diagnostic and associated bespoke student support approaches. We will be seeking sector views through a survey so look out for this.

The title of the Student-Led Project (SLP) this year is 'The Future of Learning and Teaching: Promoting Parity of Learning Opportunities', which will focus on how students can make the most of a digital or hybrid learning and teaching experience. As the new project starts, we'll be excited to see how the work takes shape and reaches out to our student communities. We will publish more about the SLP in the coming weeks.

Dr Liz Austen, one of our Theme evaluation consultants led a session on the Theme evaluation work. A [short film](#) highlighted the story so far with the work, highlighting what had been achieved in the first year. Our consultants' review of HEI year 1 reports identified how HEIs are evaluating their Theme activities and this is informing further work to support institutions more effectively evidence change and impact, building this in from the start of projects, and making a clear distinction between outputs and outcomes. In parallel with supporting sector capability through workshops, courses and drop-in sessions, our evaluation consultants will also be developing a Universal Evaluation Framework and will be working with colleagues across Scotland to prototype and pilot this Framework.

Our regular 'Air and Share' activity was led by Professor Ruth Taylor and gave TLG members the opportunity to network with each other, share their year 1 achievements and success and use colleagues as a sounding board to talk through challenges or points of concern.

As sector refines new ways of teaching, learning and working, we start year 2 with aspirations that Resilient Learning Communities will continue to help the sector respond to, and emerge stronger, from the pandemic.

We are working on a Themes activity calendar for 2021-22 and we will be keeping that updated regularly as we confirm events and activities across the range of Theme work. We will let you know as soon as it's available. We are delighted to be ending session 2021-22 with an Enhancement Conference on the **8 and 9 June 2022** so do please save the dates in your diary. We are looking forward to sharing Theme learning and collaborating with you to deliver an inspiring and lively event.

TLG is a group central to delivering the Resilient Learning Communities Theme. The group leads, supports and evaluates the work undertaken for the Theme. Please get in touch with your TLG [institutional staff and student representatives](#), [Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee](#) representative or [QAA Scotland](#) if you want to know more and get involved in Enhancement Theme activity.