End of Year 2 Report for Abertay University

The key purposes of this report are to:
- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

We have added:
Ms Elley Petrie, CEO Abertay Students’ Association. This will help add some continuity from the student representation aspect of our work.
Dr Kehinde Oduyemi, Academic Curriculum Manager and Project Lead of our project to support Module Leaders in using evidence
Dr Cornelia Doerich-Stavridis, Senior Lecturer in the Division of Natural and Built Environment and Project Lead of our project to support Programme Leaders

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

Activities proposed at start of year and update on progress:
Workshops and focus groups on staff and student needs re evidence

Still underway, will not complete until Annual Reporting cycle is concluded in January 2020. We have held a number of workshops with our Programme Leaders. One of which was externally facilitated and covered Programme Leader development holistically, including consideration of evidence. We are holding a workshop for Programme Leaders when the annual reporting data is available to support this group with their annual programme reports. A joint project between Teaching and Learning Enhancement, Registry and Planning is working with Heads of Division on how to support their use of evidence in annual reporting. So far, this has consisted of interviews with Heads of Division about their annual reporting practice, the evidence they receive centrally, additional evidence they would like to receive centrally and how to support them in writing the reports. A programme of support will be put place over the summer. Finally,
we will be supporting module leaders in evidencing their module level changes and evaluation of changes. So far, we have collected data about evidence sources used by academics more generally (see Abertay Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund projects re evaluating classroom practice) and we are using this to deliver workshops and written resources for module leaders.

Creation of resources which are evaluated
Not yet created.

Abertay Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund pedagogic projects
Still being completed, the majority of projects will be completed by the 31 July 2019. One of these projects is around evidence used by academics when evaluating their classroom practice. We have surveyed academic staff about which sources of evidence they use and find useful and are following this up over the next few weeks with focus groups. This project will allow us to identify practices used by academics, particularly those used during and at the end of teaching sessions and create a resource bank of techniques for sharing. This will be particularly useful for our early career academics. We will also be able to identify which sources of evidence academic staff are finding difficult to work with and support staff development and resources where appropriate.

Student experience consultants to work with staff in improving practice being led by the Students’ Association as well as a student-focused strand of enhancement themes work
The Student experience consultants project has been successful with 6? Projects funded this year ranging from “walking tutorials/supervision” to students who have been on placement supporting students who will be going on placement. This work is not funded by the Enhancement Themes but its work is being evaluated to add to our evidence-base about how to support student learning and pedagogic research into this. The student-led strand is currently holding workshops around the use of student feedback through module surveys and closing the feedback loop and also on how the SA can communicate changes made as a result of feedback from the student body better.

Learning and Teaching Conference on the theme of “Learning through co-design”, 16-17 October 2018
The conference was very successful with around 90 delegates of which 30 were external to Abertay from all over the UK. Attendee feedback was obtained using Evasys during the conference and showed that attendees found the conference thought-provoking and wanted to know more about play and co-design. This is something for us to take forward.

Collaborative cluster work and cross-institutional work
We have been involved in the collaborative cluster work re Programme Leaders and hosted the final symposium in May 2019. We have been liaising with GCU and Strathclyde to build on their work on collecting baseline data on the needs of Programme Leaders in their use of data. We have also led the collaborative cluster on Intangibles which is reported on separately.

Reviewing of the University strategy, informed by evidence from internal and external sources offering opportunities for engagement with staff and students
This is still in progress.

In addition, we have used the data from the Jisc Digital Tracker work which collected data from staff and students re their digital experience at Abertay in Spring/Summer 2018. We employed a student intern in the Summer and Autumn of 2018 to analyse the data. This analysis was used as part of our process of procuring a new VLE and to support decisions being made in how to effectively develop our new VLE. It has also supported staff and
student development in digital literacies. The new VLE is currently being rolled out and we will conduct baseline work re staff usage of this in 2019/20.

We also have analysed Abertay Student-Led Teaching Award nominations between 2015-2018. The aim of the study was to identify what student’s consider to be excellent practice in teaching, employability and assessment. We will be extending this analysis to include the 2019 nominations and using this data to inform some of the content of our Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) which is our early career staff development programme (successful completion is a mandatory condition of probation and leads to recognition as FHEA). We have already used some of the nominees and winners to support learning by delivering sessions on the programme.

A recent ATLEF-supported project on ‘Supporting the pregnant student – analysing experiences’ has been submitted as an Advance-HE case study; and the evidence base around the use of a ‘LinkedIn style’ webfolio for enhancing student employability is the subject of a JISC case study (in press). The community engagement activity of Abertay sport students on placement featured in a GuildHE report evidencing the socioeconomic value of sport and exercise science students. The merit of our work in relation to Embedding Race Equality in the Curriculum has led to a number of invited speaker requests (Holyrood Forum, Advance HE) to showcase how the data gathered in the early stages of an Advance HE Strategic Enhancement Project has been used to drive change in respect of accessible and inclusive curricula (we are the only Scottish HEI to be awarded the Race Equality Chartermark).

The early findings in respect of our ‘Walk, Talk, Learn’ project was presented under the auspices of ‘Building HE Health Partnerships – Cross-Institutional Collaboration’ to the Association of National Teaching Fellows in March 2019.

**Dissemination of work**

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

Our conference provided a vehicle for dissemination of some work through presentations/worships and posters. The keynote presentations are available on Abertay’s internet site [https://www.abertay.ac.uk/about/working-at-abertay/teaching-and-learning-enhancement-conference-2018/](https://www.abertay.ac.uk/about/working-at-abertay/teaching-and-learning-enhancement-conference-2018/). All posters were made available internally through our intranet conference pages.

We share outcomes of our enhancement themes work internally through intranet pages and monthly workshops. A particularly well-attended workshop was based on the Abertay Teaching and Learning Fund (ATLEF) project on group work from the student perspective. We also promoted the findings from the JISC digital tracker survey when discussing the new VLE at workshops and seminars. However, we are still considering how to make the outcomes of our work more widely known, particularly with those who may not attend seminars etc.
### Inter-institutional collaboration

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.*

We have been able to use the practice of other institutions and in particular have found our discussions with UWS about their annual monitoring data to be particularly useful. This has helped shape our thinking about what kind of data is useful, how it can be presented and how to support colleagues in their annual reporting. This journey was presented at the TLG meeting in December. The main challenges have been time and also knowledge of relevant practice elsewhere. If we are unaware of activity in other institutions then we do not know we can collaborate with them. This is where networks such as TLG are so important. As part of the NUS, the Students’ Association also benefits from a network of other institutional information and feeds this back when and where appropriate, including visiting other Students’ Associations to share practice.

### Collaborative cluster

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?*

We have participated in the collaborative cluster work on programme leaders. We have attended the symposia and participated through presentations and the “fireside chat”. We have also engaged in finding out practice from other institutions re their baseline work on programme leader needs to incorporate into our own baselining work. The benefits including being able to build on the work of others, sharing ideas and having a network of people to call upon to discuss related issues. The main challenge is time.

Dr Alastair Robertson has also led a collaborative cluster project “Beyond the metrics: charting the intangible aspects of enhancement in the age of accountability” in collaboration with Edinburgh Napier University and the University of West of England. This project has been very successful at engaging the sector both in Scotland and the rest of the UK through a series of participatory workshops and the project is now at the final analysis and reporting stage with scheduled completion at the end of July 2019.

### Sector-wide work

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?*

Abertay has participated in all events and contributed to sessions e.g. by delivering presentations/workshops where appropriate. The Director of TLE has also been fully engaged as Vice Chair of SHEEC.

The benefits have included enhancing our knowledge and understanding which can then be used in developing our practice. As well as the benefits articulated in early sections about networking, sharing practice and learning from others (both in terms of mistakes and successes). The challenges are competing priorities for people and potentially travel. This was a positive with the webinars which enabled engagement with key ideas but did not require time out of the office.
Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

Staff have been supported in a number of ways. We have disseminated information e.g. sector workshops/webinars etc. not just generally but also with targeted dissemination where we are aware of staff/students with specific interests. We have provided funding for travel and also had discussions with line managers about the importance of the theme and theme engagement from a staff and institutional perspective. This is important when staff have competing demands being made on their time and need the support of their management to give them time to engage in enhancement theme work. Staff have attended the webinars and the data landscape resources have been discussed/demonstrated in a number of fora. Over the next few months we have a programme of work on upskilling staff which has emerged from our project work on staff use of resources. This upskilling work will be conducted at module leader level, programme leader level and Head of Division level. It is recognised that staff at each of these levels need to use different data for different purposes and therefore a series of bespoke workshops and online resources are being created. The data landscape materials on the Enhancement Themes websites are being used as part of the materials for these. We would be very happy to share them with the sector when our work is completed at the end of 2019.

The Students’ Association has been training and supporting student reps and will be specifically working on upskilling students in the use of data during 2019/20. The SA has also been engaged in a democratic review which will also be implemented in 2019/20. This will also give another avenue for working with students to understand and interpret the data which is appropriate to them in their representative roles.

Processes

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

This report will be distributed through our committee structures. Elements will be disseminated on our intranet pages and will also be used to form the basis of discussions with academics and management. The report will be used by the institutional Enhancement Themes team to plan our work for the final year of the theme. The full report will also be on our intranet site.

We have tried to widen the pool of staff and students involved in theme related work as well as spread work around the institutional team e.g. partnering more experienced pedagogic researchers with those newer to this field of enquiry. Where appropriate, we have asked those involved in theme-related work to join the institutional team if they were not already members. We have tried to be more focused in our work, particularly compared to previous years and to work on a smaller number of projects but with more depth and with an eye to ensuring capacity to evaluate theme-related work.
### Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light-touch evaluations:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None have been completed yet due to the timings of this work and this report. For example, the recommendations re learning spaces are being implemented over this summer.</td>
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<tr>
<th>In-depth evaluation projects:</th>
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<tr>
<td>At present we do not have evidence relating to the short-term and medium-term impacts due to the timings of the activities and this report. However, we believe we are on track to achieve all our impacts.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Our key learning points from the Theme evaluation work centre around showing whether activities have worked rather than reporting on whether they have taken place or not. We may do an activity as set out in our planning, but we need to move beyond this to determining whether the activity actually achieved what we set out to achieve. However, this involves collecting the correct information right from the start of projects e.g. baseline data so that we can make comparisons during the project and afterwards. The work led by Liz has allowed us to think more strategically about how we evidence the impact of what we do and build it into project work.

### Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

It would be useful for evaluation templates to be shared by the start of the academic year in order for us to build the appropriate evaluation mechanisms into our work. As far as Abertay is concerned, the final year will focus on completion of existing projects and work on supporting students’ use of data.

Possible topics for the new Theme might include:

- Equality and Diversity
- Education for Sustainable Development
- Mental health in Universities and its impact on teaching and learning
- The 4th industrial revolution and higher education eg. HE in a robotic age/Me and My Robot/The Virtual Academic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Author:</th>
<th>Julie Blackwell Young</th>
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<td>Date:</td>
<td>7th June 2019</td>
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End of Year 2 Report for University of Aberdeen

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

### Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

The Dean of Postgraduate Taught Studies for Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business has left the University. He was not replaced on the Steering Group. We were unable to identify a postgraduate (taught) student representative for the Steering Group for Year 2.

### Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

### What has been achieved in Year 2?

**Institutional Evidence Project Year 2** (to promote a culture of learning from others, innovating practice, and evaluating, and disseminating, the impact and outcomes)

*Introduction of the Principal’s Teaching Excellence Award (PTEA)*

The first PTEA was launched in autumn 2018 to encourage and support staff to enhance their teaching through sharing examples of effective and innovative practice. Staff were invited to submit a case study, which required them to reflect on their teaching and evidence the educational impact of their practice. Twenty-nine members of staff submitted a case study and four monetary prizes were awarded (one winner and three runners up).

The Award was well received and feedback from the winners can be found [here](select Principal’s Teaching Excellence Award). A meeting has been arranged with Schools’ Directors of Teaching to provide feedback about Schools’ engagement with this, and other initiatives put in place to encourage staff to enhance, evaluate and disseminate their practice. It is hoped that this will encourage schools with lower participation rates to encourage their staff to take part.
Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP)

The LTEP was established to encourage the introduction of enhancement activities in learning and teaching and to disseminate effective practice throughout the Institution. The 2018/19 LTEP launched in autumn and aligned with the Evidence for Enhancement Theme with the focus on how generating evidence (either qualitative or quantitative) might be used to improve the student experience. This year the Institution matched the QAA funding which was available. Sixteen proposals were submitted of which nine were funded. Projects include: the introduction of mindfulness into teaching Chemistry; evaluating the Social-cultural coaching for careers and employability; developing an open text book for Community Music and exploring the effect of pre-submission feedback on student engagement and performance. This is another initiative which will be discussed at a meeting with School Directors of Teaching with a view to encourage lower participation areas to engage.

The Postgraduate (Taught) Student (PGT) Experience

The project to investigate the sources of evidence that could be used to identify areas for development to enhance the PGT experience has continued in Year 2, building on the institutional PGT Experience Survey which closed in 2017/18. A paper was brought through the University’s Committee structure and finally discussed, and approved, by Senate on 15th May 2019. The paper used three key sources of data, the PGT student survey, degree attainment and retention rates and leavers’ destination data as mechanisms for evaluating the PGT student experience centrally. Whilst this has routinely been carried out for undergraduate students it has not previously, in this Institution, been done for PGT students. The paper also highlighted several PGT student experience enhancement plans that have been developed at School and Institutional level.

Using Technology to Improve the Student Experience

School Consultations

A programme of consultations with academic Schools was undertaken over the course of the year to support Schools to plan how they will make better use of MyAberdeen, the institutional virtual learning environment (VLE). This is also in preparation for a more significant change to Blackboard Learn Ultra Course View for the Academic Year 2019/20. Five Schools have been identified to pilot this move, and training and central eLearning resource has already been allocated to help implement Schools’ plans. The strategy to encourage a step change in the use of the VLE using the change to Blackboard Learn Ultra as a catalyst is one of our in-depth evaluations (see Evaluation Section).

Digital Badge Project

To build upon our preliminary digital badge activities we have received approval from the University to formulate the two pilot badge initiatives, using the digital badge functionality platform in the University’s VLE. In the co-curriculum, we plan to reward and recognise Career Mentors (volunteer employers) for supporting students over a six-month period in their career development learning, as part of the University’s Career Mentoring Programme. In the curriculum, we plan to embed in the General Practice (GP) Enhanced MBChB Programme a progressive badge award. Students completing the ‘GP options’ will be eligible for the GP Recognition Digital Badge Award.

National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS)

The NTFS requires staff to consider, and evidence, the impact that they have had on student outcomes and the teaching profession in HE. At the time of writing our plan for Year 2, the University of Aberdeen had recently engaged with the Scheme and had developed a pathway (now reviewed and revised based on feedback) to support a group of potential nominees to work towards fellowship over 2018/19 or beyond. This has involved collaboration with UHI through the organisation of a series of shared events, including two with external NTFS experts, to promote the scheme and support potential applicants. The University now has a number of staff who are involved with the process with the view to submitting NTFS applications in the short to medium term.

Measuring Impact: Closing the Feedback Loop

A university-wide project was undertaken to determine reasons for a lack of student engagement with the Institution’s process for gathering student feedback on their courses. A student intern was employed to undertake qualitative research into both Student and Staff views of the Institution’s Student Course Evaluation Form (SCEF) and to identify good practice both within the Institution and
The common theme which emerged from the focus groups was a fundamental lack of understanding of the SCEF process itself. A report from the SCEF working group, recommending changes to the process, was brought through the University’s Committee structure and finally discussed, and approved, by Senate on 15th May 2019. As a result, new guidance has been developed for staff, and is currently being prepared for students, on how the system can best be used, what its purpose is and how student engagement in the process could be enhanced. This project is one of our in-depth evaluations (see Evaluation Section).

Unintended Outcomes
We were surprised to see the amount of use of Social Media during our Annual Academic Symposium. We will investigate using this further to raise awareness of Theme-related activities in Year 3.

Successes
- We have seen a gradual change in attitude, and an increase in activity, relating to the enhancement of teaching and the consideration given to gathering evidence and measuring impact. This is helped by the introduction of initiatives such as the NTFS and the PTEA.
- The work to look at the Postgraduate Student Experience has been well received, both internally and nationally.
- We have contributed two excellent student case studies (see Sector-wide work) to the Enhancement Themes website.
- We have been pleased with the level and quality of student engagement in cross-institutional work across Years 1 and 2 of the Theme.

Dissemination of work
Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

In Year 2 we continued to disseminate our activities and outputs through various channels including:

- Internal Enhancement Themes webpages
- Collecting examples of current use of evidence through new Good Practice case study award.
- A new round of the Institution’s Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme which launched in autumn 2018. The Programme provided an opportunity to raise awareness about the Theme and provide funding to encourage evaluation of existing practice with a view to dissemination when further funding is available.
- The introduction of new initiatives (such as the PTEA and NTFS) promoted through School contacts and the institutional weekly staff eZine.
- Existing committee structures and institutional task forces, namely: The Positive Outcomes; Feedback & Assessment and Retention Task Forces.
- The University-wide weekly eZine which is sent to all staff. The online document includes a new regular ‘On our own doorstep’ feature.
- Theme related events e.g. Annual Academic Development Symposium, Annual Learning & Teaching Network event, monthly Learning & Teaching Network and Pedagogical Enquiry Network meetings.
- External dissemination by attending Enhancement Theme events and inviting other institutions to attend our Annual Symposium.
- Dissemination to the student body via our four student representatives on the internal Enhancement Theme Institutional Team, which include the Education Officer from the Aberdeen University Students’ Association who disseminates to School Convenors/Class Representatives.
- Two student-led case studies made available to the community through the "Students and the Data Landscape" project.
- The current PGCert Higher Education Learning & Teaching cohort.

### Inter-institutional collaboration

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

We have successfully collaborated with UHI to provide development and support for the first cohorts of staff from both institutions to engage with the NTFS.

### Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

**Distance and Sense of Belonging Cluster**

We have engaged with the Distance and Sense of Belonging Cluster which will involve the development of an Online Toolkit for Online Tutors. The University of Aberdeen will be involved in the piloting the toolkit study.

**Learning Analytics Cluster**

We continue to engage with this cluster, most recently by contributing to the work of the project investigating student views on learning analytics.

**Benefits and Challenges**

Whilst we understand the benefits to being involved in collaborative cluster work, it is not always possible to undertake this in addition to the existing university activities and commitments. This year we have had to be realistic about what can be achieved and have chosen to focus resource on institution-specific activities. Aside from resource constraints, we are at a geographical disadvantage and it may be helpful, in future, to consider and encourage regional clusters.

### Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

### Students and the Data Landscape

We were delighted to submit two student-led case studies to share how our students have used data and evidence to drive forward two key institutional projects, namely:

- **What do staff and students really think about the student course evaluation form (SCEF)?**
  Based on the data gathered from these focus groups, our SCEFs will be revised and there will be a set of new institutional guidelines and dedicated webpages for academics and students regarding closing the feedback loop.
- **Supporting a step change in the use of a virtual learning environment (VLE) from a student perspective**
Closing the Feedback Loop

Two University of Aberdeen students were part of the Year 1 student-led project on Closing the Feedback Loop. They contributed good practice from the University of Aberdeen and brought examples from other institutions back to Aberdeen. They were also integral members of the SCEF working group (see Measuring Impact in Activity/Outcomes section above).

Focus on Graduate Skills

Staff from the University will be attending the ‘Focus On: Graduate Skills – Sharing Practice’ and ‘Focus On: Graduate Skills – Shaping Strategy’ events in Glasgow, 5th and 6th June. We will also be delivering two sessions, which focus on Graduate Attribute Frameworks: Institutional and Universal Models for Skills Development and in partnership with the Scottish Institute for Enterprise (SIE) we will deliver an overview of our engagement with the new Scottish Innovative Student Award (SISA).

We have provided data to support the ‘Graduate Skills: Students Views’ and ‘Graduate Skills: Graduate and Employer Views’ projects, which will analyse the views of current students, graduates, and employers on the skills developed by students at higher education institutions in Scotland.

We are keen to engage with the ‘Focus On: Graduate Skills’ project to further enable all students irrespective of their background to access the full range of skills development opportunities offered in higher education and to explore the digital skills required in the era of big data and social media.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

Staff Engagement with the Theme

- Staff have been encouraged to engage with Theme activities by (i) attending internal events, such as the Annual Academic Symposium and the Annual Learning & Teaching event, both aligned with the Theme, and (ii) being provided with funding to attend external Enhancement Theme events such as Collaborative Cluster meetings and to be involved with other strands such as ‘Focus on’.
- Staff who belong to the Learning & Teaching Network (aimed at academic staff on a scholarship track) attend monthly meetings, several of which have encouraged them to think about evaluating their practice.
- Staff have also been provided with funding to produce posters for the Annual Academic Symposium, and have contributed case studies which feature in the new Good Practice Hub.

Student Engagement with the Theme

- Students contributed to the Annual Academic Development Symposium and have also been funded to attend sector-wide Enhancement Theme events such as the ‘Students and the Data Landscape’ project.
- Students at all levels are represented on the Institutional Theme Steering Group. In 2017-18 the University formally approved this role to be recognised on a student’s Enhanced Degree Transcript leading to increased student engagement with the Theme.
Plans to Upskill Staff

- A new process to identify and recognise good practice focussing on evaluation and impact was launched in autumn 2018, including the new PTFA.
- Engagement with the NTFS is helping to encourage staff to consider the Scheme as a path for their own development, well in advance of an application being made.
- An institutional Pedagogical Research Network now meets monthly.
- An outcome from the working group looking at the SCEF process was the need for awareness raising and training for staff to use the current systems more effectively.

Processes

*Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.*

*What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?*

*How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?*

The Institutional Theme Steering Group is a useful vehicle to oversee and support the Theme, particularly as it includes four student representatives covering undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Although using existing committee structures to raise awareness and collect examples of practice has been useful, this could be extended, particularly at discipline level. This is just one example of where sharing responsibility across the Steering Group could be improved to widen the reach of Theme activity.

This report will be distributed to the Institutional Theme Steering Group and to other relevant committees including the University Committee for Teaching & Learning.

Evaluation

*List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).*

*Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.*

*What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?*

Light Touch Evaluations (see attached forms)

1. Creating a good practice culture/Disseminating good practice (Large scale, light touch)
2. Digital Badge Project (small scale, light touch)
3. PGT Student Experience

In-depth Evaluations

*Review of SCEF (large scale, in-depth)*

A working group was set up to review the institutional mechanism for students to feedback on their courses with a view to improving student engagement with the process. Staff and student focus groups indicated where problems with the current process lie. The evidence gathered by the focus groups indicates the baseline understanding of the course evaluation process. New guidance has been produced for staff that clearly shows the flexibility of the online process and empowers staff to use that flexibility. The new process will only be used in the next academic year so any impact of the changes made will only be seen the following year.
**Enhancing the VLE (large scale, in-depth)**

Several student focus groups have been facilitated over the previous months, discussing how students use the VLE and what they would like to see in the VLE which would enhance the teaching and learning experience. Following on from this a series of staff workshops have been scheduled for those moving to the updated view of the VLE. The first of these is ‘content and communication’ where an emphasis is placed upon considering the structure and organisation of teaching and learning material and thinking about which communication tools to use to support their students. Supporting the workshops are school working groups, which consider the specific priorities of the school, which can then be disseminated at the workshops. The next stage of the process is focussing upon assessment and feedback, in discussion with the working group and delivering appropriate workshops. Throughout all the sessions there are discussions about good practice and the collation of frequently asked questions and examples, to help inform guidelines and good practice in course design and delivery in the VLE. We are meeting the short-term benefits identified in the plans by encouraging staff to think about the design and delivery of their courses, along with increasing awareness of engagement and communication in the VLE, whilst making content more accessible. (This is after receiving feedback from student focus groups and delivering workshops on ‘content and communication’.)

**Key Learning Points from the Evaluation Work led by Liz Thomas**

- The Theme evaluation work has helped us to focus on impact. This is a challenge in the kinds of projects which we are evaluating as it is not easy to identify reliable measures, particularly in any kind of direct way.
- Whilst it is useful to have a structure to our evaluations, there must be compromise between academic good practice and the reality of stretched resource within institutions.
- There appears, at times, to be conflict between what we consider to be the use of evidence to change practice, and how we evaluate the impact of that changed practice against the original evidence.

**Looking ahead**

*At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.*

We, and other institutions, are still trying to get to grips with this Theme as it has been a challenge to identify clearly focussed activities for this very broad topic. That said, it has given us the drive to focus on the need for evidence and to consider impact. This has given new momentum to our overarching objective which is to promote a culture of learning from others, trying new ways of doing things, taking risks, evaluating practice and disseminating the impact and outcomes to other colleagues.

In the final year of the Theme we will continue with our bigger projects, such as the step change in VLE use alongside the move to an enhanced Blackboard Ultra Course View. This will involve supporting five pilot schools and gathering feedback from staff and students. The SCEF project will reach its implementation phase which will include further evaluation. The 2019/20 LTEP will facilitate dissemination of evidence generated and gathered over the course of the previous two years. We will also explore the use of social media to encourage engagement with the Theme, perhaps by employing a student intern.

At our final Steering Group meeting of Year 2 we discussed institutional agendas which might feed into possible topics for the new Theme such as, student support (mental health in particular), widening access, digital skills and technology to support the student learning experience, the Scottish dimension and preparing for the future HE landscape (including work-based learning, graduate apprenticeships & digital skills).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Author:</th>
<th>Professor Kath Shennan, Chair of Evidence for Enhancement Steering Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>31 May 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
End of Year 2 Report for University of Dundee

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

Changes to the team highlighted in bold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional team, University of Dundee</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional lead</td>
<td>Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&amp;T, School of Humanities</td>
<td>Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&amp;T, School of Humanities</td>
<td>Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&amp;T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLG staff representative</td>
<td>Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&amp;T</td>
<td>Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&amp;T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLG staff representative alternate</td>
<td>Lorraine Anderson, Academic Skills Centre</td>
<td>Lorraine Anderson, Academic Skills Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLG student representative</td>
<td>Sean O’Connor, DUSA president</td>
<td>Charlie Kleboe-Rogers, DUSA Vice-President, Academia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLG student representative alternate/Team member</td>
<td>Ellen Brooks, Vice-president, DUSA</td>
<td>Sofia Skevofylaka, DUSA president</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHHEC/TLG Team member</td>
<td>Karl Leydecker, Vice-Principal, Learning and Teaching</td>
<td><strong>Semester 1 only</strong> Karl Leydecker, Vice-Principal, Learning and Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member</td>
<td>Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel, Lecturer, Psychology</td>
<td>Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel, Lecturer, Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member</td>
<td>Linda McSwiggan, Senior Lecturer, Nursing</td>
<td>Linda McSwiggan, Senior Lecturer, Nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member</td>
<td>Naomi Jeffery, Senior Planning Officer, Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Naomi Jeffery, Senior Planning Officer, Strategic Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member, alternate</td>
<td>Wesley Rennison, Director of Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Wesley Rennison to act as alternate for Naomi Jeffery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member</td>
<td>Lesley McLellan, Director of Quality and Academic Standards</td>
<td><strong>Semester 1 only</strong>, Lesley McLellan, Director of Quality and Academic Standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

During Year 2 of the theme we worked across the institution to deliver on activities outlined in our Year 2 plan. The activities outlined below correspond to the ones in our Year 2 plan.

We have funded 4 projects on Distance Learning. Two are led by the School of Education and Social Work, one by the School of Humanities, and one by the Director of the Professional Doctorate in collaboration with Organizational and Professional Development. The projects are now under way with a completion date of 31 August 2019. Therefore, their impact will be assessed in Year 3 of the theme.

Project titles:

- Distance and Belonging: How can the School of Humanities enhance representation for Distance Learning students?
- Global Student Experience Project
- Embedding resilience for distance learning and part-time research postgraduates
- Co-creating a Platform to Facilitate an Online Learning Community area for the Master of Education programme

We have created a data champions group. Membership includes Schools, Professional Services and the student body, though student involvement has been affected, inevitably, by the handover of DUSA representatives.

The aims of the Data Champions Group are as follows:

- To strengthen awareness of the theme across Schools.
- To promote the use of data as evidence for enhancement in Schools and across the Institution.

- To act as a point of contact for colleagues wishing to engage with data for the purposes of enhancement.

- To share good practice, for example by disseminating or showcasing data-driven projects or interventions that have led or can lead to enhancement.

- To work with student representatives to identify opportunities to enhance data literacy.

Underlying these aims, our greater goal is to contribute to the University's aim to improve retention and progression.

We have designed and implemented a single Module Evaluation Questionnaire for use across all Schools and programmes. By asking the same questions on all our modules, we will be able to collect qualitative and quantitative data in a way that will enable evaluation at institutional level. Any underlying trends that emerge will help us to design interventions where necessary, and to share good practice. The MEQ will feed into module, programme and School enhancement reports.

The retention and progression working group will meet later this month in order to analyse relevant data and design appropriate interventions.

Schools have now appointed Senior Advisers and we have established an SA forum so they can meet and share best practice. To date, no one from the institutional team has had the chance to liaise with this group, but this has been marked as an area of priority. Senior Advisers, with support from the TLG, can encourage and enable their colleagues (academic advisers) to use data such as attendance records, non-submission of work, declining performance in assessment etc to take action and offer extra support to students who need it.

Projects funded under Year 1 have had results showcased through poster presentations at the Scholarship Symposium in May 2019. We are currently collecting the self-evaluation forms and planning a relevant issue of Highlighter newsletter in order to disseminate their findings further.

Power BI presentations have taken place across Schools, and the data champions group continues to work with registry to create and disseminate useful and user-friendly datasets. These provide information on retention, progression, and attainment. This information is also used by the Data Champions to support colleagues and demonstrate ow data can be used for the purposes of enhancement.

We delivered 5 OPD workshops, running twice each over the two Semesters. Their impact is being evaluated, as reported in our evaluation plan.

- **Bulletproof Your Data:** Learn about internal guidance and support on data protection and data security to help keep you, and the data you work with, safe and secure.

- **Dashboard Confessional:** Learn about the dashboards, which offer a wealth of summarised data on our students and their journey within the University

- **Enter the Matrix:** Learn about how the league tables are constructed, who uses them and why they’re important.

- **Navigating Numbers:** Learn about the data available through ARMI on prospective students, from first contact to enrolment.

- **Our Students’ Voice:** Learn about the various surveys we use to gather student feedback
The impact of these activities is expected to be gradual and cumulative, leading to culture change as more staff and students become confident in the use of data and other forms of evidence. Key information, such as NSS results and retention rates for 2018-19 will not be available until later in the year (July and late October respectively). In the meantime, our current data on retention and progression have enabled us to convene the Retention and Progression Group. The group is asking Schools to analyse their data and submit relevant action plans to enhance retention and progression. Plans will be submitted at the start of the new academic year.

The funding of projects in the School of Humanities and OPD noted earlier in this report demonstrates greater engagement with the theme across the institution compared to the applications we received during year 1.

The training and support that our student representatives are receiving from DUSA is leading to increased engagement with data. For example, the School of Humanities student president has requested data that might demonstrate correlation between attendance and attainment and is working with the Humanities data champion to learn more and engage other students. Also, School Partnership Action Plans are currently being drawn up. These include KPIs which encourage students and academics to engage with data in order to implement and evidence impact.

*If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.*

**School Partnership Action Plans will be drafted during July.**

**Funds not yet allocated to projects will be spent by the end of July and an update sent to supplement this report.**

The **Institutional Lead will start work with the Senior Advisers group to encourage their engagement with data to aid retention and progression.**

Feedback on the OPD courses will be collected for the purposes of evaluation.

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**Dissemination of work**

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

**Presentations at our annual new staff induction event and at Scholarship Symposium reached a wide audience.**

As part of the induction event, the institutional lead introduced the student dashboards and showcased ways in which academic staff at all levels can use evidence for enhancement purposes. Staff will be better able to find and use data when compiling annual module monitoring forms, for example.

The Scholarship Symposium included a presentation by the institutional lead on ‘Evidencing Student Engagement.’ The presentation showcased qualitative and quantitative data and suggested ways in which the data can be used to promote retention and enhance attainment.

**Poster presentations at the Symposium disseminated the findings of projects funded during Year 1 of the theme. They demonstrated ways in which evidence can be used to enhance the student experience. Evaluation forms are appended at the end of this report.**
OPD courses on data handling have been a good way of disseminating resources such as student dashboards. We are currently collecting evidence in the form of attendance and feedback from participants.

A student-produced video, funded in year 1, on the importance of attendance and the role of the adviser, has been shared widely using all available internal platforms such as email, newsletters, VLEs and websites. The video can be accessed here:

https://vimeo.com/315921157
**Inter-institutional collaboration**

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

We have contributed to data landscape resources through the work of the Scottish planners. The benefits include greater understanding of the relationship between professional services and academics. The main challenge remains how to reach a wider audience and get more engagement across the institution from academic staff.

**Collaborative cluster**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

Naomi Jeffery and Erica Hensens have made key contributions to Learner Analytics through the webinars Hunting for Evidence in the Data Landscape. The main challenge is getting input from across the sector in order to expand and improve on our current resources.

Shona Johnston has continued her work on the Focus on Graduate Skills initiative, making contributions to sector-wide events and sharing good practice.

Susie Schofield, who is the University officer for Distance Learning, has contributed to the Distance and Sense of Belonging cluster.

Shaleph O’Neill, Associate Dean for Research at the School of Art and Design contributed to the Creative Disciplines cluster.

Having academics and members of our professional services involved in collaborative cluster work gives us a wider, more holistic view of the challenges and opportunities associated with the use of evidence at institutional and sector level.

**Sector-wide work**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

We have participated in events relating to Responding to the Student Voice. The benefits include raised awareness and deeper understanding of issues surrounding the student voice. Challenges include co-ordination; who attends such events, who they report to afterwards, and how their notes or findings are disseminated further.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

DUSA have introduced the Student Voice Support Officer (SVSO) initiative. We have evidence from SSLCs and Annual Programme Monitoring reports that we are seeing good student engagement that includes raised awareness of the availability and potential uses of data by students and staff.

We have provided platforms for the dissemination of theme-related activity (induction, scholarship symposium, Highlighter newsletter).

We have offered funding to staff and students to support smaller scale projects.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The institutional team has remained the main body for organising and delivering the theme. This year has seen the departure of our Vice Principal for Learning and Teaching (and sector theme leader) and the appointment of Prof Lynn Kilbride as the interim VP, as well as the arrival of our new director for Quality and Academic Standards, Erica Hensens.

The University of Dundee will train staff to use Teams for collaboration, which will enhance our performance and facilitate collaboration.

We are seeing an increased appetite for data as evidence, which is very encouraging. This in turn creates demand for more data, and we are learning that academics need to work more closely with planners and colleagues at registry.

As we collect more data in the form of student feedback, we remain alert to the problem of survey fatigue.

Learning & Teaching and Quality & Academic Standards committees at School level provide a useful mechanism for communication and dissemination of Themes-related activity.

We are also learning that we have more engagement with the theme from academics on T&S contracts who can see the theme’s relevance to their scholarship more clearly. It can be challenging to find ways to reach more academics on T&R contracts, especially in the lead-up to the REF.

The handover of student representatives on the Themes Institutional team needs to be planned and managed soon after DUSA election results to ensure a smooth transition.

This report will be shared through Senate L&T and QAS committees.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

So far we have received four evaluation forms on projects we funded using Year 1 funds. The other projects have been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances, but all will be completed and will report in due course.

The ones that we have received can be found at the end of this report. They are:

- Enhancing Teaching and Learning through the analysis of the Student Led Teaching Awards data.
- The Dundee Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship- a phenomenological exploration of the experiences of medical students.
- Making A Drama Out Of It! Improving the student experience through Forum Theatre.
- An evaluation study of the impact of lecture capture on the student experience and academic performance.

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

We are in the process of collecting data on the OPD courses, so evaluation is starting.

The Retention Forum will meet next week so that will be a key time to discuss evaluation. Actual retention data for 2018/19 will be made available in October 2019. We are in the process of procuring a new attendance monitoring system, so data collection will be easier and more data will be available. Therefore, we expect to be better able to measure the impact of attendance monitoring once we have implemented the new system.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

The need to have clearly defined measurable outcomes has helped us to gain clearer focus. Also, being invited to think about short, medium and longer-term impact has been very helpful as we start to think of the theme’s legacy. Articulating impact for the purposes of evaluation has the added benefit of producing a story that can help us to engage more colleagues across the institution with the theme.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

For the final year of the theme we need to think about dissemination, legacy and impact. Designing events to facilitate sharing across these issues will be helpful. I would like to see a theme that places special emphasis on taught postgraduate courses or considers the complexities of distance/online learning. However, I have not had the chance to discuss these ideas with the institutional team, so at the moment these are just my thoughts.

Report Author: Dr Aliki Varvogli

Date: 17/06/2019
End of Year 2 Report for Edinburgh Napier University

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

Dr Anne Tierney took over as Edinburgh Napier’s Institutional Lead in April 2019, after Dr Martha Caddell took up role at Heriot Watt University.

Katrina Swanton continues as the Vice Institutional Leader.

Dr Christine Haddow continues to support Programme Leaders cluster at national level and is working with Dr Jackie Brodie on the evaluation of the Belonging workstream at Edinburgh Napier University.

Professor Alyson Tobin, Vice Principal of Learning and Teaching, leads on Learning Analytics at Edinburgh Napier University.

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

We have made good progress in the development of a new resource for the University – a Programme Leader checklist – supported by a comprehensive resource on our University VLE (Moodle). This has been evidenced in a number of ways. The checklist was developed through wide-consultation and engagement across the University to gather and develop information to be included within the Moodle site. A positive, unintended outcome of the checklist is that requests have been made for a similar checklist to support Module Leaders. The Programme Leader checklist and supporting Moodle site is due to be launched in early 2019/20 academic session.

The Belonging and Community mini-projects have been successful in surfacing some innovative work done in Schools within Edinburgh Napier University, which could otherwise go unreported. In 2018-19, eight mini-projects were funded, each of which was designed to enhance student belonging at a local level within the institution. The reports for five of the
mini-projects have been submitted with this report, and forwarded to Liz Thomson Associates. While all of the mini-projects enhance the sense of belonging and community in a local sense, an outstanding example is The Big Read, which has developed its reach to the local community. Students have been working with the charity StreetReads to support homeless readers and collected and donated 1,000 books to the charity.

The Impact Case Study using the previous Enhancement Theme of Student Transitions as an example has been commissioned for work over summer 2019. The work will be completed by the end of 2019. The late start to this piece of work is due to staff changes in the Department of Learning and Teaching Enhancement early in 2019.

Learning Analytics scoping work at Edinburgh Napier University, led by Emma Farthing-Sykes, is now complete. Emma Farthing-Sykes has completed a report, which has been circulated internally. Decisions have been made on the direction to proceed, which includes a new project around curriculum management, and a new appointment has been made to take this forward. JISC learning analytic tools have been considered, but as an institution we are yet to make a decision on them. We have benefitted greatly from contact with the collaborative cluster, allowing us to benchmark ourselves against the sector and clarify our next steps.

Dissemination of work

Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

Programme Leaders

The method employed to consult widely in the development of the checklist and Moodle site has meant that many more staff have contributed to and become aware of the checklist as a resource for the University. In addition to including a wide range of voices to contribute to the project, the Moodle site identifies individuals with specific responsibility and/or expertise, so staff seeking support contact a person rather than a generic email address. This adds to the personal nature of interactions across the university, reinforcing a sense of belonging.

Belonging and Community Mini-Projects

In October 2018 we held a Belonging event at Edinburgh Napier University, at which a number of initiatives and projects ongoing in the institution. It was well attended by Edinburgh Napier staff and students, and external interested parties, and supported by a keynote from Kate Thomson, Birmingham City University. On the success of the event in 2018, we are planning a similar event for Autumn 2019. The focus of this event will be the reports of the findings of the mini projects. Several of the mini projects will also be represented at the Edinburgh Napier staff conference in June 2019.

We intend to release an issue of “The Bones”, Edinburgh Napier University's online newsletter, to highlight the successes of the current enhancement theme.
Inter-institutional collaboration

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

Dr Martha Caddell continues to look after this part of the work. She is now based at Heriot Watt University and has oversight of the inter-institutional collaboration.

The Universities of St Andrews, Glasgow and West of Scotland have shown interest in using the Edinburgh Napier model of The Big Read.

Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

Edinburgh Napier University is involved in a number of Clusters:

- Responding to the Student Voice: Communicating Impact (ENU represented by Ashley MacLean, ENSA)
- The Creative Disciplines (ENU represented by Pauline Miller-Judd, SACI)
- Beyond the Metrics: Charting the Intangible Aspects of Enhancement in the Age of Accountability (ENU represented by Dr Fiona Smart, DLTE)
- Evidence for Enhancement: Enhancing Programme Leadership Support (ENU was awarded additional QAAS funding to lead this collaborative cluster. ENU input is led by Martha Caddell, DLTE & Christine Haddow, SAS)

The benefits to cluster involvement are gaining a sector-wide view of the issues and challenges we face, and how we can support one another by the pursuit of common goals and identification of best and innovative practice. Involvement in leading a cluster enhances the reputation and visibility of Edinburgh Napier University and showcases the dedication of its staff to enhancing student learning and improving the student experience. The challenges, as always, are identifying models to continue the improvements made during the Enhancement Theme in an embedded and sustainable manner.

Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

Nicola Kivlichan and Christine Haddow presented the Beyond Student Surveys: Programme and Institutional Level Perspectives on Community and Belonging at the QAA Enhancement Themes Student Surveys day in April 2019.

Sector-wide involvement enhances the reputation of the institution. It also empowers and enhances individual staff, boosting their confidence and affirming the validity of their work. This Enhancement Theme is especially relevant as it recognises the contribution of professional services staff towards the student experience. The challenge here is to keep that momentum going beyond the life of the current Enhancement Theme, and to plan for the continued involvement of professional services staff in future Enhancement Themes.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.
One of our institutional successes is the work done on the **Belonging and community mini-projects**. Staff have been supported financially to carry out projects with their students, using a medium which best serves the local context. The Belonging mini-projects leads are also encouraged to disseminate their work. So far, we have organised a Belonging and Community event in 2018, with another planned for October 2019. We also encourage leads to present their work at our annual staff conference in June.

The Enhancement Theme has been valuable in encouraging staff to enhance their own practice and their students’ experience by encouraging them to identify their own solutions and projects. This is empowering to both parties, but is especially beneficial to students.

The “Lab Stars” project in the School of Computing was originally conceived as a digital project. However, on consultation with students, their suggestion was that the enhancement should be in the form of tangible materials, which shifted the focus of the project, although digital was also still employed.

The Graphic Design Reading Room was designed with second year students in mind, using mini-project funding to furnish a non-teaching communal space, into which they brought extra-curricular reading materials. The space was extended to first, and third year graphic design students who bought their way into the space by contributing to the reading materials, building a cross-year communal space, facilitating working between the year groups.

Exploring Language and Culture through Film also benefitted the student community by bringing together language students in a social situation to spend time together watching foreign language films. This project blurs the lines between academic and social, moving language learning into a social context.

Worldwide Napier gave students the opportunity to publish their own magazine, taking editorial and production decisions. As with the previous project, students were able to practice their language skills, and widen their network by calling on the services and talents of graphic design students to assist them with the production of the magazine. Students also had an impact outside Edinburgh Napier by making their magazine available to the community.

Building an Inclusive Programme for Scottish Ethnic Minority (SEM) Law Students used fourth year SEM law students to encourage all SEM law students to participate in events which addressed the preconceptions of law careers for SEM students. Findings have prompted staff to reconsider both the cultural and academic needs of their SEM students, in order to support them throughout their degree.

Recruit, Retain and Prosper: A Strategy for Men in Nursing and Midwifery supported men in nursing, connecting them with other students, staff, alumni and further education partners. The goal of the project was to minimise the social isolation felt by men in nursing by facilitating a community. The events run by the project team benefitted practising nurses as much as it did students.

The analysis of the **Belonging and Community mini-projects** has been a timely opportunity to allow two members of staff, Drs Christine Haddow and Jackie Brodie, to bring their disciplinary expertise into a teaching and learning context.

Dr Martha Caddell and Katrina Swanton led a workshop as part of a British Council funded project in Colombo, Sri Lanka and utilised the student voice cards produced through the Enhancement Theme to prompt discussion and debate during the workshop. These were very effective practical tools to generate rich and relevant conversation.
The legacy and impact of the previous ‘Student Transitions’ Theme remains apparent within the University. In 2014 as we began the process of recruiting an institutional working group, we recognized that the previous working group for the enhancement theme Developing and Supporting the Curriculum comprised staff who were already involved in a great many other university-wide strategic projects. Although this group held senior positions in the university which enabled them to take decisions and mobilise support to take forward the work of the enhancement theme, their availability to attend meetings and to contribute to the shape of the programme of work was often limited. This had the effect of limiting university wide involvement with the theme and of many outcomes being centrally devised, rather than originating from practitioners. Recruitment to the Student Transitions working group (known as the Theme Team) was targeted towards staff who had regular involvement as a key part of their role in supporting student transitions, rather than strategic oversight of the area. In promoting the opportunity to join the Theme Team, the Institutional Lead made the connection between participation with the Enhancement Theme and preparing submission for various categories of Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. Where previously senior staff in key functions of the university were themselves invited to join the institutional working group, this time we invited them to identify members of their team who would benefit from the opportunity to engage with the work of a university-wide project. This approach was successful, and at the first meeting of the Theme Team in addition to managers with key responsibilities for student transitions we were pleased to see many colleagues working in the area of student transitions and for whom this was their first opportunity to engage in a university-wide project. Several of those representatives used their experience in the Theme Team in their HEA submissions for Fellowship.

At our last institutional theme meeting, we discussed the application process for mini-projects. Although it was acknowledged that the process for obtaining funds was clear, it was felt that more attention needed to be paid to sustainability, and how projects would be maintained and built upon after the completion of the Enhancement Theme. This has prompted the team to think about bringing the mini-project leads together to discuss sustainability of projects, how we can use lessons learned from projects across the institution, and how we can support the further development and evolution of projects.

The PL checklist process of crowdsourcing information was particularly successful, both in terms of the breadth of knowledge that was harnessed within the institution, and the range of people who were involved in contributing to the work. This is in contrast to the more usual model of bringing together a working group to complete a task. The crowdsourcing approach to the PL checklist also brought a vibrancy to the project.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

The light touch evaluation projects which have been returned are:

- The Graphic Design Reading Room
- Exploring Language and Culture Through Film
- Recruit, Retain and Prosper: A strategy for men in nursing and midwifery at Edinburgh Napier University
- Worldwide Napier
- Building an Inclusive Programme: Scottish Ethnic Minority (SEM) Law Students and Understanding Barriers to Engagement

The projects have had an immediate effect on the local environment of students and staff, which have extended beyond the initial scope of the projects, enhancing the wider community. Impact in the medium term comes from: student ownership of the Graphic Design Reading Room, which now accommodates students from all year groups, the embedding of cultural and academic needs of SEM law students into their programme, networking opportunities for men in nursing between students, staff and alumni.

We have discussed longer term impact and goals at our institutional theme meeting and it is one of our priorities to provide opportunities for projects to grow and develop.

The key learning points from these projects are:

- The value of student inclusion
- The amount of good will that can be generated from modest funding
- The creativity of both staff and students to take these projects forward
- Being mindful of the isolation that students can experience and encouraging participation
- Encouraging cross-year groups to collaborate

The in-depth analysis is ongoing. Mini-projects is being taken forward by two academics, who are taking a qualitative approach to investigating the impact of the mini-projects at programme and cohort level. The PL work and evidence of impact work has not yet started but is anticipated to be complete by the end of the year.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

We have discussed further steps with regards to the present and future Enhancement Themes, and have the following suggestions:

Current Theme:

- Bringing the mini-projects together to build upon the lessons learned
- Continuing to support a wider range of small projects
- Working on the longitudinal expectations of small-project funding
- Roll out of PL checklist and sharing with the sector
• Evaluation of the work done so far
• Inclusion of students in evaluation of projects including producing student videos
• Second “Belonging” Symposium to celebrate and disseminate the work of the mini-projects
• Plan to take the mini-projects to the QAA Enhancement Themes conference
• Plan to support belonging and community beyond the end of the theme
• Understanding the usefulness of data as a tool to facilitate enhancement

Future Themes:
• Inclusive Learning and Teaching
  o How do we make all of our teaching and learning inclusive?
  o What are the advantages of taking an inclusive approach to teaching and learning?
  o What are the barriers to making teaching and learning inclusive?
• Student voice
  o Co-production, challenging paradigms, changing dynamic of HE
  o Which students’ voices are heard?
  o How do we ensure all student voices are heard?
  o How do we meet increasing challenges to higher education in partnership with students?
• Student Welfare
  o How can we best support our increasingly diverse student body?
  o What aspects of teaching and learning best support student welfare?
  o What are the challenges to supporting student welfare?
• Diversity
  o How do we respond to calls to decolonise the curriculum?
  o How do we respond to agendas challenging the notions of diversity?
  o How do we provide safe spaces while maintaining the rigour of academic debate?
• Sustainability
  o What are the challenges to sustainability in education?
  o How does Scotland’s Higher Education sector respond to The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

Report Author: Dr Anne Tierney for Edinburgh Napier University

Date: 6th Sept 2019
End of Year 2 Report for University of Edinburgh

### Institutional team

Paula Webster (Head of Student Data and Surveys) has replaced Lisa Dawson on the Institutional Team and has been a driving force in enhancing the accessibility and usability of data for staff and students. The College of Science and Engineering representative is Dr Linda Kirstein Dean of Education Quality Assurance and Culture.

### Outcomes/activity

A key priority in year two of the Theme has been supporting staff to make evidence-informed decisions to enhance the student experience. This has been taken forward through the following activities:

1) **Sharing good practice at relevant internal network meetings**  
   *small project evaluation example*

   A focus of the School Directors of Quality network meeting in October 2018 was sharing practice on approaches taken to writing School annual quality reports and a discussion on accessibility and usability of data. Two School Directors of Quality presented and a useful discussion was held.

2) **Reviewing sources of data that support key quality assurance and enhancement processes with the aim of providing staff with clarity on how to access, interpret and effectively use data**

   The Head of Student Data and Surveys has led a project to enhance the student data dashboards as part of a transition to Power BI, an interactive data visualisation tool. School Directors of Quality, College Deans of Quality and relevant School, College and Academic Services professional services staff were invited to a session in February 2019 to discuss the existing data sets and provide their views on student performance metrics, definitions and populations. Following the session, staff were asked to comment on data definitions and provide feedback on test reports via a SharePoint site. Reports were made available for testing in May 2019 and the final student data dashboards will be made available in June in time for the next annual monitoring cycle.

3) **Training: developing new training opportunities for staff**

   Three demonstration sessions for staff on the new Power BI student data dashboards will be held in June 2019. The Head of Student Data and Surveys is leading a session in early July 2019 with Academic Service and College Quality professional services staff covering data interpretation and basic statistics.
Other activities undertaken this year were:

- Holding a sector-wide event on the use of qualitative data for driving decision-making at scale, with the aim of identifying what works well. Small project evaluation example

  Two sector-wide events were held, one in November 2018 and one in March 2019. The events were well received, with attendees finding the presentations informative and useful. However, challenges remain with measuring and evaluating the impact of actions using qualitative data at scale. This remains an area of interest across the sector and QAA Scotland may wish to consider this in the final year of the theme, including if there are any gaps in sector-wide qualitative data.

- Academic Services evaluating the approach being taken for teaching/postgraduate programme reviews taking place in 2018/19 of providing areas being reviewed with key data to ensure that remit items explored during reviews are evidence-based and address key strategic issues.

  There has not been a formal evaluation of this approach due to the development of the new Power BI student data dashboards. The challenges identified through this approach have been fed into the development of the new data dashboards. The new dashboards will be used by review areas in semester 2 of 2019/20 and the approach will be evaluated thereafter.

- Academic Services and Student Systems evaluating the pilot to provide a standard high-level analysis of student feedback to School student representatives

  The pilot involved staff and School Representatives from the Business School, School of GeoSciences and the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. During discussions with School staff it was agreed to present the School Representatives with standard student survey reports: National Student Survey or Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey. Going forward, Postgraduate Research Experience Survey reports will also be included. Staff suggested that it would be helpful to include a short overview to clarify the scope of surveys, the survey cohort, and the timing of when data is collected. In addition, it was agreed to provide contextual information about the School. To support this, the School Director of Quality drafted a short paragraph to include an overview of programmes and courses covered in the survey e.g. the number of programmes, cohort information, numbers, demographics, etc. There was no requirement to provide a reflection on the survey results.

  Individual sessions were held with the School Representatives, School staff, Academic Services, Student Systems and the Students’ Association. School Representatives were asked for feedback on what information they want the survey report to provide, what they found out from the report, which elements of the report they liked and why and which elements of the report they disliked and why. On the whole the School Representatives are of the opinion that access to the student survey reports will be very helpful to them in their role.

  Proposals to roll the pilot out across the University were approved at Senate Quality Assurance Committee in May 2019.

Further work to investigate specific non-continuation challenges

An initial analysis of non-continuation data was considered at Learning and Teaching Committee in January 2018 and it was agreed that a more detailed analysis should be undertaken. Two projects were carried out:

- A statistical modelling analysis exercise supporting by Enhancement Themes funding which was conducted by two student interns working closely with a member of staff in Governance and Strategic Planning (GaSP).
- An analysis of Schools’ insights into the reasons for patterns of non-continuation amongst students on their programmes was undertaken by Academic Services.

In November 2018, the Committee recommended that findings be taken into account as part of some specific existing and planned work packages. It was also recommended that good practice be gathered and disseminated and an event was held in May 2019. Finally, the Committee recommended that GaSP scope out and cost proposed further research in this area.

In response, GaSP have obtained UCAS entry tariff data and plan to enhance the analysis of non-continuation patterns using this additional factor over the coming months, as well as incorporating other entry qualifications data/measures where possible. Discussions are ongoing with the Students' Association regarding the use of peer support and societies data for analysis of any correlation between these activities and non-continuation rates. In addition, GaSP are developing a model to allow for the analysis of undergraduate progression from years 1-2, 2-3 and 3-4.


Academic Services monitoring engagement with the staff-facing web resource on closing the student feedback loop and seeking more examples to add (including those gathered as part of sector-level work in year one of the Theme) small project evaluation example

This work aligned well with the student-led project and links to these resources have been added to our webpage https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/closing-feedback-loop

Sharing the graphically designed visual representation of the new student representation system

This work began in year one of the theme when a graphically designed visual representation was developed. As the new student representation system was still in a transitional phase, this graphic was not shared at that stage. All Schools and Deaneries have now confirmed that they will be moving to the new student (programme) representative system from 2019/20 and so the graphic will be reviewed. Additionally, a follow-up evaluation of mid-course feedback and a review of course enhancement questionnaires have identified a need to provide clarity for staff and students on the various student voice mechanisms and how they relate to each other. Therefore, the original graphic will be expanded upon and online and hard copy versions shared across the University.
• The Students’ Association implementing a handover document for all programme representatives to fill in at the end of their tenure.

The handover document has been implemented. 65.7% of programme representatives have completed the newly introduced handover document (up from 53% who completed the impact questionnaire in the previous year). Further evaluation of the impact of the handover document will be undertaken next academic session.

• Project funding

A call for applications for small project funding was sent out in December 2018. Eight applications were received and three were approved funding by a sub group of the Institutional Team. Unfortunately, one project did not go ahead. The two projects that did go ahead are:

- The College of Science and Engineering would like to understand the attitudes and appetite towards the use of learning analytics to support student learning journeys.
- Impact of Institute for Academic Development’s Doctoral Programme.

All funded projects are required to complete a report which asks what were the lessons learned, what impact the project has had, how the project could be sustained, and could the outcomes be used in other areas of the University. Reports will be received following completion of the projects and will be considered by the Institutional Team.

• Exploring options for a postgraduate research strand of activity.

This was enacted through the small project funding process where priority was given to applications that related to the postgraduate research student experience. Two of the three projects originally approved for funding related to the postgraduate research student experience. Unfortunately, one of those projects did not go ahead.

The Institutional Team continued to receive updates on the following projects: strategic performance measurement dashboards (Governance and Strategic Planning); analysing peer learning and support and Teaching Awards data (Students’ Association); student representative diversity work (Students’ Association); Learn Foundations (Learning, Teaching and Web (LTW)); analysing student survey data (Student Systems); and evaluation of lecture recording implementation (LTW).

• Evaluation of lecture recording implementation: transformation phase

- Complete roll out to general teaching spaces
- Roll out of advanced features/equipment
- Review of funded research in lecture recording
- Evaluation of benefits, impact and new ways of working
- Impact: ~80% of lectures that can be recorded are being; improved student experience; improved support for accessibility and inclusion; clear safeguards for staff built into policy
- Student helpers used to support academic colleagues in teaching spaces at the start of term
- What we are learning: evaluation and research edin.ac/2Mt5u7Y; and Principal’s Teaching Award Scheme projects edin.ac/2Mo2auR
- The Little Book of Lecture Recording will be published in June
- Learn Foundations (new standard VLE template)
  - UX testing with staff and students in order to understand the current user experience and design the new template, standard terminology, and training programme
  - Methods used: open interviews; usability testing; top tasks survey; card sort; tree test; and first click test
  - ~45% of courses will trial the new template in 2019/20 (pilot with nine Schools)
  - Student interns employed to help Schools migrate course content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dissemination of work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internally:</strong> email communications; Institutional Team; Senate Quality Assurance Committee; Teaching Matters website; Learning and Teaching Conference; and a wiki.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Externally:</strong> Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC); Theme Leaders' Group (TLG); Enhancement Themes conference; and the University's website.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Closing the student feedback loop resources: [https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/closing-feedback-loop](https://www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/staff/closing-feedback-loop) (includes links to the outcomes of the Responding to Student Voice sector-wide student-led project).

The use of the HE data landscape guides will be considered as part of the student data dashboard enhancements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inter-institutional collaboration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal and informal discussions at Theme Leaders' Group meetings have continued to be useful in terms of discussing common areas of work and to share ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sector-wide events also provided useful fora for sharing good practice and discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The benefits of inter-institutional collaboration are the ability share good practice and discuss common challenges and there is a real appetite to do this across the sector. The challenge is time, both time for attending events and meetings and then time to carry out any follow-up activities.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative cluster</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff from the University have been involved in the following collaborative clusters:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The creative disciplines</td>
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<td>- Beyond the metrics: The Intangibles</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Enhancing programme leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Learning analytics - policy and practice (student intern)</td>
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</table>

The Theme Leader was asked to request an update on the distance and sense of belonging cluster and this was reported to the Institutional Team meeting in December 2018.

The benefits of being involved in the collaborative clusters is the chance to contribute to important projects and shape the resources produced. However, in a large devolved institution the Theme Leader isn’t always made aware of who is involved in the clusters.
Additionally, it is challenging to remain abreast of the outcomes as they emerge at different timescales alongside institutional and sector-wide work and then to share them all meaningfully across the University.

### Sector-wide work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students using evidence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff from the University and the Students’ Association attended the sharing practice event in February 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff have kept QAA Scotland abreast of the pilot to share data with student representative.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webinar series</th>
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<tr>
<td>These have been publicised to the Institutional Team and staff from the University have participated.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Monitoring Project</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Theme Leaders’ Group member completed the questionnaire and provided further information for this project.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student Surveys Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff from the University and the Students’ Association attended the event in April 2019.</td>
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</table>

The benefits to participating in sector-wide work is sharing practice which results in useful resources. The challenges are with the time required to participate.

### Supporting staff and student engagement

Supporting staff and students will be kept informed of the work of the Theme through the communication methods outlined above. Support and guidance can be provided by the Institutional Lead and Theme Leaders’ Group staff member. Students will be supported through the Students’ Association. Priority was given to small project funding applications that were student-led or involved students. Student School Representatives have been involved in the pilot to provide a standard high-level analysis of student feedback.

### Processes

There have been no major changes in how the Theme is organised and delivered within the University. What is becoming apparent is that many of the projects/activities are interrelated and as we enter the final year of the Theme they will need careful coordination and communication of outcomes. The Institutional Team have noted the usefulness of a number of the sector-wide resources and are giving careful consideration as to how these can be shared in the most meaningful way.

This report will be presented to the Institutional Team and Senate Quality Assurance Committee in early 2019/20.
### Evaluation

Evaluation templates for smaller projects for:

- Sharing good practice at relevant internal network meetings
- Holding a sector-wide event on the use of qualitative data for driving decision-making at scale, with the aim of identifying what works well
- Academic Services monitoring engagement with the staff-facing web resource on closing the student feedback loop and seeking more examples to add (including those gathered as part of sector-level work in year one of the Theme)

The Institutional Team will discuss the evaluation of other projects/activities at its first meeting of 2019/20.

### Looking ahead

This will be a discussion topic for the first Institutional Team meeting of 2019/20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Author:</th>
<th>Nichola Kett</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>3 June 2019</td>
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</table>
End of Year 2 Report for University of Glasgow

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional team</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.</td>
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</table>

Ms Catherine Omand, Senior Academic Policy Manager, has replaced Ms Jane McAllister from March 2019 as TLG staff representative

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes/activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.</td>
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</table>

The main focus of activity has been on three areas:

1) **Development of Annual Monitoring reporting**

This has been a challenging strand of work within our overall programme of activity under this Enhancement Theme this year. There have unfortunately been delays caused mainly by staff absence, and delays in the intern appointment process. We have therefore not proceeded with this as much as we would have liked but we have undertaken some of the foundation work for this activity and we now have the interns in post who will undertake some of the focused work on this part of our work. The Senate Office has been engaged in dialogue with the four College Quality Officers, representing each of the University’s Colleges in relation to this project. Revisions have been made this year to the College annual monitoring form with the aim of improving the reporting of issues to our Academic Standards Committee by focusing on key themes in terms of good practice and development requirements. Discussion is currently underway regarding revision of the remit of the College Quality Officers,
however any changes will be informed by data gathered by the interns as outlined below.

For the main development project, we have recently appointed two Student Interns to assist with the review of the University Annual Monitoring process. The interns will commence work on 10 June 2019 and will collate information on current practice at local level (School and units of learning) and gather feedback on how to improve the process. Good practice across Schools will also be identified.

2) **Data visualisation models to optimise the use and reporting of existing evidence on student performance, progression, attainment and outcomes.**

BIOnline and Qlikview are the data visualisation tools we have adopted to support the use of institutional data in supporting decision making across a range of areas. This capability provides us with data that can be analysed and combined in a way that suits our particular requirements. For example, all staff are able to look at feedback gathered through the NSS, down to the level of responses to individual questions, compare these with other parts of the University and across the sector as a whole. Qlikview allows us multi-way comparisons between subjects within the University, between ourselves and others in the sector and at multiple levels of comparison, to enable us to identify trends over time.

The Retention and Success Working Group (a sub-group of the Transitions Working Group) has been working with Planning and Business Intelligence on developing and understanding continuation and progression data. This has involved engaging with this new functionality of our business intelligence software to pull out information initially on continuation with an aim to duplicate this for student progression. Its aim is to be able to monitor trends in student progress and identify areas where intervention may be required, using data to inform us of what support could be beneficial for student continuation and progression and therefore improve student retention and success. The model created has allowed us to identify whether or not there are specific demographics of students that would benefit from extra support. From analysis of data this year, mature students, MD40 and students who owned their own property were deemed most at risk. As a greater proportion of mature students were also found to fall under the latter two areas, consideration is now being given as to how we provide additional support for mature students.

The Retention and Success Working Group is also investigating trends for students who appear at progress committees in each School within the University. This investigation is looking at School progress committee data for at least the last 3 years to determine if any trends or patterns are evident. A progression monitoring template is also being created that will allow each School to report on anonymised data. This will allow for easier collection of this data moving forward. The Group is working with Schools and Colleges to identify areas of information they would find most useful.

Ultimately, by having data and better analysis, we can use the evidence gathered to support better decision-making and have a positive impact on the student experience.

Further development using the Qlikview data dashboards is also planned for the annual monitoring and periodic subject review quality processes with the intention of facilitating staff access to key data in these processes and thereby improving staff engagement with our quality assurance and enhancement activity.

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1 Continuation refers to students electing to proceed to the next level of study (where permitted), whereas progression refers to meeting academic requirements to allow continuation to the next level.
3) Development of a student rep toolkit. Support for student reps and staff to promote more effective engagement both between student reps and their fellow students and between the class reps and staff. In addition, to better illustrate how a range of forms of feedback from students can be used to inform course review.

The Student Voice Portal which aimed to provide a vehicle for more effective student engagement and feedback was under-utilised and has been repurposed as MyClassRep. This was to make online information about class representation available to all students through a single point. Students can easily see who their class reps are and how to contact them. MyClassRep also records student completion of representative training and success in fulfilling the role which, in turn verifies an entry on each Student Representative’s Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR). It also offers online discussion and sharing of information, for example, student-staff liaison committee minutes. However, engagement by students with this system has been limited, hence the development of the Student Representation toolkit which is being taken forward in partnership and indeed is led by the Student Representative Council (SRC).

The SRC has consulted with Schools and Colleges to discuss information they would like to have included on the toolkit as well as gather examples of good practice. The toolkit will contain a collection of resources, information and good practice examples for student representatives and staff to ensure the effectiveness and understanding of the representatives’ roles at class, School, College and University levels. The SRC has now designed the toolkit and IT Services will take forward technical development to integrate the toolkit with the MyClassRep system and then take the application off Sharepoint and host it as a standalone Windows Internet Information Services (ISS) on an SQL Server which is a relational databases management system maintained by the Database Administrators. The migration has started, and IT Services will keep us informed of the progress. Completion is anticipated for the early autumn at which point SRC will undertake training on T4 (the software system underpinning the interface) in order for them to populate the toolkit. The SRC will include guidance on using the toolkit in their bespoke class rep training and will also provide a workshop for staff.

Each of the three projects are still in progress so we are unable to comment on unintended/unexpected findings at this stage. We anticipate benefits from all three projects; for instance, the SRC class rep toolkit is expected to provide a particularly positive step for promoting the student Class Reps and the importance of this role; actively encouraging both staff and students to become more engaged and recognition of the potential for greater staff-student partnership and student involvement in every aspect of their student journey. We also note significant benefits with the work undertaken by the Retention and Success Working Group and its commitment to improving the student experience by analysing data to provide additional targeted support to students. Currently, the priority is on mature students and this is currently being taken forward by the Group with the Vice Principal (Academic and Educational Innovation), Assistant Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching), the SRC and Equality and Diversity Manager.

Dissemination of work

Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the
sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

To date, dissemination of work has been internal.

College and School Quality Officers have been consulted by the Senate Office in relation to annual monitoring processes and have been involved in determining the remit for the Graduate Interns recently appointed to carry out the review of internal practice and collation of good practice.

Planning and Business Intelligence (P&BI) has worked in collaboration with University Services, Colleges, Schools, Assessment and Feedback, and Transitions Working Groups and the SRC to endeavour to provide useful and interactive data that is informing strategic decision making. This can be evidenced by the work undertaken in relation to widening participation and identifying categories of students deemed most at risk for non-completion. Providing evidence to Schools related to their courses and programmes, will allow for more insightful discussions with colleagues and will ultimately lead to changes being made.

P&BI has also created a survey portal where all internal and student experience surveys results are stored. All students have access to this by logging into their MyGlasgow student account.

We work closely with the Student Representative Council (SRC) on any projects that involve students. The SRC run class representative training and also an annual conference for Class Representatives. The last conference was held in January 2019, attended by 145 students. This is an opportunity for class representatives to learn about SRC priorities and wider university initiatives and gain feedback on these. The conference also provides an excellent opportunity for networking. This year, the conference focussed on a number of themes including:

- Timeliness of feedback
- The class representative role
- Closing the feedback loop
- Awareness of the SRC
- Creating a community at the University of Glasgow

The SRC produced a report that identified the key findings of the conference and this was presented to the Learning and Teaching Committee and Education Policy and Strategy Committee.

It is anticipated that we will be able to share the Class Rep toolkit at a future Class Rep Conference and colleagues across the sector at QAA and Enhancement Theme events. We also anticipate sharing the progression template at QAA events where appropriate.
Inter-institutional collaboration

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

N/A

In our end of Year 1 report, we had expressed an interest in working with Glasgow Caledonian University in the use of mental health services and effective interventions. However, this was not taken forward.

Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

N/A

Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

Planning and Business Intelligence participated on a JISC organised project called Analytics Lab. Events were run several times a year, which brought together teams of data analysts to work on key topics and challenges in the HE sector to provide data-driven solutions. The benefit of this collegiate, cross sector collaboration ensured that the unique Scottish education process (system) was represented on this project, with JISC developing analytics which are inclusive and coherent around the UK.

Benefits: sharing of best practice as well as working on issues that have sector-wide implications.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

All of our data projects have been developed following consultation with staff and the SRC.
The SRC is the main author of the Class Rep toolkit and we have student interns working on the Annual Monitoring Review.

PB&I provide on-line guides on the use of Qlikview for staff to access and training is also available on request. As highlighted above, the SRC engage class representatives at their training sessions and at their annual Class Representative Conference.

**Processes**

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

The outcomes of the development of the analytics initiatives have now become embedded in local practice for School, College and University reflection on support for the student experience. It will become central in our attempts to monitor continuation and progression informing decision-making on how best to support our students.

We now have plans to provide a data dashboard for our quality processes.

**Evaluation**

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

There are regular meetings with staff involved with projects whereby updates on progress are provided. There have been some unforeseen delays, but it is anticipated that work will complete in this final year and we will be in a better position to evaluate the impact of the projects in the future.

Key learning points from the Theme evaluation work led by Liz Thomas include:

- considering how the activities have had short term, medium term and longer-term impact.
- identifying benefits to all relevant stakeholders

**Looking ahead**

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

Apart from the data analytics project, we have had unexpected delays in the other two projects and therefore it has been difficult to evaluate the success of the activities at the end of each year. In future, it may be useful to include milestones and risk assessment. For
example, the Student Class Rep toolkit has been designed but we need to wait for IT Services to implement. This is due to conflicting demands and priorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Author:</th>
<th>Catherine Omand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>6 June 2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
END OF YEAR 2 REPORT FOR GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

No changes

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has it been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

Over the last two years, Glasgow School of Art has undertaken a series of activities to engage with the latest QAA Scotland coordinated Enhancement Theme. It is fair to say, however, that the events of June 2018 (the second Macintosh Fire) and the need to ensure the maintenance of the student experience for those students on campus and for the returning students in September 2018 became the over-arching theme for GSA in the academic session 2018-19.

This did have an impact on the original plan for our Enhancement Themes work. We continued to use the theme to enable increasing engagement, particularly within the School’s Learning and Teaching Committee, with the shifting metrics landscape in higher education and how as a small specialist institution we could best develop an understanding of our own metrics and also what the implications of this understanding were for how we renewed our approach to annual monitoring.

In many ways, the redesign of PMAR (programme and annual monitoring review) has been a major achievement for the School in this session and part of our year three work will be to trial the new process and support for programme leaders that has been incorporated into the process. This renewal process has been focused around the question of what our data sets tell us about the impact of our teaching enhancement in a manner that allows us to make more effective enhancements decisions going forward.
As part of this process, GSA embarked on an experimental project which was focused around community asset mapping through a participatory art practice as a way of challenging the deficit nature of many student experience surveys. This, in the end, proved a very difficult project to implement as we needed to change the target student group after the fire and then subsequently the timing of the actual art participation was delayed because of the fire. The event was to be held in the Centre for Contemporary Arts but its closure as a result of the fire on Garnethill made scheduling particularly difficult. Nonetheless, we remain committed to developing arts based forms of student feedback, hopefully in collaboration with the Centre for Contemporary Arts, which are focused on the assets (or positive hidden curricular) that are central to creative education at a higher level.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW
Year 1 (2017-2018)
The key aims were as follows:

In year 1 the main activities to achieve these aims were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reach, significance, and impact (where possible to identify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Using a newly implemented <strong>Student Experience Survey</strong>.</td>
<td>The reach and significance of this has been pronounced. Schools now have a cross-institutional internal survey from which to gather feedback, consider what enhancements might need to be undertaken, and assess in advance issues that have hitherto been captured in the NSS. The impact of this, however, continues to be affected by current response rates. Two years into this activity, we are still to achieve a 30% response rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Auditing engagement with the current GSA <strong>Code of Assessment</strong> and identifying amendments to increase the usability of the Code and guidance that runs alongside it.</td>
<td>Whilst the potential reach and significance of this renewal is high, a refreshed Code of Assessment is only likely to be ready for approvals come September 2019. The delays to the production of this were in part a result of changes to the Quality Code, which have required a focusing on mapping to the new Code for ELIR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Beginning to explore how <strong>graduate outcomes metrics</strong> can inform GSA’s approach to understanding and evidencing the impact of its educational provision in terms of post-graduation experiences.</td>
<td><strong>Graduate Outcomes</strong> metrics (replacement of Destination of Leavers in Higher Education) has yet to report fully. At this point in time, it is not clear that the response rate will be high enough for GSA to glean meaningful information regarding student moves into employment/ further or higher education six months after graduating.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Longitudinal Educational Outcomes

Metrics are available to GSA via the Office for Students Teaching Excellence Framework portal.

However, given the current 'experimental nature' of both of these metrics sets, GSA is currently focusing its activity more on:
1. Building alumni relationships than responding to specific metrics;
2. Revisiting where and how GSA sits within its creative ecology and what the significance of this is in terms of employability, professional development at a School level, and other forms of enterprise activity.

As a general point, it is clear that Art and Design programmes have 'slow burn' graduate outcomes with the first six months after graduation not mapping easily onto other programmes’ degree outcomes. The same is less clear for Architecture.

### Year 2: (2018-19)

In June 2018 GSA’s normal activity was interrupted by the impact of the Mackintosh Fire. With this in mind, year two activities were necessarily defined around the following themes:

- Developing new sources of discipline specific evidence gathering via an experimental participatory arts project based at the CCA;
- Evidencing how we maintained this year’s student experience in the face of the disruptions caused by the fire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Lessons Learned/ Outputs to date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative practice activity focussed on asset mapping. Led by Rudy Kanhye, Gina Wall, Vicky Gunn</td>
<td>The key lesson learned was student engagement in such a project within GSA is complex. This experimental project has failed to have the outcomes for which the team had hoped. Ideally, we were looking to develop a participatory art practice. This was to be based in the CCA, drawing on input from Caroline Woolard at Cooper Union University and centred on engaging students in understanding the tangible and intangible assets that GSA provides in terms of student learning. At each stage of the project we were bogged down by situations that we couldn’t have foreseen – the biggest being the fire in June 2018, which occurred just prior to us rolling out the project with the PGT students. Subsequent delays necessitated by persistence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cooper Union University in the USA introduced a participatory art process for gathering student feedback that could enrich the increasing dependence on metrics to assess the student experience. The focus of their work was on participatory asset mapping. This entails the self-identification of community assets, meaning that the community is becomes the object of internal reflection rather than the focus of external research.
Over the last six months, the project assistant for this aspect of GSA’s quality enhancement theme response has developed a conversation with Cooper Union regarding what principles underpinned the original activity and whether these would be transferable to a smaller project aimed at improving how students experienced their learning environment at GSA.

the need to ensure continuity of the student experience meant that we needed to pull the project during the period June – November 2018 and restart by looking at another potential student cohort for restarting the project.

Learning and Teaching Committee discussed moving the project to focus on third year Fine Arts students. Unfortunately, due to problems with scheduling (as a longer term consequence of the June fire, particularly for the CCA), whilst staff tried to engage the students, come the participatory studio exhibition offered in the CCA, very few students engaged in the preparatory workshops and exhibition space in the CCA. Were we to undertake such a project again, we would definitely change the timing.

Output:
The project commissioned a video from Caroline Woolard as part of the preparatory evidence for students to engage with prior to attending the CCA exhibition space or when first arriving at that space. The focus of the video is the importance of collaborative creativity in the asset mapping process. Since the end of our project this video has been integrated into Caroline’s work, but can be reused to open discussions regarding collaborative creativity in Fine Art learning contexts. The video can be accessed here: http://studycollaboration.com/

This work was discussed at GSA’s Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee as a way of considering the positive aspects of the hidden curriculum (which are normally articulated in their negative socio-economic aspects).

Supporting and evidencing the student experience in an unexpected estates situation. Ken Neil, Laura Glennie.

This work was necessitated by the events of the Fire in June 2018. We included it within this current QET plan, because evidencing the impact of the Fire on the first semester of this academic year was critical for the student experience.

Outputs from this work included:
1. A Student Engagement Lead (GSA recovery)
2. Pre-emptive Student Mental Health Support
3. Relocation of students and installation of equipment / access to learning resources
4. Staff developed a flexible curriculum and staggered assessment deadlines

Key lessons learned include the following: ensure a thorough communications plan is
| devised to keep students up to date; ensure there are mechanisms in place for responding to student feedback; create relocation and installation of equipment plan; determine where there is flexibility in the curriculum and make changes to maximise the student experience in a time of crisis; and think carefully about the impact on student mental health and how this can supported with extra resource. |

### Achieving Our Aims
In the original plan for this Enhancement Theme, GSA focused on growing a GSA-wide community of practice engaged in creatively designing, using, and critiquing a range of methods for evidence gathering, evaluation, and decision-making for enhancement purposes across all the educational stages at GSA. To achieve this we would had two key headlines:

1. Managing the evidence we have and are expected to use to make decisions regarding enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment in creative practices education;
2. Building new, creative forms of evidence that serve our disciplines and can be used for communication of enhancement internally and externally.

At this point in the current theme, GSA has implemented or initiated all of the activities that it planned. However, a mixture of circumstances (including the June 2018 fire, a new Quality Code, changes to the data sets initially identified for analysis – ie the shift from the DLHE to Graduate Outcomes, the partial – experimental- introduction of the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes) have impacted to slow down the rate of engagement with some of the activities.

In one case, the Asset Mapping project, we recognise that this ambitious alternative approach to metrics, though creative, just could/did not get student buy-in. This was disappointing for the project assistant and staff in the School of Fine Art alike. Moreover, it demonstrates the difficulties of undertaking participatory arts’ projects (unpredictable outcomes and possibility of failure) as an antidote to over-dependence on (more easily) predictably captured metrics.

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### Dissemination of work

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

Via internal committee dissemination.

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### Inter-institutional collaboration

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance*
rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

Much of the collaborative interaction that we have had regarding this enhancement theme is difficult to disentangle from the collaborative cluster. It’s work is co-lead by our Head of Learning & Teaching and its activity has directly informed the renewal of the PMAR process. In this renewal process, we have worked closely with our degree awarding institution and a follow up to this will occur in August 2019, when the Head of Learning & Teaching meets with the Assistant Vice Principal Learning and Teaching, Moira Fischbacher-Smith and members of Glasgow University’s quality office to share the implications of the work undertaken by GSA over the last two years in relation to this project.

Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

GSA has maintained Co-leadership of a national creative arts collaborative arts cluster looking at how to engage with and manage evidence regarding the impact of enhancements to learning & teaching.

This is still on-going. Outputs as follows:
1. An introduction to the creative arts collaborative cluster
2. Scoping the Creative Arts Data Territory
3. Understanding the Creative Arts Learner Journey in, through, and out of higher education

The website for outputs can be found here: https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/current-enhancement-theme/defining-and-capturing-evidence/the-creative-disciplines

Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

At this point in time, the impact from the enhancement theme in terms of GSA’s contribution has been mainly through additional knowledge exchange including:

1. Presentation by Vicky Gunn (Weaving narrative and numbers to create a pattern of student success) at the QAA UK wide Data Matters Conference, January 2019.
2. Presentation for Council for Higher Education Art and Design
3. Discussion at Universities Scotland Learning & Teaching Committee as part of growing conversation regarding the Scottish Government’s Skills Agenda.

As we progress into year three, activity pulling together GSA’s approach to PMAR and the outcomes of the two years of the collaborative cluster will be linked into the project work now going on at a sector-wide level to explore annual monitoring.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.
Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

Mainly this is connected to a cross-GSA approach to enhance engagement with data evidence during annual monitoring processes. This will be the focus of year 3 of this theme.

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<tr>
<td><em>Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Material included in this report has already gone to Learning & Teaching Committee, UPC and Academic Council.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

To follow by 31st July.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

As a small specialist arts institution, looking ahead is always tempered by our need to respond not just to the general sector but also to the particular nature of creative arts, especially in terms of their impact culturally, economically, and educationally. Bringing the insights of this context to the sector, however, perhaps offers cross-institutional possibilities. Thus we outline four interlinked areas that we think will need to continue to be addressed through enhancement of learning and teaching over the period of the next Enhancement Theme:

1. Understanding the tangible and intangible impacts of what we do as educators and what our students do as co-participants in a pedagogic process which deliberately asks for engagement with the local community;
2. Articulating the impacts of what we do as educators in a manner that enables enhancement to the learning and teaching regimes at the same time as answering the metrics which are emerging as of importance to funders;
3. Enabling students to both identify and understand the indicators of impact;
4. Recognising how to manage the balance between indicators that focus the skills agenda on growth in employment and innovation terms and indicators that enable educators to develop their programmes in a manner which embeds sustainability and improves equalities as an intrinsic part of skills development.

Whilst these are potentially generalisable across the sector, the creative arts have a specific journey to pursue and, following the relative success of the collaborative cluster, as well as the increasing possibility that metrics will be disaggregated to the level of subject area, there should be an aspect of the next enhancement themes that addresses the disciplinary approaches to measuring the success of their programmes.

Report Author: Vicky Gunn

Date: 10th June 2019
End of Year 2 Report for Glasgow Caledonian University

Institutional team

The team is as described, with one change: Professor Ruth Whittaker left GCU in December 2018 to take up a role at the University of Brighton. At the time of writing, we are awaiting confirmation of the new Student Representative for AY 2019/20.

Outcomes/activity

Progress against planned outcomes is as follows:

Outcome 1
Continue to enhance and develop reliable monitoring mechanisms through the recruitment of engagement interns in each school who will focus more closely on school level data.

Outcome 1 Achievement
Student Communication and Engagement Assistants (SCE Assistants) were employed for AY 2018-19 and have undertaken range of activities designed to engage students and staff on key school challenges. For example, the SCE Assistants held listening events with final year students on programmes demonstrating lower overall satisfaction scores in the 2017 GCU Evaluation Survey. To close the feedback loop the workshop findings were then reported back to Programme Leaders. To continue to drive the increase in engagement with the NSS, workshops were also held with lecturers. These provided space and time to share best practice related to the achievement of a high NSS programme based response rate.

To help with student engagement the Student Communication and Engagement Assistants have managed school Twitter accounts, currently run by the Marketing Department, and achieving a significant increase in engagement from student focused posts in comparison to corporate focused posts. SCEs are currently working with the Learning Development Centres (LDCs) to create an online campaign targeting missed appointments and misconceptions of the role of the LDCs.

Outcome 2
Develop and align student and staff communications to demonstrate how we use and value evidence to improve the student experience and close the feedback loop.

Outcome 2 Achievement
There is currently wide-spread practice of ‘Closing the Feedback Loop’ (CTFL) activities at GCU resulting from student surveys and module evaluations. Students are primarily provided with this type of feedback by academic staff verbally (e.g. in-class), with email and GCU Learn also currently used but to a lesser extent. However, the current approach is inconsistent and not all students are receiving this type of feedback. This year, the University has been consulting with both students and academic staff about the possible implementation of a more standardised approach to CTFL whereby all students would receive a short report (by email and on GCU Learn) from their module or programme leader on outcomes arising from feedback provided in internal surveys and module evaluations. It is intended that this automated process be implemented (from 2019-20) using the University’s current survey tool. The aim of this is to
continue to build student engagement with the student survey process at GCU, ensuring that all students know their feedback has been considered and where appropriate, acted upon; in turn improving response rates to allow staff a more robust evidence base upon which to make decisions on any module or programme enhancement.

Outcome 3
Understand the needs of, and improve support for differentiated students (focus: students with disabilities, those with mental health wellbeing issues and Trans, non-binary and gender neutral students).

Outcome 3 Achievement
Two 2020 SE Scholarship projects were funded to explore the experiences of differentiated students. The 'Evidencing a better understanding of the Student Experience of students with disability' has explored sectoral approaches to supporting students with disabilities as well as surveying students locally to understand provision of services to students with disabilities, particularly with regard to their experience of employability development. This project has worked with the Disability Team at GCU to provide input to a pilot programme providing work placement experience for students on the autistic spectrum.

Another small project was funded to look at the implications of the findings of the SFC-funded TransEdu project for GCU students and staff. Both projects are due to report in Summer 2019.

Outcome 4
Develop an evaluation strategy for the forthcoming WP Action Plan and initiate evaluation activities around identified priority areas.

Outcome 4 Achievement
The Widening Participation (WP) Action Plan is still under review. In preparation, the ERE team are developing a GCU Evaluation Toolkit to support impact evaluation of activities across the University. The toolkit is currently in draft format. In preparation for the new WP Action Plan, the University carried out a Thematic Review of our Articulation provision. The findings of this review are now being considered by a working group, due to report in Autumn 2019.

Outcome 5
Implement revised, and evidence-led, approach to personal tutoring (academic advising).

Outcome 5 Achievement
One of the Year One 2020 Student Experience Scholarship projects focused on Personal Tutoring. The project aimed to co-create a core set of Academic Advising values and principles as well as sustainable, embedded and technology enhanced policy and practices for Academic Advising at GCU. The recommendations of the project were operationalised as a set of revised Personal Tutoring arrangements introduced at the beginning of AY2018-19. Personal Tutoring provision is now supported by dedicated student and staff webpages on the scope of the provision and role of students and staff in Personal Tutoring. The launch of revised Personal Tutoring procedures was accompanied by a communications and marketing campaign to raise awareness of the new Personal Tutoring process for all students and staff, including cross-campus posters and videos.

Outcome 6
Partnership Working.

Outcome 6 Achievement
The year 2 2020 Student Experience Scholarship PAIRING Project (PArtnership woRking IN Gcu) was funded to explore good practice in partnership working practices across the UK and locally at GCU. This scholarship has surveyed students and programme leads for their experiences and perceptions of partnership working. The project found that key partnership working activities included: Professional & career development for students; creation of a Programme community; module learning and teaching approaches; programme organisation and management, e.g. timetabling; GCU Learn; etc.; and module
learning resources, e.g. reading lists; online resources; etc., The project is collecting case studies to drive greater adoption and is due to report in Summer 2019.

Outcome 7
Evaluate GCU Graduate Apprenticeship provision.

Outcome 7 Achievement
The ERE team have worked with Graduate Apprentice programme leaders from across the University to identify challenges and evaluation questions to address. The ERE team has also worked with Strategy and Planning to introduce questions specifically addressing the learning experience of Graduate and Degree Apprenticeship students into Module Evaluation and GCU Experience Surveys, providing baseline data for the study.

Outcome 8
Bid to Co-lead collaborative cluster: Supporting Programme Leaders to Navigate Evidence and Enhance the Student Experience.

Outcome 8 Achievement
The bid to co-lead this Collaborative Cluster was successful (See full details below in the section on Collaborative Cluster work).

Outcome 9
Engage with the Learning Analytics (LA) collaborative cluster and pilot LA driven analysis of assessment turnaround times and student lecture attendance (linking to academic achievement).

Outcome 9 Achievement
Through this year, we continued to be an active member of the Learning Analytics Collaborative Cluster (see below). This activity follows on from our role as associate partner in the Erasmus funded SHEILA project, participating in a range of stakeholder surveys and events to contribute to this major initiative around policy development in learning analytics.

The ‘Understanding Student Attendance’ 2020 SE Scholarship Project has undertaken a quantitative analysis of the relationship between attendance and performance (as reflected by marks) and the mediating/moderating roles of module delivery (online, on campus, blended), level of study, school and assessment types. The project collected attendance records and end of trimester academic performance data from up to 10 modules within each of the three schools. The two datasets were combined and Regression models developed to explore the relationships between the factors of interest. The project is due to report in Summer 2019.

Unintended Outcomes/activities
There were no major unintended outcomes or activities.

Key Achievements
The key achievements are indicted in the sections above.

Uncompleted work
Aspects of the work will continue into the final year of the QET (19/20) as indicted above.

Dissemination of work
The work of the SE Scholarships has been actively promoted through external dissemination at national and international conferences, including presentations at the 15th Enhancement Theme Conference held on the 7th of June 2018.
Internally work is disseminated through activities organised by the Education, Research and Evaluation Team including Workshops and Seminars, and newsletter. The Annual Learning & Student Experience Event\(^1\) is due to be held in 10-14 June 2019 and provides an opportunity to present the work of the SE Scholarships alongside complementary work from elsewhere in the University facilitating cross-fertilisation.

The annual institutional visit from sparqs to the GCU Students Association and the QAA annual visit to GCU provided good opportunities to disseminate key areas of this work at a Sector level.

**Inter-institutional collaboration.**

None at this point beyond what was discussed in work on collaborative clusters.

**Collaborative cluster**

The *Enhancing Programme Leadership* collaborative cluster was launched on 30 October 2018 ([link](https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/news-events/news/new-project-to-support-programme-leaders-launched)) and has been led by Sam Ellis (Senior Lecturer in Academic Development, GCU) alongside Martha Caddell (Director of the Learning and Teaching Academy, HWU). Four cluster roundtables have been held during 2018/19, one of which was hosted by GCU. GCU PLS benefitted from a UK-wide perspective provided by Rowena Senior (Aston University) as well as PL perspectives from UWS and ENU. David Hegarty, a programme leader at GCU, shared strategies for engaging a programme team in the absence of line-managerial authority. This theme was explored further by Michelle Rutherford, a GCU programme leader, in an internal seminar for GCU colleagues. Cluster outputs can be found here: [link](https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/current-enhancement-theme/optimising-existing-evidence/enhancing-programme-leadership).

GCU is also part of the current QAA Enhancement Theme *Learning Analytics cluster*. This cluster has investigated potential sector wide collaborations around learning analytics. In year one student interns were hired to produce a sector level report on institutional approaches and capacity for learning analytics. The SL in Academic Development has provided mentoring support, as well as institutional input to the student interns as they produced the baseline report. In year 2 this report is being developed into an online resource by student interns.

**Sector-wide work**

Aside from contribution to collaborative cluster work (see above) staff engaged with the 2018 QAA Enhancement Theme Conference and staff from Academic Quality and Development, and Strategy and Planning, worked together to provide input to the sector wide project on Student Retention and Progression. The GCU QET Lead, Nicky Andrew, continues in her role as Co-Deputy Theme Lead.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

Staff and Students have been supported to engage in theme activities through the work of the EtSE Steering Group, informed by institutional data sets presented via GCU DASH. Partnership and collaboration has been achieved through the Student Experience Scholarships (see examples above), all of which include student representation, and which are due to report in Summer 2019. All projects are supported by the GCU Educational Research and Evaluation Team\(^2\).

The ERE team and Students’ Association are investigating the possibility of analysing qualitative data collected through the Students’ Association Teaching Awards, in line with previous work undertaken elsewhere in the sector.

Staff from across the institution have been informed of Enhancement Theme events with attendance at

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\(^1\) [https://www.gcu.ac.uk/academicqualityanddevelopment/cpdactivitiesandevents/learningandstudentexperienceweek/]

\(^2\) [https://www.gcu.ac.uk/academicqualityanddevelopment/educationalresearchandevaluation/]
Webinars, and workshops (student voice, working with student surveys). The policy and development officer has used the Student Voice Activity Cards to inform her work with the Students Association and Student Representatives.

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<th>Processes</th>
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Our theme related activities continue to be aligned with the work of the EtSE Steering Group. This group has provided an established and solid infrastructure to support the work of the theme and ensures the work of the theme links directly to the SEAP and GCU Strategy 2020 priorities and help us to be discerning in our activity and focus on those areas that have meaning to The University and directly link to the QET. In this way activity is seen as joined and integrated not regarded as separate work streams. This Year 2 Report will be tabled at the EtSE Steering Group and the University Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee (LTSC).

In 2020, GCU will undergo ELIR4 and so this year of our theme activity has coincided with early stages of consultation and planning for ELIR during which our enhancement activities have been extensively discussed.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

Light touch evaluation has been carried out on three 2020 SE scholarships that completed in June 2018 (see accompanying document). In depth evaluation of the 2020 SE Scholarship scheme is underway, incorporating feedback received from Liz Thomas (see accompanying document).

Key Learning Points: Being encouraged to think through the short, medium and longer term impact of our activities has been particularly useful for the 2020 Scholarship recipients. Year 2 Scholarship recipients have been asked to consider the evaluation process throughout their project (rather than on completion). Evaluation of the Scholarship Scheme is ongoing.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

In the final year of funding, we would like to further explore opportunities and possibilities to integrate processes, addressing some of the organisational issues that have emerged during this year of the theme activity.

Topic for next theme: After a theme which focused on evidencing enhancement, the next theme is likely to return to looking at enhancement in a particular area. The University recognises increased sectoral activity /attention to the learning experience of Differentiated Students. Perhaps a focus of the next theme could be ‘The Attainment Gap’.

Report Author: Professor Nicky Andrew (QET Institutional Lead)  
Dr Colin Milligan (Education Research & Evaluation)

Date: 31 May 2019
End of Year 2 Report for Heriot-Watt University

The key purposes of this report are to:
- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

Dr James Wilson (Academic Development Coordinator, Dubai campus) has joined the Institutional team.

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

Achievements

Student Surveys

Much of the focus of this work has been implementing the recommendations from the report from the year 1 project looking at our student survey process. While this work is still ongoing, considerable progress has been made. Of the 19 recommendations being taken forward, we have good evidence that 7 of these are fully or widely implemented with partial implementation having been achieved for another 4 recommendations. Across the 19 recommendations, a total of 37 key measures have been identified and are being tracked.

Student Retention

The Student Success Advisors (SSAs) are all now in post, with 4 at the Edinburgh campus, one at the Scottish Borders campus, one in Malaysia and one in Dubai. (see https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/edinburgh/student-success-advice.htm)
One of their main roles has been contacting those students who may be “at risk” due to them not maintaining contact with their personal tutors, not attending classes or missing coursework deadlines. In semester 2, by March 12th 2019, 259 students were referred to the SSAs by personal tutors and 180 of these had been successfully contacted by the SSAs. These students are then provided with advice and guidance from the SSAs and may be referred to specialist support.

The SSAs are working with Schools to plan new peer-mentoring initiatives for the next academic year. There will be different initiatives at different campuses, including a buddy system for Go Global students at the Malaysia campus.

Work is underway to develop a summer school at the Scottish Borders Campus to offer pre-Welcome Week orientation activities for new students from widening participation backgrounds. There is also a summer school being planned to allow early enrolment and briefing for students at the Malaysian campus.

Other work being undertaken by the SSAs includes development of the student portal and student information desk, activities being planned for World Mental Health day (Oct 10th 2019) and work to encourage students to engage with assessment feedback. In addition, work is underway to evaluate the impact of these posts.

Work is under way to develop an online development offering for Personal Tutors. This is expected to be ready for the start of the 2019/20 academic year.

**Enhancement Theme Projects**

Since last year’s report, we have continued to fund internal projects that aligned with the enhancement theme. Most of these new projects are ongoing. Two of the year one projects are complete. The details of these projects can be found at [https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/is/learning-teaching/innovation/current-projects.htm](https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/is/learning-teaching/innovation/current-projects.htm) with the final reports for those completed projects available from this page also.

Six projects were funded with a total funding allocation of £30,552.

These funded projects were:

1. “Engage earlier with hardware in Robotics – Infrastructure for Formative and Peer-Based Feedback” Project Lead: Dr Katrin Lohan (MACS)
2. “Improving Retention: Understanding the challenges for students with disabilities” Project Lead: Dr Tessa Berg (MACS)
3. “Expectations and Experiences of First Year Languages Students in their Transition from Secondary to Higher Education” Project Lead: José María Conde (SOSS)
4. Revitalising Assessment & Feedback practices at Heriot-Watt University Project Lead: Dr Margaret King (Registry)
5. Closing Software-Based Assessment Feedback Loop – Infrastructure for Formative and Peer-Based Feedback Project Lead: Robert Stewart (MACS)
6. Maximising the benefit of formative feedback to students’ learning Project Leads: Dr N Hendrik Nahler (EPS) and Dr SJ Greaves (EPS)

Further details on all projects funded during this theme can be found at [https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/is/learning-teaching/innovation/current-projects.htm](https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/is/learning-teaching/innovation/current-projects.htm)

**Unintended outcomes/unexpected findings**
**Student Surveys**
While possibly not totally unexpected, it has become apparent that a considerable length of time is required between having recommendations agreed and signed off, the specific actions required to be undertaken and achieve results before appropriate assessment of their impact can be undertaken. It is possible that the full impact of some of the work being undertaken will not be clear until well after the present Theme period has elapsed.

**Student Retention**
The delays in appointing Student Success Advisors at the Malaysia and Dubai campuses has led to a delay in activities getting underway at these campuses.

**Particularly proud of**
The initial impact of the Student Success advisors is worthy of mention. These posts were only being conceived of at this time last year and are now having real and demonstrable impact on the experience of many students. While the full value of these posts will take some time to evaluate, they are already a success story. See [https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/edinburgh/student-success-advice.htm](https://www.hw.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/edinburgh/student-success-advice.htm)

The ongoing work to enhance our student survey process also deserves a mention. The impact of this work will also only become clear within a longer timeframe, but the initial responses internally are positive and the external interest in this project is reassuring that we are going in the right direction

**Incomplete/ongoing work**
All of this work is ongoing and shall continue for a year or more.

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**Dissemination of work**
Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

**Internal dissemination**

- Awareness of the Enhancement Theme activities and the various HWU projects being undertaken has been achieved through the HWU ET website (see [https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/is/learning-teaching/qaa-enhancement-theme.htm](https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/is/learning-teaching/qaa-enhancement-theme.htm) and links within) and regular staff news items linking to these pages.
- In February we hosted an internal half day event on Feedback on Assessment. Included in the introductory and closing comments were elements to link this work to the wider work at HWU related to the Enhancement Themes. This event also provided an opportunity for two of the Enhancement Theme funded projects (Stewart, and Nahler & Greaves) to present their interim findings to a HWU audience.
- Regular reports on the enhancement Theme work and the internal projects have been presented to the University’s Learning and Teaching Committee.
- School directors of Learning and Teaching have received regular updates on events linked to the Enhancement Themes including the series of webinars. A number of HWU staff have engaged in the webinars.
External dissemination

- Gordon Rennie presented the findings of the Year 1 student surveys project at the sparqs Academic Representation Co-ordinators' Network event in November 2018 and at the sparqs annual conference in March 2019.
**Inter-institutional collaboration**

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

None of the institutional contract finance has been used for this purpose.

**Collaborative cluster**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

**Enhancing Programme Leadership**

Dr Maggie King (HWU) has been a member of this project team and contributed to the project design, workshop development, workshop delivery and development of outputs. (e.g. Student Surveys – Process to Enhancement paper). Dr Rob Daley (HWU) has attended two of the workshops for this event. In addition HWU hosted a workshop for this project in Jan 2019.

**HE Planners**

Em Bailey has been a member of those project team and contributed to the meetings, activities and output development.

**Learning analytics**

Dr Rob Daley has attended a number of activities and discussion meetings as part of his project. The learning from these has been shared within the University through colleague discussion and internal reporting.

**Benefits and Challenges**

All three of these collaborative clusters have benefited HWU in different ways. The learning from the Programme leadership project is influencing our internal understanding of the role and helping to shape the support we provide for programme leaders. In addition, the learning form this project will help us to develop new activities to support staff in being better prepared for undertaking such roles going forward. Similarly, our involvement with the work of the Scottish Planners group is helping to inform improvements to our internal data analysis processes and feeding into our wider discussions around revitalising our student survey processes. While our involvement in the Learning Analytics project is less than in the other two, the learning from this project is helping to inform our internal considerations of what approaches we might take with Learning analytics going forward and helping to catalyse wider discussions about our approaches to data collection and data utilisation across the university.

As ever with such projects, the main challenge is the limited time and staff resources available to fully engage with this work and to convey the learning from these projects to staff and students across the University. In this regard, it is hope that the new HWU Learning and Teaching Academy, will provide new opportunities for greater involvement in this work as well as greater potential to harness the learning from these projects, and other Enhancement Theme activities, for the benefit of staff and students across the University.

The timing of some collaborative cluster activities at the same time as TLG activities has not helped.
Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

Students using Evidence: Alex Hedlund has contributed to many elements of this project work including writing the example of practice papers “A look into the minds of first—year chemistry students” and “Understanding what gets students engaged” see https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/current-enhancement-theme/student-engagement-and-demographics/students-using-evidence

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

As outlined in previous sections, a number of staff and student representatives have been involved in the collaborative cluster work and other theme projects. Staff across the University have been made aware of the various activities available to them through the theme and many have availed themselves of these opportunities. The webinar series in particular has received favourable feedback from a number of teaching staff.

Much of our present focus on upskilling is directly related to specific HWU projects (e.g. student surveys work, retention work etc.). The upskilling element is directly linked with process improvement and not seen as a distinct element. It is highly unlikely that we would not be happy to share any materials or approaches used with colleagues across the sector.

Processes

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

The organisation and delivery of the Theme during the last year has varied little from the previous year. In light of the present resource available and the relative success of the present approach have made changes unwarranted. However, as we launch the new Learning and Teaching Academy at Heriot-Watt we are expecting a greater level of activity around enhancement of our teaching practice and to strengthen our links to Enhancement Theme activities.

Much of our institutional learning has been identified in earlier sections. In particular our involvement in the collaborative cluster activity and other Theme projects has allowed staff and student representatives to transfer the learning from these projects into our internal work.
This report will be circulated to School Directors of Learning and Teaching, Members of the University Learning and Teaching Committee and to members of the Institutional Theme team.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

Our light-touch evaluations are still ongoing at this point.

Our in-depth evaluation is progressing well. All of the initially identified Short –Term indicators have been achieved along with most of the medium-term indicators. We have identified 37 key measures that need to be tracked to evaluate this project in full. Evidence has already been collected against nine of these measures. Collecting the evidence against a number of these measures will involve interviews or focus groups with students and staff to fully measure the impact of the actions taken. These will be undertaken in the third year of the theme.

While it is too early to comment on the full achievement of the goals of this work, we can be already confident that this work is having a positive impact on staff and students across the university.

Much of our learning from the Theme evaluation work has been through thoughtful discussion with colleagues in TLG meetings and elsewhere. The very expectation that we will evaluate this work has helped us to consider how we might do so and where our best investment of evaluative effort might be. Much of this work is similar in nature to the evaluation work previously carried out under the Roberts funding from RCUK and much of our internal approach has been influenced by the learning from that work as well as the guidance provided through Vitae. See https://www.vitae.ac.uk/impact-and-evaluation/researcher-development-evaluation-toolkit

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

While there are many topics that come to mind, there are two themes that seem to be recurring in many presentations and conversations across the Scottish sector.

1. Consideration of the well-being and mental health of both our students and staff;
2. Consideration of our universities as having global impact and being impacted upon by global elements, this will require us and our students to have to have a more global mind-set going forward.

Report Author: Rob Daley
Date: June 3rd 2019
End of Year 2 Report for University of the Highlands and Islands

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

### Institutional team

*Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme leadership</td>
<td>Sorcha Kirker</td>
<td>Highlands and Islands Students Association</td>
<td>(Student lead and TLG representative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professor Keith Smyth</td>
<td>Professor of Pedagogy and Head of Learning and Teaching Academy</td>
<td>(Institutional lead and TLG representative)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: Sorcha Kirker is coming to the end of her period of office as HISA VP for HE, and going into the new Academic Year will be succeeded as Student Lead by Andrew Bowie (who will be the new HISA VP for Higher Education).

### Internal Steering Group

Membership has been expanded and is now as follows (please note specific enhancement theme roles for a number of colleagues noted in brackets):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Quality</td>
<td>Jessica Borley</td>
<td>Perth College UHI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Manager</td>
<td>Liz Cook</td>
<td>Inverness College UHI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Science, Health and Engineering</td>
<td>Dr Gary Campbell</td>
<td>University of the Highlands and Islands</td>
<td>(Chair UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

In our institutional plan for Year 1 we identified the following three ‘project strands’ as priorities for our institutional work for the enhancement theme:

1. Linking evidence to learning (Lead: H Fotheringham)
2. Linking student representation to enhancement and belonging (Lead: S Kirker)
3. Linking feedback to progression (Lead: K Smyth)

In our end of Year 1 report we detailed the progress that had been made in key areas including finalising detailed project plans, benchmarking reports for each of our three project strands, and the development of a range of engagement activities for staff and students. As detailed in our ‘Update Report to ET Steering Group - May 2019’ (recently produced for our internal Steering Group and submitted with our End of Year 2 Report), significant progress has been made in relation to each of our project strands.

Our progress includes initiating a range of pilot projects to implement and evaluate various evidence-based and data-led approaches to evaluation for strand 1, a highly successful staff and student ‘Student Reps Summit’ in relation to strand 2, and a range of professional development events and pilot project in relation to strand 3.

We would highlight in particular the success of the Student Reps Summit, held 1st February as a joint event organised by HISA (Highlands and Islands Students Association) and our LTA (Learning and Teaching Academy). This was a highly
participative day involving all student reps from across UHI and a range of senior staff and programme and module leaders. The day included sessions on the following topics:

- KPIs
- Analytics and Engagement indicators
- Student surveys
- Student representation
- Representation for online and networked students
- Closing the feedback loop

The sessions above, individually and collectively, related to our three project strands and each produced significant outputs we are now taking forward. This includes a significant body of ideas, from the student perspective, relating to learning analytics and engagement indicators which will be feeding directly into current analytics developments at UHI.

**Dissemination of work**

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

In Year 2 we have made increased use of existing digital and social media channels to increase internal and external awareness of our Enhancement Theme work. The range of engagement and professional development events we have offered internally have increased awareness of our work and the ways in which it is beginning to benefit colleagues and (e.g. in the case of the Student Reps Day) directly influence policy.

We have presented our work at Enhancement Themes events including the December 2018 event, at the student focused ET event, through webinars, and through presenting at an event of the Programme Leaders collaborative cluster.

Further detail can be found in the ‘Update Report to ET Steering Group - May 2019’.

**Inter-institutional collaboration**

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.*

In Year 2 we our main collaborative focus has been in relation to the Collaborative Clusters as detailed below, although this has been a substantial area of activity.

**Collaborative cluster**

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?*

In Year 2 we were have been part of two collaborative clusters. The first aims to provide resources showcasing best practice in creating a sense of belonging amongst online and distance learning students. The outputs from this cluster will be a toolkit containing the following resources:
- A mini literature review
- Videos from tutors and students
- Case studies evidencing best practice from a range of programmes (different discipline areas and different modes of online/distance learning)

UHI is one of four institutions involved in the cluster (along with OUS, Dundee and QMU) and we are leading on the production of the best practice case studies. Keith Smyth produced a template with accompanying guidance. Heather Fotheringham conducted telephone interviews during February 2019 with case study authors. These have been put with the other resources to produce a first iteration of the toolkit which was recently reviewed by nominated staff at each of the participating institutions. The final version of the toolkit is now being refined, and the UHI team are revising the literature review to be included in the toolkit as a further part of our contribution.

The second collaborative cluster, led by Edinburgh Napier and GCU, is focusing on upskilling module and programme leaders to become effective users and analysts of data for enhancing learning, teaching and the student experience. The second cluster involves a wide range of universities contributing to the work in various ways. To date, in addition to providing input to scoping the work of the cluster and presenting at the Herriot-Watt event on Jan 2019 we are also planning to contribute a short case study relating to our own work in evidence-based practice to the outputs of the cluster. Heather Fotheringham also participated in the final event of the cluster on 15th May 2019, and is currently authoring a ‘Think Piece’ for the cluster’s final outputs.

**Sector-wide work**

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?*

Beyond our work in relation to the Collaborative Clusters, Sorcha Kirker has provided input and contributed as a speaker to the work and events in Year 2 relating to students as users of data. At the time of writing this report we are also hoping to participate in the student focus groups that are to be conducted into June although there may be logistical challenges in securing student representation at this time of year.

In addition to the above, discussions with QAA Scotland are expected to continue around the potential publication of a Special Issue of the Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice (JPAAP) which will be tied into the Enhancement Theme and published at the final Enhancement Theme conference. This follows a similar special issue that was organised for the conclusion of the previous theme. Keith Smyth is leading on this for JPAAP, we expect to confirm details and call for contributions early 2019/2020.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.*

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?
How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

As indicated above, and in our accompanying report to our internal Steering Group, a range of engagement and professional development activities have been undertaken in Year 2. Many of these, including the Staff Rep Summit, have produced tangible outputs that will feed directly into further staff and student engagement activities.

We are also underway with our various pilot projects involving module and programme teams, and each of our project strands will draw upon these and our other activities in producing new guidelines, case studies, exemplars and workshop designs and materials for staff and students that can sustain engagement beyond the conclusion of the theme.

Processes
Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

Our main lesson learned is the importance of harnessing the Enhancement Theme (both the sector wide work and outputs and our internal work and projects) to create opportunities to inform, synthesise and cohere existing and new work related to the broad area of evidence-informed enhancement. The way in which we have organised our work internally into three distinct but interrelated strands, has been critical here.

Our End of Year 2 report will be taken to our internal Steering Group, and to our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC), where it will be used to establish the progress being made and the support needed to ensure a successful Year 3. It will also be disseminated via our website as a means of documenting progress, alongside our own internally facing ‘Update Report to ET Steering Group - May 2019’.

Evaluation
List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

Light-touch evaluations (documents attached):
- Student rep summit (event)
- Assessment and feedback symposium (event)
- Increasing student engagement with surveys (project)

In-depth evaluations
Piloting use of surveys within HN (project)
This project involves using a standard survey to gather end of unit feedback from students within an HN programme that is delivered at many UHI Academic Partners simultaneously in order to:

- Enable staff to gather student feedback easily
- Access student feedback data easily to inform enhancements
- Allow the Programme Leader to identify good practice or issues (i.e. at a local or programme level)
- Make evidence-informed changes to positively impact on the student experience

Short and medium term indicators show:

- Average response rates of 20% for the unit surveys (although a great deal of variation at unit and Academic Partner level)
- Mixed staff engagement with survey data, mainly due to the fact that low response rates for some units/Academic Partners meant there was not a great deal of data to engage with
- Staff satisfaction with both the survey and the data that is provided, although recognising that they could do more in terms of raising response rates in order to generate more meaningful data (based on informal feedback gathered via Padlet from teaching staff on the programme)
- A commitment to increasing the response rates where these were low, and to using the data to inform enhancement in the next academic year

In terms of achieving the longer term goals there is more communication and engagement work to do with both staff and students in order to articulate the value of the survey. This will be a focus for the next year of the project.

**Piloting the use of region-wide surveys (project)**

This project involves using two region-wide surveys (across all UHI Academic Partners) for the first time in order to:

- Reduce survey fatigue
- Increase response rates
- Reduce student confusion about the purpose of the surveys
- Bring survey data together to allow staff to benchmark results
- Give the university a more rounded picture of students' perceptions
- Contribute to a culture of data usage and data sharing within the university.

Short and medium term indicators show:

- A reduction in the number of surveys as separate Academic Partner surveys are amalgamated to become one university-wide survey.
- Reduced survey fatigue as response rates have increased compared to previous years:
  - Early experience survey: Overall response rate of 57% for 2018/19 compared to 46% in 2017/18.
  - End of year survey: Response rate of FE 77%, HE 51% for 2018/19 compared to FE 63%, HE 49% in 2017/18.
- A reduction in the number of surveys as separate Academic Partner surveys are now amalgamated to become one university-wide survey.
• Staff satisfaction with both the survey and the data that is provided which allows different Academic Partners to benchmark against each other (based on informal feedback gathered via email from Quality Managers at each Academic Partner)

Prospects of achieving the longer term goals are good in that this project represents successful cross-partnership collaboration and sharing of data. The focus for the next year of the project will be to consolidate the work to date, and to improve the survey data dashboard so that it is useful to members of staff beyond Academic Partner Quality Managers.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

To be inserted.

Report Author: Professor Keith Smyth, Institutional Lead and TLG staff representative, Professor of Pedagogy and Head of Learning and Teaching Academy.

Dr Heather Fotheringham, Evidence-based Enhancement Lead, Learning and Teaching Academy.

Date: 10.06.19
End of Year 2 Report for Open University in Scotland

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

**Institutional team**

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

| There have been no changes. |

**Outcomes/activity**

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has it been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

As noted in our Year 2 plan OUeS decided to use a project-based methodology to progress work on the Theme. Activity therefore is exploratory and experimental and may or may not be implemented across the University depending on the outcomes. Some of these projects will report by 31st July 2019 but some will continue to be ongoing. This is indicated below.

**Assessment approaches – live programming.** This project aims to investigate distance paired programming techniques as an innovative pedagogical technique and
method to increase student skills and develop sense of community. (Janet Hughes, Staff Tutor, STEM). The first phase of this project will report by end July 2019.

**Engaging students with learning analytics (student led project)**  (Mark Cameron (OUSA) and others, supported by Amy McDermott) to be run 2019-20 this project will focus on raising awareness and engagement of OU students around the ethics of learning analytics. The project is in its scoping phase and expenditure to support it will come from the 2019-20 budget.

**Data Changers:** This project aims to work with colleagues in OUiS to showcase how they work they are doing uses data, what data they use and how that impacts on the student experience. This will report at the end of July 2019.

**Evaluating a STEM predictive modelling campaign.** Working with our Student Support Teams we will investigate the accuracy of the predictive model used to identify students at risk in STEM subjects and ascertain the effectiveness interventions carried out. It will result in a case study that will report in July 2019.

**Supporting students from deprived backgrounds: closing the attainment gap.** This is a long term project that aims to investigate the reasons for and possible solutions to, the attainment gap for students from deprived communities. The first phase has involved the collection of evidence for the extent of the attainment gap in for students undertaking level 1 modules and a literature review on practice elsewhere. We are using assignment submission rates and performances as proxies of student attainment and have managed to analyse these for key level 1 modules. We are moving onto a new phase for the project collecting and analysing more data including data about tutors and students’ experiences and refining how we collect and present the quantitative data we are using. With regard to student experiences we are working with a Staff Tutor (Gerry Mooney, FASS) and Hannah Jones from Data and Planning Team has been very helpful with providing quantitative data.

**Dissemination of work**

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

In common with many other institutions, there is much good practice in the Open University around using data to enhance the student experience. However, it is not always disseminated effectively. Part of our work this year to construct a dissemination plan has attempted to address this by capturing practice in formats that make it easy for others to learn from and use.
• Data Changers: As noted above this project will collate good practice across OUiS of colleagues using data to enhance the student experience, and develop a format to communicate it to a range of audiences. We envisage that the case studies produced from the project can be used for internal comms as well as evidence for Enhancement Theme activity at OUiS.

• Organise ‘Fika’ sessions – internal workshops/seminars held monthly in OUiS to share practice and work with colleagues. This has allowed colleagues in OUiS to find out about the range of work that is carried out ranging from the demographics of our student population, discussions about gender imbalance in STEM, how we are working in Zambia, our founder Jennie Lee and updates about our Careers and Employability work.

• Re-design of the external website highlighting the enhancement work that OUiS carries out (http://www.open.ac.uk/scotland/node/37).

• Theme update for the internal University Academic Services newsletter February 2019

• Scoping of new ‘Practice Exchange’ – short, sharp summaries of project outputs to help the University use existing resources. This involves working with one of the University’s huge resources of practice, Scholarship Exchange to streamline and highlight ‘nuggets of change’ or lessons learnt in terms of what worked and what did not. We want to trial this idea using an area of strategic importance to us – attainment.
**Inter-institutional collaboration**

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

We are a small team working within the Scotland office of a very large four nation university, and much of our collaborative work is done within the University. After a substantial amount of collaborative activity last year (workshops and learning analytics discussion papers) we decided to focus more on generating internal project activity and enhancing our student engagement work this year.

We have also attended all TLG and SHEEC meetings and contributed to discussions there. We also presented at the TLG institutional team meeting/conference on our work to support SIMD20 student attainment in December 2018.

Our colleague Thomas Ullman also presented at the QAA Scotland ‘Exploring Student Surveys’ event on 30th April. A blog post about his experience can be found here: https://eduinf.eu/2019/04/30/text-analytics-to-improve-the-student-experience-event/

**Collaborative cluster**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

We have been involved with the collaborative cluster looking at Sense of Belonging for Distance Learners, along with QMU, UHI and the University of Dundee. It has been interesting to explore the concept of Sense of Belonging for our students and it has resulted in a very beneficial intra-institutional collaboration and allowed us to involve colleagues in Theme work who would not normally become involved. It has also raised awareness of the importance of Sense of Belonging with senior managers.

It has been challenging, however. We lost one institutional representative who was also the leader for the project due to issues outside our control. This meant we lost quite a lot of time. In addition, the OU context was still quite different from the other institutions. In particular, the scope and agency our tutors have with regard to course design being quite different from the tutors in the other institutions. This has required some sense checking at various stages of the work.

**Sector-wide work**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

Susan Fish from our Data and Planning Team has been involved with Scottish Planners Forum working on the National Student Survey and implications for enhancement in
Scotland. This forms part of the HE Data Landscape resource. We also finalised the discussion paper on the use of learning analytics for enhancement, this piece of work contributed to the ‘Exploring Learning Analytics’ strand.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

We have funded some members of our Student Association to attend two events here in Scotland. These were the institutional team meeting held in Edinburgh on 8th December 2018 and the sparqs event also held in Edinburgh in March 2019.

This has been hugely beneficial to us in terms of developing relationships with the Student Association and allowing us to use the University’s internal student consultation structure. Students also report that they understand the Scottish Enhancement approach much more thoroughly and their involvement has helped us work with them to generate student-led projects.

We have also supported several members of staff to attend Theme related meetings including Tom Cleary and Rebecca Ward who presented to an internal team and colleagues from Dundee University about the University’s data handbook. Heather Gibson was also asked by Tom Cleary from the Strategic Information Office to write a short article about the Enhancement Themes for the Data Planning Team University newsletter – ‘Data Buzz’. Another colleague, Thomas Ullmann was supported to come to Scotland twice to present on his work using sentiment analysis to examine open text comments from students in the end of module evaluations.

Academic staff members (Staff Tutors) have been encouraged to participate in Theme projects using small amounts of funding. Uptake has been slow for various reasons mainly related to workload but we are working with Staff Tutors to design an approach for projects that it easier for them to participate.

We also used Theme funding to organise a workshop at OUiS with Dr Nicholas Bowskill to introduce his student generated induction model to colleagues. This aimed to help OUiS colleagues reflect on practice and also consider new practices. A short report highlighting the main learning points will be disseminated to all staff.
Processes

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

We have not changed the way we have run our Theme this year but used the processes we developed last year: that is to aim to use Theme funding and activity to engage key colleagues and students in the wider University. This has allowed us to start positioning our Theme work as being a method for the wider University to adopt when trying to enhance the student experience. We have also reinforced the approach that the enhancement approach underpins our work to meet our outcome agreement targets in key strategic areas.

Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

As our projects will run until the end of July 2019 we have not completed our evaluations yet. As part of their conditions for funding project managers have been asked to complete project management forms and will be asked to complete the light touch forms. These will form part of their reporting in July 2019.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

A good Theme should allow institutions to align activity to institutional needs and priorities. The unit of resource given to institutions is also very low for the amount of work generated – so a new Theme needs to align with internal priorities in order to avoid being a superficial exercise. There is much in the present Theme that could be carried over into a new Theme and although that has not been done before, it does not mean that it should not. The challenges around using data and evidence will continue to exercise institutions. Perhaps a new Theme could focus on how evidence is used – there is an identified gap in
capacity about how Widening Participation interventions are evaluated – perhaps this idea could be extended to cover how we use data and evidence to test whether and how the interventions we design for enhancing the student experience actually work.

Otherwise, OUiS would support a Theme that explicitly looks at equality and diversity issues within higher education, which could include concepts around inclusive curriculum and assessment, supporting students with seen and unseen disabilities and students from disadvantaged communities as well as students from other protected characteristic groups.

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End of Year 2 Report for Queen Margaret University

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

Due to the retirement of Professor Roni Bamber at the end of December 2018, Jo Rowley (Head of Library Services) took over as the Theme lead. Jo attended the TLG meeting in February. Unfortunately both student members of the institutional team had to stand down due to pressures of academic workload. QMU is still trying to recruit another student who will serve for the final year of the Theme. The Project Officer for the Theme also left the University in February, however we have been able to recruit another Project Officer (from the existing institutional team) to serve for the remainder of the year. Other than these updates, membership of the institutional team remains static.

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

In year 2 of the Theme we intended to concentrate our efforts on the following activities:

- Production of an information pack;
- Making use of institutional evidence (“5 things” and module evaluation);
- Making use of external evidence (top tips);
- Widening sector participation;
- POETS projects;
- Gathering institutional evidence.

With the departure of the Project Officer in the middle of the year, we have had to prioritise our work, choosing the activities which would most benefit the greatest number of people.
**Information Pack:** We designed “5x3” prompt cards detailing the aims of the Theme, sector strands, QMU projects, collaborative cluster work, etc. to help staff raise awareness of the Theme and its aims in their division, programme and module meetings. These were used by some of the Theme members to good effect, acting as aide memoires when speaking at relevant meetings.

**Making use of institutional evidence**

- **Five Things:** This project is aimed at helping staff to engage with the data about their programmes that are already available. Programme Leaders are able to access the dashboard through the Staff Portal as part of an initial testing phase. Early feedback is positive and the renewed Portal will soon be made available to all relevant staff. An ongoing process of feedback and development will continue during the final year of the Theme and beyond.

- **Module evaluation information:** We have been unable to follow through on this project for 18/19 as intended, however our revised AMR process has confirmed good engagement with module evaluation, as reported to the Student Experience Committee. This will be considered again for the final year of the project.

- **Metric of the month:** This was included at the suggestion of the institutional team, as a way of highlighting the existing data already available to staff. This work is still ongoing and will be refined during the final year of the Theme.

**Making use of external evidence**

- **Top Tips.** This project will build on a previous collection of leaflets developed during a previous enhancement theme and update them in terms of content and delivery mechanism. We began work on updating the leaflets however we had to prioritise the work of the Project Officer for the remainder of the year, so this project is currently on hold.

**POETS projects**

In November 2018 we put out a call to staff and students asking them to bid for small amounts of money for “Project Opportunity for Enhancement Theme Funding” (POETs). We received 4 bids, all of whom were successful in gaining funding. All are expected to submit a final report at the end of May 2019. To gain funding, the bids had to align with the work of the Theme and be sustainable into the future.

**Gathering institutional evidence**

While there is much data available, one area which we as an institution recognise is less strong than others, is the collection of qualitative data, particularly on student views. This aspect of our work has not been carried forward for this year and will be reconsidered in year 3.

**Dissemination of work**

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

As well as raising awareness of the Theme at divisional meetings, etc., using the information packs outlined above; a number of institutional team members also sit on other related institutional groups such as Student Experience Committee, Transitions and Induction Group and the WISeR (Widening Student participation and Retention) Board. This has allowed for constructive discussion and collaboration on the development of a variety of institutional projects.

An internal newsletter is produced and publicised each semester highlighting the Theme, upcoming events and staff involvement.
### Inter-institutional collaboration

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.*

**Developing a toolkit for tutors to promote a Sense of Belonging for online, distance and rural learners at the module and programme levels.**

This collaborative cluster was set up by Dr Susi Peacock of QMU. The collaborating institutions were the Open University in Scotland (Dr Heather Gibson & Dr Linda Thomson), the University of Dundee (Dr Susie Schofield) and the University of the Highlands and Islands (Professor Keith Smyth). The independent consultant was Professor John Cowan from Edinburgh Napier.

The draft toolkit was set up and distributed for testing at the institutions involved. Unfortunately, Dr Peacock left the employment of QMU at the end of April 2019, before the culmination of the project. The overall management of the project was taken forward by the OU and the University of Dundee; however there was only 2 months of the project remaining, and we were assured that everything had progressed as per the bid document. QMU did some of the evaluation work (through Dr Lindsey Irvine) but unfortunately Dr Irvine has also now left the University. QMU will however pay out any remaining funds for invoices received.

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### Collaborative cluster

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?*

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**Learning Analytics** – **Gavin Hughes** has updated the cluster group on his work with Five Things and the development of the ERA staff portal, as well as engaging in discussion around the purpose(s) and ethics of learning analytics.

**Programme Leaders** – **Susanne Schulz & Christina De Placido**

**Employability** – A research intern based at QMU received guidance from **Colin Duffus** and Craig Warrack on graduate outcomes and other available statistics. This intern is also responsible for conducting focus groups which will inform the development of a toolkit for supporting graduates.

By having members of the institutional team contribute to clusters which play to QMU’s strengths and areas of ongoing development, we have the benefit of knowledge and experience of good practice from colleagues across the Scottish sector and beyond. As a small institution, this has been invaluable in terms of the research time saved – however, as a small institution there is sometimes a difficulty in staff being available to contribute their time to cluster work.

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### Sector-wide work

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?*

**Progression and retention annual monitoring project** – **Dawn Martin** has undertaken a commissioned piece of work relating to the use of progression and retention data in
annual monitoring. Her project has reviewed Scottish HEIs’ approaches in order to share good policy and practice across the sector and develop practical resources for staff involved in using data for annual monitoring. Outcomes from Dawn’s work are expected to be published in Summer 2019.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.*

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An undergraduate student was employed and supervised in conducting desk-based research into graduate outcomes of students from widening participation groups. This research will be used not only to inform enhancing student experience around employability, but add to examples across QMU of the benefits of staff-student collaboration and student-led projects.

**Processes**

*Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.*

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As mentioned above, changes in QMU staffing have necessitated a more focussed approach to the development and delivery of Theme work, in collaboration with the ongoing projects and concerns of other institutional groups. While in some respects this has potentially limited the number of outputs QMU had originally hoped to pursue, it has alternatively led the institutional team to targeting specific expertise and sharing structural resources and opportunities for embedding practice. This report will be disseminated to Student Experience Committee, WISeR Board and Programme Leaders, in the first instance. It will also inform discussion at a forthcoming Executive Board and planning away day.

**Evaluation**

*List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).*

*Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.*

*What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?*

*Improving Module Evaluation procedure and use, closing feedback loop – please see the separate evaluation template document attached at the end of this template.*
Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

The current and previous Themes have returned questions around the longevity and standardisation of practice developed and outcomes produced. It is clear that, across the sector, the embedding and resourcing of evidenced good practice in institutional policy/procedure, alongside the true engagement and ‘buy-in’ of the wider community and senior management in reflecting lessons learnt from Themes in long-term strategy, requires stronger support.

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<tr>
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</table>

As mentioned above, changes in QMU staffing have necessitated a more focussed approach to the development and delivery of Theme work, in collaboration with the ongoing projects and concerns of other institutional groups. While in some respects this has potentially limited the number of outputs QMU had originally hoped to pursue, it has alternatively led the institutional team to targeting specific expertise and sharing structural resources and opportunities for embedding practice.

This report will be disseminated to Student Experience Committee, WISeR Board and Programme Leaders, in the first instance. It will also inform discussion at a forthcoming Executive Board and planning away day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Evaluation</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Improving Module Evaluation procedure and use, closing feedback loop* – please see the separate evaluation template document attached at the end of this template.
Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

The current and previous Themes have returned questions around the longevity and standardisation of practice developed and outcomes produced. It is clear that, across the sector, the embedding and resourcing of evidenced good practice in institutional policy/procedure, alongside the true engagement and ‘buy-in’ of the wider community and senior management in reflecting lessons learnt from Themes in long-term strategy, requires stronger support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Author:</th>
<th>J Rowley</th>
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<td>Date:</td>
<td>31 May 2019</td>
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End of Year 2 Report for Robert Gordon University

The key purposes of this report are to:
- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Institutional team

The RGU institutional contacts have remained as originally specified:
- Staff lead - Kirsty Campbell, Learning Analytics and Partnership Lead, DELTA
- Student lead – Adam Johnson, President Education and Welfare, RGU:Union

In addition an internal Enhancement Theme Leadership Group (RGU:ETLG) brings together stakeholders from project strands and ensures collective oversight of activity. The group comprises academic and support colleagues from across the university, alongside members of the student union and school representatives. The RGU:ETLG reports to our Teaching Learning and Assessment Sub-Committee (TLASC), which is convened by the university’s Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC) member.

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

The Theme continues to facilitate opportunities to evolve a culture of evidence-based enhancement within the institution. In negotiating projects for inclusion RGU has given consideration to the balance of ‘new’ activity in support of enhancing the student experience, versus the opportunity to bring to the fore ‘existing’ activity which could be given added impetus through being undertaken under the auspices of the Theme. RGU has also given consideration to the balance of alignment to institutional priorities, and opportunity for colleagues’ engagement and interpretation within their own local contexts.

Each of the Year 2 projects – which align to sector-wide strands - have enabled focus on what constitutes evidence for enhancement and enriched the understanding of colleagues, individually and collectively. RGU has continued to develop understanding of how our data collection,
processes, reporting and our partnership approach to working with students can inform the identification and progression of enhancement activity.

In summary, the project updates presented below demonstrate:
- Deeper consideration of existing evidence;
- Greater capacity to join and make connections between sources of evidence;
- Creation of new evidence in support of emergent institutional priorities; and
- Increased connectivity amongst colleagues; with sources of evidence providing the starting point for facilitated dialogue.

Optimising Evidence:
Supporting our Course Leaders

In summer 2018 the university appointed Course Leaders to a new role descriptor which made explicit the importance of effective course delivery and enhancement as a core aspect of the role. The imperative being to recognise developing and sustained excellence. Implementation was an opportunity to modernise role descriptors and expectations, clarify authority in relation to the course, empower academic leadership and create progression pathways.

In recognition of the new performance criteria the project sought to:
- Understand what constitutes an effective ‘evidence-base’ for Course Leaders, in support of both discharging their duties and pursuing enhancement activity;
- Support effective interpretation of this evidence-base to empower appropriate interventions; and
- Facilitate the sharing of practice across our subject areas.

Subsequent to the ET project being defined, RGU began consultation to define a new succinct Pedagogy Statement. The Pedagogy Working Group includes representatives from all Schools and, following consultation with students, content will be approved for September 2019. As such the in-year deliverables for the Course Leaders project were revised, in the knowledge that the Statement will provide a further opportunity to review underpinning support from academic-related support teams.

Specific activity with Course Leaders included the creation of space for peer dialogue; workshop activities were undertaken to explore perceptions of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and consider examples of current practice of their use. Key themes distilled from discussions have informed the upcoming programme of Academic Development workshops. Helpfully, these have been informed by sector outputs, including the HE Data Landscape resource, Student Voice project and Programme Leader collaborative cluster.

Two new sessions delivered within the June CPD offer will allow colleagues to engage in discussion of; evidence available to help better understand the experiences of cohorts, demonstrate high quality teaching and learning and foster enhancement activity; and how student feedback sources can be utilised and used to influence change at course, school or subject level. In addition, to support effective completion of the Annual Course Appraisal Process, a series of ten informal drop-in sessions will be held throughout the summer months.

Furthermore, DELTA has been tasked with giving further consideration to the support offer for these key leaders in teaching and learning during Session 2019/20. Support will recognise the value of meaningful metrics as a sound basis for assuring quality as well as driving enhancement.
Our internal project mirrors sector-wide interest, and the collaborative cluster funded by QAA has supported engagement of our own Course Leaders and service-leads in sector-level discussions. Moreover it has supported RGU in being instrumental in establishing a Sharing Practice Network for academic developers with a series of virtual meetings held to explore existing practice.

“As well as engaging in institutional-level activity, the Collaborative Cluster has been invaluable in learning about effective practice at other institutions and providing a constructive forum to test thinking about future developments. Valuable insights will shape my team’s approach to future support.”

Rachel McGregor, Academic Support Lead

Initial activity has developed a better understanding of the real world needs and challenges of Course Leaders. The approach taken aims to empower colleagues by providing opportunities for dialogue on the data sources themselves; fostering deeper consideration of existing evidence and ability to make informed-decisions.

Student Engagement:
Development of ‘Borderless Learning’

A key strategic growth area for the university is online-distance learning and the concept of ‘borderless’ education. To inform course development, assure excellence of provision and to provide a high quality experience for students this project has supported the analysis and discussion of data sources pertaining to online learning. It aimed to develop an understanding of ‘what works’ for our current students in order to inform ambitions for growth. It should be noted that the project has been intrinsically linked to the related activity of the Student-Facing Services Review: ‘Delivery of Support Services to Off-Campus Students’ and early discussions to define an RGU Pedagogy Statement. These all recognise that whilst two in five of our learners study wholly online, all learners make use of core online products.

Activity commenced with a series of workshops with academics/stakeholders to ‘curate the conversation’ on the digital estate. Over sixty colleagues attended providing rich insight into what they felt currently works within our digital estate, and what could be improved. Workshops also provided opportunities to share ideas for the future, taking account of expertise from across the university.

Key learning from staff:
- Feedback that recent enhancement work has advanced practice within the university.
- Positive endorsement of Moodle and related technology, with recognition that new technology may also be required.
- A recognition that CPD for online learning could be further enhanced.
- A clear ask for better and more cohesive communication about how the digital estate is maintained and developed.
A scoping of the analytical capabilities of the core suite of digital 'products' was also undertaken and culminated in better understanding of the potential to exploit features of current products, process and designated roles to deliver enhancement.

Concurrently a DELTA Student Intern was appointed to design and deliver mechanisms to seek additional feedback on students’ experiences of online learning. Due to the potential to directly inform the upcoming CampusMoodle upgrade (Summer 2019) a short survey was designed to seek feedback on the VLE specifically, providing direct insights into aspects of the user experience. In addition, pop-up on-campus feedback opportunities were hosted, and additional insights sought via liaison with RGU:Union and student representatives.

Key learning from students:
- 88% indicated CampusMoodle helped them to be independent with their learning
- 94% indicated CampusMoodle helped them to understand module-related information
- Developmental themes included:
  o potential to enhance communication and collaboration with/between lecturers, and peers.
  o desire to locate course information, modules and learning resources more easily.
  o desire for more consistent navigation for online support services

Responding to feedback from both colleagues and students, the following deliverables will bring significant positive change for students for Session 2019/20:
- An upgrade to CampusMoodle, together with a refresh of the 'look and feel' of the site and further elements of responsive design, delivered in partnership with IT Services.
- A new institutional Student Welcome space, delivered in partnership with Student Life, taking account of learning from students.
- Listening to our staff, introduction of a new 1-2-1 desk based approach to learning technology support.

The upgrade itself will provide a series of modifications leading to a step change in the user experience, and, importantly provide a robust platform for further development of the digital experience.

In addition recommendations will continue to be developed to support the strategic ambition beyond September 2019. This will be informed by three further future focused work-strands:
- **Understanding future learners** - will engage with college and local authority partners to connect with learners elsewhere in our education and skills system; with the aim of understanding how digital is changing their experience of education and is shaping their needs and expectations of studying in a university.
- **Enabling our academic workforce** - will engage with colleagues in key leadership and support roles within our Schools to understand the needs of our academic workforce and to explore how we can better support these needs as we move forward.
- **Enhancing understanding and improving partnership working on digital** - As we look to the future, effective partnering to make best use of our talent and resources will be critical. Directors of IT Services and DELTA have been exploring how teams can work together more closely, and will engage with Heads of School to understand how they envisage digital developing in their contexts.
Activity undertaken has re-considered the major technical components of the digital estate, explored the effective assembly of these components as a whole and evaluated the support for staff and students in using the estate effectively.

The significance placed on eliciting new staff and student feedback as evidence to underpin the technical implementation marks a shift in approach from a service-driven upgrade process to full recognition of the critical need to ensure the learning platform is holistically developed and collaboratively supported.

**Student demographics, retention and attainment: Understanding the Graduate Apprentice student experience**

Following delivery of inaugural Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs) in Session 2017/18, the university was successful in securing over one hundred full-funded GA places and has developed content across a range of disciplines including construction, engineering, business management and IT. Whilst RGU has historically monitored the experiences of different characteristics of our intake (eg articulation and collaborative provision), Graduate Apprenticeships - as a product - are a new entity. This project has explored the experiences of students and staff to understand areas of positive practice, as well as areas for development.

A Course Leader group, facilitated by DELTA, was established to consider key aspects of the GA delivery model. These regular meetings have enabled discussion of colleagues’ experiences across Schools, and have provided an opportunity for sharing best practice and dialogue around the enhancement of the GA offering.

During Semester 1 a bespoke Student Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) for GA cohorts was designed and implemented. This included additional content specific to the GA experience of work-based learning such as questions regarding their learning plan, learning in the workplace and university, mentor and employer support. To gain further insight and enable interrogation of the questionnaire responses, follow-up focus groups were conducted. Notably, initial consideration of the qualitative and quantitative feedback by course teams was facilitated by DELTA, with Heads of School (and nominees) invited to discuss perceptions of results on a cohort-by-cohort basis. This allowed reflection via various lenses, and consideration to be given to both institutional and course responses.

As a result of feedback from the SEQ, two main in-year actions were taken forward to seek to enhance the GA experience. Firstly, there has been sharing of best practice with regards to the application and communication of the, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) required, learning plan. Secondly, the number of on-campus days has been re-evaluated.

High-level messages from the SEQ have also informed the strategic approach taken to marketing and communicating the RGU GA offer. Ensuring that key information is shared appropriately and timeously by the Business Development Team who build and maintain close relationships with employers and support their business needs effectively.

The impetus of the Enhancement Theme has supported work to explore the in-year progression of GA students and give consideration to appropriate student support. A GA Success Coach was appointed; an expert in student transitions and well placed to provide additional support to learners with diverse needs. Furthermore a GA Mentor Consultant liaises closely with Workplace Mentors ensuring they develop adequate skills and competencies to support students, and are well-
informed as to learner engagement and performance. This role took cognisance of student and employer feedback on how work based learning, and support for it, could be enhanced.

An emerging focus has been that of GA progression. The GA SEQ together with early analysis of student achievement has informed the secondment of an academic colleague to DELTA to enable RGU to understand more about the likely journeys of different types of student; this activity will report prior to the start of next session.

“The theme has instituted an evidence base which has facilitated in-depth discussions with Course Teams regarding course design and delivery which will be drawn upon to guide future enhancements to these courses, and the support provision offered for them”
Julie Strachan,
Head of Learning Teaching Development

GA courses are a natural extension of the professional education ethos of RGU, and new courses are fully embedded within core quality monitoring processes. The creation of new sources of evidence to provide additional insight into the specific experiences of GA students has underpinned the approach to strategic oversight and maintaining parity, whilst also providing degrees of flexibility at subject level.

Dissemination of work
Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

Building on the mechanisms used in year one, during the second year of the theme, the following have also supported dissemination:
- Revised membership of the RGU:TLG to increase academic representation;
- Greater use of standing committees to distribute key messages, with members receiving updates for consideration (Learning Infrastructure Sub-Committee (LISC), Teaching Learning and Assessment Sub-Committee (TLASC) and Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC));
- Briefing updates to Heads of School, for onward circulation as appropriate;
- Inclusion of key messages within Academic Development content circulated to all academic staff;
- Promotion of opportunities to engage via institutional outputs of the Communications Team; and
- Each project strand has engaged relevant staff and students directly in their development process as appropriate.
On-going development and dissemination of analytical capacity

It is important to note that aspects of activity from Year 1 have continued to be developed, and disseminated, with significant further impact. By way of examples, additional extension of analytical capacity through the RGU:Insight project includes:

- **Further augmentation of the suite of Annual Course Appraisal dashboards**
  New evidence to be incorporated for 2018/19 includes integrated masters classifications; academic appeals and academic misconducts. There will also be a new workbook for the School Academic Boards (SABs), which will include student achievement rates and honours, integrated masters and masters classifications post re-sit boards.

- **Review of associated support to interrogate dashboards**
  The method of introducing these data to staff has been reviewed, with segmentation of drop-in sessions (UG, TPG and SAB members) and tailored support to staff beyond those sessions.

- **Visualisation of in-year student feedback mechanisms**
  Significant developments have taken place to visualise the results of this year’s student experience questionnaires, including the internal Semester 1 questionnaire, which has resulted in real-time changes and enhancements to courses, and the first Graduate Apprenticeships questionnaire (Refer detail within ‘Student demographics, retention and attainment’ section)

- **Development of new dashboards to underpin strategic business processes**
  In order to support evidence based decision making regarding student recruitment; the applications and enrolments workbook will be published for use of all relevant staff by the end of 2018/19. This includes a map of applications and enrolments; historical comparison of each application stage and enrolment vs target data. All dashboards contain multiple filters for course, country, mode of study, funding status and certain population characteristics.

- **Creation of a cross-institution user group**
  Across the university, the development of authors’ competence and confidence in reporting via RGU:Insight has been underpinned by two key initiatives; the introduction of in-house training courses and the creation of an RGU:Insight User Group.

  “In my role as Course Leader, I am not only responsible for analysing the data that comes out of the SEQ and NSS, but also for disseminating it across the teaching team. The Theme’s work on improving the availability and visibility of data has meant that it is very straightforward for me to see where change needs to be affected – and also very straightforward for me to share these reports with the team so we can focus on what is most important: bettering the student experience.” Mark Zarb, Senior Lecturer (A), School of Computing Science and Digital Media

Elements of this continued progress was shared within the spring QAA Newsletter.

Inter-institutional collaboration

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

Collaboration with other institutions has predominantly been via the TLG and input to collaborative clusters [Refer Collaborative cluster and Sector-wide work sections below].

Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

The university has actively engaged in the following collaborative clusters:
- **Learning Analytics**

The cluster has continued to provide a constructive forum to liaise with interested colleagues and develop thinking in this area. In addition RGU has supported one of four student interns recruited to undertake sector-wide focus groups on students’ perceptions of learning analytics. Although challenges in timing have constrained certain activity useful insights have been assembled, and the collective output will be submitted to QAA in June. Notably the Intern chose to capitalise on the contacts made, and desk-based background research, by undertaking a course assessment on the topic of ‘Learning Analytics: The Absorptive Capacity within Higher Education’:

- **Programme Leaders**

  Refer Outcomes section above.

- **‘Responding to the Student Voice: Communicating the Impact’**

  Engagement with the student-led project has continued and involved contributing to Steering Group discussions, commenting on the direction of the work, the focus, and suggested content of resources. Specifically RGU presented on the ‘institutional data landscape’ at the sharing and developing practice event held in February 2019.

Clusters continue to provide an opportunity for relevant RGU colleagues to engage in sector-wide discussions on the future direction of key topics. This external perspective supports a breadth of understanding and brings new insight back into the university.

### Sector-wide work

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?*

RGU has contributed to a range of sector-wide commissions via the provision of institutional feedback, e.g. retention and progression, sparqs research into approaches to NSS.

RGU has also contributed to a range of events through the provision of presentations to facilitate further dialogue, for example via:

- TLG Showcase; ‘Celebrating targeted enhancement activity in conjunction with School of Nursing and Midwifery’ (December 2018)
- Student Led Event; ‘A tour of the institutional data landscape’ (February 2019)
- Programme Leaders Event; ‘Academic Role Review’ (May 2019)

Examples of showcasing the auspices of the Theme across wider external networks include presentations at:

- Higher Education Institutional Research Conference (HEIR) (September 2018)
- sparqs Conference (March 2019)
- UK Quality Summit (May 2019)

### Supporting staff and student engagement

- **How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.**

- **Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?**

- **How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity**
Academic membership on the RGU:TLG was augmented during Year 2, and concerted efforts were made to provide regular updates directly to Schools. Notably each project strand created dialogue opportunities for, and with, key stakeholders.

Particular consideration was given to how best to stimulate student engagement in the theme, with the Partnership Working Group comprising key student leaders receiving a briefing at the start of session. Engagement of the President (Education and Welfare) was augment by inviting contributions from Student School Officers to both projects and the RGU:TLG. A Student Intern was also recruited to progress specific associated tasks, as outlined within project updates.

As a student representative, staff have supported my engagement with the theme and most importantly, I have been able to transfer that onto students. I have tried to make students aware of the theme as well as how they could engage. Also, I’ve made it clear that the University’s plans for improvement are tailored to this for the benefit of students (e.g. Employability). I’ve received positive responses from students on how the utilisation of relevant data sourced from students could be used to improve the experience.”
Zainab Olatunji, Student School Officer

In addition a showcase event is planned for late June. This will include input from senior management, and invite representatives from each of our Schools to receive progress updates on project activity and consider the benefits of the ethos of evidence-based enhancement.

Furthermore to inform the Year 3 plan RGU intends to hold a summer event to reflect on the strength and weaknesses of the approaches adopted to date. This conversation will include members of the RGU:TLG as well as Teaching Excellence Fellows, incoming Sabbaticals and an external perspective. Discussion will be fundamental to developing the approach, and planned activity, of the final year of the theme.

As a final point, RGU welcomes the production of sector-wide resources and webinars and has sought opportunities to facilitate conversations around these. In addition staff have continued to be supported to attend sector-wide events as appropriate.

Processes
- Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.
- What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?
- How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

This report will be shared via the Dissemination mechanisms outlined in the section above.

To ensure progress against intended deliverables a range of approaches to project planning, and engaging stakeholders, have been designated by each work strand.

It is clear that the projects of the theme must be flexible in responding to the changing priorities of the university. An example being the in-year introduction of a Pedagogy Working Group with
specific intent to engender collective participation from Schools in its output. There was recognition that this took prominence over the Course Leaders project, but that in its conclusion would provide a natural stepping stone back into specific consideration of the role of Course Leaders.

### Evaluation

- *List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).*
- *Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.*
- *What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?*

The approach to determining institutional-wide projects, agreement of intended deliverables for these and subsequent reporting continues to be underpinned by full commitment to monitoring and evaluation.

Smaller evaluation templates will be provided for the following Year 1 projects:
- *Extension of the reach and impact of the suite of internal student evaluation questionnaires*
- *Support for the implementation of our new Employability Hub, and graduate-level employability aspirations*

Feedback from Liz Thomas Associates will inform the in-depth project evaluation pertaining to: *Further development of our analytical capacity through the phased roll-out of a new business intelligence reporting tool*

### Looking ahead

*At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.*

The Enhancement Theme enables the institution to further develop understanding of the ethos of evidence-based enhancement amongst staff and students, whereby consideration is given to mutual interests and challenges pertinent to teaching and learning and service design.

The reporting process provides initial insights into the influence this has on practice, and importantly on the student learning experience. Longer term benefits will be assessed by the in-depth evaluation process.

As stated above key academic leaders will be fully involved in determining the approach, and objectives, in the final year.

### Report Author:

Kirsty Campbell

### Date:

31 May 2019
End of Year 2 Report for The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

### Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

The Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership remains as stated in the institutional plan with the exception that we have included Yvonne McLellan within the team membership. Yvonne is our Widening Access to the Creative Industries (WACI) Coordinator with a specific remit for Technology Enhanced Learning.

### Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

As outlined in our original year 1 plan, our intentions were to structure the work of the theme over the three years, with each year denoting a stage in the process. Year 1 was primarily about setting up the structures and mechanisms we would need to gather new data from the members of our institution, year 2 was designed to be the main data gathering phase and year 3 would be the analysis and application of the findings. Our intentions were to track the whole cycle of the planning, gathering and use of data to enhance the learning experience of students. At the end of year 2 we are content that this is still the best structure for the work of our theme and we remain (largely) on track. It may be worth reflecting on our original aims before discussing the work of the associated projects.

**Aim 1: To develop a shared language of Learning and Teaching**

This remains a priority particularly as we are in the process of revising our documentation as part of our review of our postgraduate provision. As part of this review we are considering how we simplify programme handbooks and module specific documentation. We are conscious of the fact that the
language required for academic documentation to gain validation is often inaccessible to many students. At the same time we are now delivering our newly validated undergraduate curriculum. This curriculum offers increased opportunities students to develop pedagogical skills that may help them construct a wider portfolio of employment opportunities upon graduation. NSS results across the creative arts sector tend to show lower scores for feedback and assessment. Anecdotally we have found that this is often about misconceptions around what constitutes feedback. The drive to develop a shared language of Learning and Teaching is increasingly relevant.

**Project 1 – Good Teacher/Good Learner** was designed to help us meet this aim. The project has progressed well. The first five of the six stages of project were completed as outlined in the year 2 plan. Over the year we have gathered approximately 300 postcard responses and 70 video-recordings. In practice the set-up of the video-booth events was rather more labour intensive than expected. We were keen to ensure that students based in our second campus would have the opportunity to contribute, so the data gathering process took longer than expected. The uploading of the postcards and the processing of the video content also took considerably longer than anticipated. Unfortunately the quality of the audio track in the video responses was not good, and we have been working on enhancing this, again adding time to the process.

Our original year 1 plan located the bulk of the analysis and the dissemination in year 3 however we moved this forward into AY18/19 in our year 2 plan. This proved to be overly ambitious in practice and we are returning to the original strategy. This will allow a more thorough analysis of the data and more time for discussion with stakeholders around the reporting and the dissemination strategies. We feel that the volume and richness of the responses merits more dedicated time than was budgeted for within this year’s workload.

**Aim 2: To track and understand student changing perceptions of success**

This is proving to be an increasingly important aim within our institution and from our work within the collaborative cluster, across the arts sector. With the potential impact of the Augur report on creative arts funding, and some derivation of TEF looming on the horizon, it is important that we ensure we have a thorough understanding of the value of an arts education. This value does not necessarily show through the standards metrics potential applicants might have access to online, so it is important that we understand how our students define success and what they see as our institution’s role in helping them achieve it.

In year 1 of **Project 2: Definitions of Success** our statistical analyst gathered a significant amount of data from our first year undergraduate cohort through asking two key questions: ‘Where do you see yourself in 15 years?’ and ‘How can the institution help you to succeed?’ The intention for year 2 was firstly, to ask undergraduate teaching staff to estimate what they thought the student responses would show, before sharing the actual responses with them. The researcher would look for and report on areas of significant commonality and difference. Secondly, the researcher would repeat the process for postgraduate students and their teaching staff. This plan was impacted by staff illness and the decision was made to change the emphasis of the year 2 work to focus on perceptions of success within a specific project. Each year students on our BA Acting and MA Classical and Contemporary Text programmes engage in a festival of new work called ‘On the Verge’. A research proposal was made to our ethics committee and was successful. The methodology for gathering the data was a fairly simple questionnaire to all students distributed at the start of the project and a follow-up focus group at the end of the project. The intention of the research is to gather data on the changes pre- and post- production, but also to gather data on the relationship between the responses of undergraduate students and postgraduate students. In the final report, the researcher will document the trends captured within the data, their interpretation of the findings, and make recommendations for how we understand, challenge and support our students in achieving their version of success. Due to the timing of the actual festival, this work is currently in progress, with the final report being completed by the middle of July.

**Aim 3: To generate engagement with the Theme across the institution**

We have a very busy production schedule at the RCS. The proto-professional environment that our students learn within leaves very little time for extra-curricular engagement in major projects. At the same time, it is increasingly important that our staff and student bodies are engaged with the evolving HE sector. In particular, there is a need to engage with the ways in which metrics are
Project 3: Evidencing Enhancement Project Fund was intended to be linked to our Make It Happen Month. In November a series of events had been planned by our Research and Knowledge Exchange team to encourage the development of entrepreneurship within our graduates. The events would be designed to help them secure their first project investments. We initially thought that we could offer a small fund for students who were keen to develop a project and were able to demonstrate how they could use data to demonstrate the impact of their work. As the project already had a strong identity and was also open to graduates from other institutions, we made the decision not to progress with this plan. We did make sure that the Good Teacher video-booth and café events happened during the same week so that there was still some connection. At the RCS we have Bridge Week in which all curriculum delivery stops and students have the opportunity to pitch for venue time and other resources to develop new non-curricular work. We investigated whether an additional fund for the same original purpose of gathering data to demonstrate impact would be attractive to students. We decided that the Bridge Week ethos of experimentation contrasted too much with the idea of demonstrating impact, so rejected this approach.

We were conscious that this project was designed to help us meet Aim 3. However, through discussions with our student presidents it became clear that this fund would be unlikely to achieve the aim. The levels of engagement with Project 1 Good Teacher/Good Learner had established that this aim was already being met and it was at this point that it became clear that our original plans for project 2 would not be progressing. Aim 2 became a bigger priority and by chance a discussion around a potential project led to the decision to fund the research that would now replace the year 2 activity for project 2. As such project 3 was discontinued.

Aim 4: To evaluate the effectiveness of support mechanisms

The ways in which we support our students with mental health issues is becoming increasingly important. We recognise through our internal reporting that the number of students disclosing mental health conditions is still increasing across all programmes of study. To ensure that we know the impact of what we are providing, we are intent on gathering data to inform our decisions.

Project 5: Evaluation of Mental Health support mechanisms was designed primarily to provide an analysis the impact of the introduction of the Big White Wall online platform. However, we discovered that Big White Wall has an inbuilt data reporting feature that would provide the bulk of what we were hoping to capture. Over the period that we were intending on gathering this data, our student president commissioned a survey of mental health support and provision and we made the decision that we should revise the nature of the research to avoid duplication of data gather and survey fatigue.

RCS students’ experience of performance anxiety

Following on from previous 2016 research exploring the barriers to learning faced by students with mental health issues, our researcher designed a body of work to investigate the impact of performance anxiety for students in the Conservatoire setting. The aim of the research is to gain an understanding of how performance anxiety affects students across all art forms at the RCS with the view to providing data that will influence how we develop and improve the ways we support them. It is hoped that this research will highlight a shared understanding in addition to distinct variations of performance anxiety across the different art forms at the RCS.

Performance anxiety, often called "stage fright", is something that affects many artists involved in live performance situations. The symptoms of performance anxiety can be physiological (symptoms related to ‘fight or flight’ response), cognitive (negative or irrational thoughts) and behavioural (tension in the body, poor sleep etc). For artists, this can result in a performance experience that is uncomfortable at best and entirely debilitating at worst. This small-scale research study aims to understand better the impact of performance anxiety for students across the RCS. An online questionnaire will be used to generate data on the student experience of performance anxiety at
the RCS. The questionnaire was launched at the end of May 2019 and will remain live for 4 weeks. The reporting will be completed by the end of July 2019.

Dissemination of work

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

As outlined in the previous section, the projects we have been engaged in have been designed to run over the three years of the theme, with year three primarily focusing on the analysis and dissemination of our findings. Having said this, I have engaged used the resources developed around the Good Teacher and Good Learner project in a number of contexts:

- Delivered sessions for years 1, 2 and 3 of our Postgraduate Learning and Teaching cohort
- Delivered session for RCS Transitions students
- Delivered session for Big Noise/Sistema Scotland
- Delivered session for graduating PGDE Drama students at Aberdeen University

One of the underlying concerns that we have begun to explore within the work we have produced for the theme is around how we communicate data across or institution. Historically data has been shared within particular committees with a remit for specific strategic priorities. Data on application numbers, retention rates, SIMD figures etc. have tended to be communicated in tables or lists and have limited accessibility. Through the work of this theme we have begun to explore how we might use data visualisation software to generate more sophisticated and more accessible information from our data sets.

Year 1 work in this areas was focused on **Project 2: Definitions of Success** and the early dissemination of findings from our first year cohort. In year 2 we are beginning to explore how PowerBI and other data visualisation software might help us disseminate responses to **Project 1 – Good Teacher/Good Learner.** Early from this project show how a simple word cloud can communicate the most repeated terms in a visual way. The image below shows early staff responses to the question ‘What Makes a Good Teacher?’
We intend to find more innovative and diverse ways in which to share the responses as part of our year 3 work on the theme.

Within the final year of the theme we will be producing and disseminating findings for projects 1, 2 and 5, in each case exploring how we can use data visualisation to disseminate our findings within our institution and across the sector.

Whilst not formally a part of the QAA work, we have produced a report *Mapping National Provision of Dance Education in Scotland* as part of a Creative Scotland funded project. The report provides a snapshot of the provision for credit-rated dance education across Scotland and part of the remit was to provide visuals to communicate the data. This image below illustrates the provision for Higher Dance:

![Higher Dance Provision Map](image)

The report does feed into the Learner Journey project for the Collaborative Cluster work we have been involved in, but it is included here as an example of how we might use visual imagery to share the data sets from our projects. Currently we are exploring how PowerBI can be used to show the above information in relation to SIMD numbers and local authorities. Early responses from the dissemination of this dance report indicates that our stakeholders are very responsive to data that is communicated visually, and whilst our projects are not concerned with geographical mapping, the range of visualisation templates within software such as PowerBI is vast. Year 3 would allow us the time to investigate this more thoroughly, disseminating visually rich data sets at the end of the theme.

**Inter-institutional collaboration**

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.*

Beyond the work of our collaborative cluster and attendance at QAA meetings over the year, we have had no additional inter-institutional collaboration as part of this theme.
The work of our collaborative cluster has expanded to include many partners and has engaged us in a fairly robust investigation of the theme. The collaborative cluster exploring *Distance and Sense of Belonging* holds a particular relevance to my role within our institution and the cluster work *Beyond the metrics: Charting the intangible aspects of enhancement in the age of accountability* would appear to parallel the work of our Creative Arts cluster group. As ever, time is an issue and it was a conscious decision to focus our resource on our own institutional project work and the work of the creative arts cluster.

**Collaborative cluster**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

Over year 2 we have continued to co-lead the creative arts collaborative cluster work. The group has expanded over this year to include individuals from an increasingly wide range of discipline areas and institution types. The work of the cluster relates directly to our own institutional aims and concerns. One focus of the cluster work has been on how metrics might be expanded to better communicate the value of an arts education. Increasing threats to arts provision force us to consider how make a strong case for the value of the arts and an arts education. Work on the Learner Journey helps us to articulate the often non-linear route from school to higher education into industry within the arts. As previously mentioned our recent research into dance provision highlights that the learner journey is not always supported. The toolkit developed as part of the work of the theme will help us to help our staff and students to identify the impact of their work in a much richer ways that captures the complexity of a typically portfolio career in the arts. The symposium provided an opportunity to share this complexity with stakeholders and to learn from the current debate around arts education and how its impact can be measure. This work has been vital for use and will influence how we progress on the theme and beyond.

**Sector-wide work**

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

These are clearly valuable and I have personally accessed many of the resources produced through this work, however we have not directly contributed to sector-wide work project strands.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

**Project 1 – Good Teacher/Good Learner** has engaged our staff and students over the year through a series of events designed to gather responses to the core questions. These café events were informal and fun and the direct simplicity of the questions posed made the project accessible to all students. In year 2 this theme has employed two part-time members of staff who have developed skills in the following:

- Preparing for and gathering multimedia responses
- Constructing a bespoke web space for the collation and sharing of responses
- The use of data visualisation software
In year 2, Project 2: Definitions of Success has engaged two specific learner cohorts in considering their definitions of success. A part-time member of staff was employed as a researcher to undertake this work. The researcher had not made an application for research within our institution and was supported in successfully applying for ethical approval for the work.

Project 5: Evaluation of Mental Health support mechanisms is currently being undertaken by a member of staff with considerable experience in research. Throughout the devising of this project, the researcher has been supported by key members of senior management to ensure that the focus of the research was meaningful and valuable to the institution, as well as meeting the needs of the theme work.

As we move into year 3 our priority is on the analysis and communication of the data gathered. As previously mentioned, it is our intention to explore how we might use data visualisation software to successfully communicate responses within our institution. We aim to make work this available to the sector through the ET website throughout the year.

**Processes**

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

In this year we have introduced dissemination of the work of the theme as a standing item within our Programme Committee system. This process is our institutional monitoring process where student representatives share their feedback on their learning experiences. Students meet three times a year with their programme head and delivery team, with the third meeting being an open forum format.

We have also begun to report the work of the theme as a standing item on the agenda of our Quality and Standards Committee.

This report will go to both the Programme Committees and the Quality and Standards Committee, as well as being discussed at our ongoing ET team meetings.

We would like to arrange more team meetings throughout the year as we want to ensure that the work we produce is accessible, relevant and engaging across our institution. Student representation is vitally important here and we will seek specific feedback on the data visualisation methods we will be trialling.

**Evaluation**

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

As outlined in the attached Evaluation Template, our work for this theme is designed around a model where year 1 was focused on setting up the activity, year 2 on gathering new data and year 3 was intended to be primarily for the analysis and dissemination of the findings. We expect to be
able to undertake a more significant evaluation of the success of the theme work after we have disseminated the findings and used them as a tool for engaging students in discussions around learning and teaching, perceptions of success and mental health support.

At this stage, and from the evidence of engagement in the projects, I am confident that our work for the theme will achieve our original aims. The findings from the project work will be reported through the programme committee structure and our Quality and Standards Committee, hopefully leading to some integration within our procedures. We are currently in the process of devising a strategic plan for the institution and I am confident that the work of the projects connects directly to the priorities expressed there.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

From the work across the sector it seems clear that we need to become highly skilled at synthesising complex data sources into accessible and meaningful resources that can be shared and used in practical ways. I personally felt the Transitions Map was an excellent visual reference to demonstrate the range of activity from the previous theme. I would be very interested to see something similar emerge from the work of this theme.

Report Author: Jamie Mackay

Date: 7/6/19
End of Year 2 Report for SRUC (Scotland’s Rural College)

The key purposes of this report are to:
- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

During year two of the Theme there have been two changes to the institutional team. Lesley Howie, Learning and Teaching Enhancement Manager (Higher Education) and the TLG representative retired in October of 2018. Ann Wood the former TLG alternate representative replaced Lesley as the TLG representative. The second change was that Paula Cuccurullo one of the institutional team members, resigned from her post.

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

A key priority for SRUC is to continue to encourage and support engagement of staff and students with the Theme across all levels of delivery i.e. to undertake activities that build on the integration of further and higher education at SRUC. During year two, we wished to build on staff and students understanding of the importance of using both quantitative and qualitative data as an evidence base on which to make informed decisions about aspects of the student learning experience.

The focus on Business Intelligence has continued to be strong during this year and has included the highest levels with the development of a Balanced Scorecard for use by the Board of Management. The intention is to use this to track progress and inform strategy in relation to a number of key areas including:
- reviewing international students
- post exit employment rates
- tracking NSS survey results
However, Enhancement theme activities focused on two projects areas, which are summarized below:

**Strengthen the annual monitoring process through improved use of learning/learner analytics.**

This project is an extension of the work that was undertaken in year one of the Theme and will continue into year three as the structure of SRUC evolves along with the mechanisms available to generate, capture and evaluate the evidence base that informs annual monitoring.

The main achievements in year two are:

- The further development of two performance data sets, for Further and Higher Education respectively, which include three year trends and enable Programme Leaders to evaluate performance against key outcome agreement targets and external benchmarks. Programme Leaders are also using this data to identify and focus in on problem areas that may need resources to allow improvement or areas that are excelling in performance in order to replicate this in poorer performing areas.

- A review of the annual programme monitoring template to reflect the new data sets and facilitate greater analysis and evaluation of performance across a wider range key areas including, for example, gender balance. This in informing our marketing strategy and a more targeted marketing approach is being implemented.

- All aspects of Student Support Services were included in the annual monitoring process with the provision of support divided into five stages of the student journey. Staff involved in each stage produced an annual monitoring report and quality enhancement plan (QEP) which then culminated in a single overarching report and QEP. These reports were used as a basis for the discussion at the annual dialogue meeting for the first time this year (previously the discussion had been based on the Institution-led Review report).

- The evidence base used to support annual monitoring of student support continues to evolve with teams identifying key metrics, which can be used to inform each stage of the student journey. Work to evaluate and develop this evidence base will continue into year three of the Theme, as teams review and evaluate outcomes related to performance during the current year in order to target services in the coming academic year.

- SRUC once again benefitted from the input of an Education Scotland (ES) Student Team Member, who undertook visits to two campuses in October and facilitated focus groups exploring the topics of induction/enrolment and support for progression. This activity provided valuable and timely feedback to inform the induction process and contributed to the preparation of the Reflective Analysis for the ELIR review.

- The Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) project focusing on student surveys continued during this year and culminated in a radical review of the existing SRUC end of year survey. The overall length of the survey was reduced considerably and the mandatory Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey for FE was embedded within it. The timing of the survey was moved to March to enable feedback to be given to the current cohort before they leave. Closing the feedback loop to students was considered to be a key factor in student engagement following feedback from the STM activity which took place in May 2018. Results from the survey indicate improved engagement and feedback has already been given to students. Completing the survey earlier has also facilitated earlier dissemination to staff and an opportunity to address any key issues arising before the students leave.
SRUC seeks to utilise its new portal, mySRUC, as a source of qualitative and quantitative information. During the current academic year the portal (myDay) has been procured and is currently being installed (phase 1). In phase 2 of the project, during the next academic year, it will be further populated with key student information to support SRUC’s on-campus, distance and work–based learners. The utilisation of this support information such as careers, financial support and mental health information will assist SRUC further develop these key areas in the future. We will also be seeking to develop the portal as a focal point for student feedback on modules and at other key points during the year.

Digital technologies in curriculum delivery.
This is again a continuation of a year one project with the intention being to improve the use of technology in learning and teaching to enhance the student experience. In year two, the achievements to date are:

- The installation of a digital classroom/ collaborative learning space at the Barony Campus. Co-operative learning is being expanded in the digital environment and is engaging the learners in team working. The use of the leader board helps to drive the co-operative approach within the learner cohorts. Students are able to utilise their own devices in the field to record their own digital work (photo, videos, voice memo, lecturer discussion), and bring it into the classroom. Here they can connect seamlessly to the technology in order to create collaborative portfolios of evidence. This has given rise to a higher standard of student work and more engaged student cohorts. Further detail relating to a pedagogic project, which focused on utilisation of the classroom is included in Appendix 1 – Digital Classroom Impact Evaluation.

- The installation of new Video Conference equipment at the Ayr Campus and the introduction of new support procedures from the Information and Digital Support teams at all sites to address negative feedback from students and staff. Feedback suggests however, that while the technical performance of the video conference facilities has improved there is still a resistance to using this approach and the number of modules that include an element of video conference delivery remains minimal.

- Completion of a pedagogic project, which piloted the use of the PINGO app. as a means to undertake a mid-module survey to inform classroom delivery during a unit/module and improve the overall student experience. Early indications are that the staff and students enjoyed using the app. particularly as it was flexible enough to be used as part of the normal teaching and learning process and that undertaking the mid-module survey did inform module/unit delivery. However, further discussions about this have indicated that there may be easier and more effective apps available for this type of activity. The plan is to review the available apps and develop the utilisation of mid-module surveys further with a view to embedding it into normal teaching and learning practice.

Dissemination of work
Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.
The institutional Enhancement Theme team are integral to the dissemination of activities. This group is drawn from a wide range of disciplines within SRUC i.e. the Academic division including Student Support, SRUCSA, Business Intelligence and Education Business Support. This has widened the sharing of knowledge and experience across the institution.

Outcomes from the Enhancement Theme are formally reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee and to the Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement group, which is comprised of the Academic Development Team, Department Quality Enhancement Coordinators, a Learner Engagement Officer and a SRUCSA Sabbatical Officer. The expectation is that these staff will share updates with departmental staff and the wider student body as appropriate.
Inter-institutional collaboration

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

SRUC indicated involvement in the following two collaborative projects:

- Supporting sector work in learning analytics - led by the University of Strathclyde. This is a continuation of cluster activity during year one of the Theme, and SRUC planned to contribute to the topic of engagement with learning analytics (to include both staff and student engagement).
- Enhancing programme leadership support, jointly led by Edinburgh Napier University and Glasgow Caledonian University. This event was attended by our Learner Engagement Officer who shared the outputs prior to her departure. Unfortunately further engagement with this cluster during this year has not been possible, however SRUC is very interested in the outputs from this work as it would fit very effectively with our main Theme project focusing on the improved use a learner/learning analytics in annual monitoring.

SRUC will continue to follow this work and utilise the outcomes appropriately. The appointment of Dr Pauline Hanesworth as Head of Learning and Teaching at SRUC will see an increased focus on developing colleagues skills and competencies and the outcomes of the enhancing programme leadership support will dovetail in to specific work-streams. The ongoing work at SRUC around BI and analytics will be sharply in focus with the development of a single Registry function in the coming twelve months.

Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

At the start of year 2, SRUC intimated that due to capacity issues it would be unlikely to be able to lead on a cluster although we were interested in engaging with two areas in particular i.e.:

- Sense of community, dispersed HEIs and rural learning; and
- Graduate/ Technical apprenticeships

Unfortunately, due to limited resources and a focus on the ELIR review, SRUC has been unable to engage with collaborative cluster activity in a meaningful manner during this year.

Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

SRUC has participated in the sector wide “Progression and Retention Annual Monitoring” project by completing the initial questionnaire and being involved in a follow up discussion relating specifically to two key aspects of the annual monitoring process within SRUC. These are the annual quality calendar and the academic dialogue meetings. There were no challenges involved in this activity as the time commitment was minimal. SRUC believes the benefits of this activity will be in the outcome of the project and the shared experience and knowledge that will be gained across the sector.
Further to this staff and students have attended the following sector level events:

- **Theme Leaders Group Event** – two members of staff attended this event in December 2018 and shared practice relating to the pilot project focusing on the use of the mid-module survey app. Discussions relating to the presentation highlighted some interesting use of alternative approaches which will be considered when developing policy and practice relating to mid-module evaluation.
- **Students using evidence to improve the student experience: A developing practice workshop** - three staff along with the SRUCSA Vice President attended this event in February 2019. This stimulated further discussions about what and how data is shared with students. This is an area for development as the data landscape evolves within SRUC.
- **Scottish Sector Surveys Event** – the Student Experience Manager attended this event on the 30th April. This event helped to inform follow up activities in relation to the SPA project focused on reviewing the SRUC student survey.

### Supporting staff and student engagement

**How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.**

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

**How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.**

Staff continue to be supported through a range of activities, linked to both the annual monitoring process and digital technologies. Both quality and business support roadshows took place in June last year focusing on qualitative and quantitative aspects of monitoring respectively.

SRUC is in the process of restructuring which has resulted in changes to key posts within the academic departments. The Academic development Team has hosted meetings with new postholders to raise awareness of the evidence base available to underpin annual monitoring.

Further meetings with Student Support staff took place in March, helping this group to build on the initial foundations of annual monitoring which were created last year. The follow up meetings focused on developing a stronger evidence base for each stage of the student journey to help underpin decision making.

Staff involved in the development of the digital classroom have been able to take advantage of training provided by external agencies including, Mediascape and Clevertouch. Staff visits to the digital classroom to look at collaborative learning techniques and the use of Clevertouch technology are planned over the summer recess. This will inspire and enthuse staff on other campuses to use similar techniques and technologies.

As with previous Themes, SRUC provided funding to support a small number of pedagogic research projects linked to Theme activity (some of which have been mentioned previously).

Two further pedagogic projects which incorporated digital approaches to improving learning and teaching were started during this year, however both are ongoing.
Appendix 2 is the initial impact evaluation for the project titled: Development of a range of electronic resources, which aid student learning and understanding of the college farm environment.

Staff involved in the second project, Adopting mobile phones into higher education learning environments – practicalities and implications for pedagogic practice, have conducted several lecture observations followed by interviews with students. However, they were hoping to augment this with a larger (cross-campus) sample through a survey and/or journal approach. Unfortunately there has been little uptake on either by students therefore they are looking at possibly postponing data collection until September to try and get more meaningful results.

Staff involved in all the projects will be invited to share their experience and knowledge at the annual SRUC Learning and Teaching Conference which will take place on the 21st August 2019.

Staff and students are also supported via the Theme funding to attend sector meetings and other activities. Engagement in workshops to date has been reported in the above sections.

**Processes**

*Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.*

*What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?*

*How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?*

No major changes in the processes, approaches and structures to support the Theme are have taken place in year 2. Changes to the composition of the institutional team were made in year 1 and there have been no further changes other than those described in the first section, which can be attributed to staff changes. The main approaches to the organisation and delivery of the Theme are similar to those used previously e.g. supporting pedagogic research projects and using Theme funding to encourage sector engagement.

This report should be widely distributed throughout SRUC as indicated in the section above on ‘dissemination of work’. It should be available to all staff (through the E-SIN) and to students (via SRUCSA) and therefore discussed in a variety of forums. The report should provide relevant information for students and staff across both FE and HE provision. It should be used to illustrate the level of activity during this academic year and to engage staff and students in ongoing work, particularly relating to the two key projects i.e. strengthening monitoring and review processes and promoting digital technologies in the curriculum which continue to be a focus for SRUC going forward.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

1. Digital Classroom Impact Evaluation – Appendix 1
2. Electronic Resources on Farm Impact Evaluation – Appendix 2

Progress with in-depth evaluation project 1 - Strengthen the annual monitoring process through improved use of learning/learner analytics.

Feedback from the initial submission of the evaluation plan for this project suggested that the original short term goal of Improved reporting for key performance indicators was unlikely to be met. However, SRUC has made significant progress with this in terms of the production of a wider data set for both FE and HE, which now also includes three-year trends. At this point it is not possible to evaluate the medium term goals and impact as this requires programmes teams to utilise the data in the coming round of annual monitoring.

The new academic structure within SRUC lends itself to achievement of the longer-term impact goals, which is to improve trends in key measures like retention and achievement. A closer focus at department and faculty level on individual programme performance as measured and evaluated through the annual monitoring and discussed at the annual dialogue meetings should ultimately lead to a cumulative improvement in these trends at institutional level.

Progress with in-depth evaluation project 2 - Digital technologies in curriculum delivery: Mid module survey.

Project progress has been impacted by other priorities including key staff being involved in the ELIR process, however early indications are that at least one of the short term goals i.e. Improving the student experience of the module has been achieved for the modules included in the pilot. Evaluation of the other two short term goals has not been undertaken yet as the monitoring activity associated with these is scheduled for June 2019. Equally, it is too early to evaluate the medium term goals, however increasing the number of staff engaging with mid-module review will depend on the development of a clear policy and dissemination of the approach and associated software to all sites. The longer-term goal of improving National Student Survey Outcomes was highlighted as being quite narrow due to the small target group for the NSS. This goal could be expanded to include the student satisfaction measure in the SRUC survey which also incorporates the Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey and targets all FE and HE students excluding those selected for the NSS survey.

Key learning points of the evaluation work, include the importance of being able to demonstrate the linkages between the project activities and the short/medium and long term goals. Taking an evaluative approach also encourages staff to consider their project plans in more detail and make them more articulate in terms of the links between the aims, goals, outcomes and impact.

Looking ahead
At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

The Enhancement Themes are an invaluable mechanism that enables both institutional and sector-wide development. The addition of the collaborative clusters has been welcomed and SRUC aims to get more involved in these in future years.

There is a danger, however, of learning from previous Themes becoming lost as staff and systems change. There is consequent scope for focus on consolidating learning from previous Themes with the aim of iterative enhancement. This aligns to the current Evidence for Enhancement Theme, wherein “Evidence” is seen in the more holistic sense of evidence from the Theme process itself.

This could take the form of year three activity, a year three Focus On, or even the next Theme.

There is also potential in revisiting previous Themes as a consequence of such activity: we should not consider previous Themes as out-of-bounds for future focus.

In light of current foci within the Scottish and broader sector, and priorities of respective governments, future Enhancement Themes around equality and diversity (including or even focused on mental health and wellbeing), personalised learning, sustainability, and global-local learning links (especially considering Brexit) would also be welcome.

Whichever area chosen, there is potential to create greater linkages between each Theme, both in the ways suggested above and by explicitly bridging the current Theme and the next (e.g. through the Year Three Focus On).

Report Author: Karen Martyniuk
Date: 3 June 2019
End of Year 2 Report for University of Stirling

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

**Institutional team**

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional lead</th>
<th>Prof Alison Green Dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement</th>
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<tr>
<td>TLG staff representative</td>
<td>Lesley Grayburn</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLG staff representative alternate</td>
<td>Elizabeth Robertson</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLG student representative</td>
<td>Daniel Wright</td>
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<td>Outcome 1 leader</td>
<td>Elizabeth Robertson</td>
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<td>Outcome 2 leader</td>
<td>Richard Aird (Derek Robertson)</td>
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<td>Outcome 3 leader</td>
<td>Lesley Grayburn</td>
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**Outcomes/activity**

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

**OUTCOME 1**

The aim of this outcome is to improve student retention by improved targeting of intervention and resource to improve the student experience. Our aim in year two was to:

- review data and evidence available which can be used to inform student retention activities;
- work with faculties, students and programme teams to determine any additional information they require;
- work with faculties and programme teams to determine the way in which evidence should be presented to clearly illustrate key issues and clearly indicate what action should be taken in a systematic way;
- work with Information Services and Registry on delivery and presentation of data;
• train faculty staff and other key staff on data presentation and train programme and faculty staff on the use of this data to achieve maximum, evidence-based impact on retention.

Delivered:
We have reviewed the data and evidence available to inform student retention activities and have identified additional information required. We have undertaken consultation with Faculties to understand better, how they might want to use the data to support their annual planning process towards developing a retention dashboard. We are also reviewing our student lifecycle processes and will make recommendations for changes to the leave of absence and withdrawal processes to improve the retention data available. Our planning team have started to collaborate with the University of Strathclyde to review institutional approaches to retention modelling. The work has also informed institutional and programme inductions that are currently being redesigned, in order to maximise student retention. As the dashboard is not yet available, we have not begun training staff.

OUTCOME 2
Our aim was to deliver a review of the capabilities of our current systems to offer learning analytics; identify with academics and students the types of learning analytics that are helpful to them; provide analytic information to staff and students in an accessible format and support them to use this.

Delivered:
We have undertaken consultation activities with staff and students to raise awareness of what learning analytics are and how they might want to use them. We have also reviewed the capabilities of our current systems to offer learning analytics and are commencing a pilot with JISC analytics shortly. We have laid the groundwork for developing an ethical policy on the use of analytics at Stirling (UoS).

OUTCOME 3
Our aim was to continue scoping work and work towards agreed institutional approach on PDP and to explore options for pilot PDP activity and appropriate e-portfolio.

Delivered:
An exploration of a number of options to introduce/pilot PDP. Further development will depend on the acquisition of a fully available and appropriate e-portfolio software system. The scoping work has however informed the development of an induction module on development of academic and digital skills for UG students which will be introduced in Autumn 2019. The impact of this module will be an improvement in the academic and digital skills deployed by our undergraduate students.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:
Our aim was to provide a comprehensive dataset of employability data that meets the need of Faculties and supports evidence-based decisions and interventions and provide effective, user friendly and engaging methods to share the data and the key messages that it contains with staff and students. To do so we reviewed data available and how it is currently utilised; worked with faculties and students to determine the type of information they require and the way it should be presented; and considered how the data could be presented to different stakeholders.

Delivered:
We developed a widget to allow students to search on the graduate destination data and find information that is of interest to them. This will be available via the VLE in Autumn 2019.
We also developed a dashboard to show student engagement with the Careers and Employability Service by faculty, discipline, year group. This will be used to inform planning in CES and shared with faculties/University committees as appropriate.
We further developed our Careers Registration and Exit Survey data to allow for effective segmented and tailored messages and marketing. Impact of these introductions is yet to be assessed following introduction.

Dissemination of work

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

We have disseminated outcomes, projects and sectoral collaborative cluster work internally via our Staff and Student Round Up weekly e-publications, our learning & teaching committees in faculties and our University wide Education and Student Experience Committee.

We have disseminated our work on learning analytics externally via:

- An event in August 2018 Datafication of Higher Education: Considering an ethical approach to enhancing the student experience Tues Aug 28/2018- this event attracted internal and external audience of over 60 participants and was widely followed on Twitter and other social media.
- A presentation at SHEEC in 2018
- A joint presentation between the dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement and the VP Education Students’ Union at the SPARQS conference March 2019
- We have also undertaken consultation with staff and students that has disseminated our work as a by-product of consultation on learning analytics.

Inter-institutional collaboration

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.*

We did not undertake inter-institutional collaborations of this sort in 2018-19 as our main focus has been through the collaborative clusters.

Collaborative cluster

*Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?*

Programme Leadership Collaborative Cluster

Following on from Heriot Watt workshop in January 2019, Catriona Cunningham (Academic Development Partner) co-wrote with Kimberly Wilder (Academic Development Consultant for UoS) a thinkpiece around the invisibility role of the Programme Leader, arguing that we need to use Senior Fellowship case studies as a way of evidencing their impact at both institutional and disciplinary level. This thinkpiece is published on the QAA Scotland website:

https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/ethemes/evidence-for-enhancement/programme-leaders-as-invisible-superheroes-of-learning-and-teaching.pdf?sfvrsn=e862c381_8
Academic Development at UoS have been represented at each of the two webinars (February and April 2019) since.

Support for Graduates Collaborative Cluster
UoS is part of a collaborative cluster with Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow Caledonian and Queen Margaret University looking at Support for Graduates.

The key tasks of the project are to:
1. Review past projects and activities aiming to provide graduate employability support
2. Collect information from students and graduates as to their perceptions and preferences around graduate employability support
3. Design, deliver and evaluate a range of graduate employability support programmes at partner institutions

In the last year, we employed an Intern to carry out the first two of the above tasks. The next step will be to pilot activities based on the research findings across the 5 partner HEIs.

Learning Analytics Cluster
UoS accommodated an intern, financed through the cluster, who is collating student views on learning analytics across the sector. This sectoral work will be used to inform and shape our own work in this area. We have worked closely with cluster colleagues on scoping the use of learning analytics.

Sector-wide work
Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

Beyond the collaborative clusters, we have not contributed to sector-wide strands.

Supporting staff and student engagement
How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

Supporting our Staff and Students to Engage
We are taking an approach to supporting staff and students to engage with the Theme in a way that may simultaneously increase knowledge and understanding while also providing a means of informing institutional policy and practice. We take a strong view that support and engagement are mutual, two-way activities, in which the institution can learn how better to engage with the knowledge and desires of students and staff, rather than simply attempting to generate agreement with and engagement in an institutionally set agenda.

This has taken the form of surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, presentations and attendance at Faculty and student events over the past year. These methods have been deployed across all our Enhancement work described above. Impact in respect of our Learning Analytics Outcome is being evaluated at present.
Upskills staff and Students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience
Our focus this year has been on improving the data available, and presentation of that data. Once that work has been completed we will focus on helping both staff and students to use that data effectively.
We are developing resources to help our Programme Leaders be successful in their roles and are drawing on materials and learning from the Programme Leaders Cluster and on the HE Data Landscape resources.

Focus-On and other materials
The institution has encouraged participation in Focus–On and cluster events by staff and student representatives.
Attendance at the webinars has been encouraged through regular Staff Round-Up announcements.
We continue to engage with resources on the Transitions theme to help inform our institutional focus project on supporting students transitioning in, through and out the institution. Those materials have provided a rich source of evidence and tools to the team involved.
In addition, we are again revisiting the Focus-On work around supporting Graduate Teaching Assistants, as we develop our support structures in that area and seek to deploy evidence-based approaches.
The student voice activity cards have been discussed with Students' Union representatives and leaders of learning & teaching. They echo the approach we take at UoS.
The Focus-On Feedback posters, which were distributed this year, have been posted around staff areas in the University to raise awareness.

Processes
Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.
What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?
How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

We have not changed the way in which the theme has been delivered in the institution during the year. We have remained focussed on three threads of work to ensure that they are delivered. Through this process, we have seen the benefits of this focussed approach that has involved teams drawn from academia and professional services staff.

This report will be disseminated via our governance committee structure; this reaches all Faculties and relevant service areas.

Evaluation
List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).
Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?
Light Touch evaluations:
We attach two light touch evaluations of projects undertaken by our student Faculty officers:

1. Developing student led learning in Psychology
2. Raising awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in reading lists used in history.

This is a small sample of the many projects that have used data to inform enhancement at UoS, however, they demonstrate student led initiatives that we encourage and support.

In-depth evaluation:
We are in the short-term phase of impact from our project to develop a learning analytics, student-led ethical policy. We undertook to: review approaches in the sector; seek input for internal and external experts; raise awareness with staff and students what learning analytics are; identify with academics and students types of learning analytics which are helpful and ways of communicating these; produce a policy; consult with students and staff on the draft policy and launch the policy.

Our impact narrative was that:
The project will develop a co-produced student led ethical framework for use of learning analytics. By developing this framework we will increase student understanding of data and its uses for staff and students through the process of student and staff information and consultation during its development.
We will then change behaviours of staff and students in their use of data. Students will be empowered to use data within the terms of the framework. Through better understanding of the uses of data and the protections in place, student trust and engagement will increase.
In the longer term institutional culture will be improved by a sense of partnership between staff and students through the co-production of University policy; trust will improve with a better awareness of ethical frameworks by students to this aspect of University life.

Impact
Having undertaken a review of sector best practice and sought input from internal and external experts we have focussed our short-term activity on consultation with students and staff. The outputs from this work have not yet been evaluated but a description of the activity undertaken so far and our rationale is set out below:

As part of a mutual, two-way process, to inform institutional policy, we have engaged in a consultation with students and staff on their knowledge and desires for learning analytics.

We employed a student intern to undertake consultation with students on learning analytics and to collate the results. We gave students a small financial incentive for participation. At this stage, this work is largely about awareness raising and obtaining student views on and input into the ways in which we might use Learning Analytical data such as LMS use and library access data. The consultation activities are ongoing, in the form of focus groups, individual interviews and an online survey. The discussions and questions in these focus on awareness of current data collection and students' perceptions of the ethics and utility of collecting, monitoring and intervening in response to these data. Preliminary results indicate that we need to find new and better ways of informing students about what data is being collected and how it is being used. Students interviewed indicated that, while they are appreciative of initiatives that might flag up causes of concern about students' health and well-being, they are doubtful that time spent online or in the library (for example) has a strong correlation with time spent engaged in learning. The discussions have surfaced several important reasons for UoS to be cautious about how to interpret certain kinds of data, as well as laying the foundations of a set of student-led ethical principles to govern data collection and use.
The other strand of our mutual engagement process focuses on UoS staff. Here, we extend our distinctive approach by starting from a recognition that university teaching staff have had to make judgements about student learning and progress for a long time, and therefore should be seen as a rich resource for discovering what kinds of data/performance indicators might best be drawn upon to make such judgements in automated processes. Consultations with staff are ongoing, and to date have taken the form of individual and group interviews. These have been used to find out what data and other forms of evidence staff already use and find most effective in monitoring and understanding student progress, particularly in relation to deciding if, when and how to intervene, for example by offering additional support or alternative assessment arrangements, or directing a student to learning support or counselling services. At the same time, they have provided an opportunity to find out what LMS, administrative and other data staff are aware that they have access to and how they experience the interfaces that give them access to these data. Finally, these consultations serve to raise awareness of existing and potential Learning Analytics at UoS and to give staff a sense of empowerment in relation to their influence on institutional policies and practices.

Once the data from our consultations with staff and students have been analysed we will reflect on our learning gained through the consultation and through the process itself to help inform future projects. We are currently holding firm to our medium and longer-term impact goals.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

This theme has been very useful and thought provoking. It has delved into all aspects of student and staff experience. It has also questioned fundamentally what data we collect and how we use it. Due to its far-reaching implications it has, and is, taking time to implement the enhancements as they cut across many functions in the University. In the third year of the theme we are keen that we are supported to continue and complete the work we have set out to do, rather than being faced with more new activities. The existing collaborative clusters have produced really valuable work and again, they should be supported to develop that further.

Thought should be given as to whether we should in fact have a new theme or whether there is mileage in continuing this theme for a further year. The range and scope of work being undertaken within the theme at present suggests to us that an extension would be useful. If this were not acceptable then a theme around inclusive practice would be interesting to develop as it could build on some of the achievements of this current theme.

Report Author: Prof Alison Green, Dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement

Date: 27/5/19
End of Year 2 Report for the University of St Andrews

The key purposes of this report are to:
- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

The institutional steering group membership remains as reported in the start of year institutional plan. As indicated in the plan, Gerald Prescott temporarily replaced Ros Campbell as Theme Lead mid-way through the academic year, enabling Ros to support institutional preparation for ELIR.

Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

Enhancement Theme activities for 2018-19 have focussed on the key priorities outlined in our Year 2 plan;
1. Reflect on the nature and use of evidence to enhance the student experience;
   a. Investigate factors influencing degree outcomes.
   b. Create an online dashboard to make statistical analysis for survey data more accessible.
   c. Use nomination data from student-led teaching awards to identify and share good practice.
2. Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces.
3. Enhance attainment and build diversity across the student demographic
4. Develop the link between evidence and pedagogy

Reflect on the nature and use of evidence to enhance the student experience:
Progress in year two has centred around discussion with interested parties outwith the core Theme team, and identification of opportunities to link with other ongoing work. An
initial plan to develop tools to facilitate statistical analysis of multi-year trends in survey results—e.g. NSS and internal module evaluation questionnaires—has developed into a collaboration between a PhD student in Statistics and the institutional planning team. An independently initiated project within the SALTi (St Andrews Learning & Teaching Initiative) assessments theme has similar goals to this Theme strand, and discussions are ongoing on how to best align. The project aims to investigate factors influencing module choice and performance, and patterns in grades across alternative forms of assessment e.g. coursework vs exams. Finally, an Institution-wide investigation into correlations between attainment and progression for different demographic cohorts will also feed into the strand and enhance our approach to equality and diversity in the context of the student academic experience.

**Use nomination data from teaching awards to identify and share good practice.**

Nominations from the Student-Led Teaching Awards (hereafter SLTA) were analysed to identify common themes and trends. A report was submitted to Learning and Teaching Committee at the beginning of the year and this template will be used to write the end of year report for the 2018/19 awards, and onwards. A template timeline was also drawn up to accompany this report, as a ‘how to’ guide for future Students Association Directors of Education (DoEd), and will be used annually to ensure the awards run efficiently and smoothly. Historic nomination data has been analysed and this will be used to create ‘Best Practice’ Guides for staff. A selection of categories from the 2017/18 awards were selected by the Deans office, and the data from these are being used to develop Master Classes (in small group teaching, taught PG supervision, and innovation).

An additional improvement to this year’s process has been the introduction of a live dashboard to track data whilst the nomination period was active – including a breakdown of schools, award categories, unique nominations vs total numbers, and nominations by year of study. This was particularly helpful in creating excitement around the awards among School Presidents, and they were motivated to advertise the awards to improve their school’s ‘ranking’. This resulted in a substantial increase in nominations from last year.

A decision was also made by the current DoEd to feedback individual nominations, firstly to the Director of Teaching and School President in the relevant school (in order that they may see which staff in their school had been nominated, even if they were not shortlisted or award winners), then to the individual staff members themselves. This was twofold: firstly, to increase visibility and engagement with the awards across the University (and not just from those staff who were invited to the ceremony due to being shortlisted), and secondly, so that staff can fully benefit from the SLTA process. These measures received positive feedback across the board and will be standard practice hereafter.

**Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces.**

Work in this strand has focussed on evaluating the impact that our refurbished teaching spaces are having on learning and teaching. Survey evidence from students and staff was gathered in two phases. The first phase, conducted shortly after the newly designed rooms were put into use, concentrated on reactions to the environmental changes to the teaching spaces. Evidence gathered from this phase was used not only to identify initial teething problems with the spaces, but to start conversations within our Teaching Infrastructure Support Group on a methodology for future space developments, which balance the (sometimes competing) needs of different stakeholder groups. These discussions centred around scalability, resourcing and managing expectations. The second phase of research was undertaken towards the end of the academic year, and concentrated on trying to discern the impact that the changed space had had on learning.
(for students) and teaching (for staff). The results from this phase will be used to detect themes in relation to learning & teaching that we can use to provide not only future space developments but provide appropriate support and staff development. A final report based on the results of both stages, should be complete by the end of May and this will be subsequently used in dialogues with various stakeholders.

**Enhance Attainment and Build Diversity across the Student Demographic**

This strand aims to extend and enhance the University’s First Chances Programme [https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study/access/projects/first-chances-fife/](https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/study/access/projects/first-chances-fife/). Three postgraduate staff were hired to develop online resources in English, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, and Mathematics for School level pupils from S4 upwards. Material design is ongoing and on schedule; all materials are added to an online training portal, St Andrews Access Network (StAN), to be used by School students and staff on the First Chances programme. School level teachers and students are reviewing these materials and their helpfulness is being assessed. Based on evidence gathered, relevant changes will be made, giving School students the best possible grounding and resources in these subjects. It is foreseen that this will be a “living resource”, which will be continually developed and augmented. This Collaborative project, between Fife Schools and the University, involves an increasing number of staff and students from the University who work in an outreach capacity to engage with pupils and strengthen their learning.

**Develop the link between evidence and pedagogy**

This is the first year that this strand has run, however much of the work follows on from a previous strand called ‘Engendering a culture of pedagogical scholarship’. The strand has focussed on highlighting pedagogical research both within the University and in the wider sector by funding a number of seminars and workshops which are open to the University; creating a website which is populated with upcoming events and national meetings; holding an annual conference on teaching and learning, with this year’s theme being Assessment; and by running a webinar training programme designed to support staff interested in beginning pedagogically focussed research, or action research projects.

**Dissemination of work**

*Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.*

*If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.*

Enhancement Theme activities and outcomes are effectively disseminated through formal and informal committees and events. These include the University’s Learning and Teaching Committee, Academic Monitoring Group, Proctor’s Office Projects (POP) Group, the Student Experience Committee and the Student’s Association Education Committee, among others.

Examples of internal dissemination activities in 2018-19 include:
- Contribution to an Academic Forum by Prof Dilly Fung and a programme of training webinars for the University on pedagogical research techniques in conjunction with the St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative (SALTI).
- Members of the Enhancement Theme Steering Group are also members of the Student Experience Committee, ensuring strong communication between the two groups and the alignment priorities and activities.
• An annual report on the Student-led Teaching Awards was received and approved by the University’s Learning and Teaching Committee. The report will form the basis of an annual report identifying good practice from student-led teaching award nominations.
• The Theme Lead provides the Academic Monitoring Group with quarterly updates on Enhancement Theme activities.
• Student interns have been recruited to support institutional and collaborative cluster Enhancement Theme activities. Adverts for these positions were distributed widely among the student cohort. Four interns in total have been recruited to work on Theme activities in 2018-19.
• In late 2019/early 2020, small projects funded by the Enhancement Themes during 2017-18 will present posters at the University’s Annual Learning and Teaching dissemination event.
• The University’s Enhancement Theme website has been updated to reflect the current activities being undertaken and the make-up of the Theme Steering Group.

Externally, we have shared our experiences and discussed our work through the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC), the Theme Leaders’ Group (TLG) and Enhancement Theme workshops and meetings.

### Inter-institutional collaboration

*What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.*

St Andrews continues to work collaboratively with other HE institutions within Scotland through several mechanisms, including SHEEC, TLG meetings and engagement in sector events and meetings, including:

1. Using Qualitative Data for Driving Decision-Making at Scale.
2. Using Qualitative Data for Driving Decision-Making at Scale: Follow up event (data driven interventions).
3. Data matters, using data to improve the student experience.
4. Exploring Student Surveys. At this event we contributed a presentation on Post-Graduate Student Surveys.

Using Qualitative Data for Driving Decision-Making at Scale events indicated that many institutions have a common desire to make better use of qualitative data from student surveys. Work that could be undertaken would involve the development of appropriate tools and analysis methods (specialist expertise is required in this area) for the evaluation of qualitative comments. We would encourage the sector to consider whether common approaches to the evaluation of qualitative data could be developed across institutions, potentially representing a substantial saving in terms of replicated effort to develop such approaches.

As part of our Developing the Link between Evidence and Pedagogy strand of work, Scottish HE institutions were invited to attend the inaugural St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative (SALTI) pedagogical conference and an Academic Forum on the Connected Curriculum by Prof Dilly Fung (University College London). Institutions will also be encouraged to participate in the 2nd SALTI conference, taking place in September 2019, which we hope to be a national event.
Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

We have been an active member of the Learning Analytics Collaborative Cluster. Work undertaken by the Cluster builds on Year 1 and involved designing and delivering a number of sector-wide student focus groups to obtain student attitudes to learning analytics and the specific needs of each group of students. Four student interns, hosted at separate institutions (Robert Gordon University, and the Universities of Edinburgh, St Andrews and Stirling) were recruited to develop this piece of work, and they are at the stage of collaborating online to design workshops aimed at gathering the student perspective, with a view to organising and delivering the workshops in May 2019. Initial contact has been made with institutional and student Enhancement Theme reps in each institution to maximize recruitment opportunities. The expected outcome of this Year 2 work is to produce and disseminate a holistic evidence-based resource which can be used by institutions to inform their own approaches.

We have benefitted from the Collaborative Cluster by gaining further insight into the approaches taken by other institutions in the use of learning analytics. Engaging student interns in this project has allowed us to offer more students the opportunity to engage with the Enhancement Theme work, while also being of personal benefit to the interns themselves.

Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

The University of St Andrew’s has contributed to the Scottish Higher Education Planners Group, working on two projects, the Data Landscape resource and the National Student Survey (NSS) analysis. Both projects have led to extremely valuable resources for Scottish HE institutes and beyond.

We have also contributed to the QAA’s Student-led Project by contributing to discussions focussed on student-led teaching award data and through attendance at the ‘Students Using Evidence to Improve the Student Experience, Developing Practice workshop.’

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

Students and staff are encouraged to engage with Theme activities through various institutional structures. Examples include, being a member of the steering group, supporting institutional activities as part of a wide working group, attending and participating in workshops and other Theme-related events. In 2018-19 students have been able to engage in Theme-related activities through paid internships. Three students
have been employed to develop learning materials for high school students as part of our work on building diversity across the curriculum and one student has been employed as part of our collaborative cluster activities. These positions were advertised as open positions to the student community and interviews were held with candidates expressing an interest in the position. In addition to providing an opportunity for students to engage in Enhancement Theme activities, the interview process also allowed students to gain experience of formal interviews, thus contributing to enhancing their employability.

Engagement of staff has focussed on upskilling staff in the use of evidence to enhance the student experience. Examples of activities in this area include;

- A collaboration between a PhD student in Statistics and members of the Planning Team has been established, aimed at upskilling the Planning Team in the statistical analysis of survey data. A key part of this collaboration is developing tools within the statistical software ‘R’. It is hoped that this collaboration will allow staff and students access to statistically robust data sets, allowing areas for enhancement to be identified and subsequent activities focussed on these areas.
- The St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative (SALTI) has run a series of webinars on pedagogical skills aimed at upskilling staff in gathering and using evidence to inform and enhance their teaching practice. Additional ‘advanced’ webinars are planned for 2019-20. Through these increasing levels of webinars, we aim to build capacity in our staff to collect, analyse and act upon evidence to enhance the learning experience they offer to students.
- Student-led teaching award data has been analysed to identify examples of good teaching practice. Good practice workshops are under development, aimed at disseminating good practice and with the expectation that awareness of good practice will result in an improved learning and teaching experience for students.

A small concern in relation to the streamlined steering group for the Theme is that less students and staff are engaged with the Theme. As a response to this, we are exploring the idea of developing an enhancement theme newsletter for 2019-20 that could be disseminated to students and staff. We would be interested in learning whether similar newsletters have been successfully instigated by other institutes.

Processes

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

A streamlined approach to managing Theme work was introduced in 2018-19. The large institutional team, which met three times per semester was replaced with a small steering group, consisting of strand-leads, which meets once per month. The strand-leads are supported by students and staff from the wider institute as work necessitates. The streamlined approach has brought about several benefits.

The regular steering group meetings has ensured that members of the group are more familiar with all the work occurring as part of the Theme. Additional time is available for discussion, enabling members of the group to identify synergies between the strands of work and also to identify shared benefits and challenges. The regular meetings permit the Theme Lead to quick identify work that requires additional support and those that are running smoothly. This enables the Theme Lead to be responsive to members of the
steering group needs and helps in progressing the strands of work towards their intended outcomes.

A potential concern of the smaller steering group is that less staff and students may feel that they are actively engaged in the Theme’s work. In our experience, this has not been the situation and staff and students from the wider university have supported the strand leads in their activities. In response to this concern, we are however considering the introduction of a staff and student Enhancement Theme newsletter that will endeavour to engage a wide audience in the Themes work (see additional information in the supporting staff and student engagement section). Another concern of the smaller steering group is that we are placing additional demands on already busy staff, through both the increased number of meetings and increased responsibility for leading work. Our experience this year is that the additional meetings have not substantially increased the burden on staff. There may be more meetings, but these meetings are shorter and more dynamic. Furthermore, support is more rapidly available when challenges arise. Equally, staff from across the university have been willing to support the strand leads in their work, spreading the engagement.

In a change to previous years, we did not offer a funding call for small Enhancement Theme projects in 2018-19. This decision was taken strategically, allowing us to focus on our core activities at a critical point (midway) through the Enhancement Theme cycle. We feel that this focus has been a benefit this year. However, we expect to offer a limited funding call for projects in 2019-20 to enable all staff to have an opportunity to contribute to the Theme’s activities.

This end of year report will be reviewed and approved by the University’s Learning and Teaching Committee and subsequently distributed to Schools, Professional Services and the Student’s Association through the committee. The report will further be considered by the University’s Academic Monitoring Group, whose membership includes the Deans of Faculty and Associate Deans (Education). It will also be published on our website.
Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

A copy of our proposed evaluations is show in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of key activity or project</th>
<th>Scale: Large (cross-institution) or smaller (local)</th>
<th>Evaluation level for 2018-19 (in-depth, light-touch, none)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate factors influencing degree outcomes</td>
<td>Small scale</td>
<td>None (Continued into 2019-20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop mechanisms to make the statistical analysis of survey data more accessible to staff</td>
<td>Small scale</td>
<td>Light-touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use nomination data from teaching awards to identify and share good practice</td>
<td>Small scale</td>
<td>Light-touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces</td>
<td>Large scale</td>
<td>In-depth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance attainment and build diversity across the student demographic</td>
<td>Large scale</td>
<td>None (Continued into 2019-20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the link between evidence and pedagogy</td>
<td>Large scale</td>
<td>Light-touch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After careful review, we believe it is appropriate to adjust our evaluation plans in order to give our strands of work the necessary time to develop strong outcomes.

We attach to this report a Light-touch evaluation for the project; using nomination data from teaching awards to identify and share good practice. An in-depth evaluation of the ‘gathering and analysing evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces’ strand of work was submitted in January 2019.

We would like to roll the evaluation of the project; developing mechanisms to make statistical analysis of survey data more accessible to staff into 2019-20. This would give the project time to analyse the 2018-19 survey results enabling us to gather stronger evidence as to the short-term and medium-term impacts of the work. Similarly, we would like to role the evaluation of the ‘developing the link between evidence and pedagogy’ strand into 2019-20. This project has developed into a large project aimed at building capacity in our academic staff. We believe allowing this work to process into 2019-20, when ‘advanced’ webinars and the SALTI conference will be held, will enable us to more accurately reflect upon the impact of this strand on enhancing the student experience. At this time, we would expect to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the project, rather than the previously indicated light-touch evaluation.

The Theme evaluation work led by Liz Thomas has encouraged us to reflect on the impact our strands of work will have over longer timeframes. Furthermore, we have reflected on the evidence that we need to collect to assess whether our work has significant impact on the student experience, and this meets our goals for the Theme.
## Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

### Initial thoughts for the last year of the theme;

1. There seems to be considerable interest across the sector in developing appropriate tools and methodologies for the analysis of qualitative data from student surveys. Activities in this area may be well received.
2. A strong 2020 Enhancement Theme conference showcasing the work undertaken as part of the Theme would be a good culmination to the Theme. Our view is that this conference should seek to promote the Themes work as widely as possible.

### Initial thoughts on possible next topics for the theme;

1. Student’s as independent learners, building resilience
2. Postgraduate student experience
3. Digital literacy
4. Mental health and/or wellbeing – both students and staff
5. Enterprise Education
6. Assessment; Understanding the range and purpose of assessment methods.

### Report Author:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gerald Prescott</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Date:

| 22nd May 2019 |
End of Year 2 Report for University of Strathclyde

The key purposes of this report are to:
- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

### Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

No changes to institutional team for Year 2.

The TLG Representative will be replaced for Year 3, but the person undertaking this responsibility is TBC.

### Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

For the Learner Experience Framework strand, the research in Year 1 surfaced a need for increased transparency around the student opportunities available, such as industrial and professional internships, international placements, career development opportunities, etc. Work is ongoing at Faculty level to enhance the number of these opportunities and raise awareness/uptake among students. In order to support this, we have appointed two student interns to research and design an online course for students undertaking any form of international experience, industrial/professional placement, or internship. Materials in the online course will encourage students to reflect before, during and after their placement in order to maximise learning outcomes and personal development. It is anticipated that the online course will also provide us with data around student attitudes to international and industrial experiences. This will provide us with valuable insight into our support for these experiences, and contribute to decision-making on the provision for future cohorts.

For the learning analytics strand, it was anticipated that the student interns would be recruited to create a resource providing a baseline of knowledge to students on their
digital footprint and GDPR. Two student interns were recruited in January and have been designing an online course in this area. They are currently finalising the content for the course, with the view of completing the course by the end of June 2019. The interns have been keen to build into the course social media, and how this can be used as a professional portfolio. Therefore, this course is also supporting the University’s employability strategy, in addition to its learning analytics strategy. It is anticipated that this will be released to students in Semester 1 of the 2019-2020 academic year.

For the using data effectively strand, the insight gained from our survey of Programme Directors revealed a need to improve not only awareness of the data sources, but also awareness of how to access these data sources. PLs are not always sure of the relevance of data, and lack the confidence and knowledge of how to use data effectively. There is a strong appetite among PLs for more training, and in particular for training in Strathclyde systems that would help them to use the data we have more effectively. Current planning is to make use of the upcoming Sector level handbook in preparation by Scottish Strategy and Policy Planning cluster and consider how best practice can be borrowed from this to provide Strathclyde-specific resources and development opportunities. An additional strand of work is currently being implemented around the development of the programme leader role. This work is being facilitated by a short term working group established through the learning enhancement committee (LEC) and anticipated outcomes include development opportunities and resources for programme leaders.

**Dissemination of work**

Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

The Learner Experience Framework and learning analytics work from Year 2 has been shared with senior colleagues at the University via the Education Strategy Committee, Learning Enhancement Committee, and Learning Analytics Board, which provides a forum for information to be cascaded down into the Faculties and Departments. This is a particularly effective communication mechanism. The resulting resources will also be marketed for students through student communication channels.

The data strand work will be embedded into the Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Programme, an academic staff development pathway.

The work of our using data effectively strand has been shared at two sector QAA events and our LEF strand will be presented at the June Employability QAA event.

For all strands, external dissemination of the research outputs will feature in papers that will be proposed for any upcoming QAA Enhancement Themes conferences or any other relevant events in the sector. The resources as part of the Learner Experience Framework and the learning analytics strands of work, are placed within our VLE. As students will be asked to actively contribute to these courses, external access cannot be granted.

**Inter-institutional collaboration**

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.
Activity focussed through collaborative clusters, see below.

**Collaborative cluster**

_Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?_

Strathclyde continues to lead the learning analytics collaborative cluster work which involves managing and coordinating the student interns employed to undertake the research work in the Learning Analytics Framework and Engagement themes identified from the Year 1 Collaborative Cluster activity. Strathclyde recruited and supervised directly two student interns tasked with creating the learning analytics resource wiki, referred to as the Scottish Tertiary Education Learning Analytics Resource (STELAR). This is expected to be completed by mid-June 2019. Strathclyde also has oversight of the student engagement focus group theme, although is not involved in day-to-day supervision. This has resulted in a collaborative approach to understanding the benefits and challenges in learning analytics adoption, which is also directly benefiting our own institutional knowledge of this area.

Strathclyde is involved in the Programme Leaders/Data Literacy collaborative cluster work, led by Edinburgh Napier, and plan to share and have shared with the cluster our institutional data strand work for the benefit of the sector. Faculty colleagues are also active in the Programme Leaders support network and we have actively engaged in the collaborative cluster activities in order to further and advance our own institutional priorities for the Programme Leaders job role.

**Sector-wide work**

_Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?_

Strathclyde presented a workshop at the QAA Student-Led Event ‘Students using evidence to improve the student experience: A developing practice workshop’ in January 2019 on Learning Analytics. The benefit of presenting at this event was that it was different audience in attendance, and that Student Associations became more aware of the power of data and the potential this could have for them. This event was also attended by our Vice President Education and our Student Association Student Engagement Officer.

Colleagues also attended and contributed to the Using Qualitative Data for Driving Decision-Making at Scale event in March 2019.

There are synergies in the learning analytics collaborative cluster work led by the University of Strathclyde and the optimising data and the student demographics, retention and attainment sector strands of work, with outputs from the workshops provided to QAA informing these strands of work.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

_How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement._

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?
How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

Staff have been supported by the institutional Enhancement Theme team to advance work in the three strands of institutional Theme activity. Staff have also been engaged by supplying their expertise to the development of the online resources for the Learner Experience Framework and learning analytics strands.

Student interns will undertake full inductions and are linked to staff leading each strand of work to ensure they are fully supported in their intern role. The students undertaking the LEF and LA internships will be supported in the development of an online course, from course design and planning, creation of materials, and building the class on the VLE. The using data effectively strand presented this work to LEC and received their support and mandate to continue the work in terms of furthering the programme leaders work in the institution and creating an institution-specific version of the sector-wide using data effectively document.

Processes

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

There have been no changes to the way the Theme has been organised and delivered this year. We continue to lead this Theme as a group and this has been particularly helpful as the Theme has progressed.

This Theme has been led from as top-down, rather than a bottom-up approach that we employed in the Transitions Theme, but felt that this Theme was more appropriately managed this way. We continue to use our Committee structures as a way of disseminating information to our Faculties. The recruitment of student interns has continued to be an excellent resource to the advancement of the projects we undertake as part of the Enhancement Theme work. They bring a unique insight and voice to the project and show exceptional initiative and leadership on the work they personally undertake.

The report will be shared through our existing Committee structures; via the Education Strategy Committee, Learning Enhancement Committee, and Learning Analytics Board, which provides a forum for information to be cascaded down into the Faculties and Departments.

Evaluation

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

No light-touch evaluations have been completed for the 2018-2019 session to report.
The in-depth evaluation for the Programme Leaders strand anticipated the following short term benefits:

- Clear understanding of data usage through audit output
- Insight into any discipline specific dimensions through analysis of audit output
- A clearer understanding of variability and responsibility in Programme Leaders across Strathclyde through analysis of audit output

These have all been achieved and we continue to work towards our medium term benefits.

Looking ahead

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.

The different strands of activity at Strathclyde have created synergy between them and have been helpful in moving forward our understanding of our needs and how we might better support the use and understanding of evidence and data with our university. It has been a successful and coherent overarching theme in our experience.

In terms of next topic, it has been some time since we have looked at the student experience (Responding to Student Needs 2003) and the experience and expectations of our students entering university has changed significantly in this time, as has their final employment destination. There is an opportunity to build on the previous work in this area and explore the new challenges and opportunities impacting our students. This might include work on Health and Wellbeing.

Report Author: Dr Ainsley Hainey

Date: 21/05/2019
End of Year 2 Report for the University of the West of Scotland

The key purposes of this report are to:

- provide a framework for HEIs to report on their Theme activity that has taken place over the year
- help share information across the sector on the benefits and challenges around Theme engagement
- start to share learning about the impact of the Theme

Please address all the questions in each section. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

### Institutional team

Identify any changes in Theme leadership, TLG and institutional team membership since details were reported in the institutional plan developed at the start of the academic year.

To ensure full representation of all 5 Schools, two additional members of staff were invited to join the group: Ian Gillan, Creative & Academic Development Consultant, School of Media, Culture and Society and Linda Crearie, Lecturer, School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences

### Outcomes/activity

Outline what was achieved in relation to your year 2 planned outcomes and activities, at the time of submitting this report. Please identify the impact of activity, for example how it has it been used by staff and/or students, have colleagues in other HEIs used it, has it been implemented across the HEI or in certain areas, has it brought about an improvement to policy and/or practice?

Have there been any unintended outcomes/unexpected findings?

Please report on any aspect of work that you are particularly proud of and want to promote.

If there is work, which is not yet completed but will be by the 31 July, please comment below.

In our year 2 plan we proposed to undertake a range of disseminating activities, undertake further project work based on the findings of year 1 and to develop staff development activities. We report on each of these in turn.

### Dissemination activities

We had planned to undertake ‘roadshows’ at each of our main Scottish campuses. This has not been possible due to staff shortages but an update on the project has been included in a number of events notably a UWS Academy development day at its Dumfries campus. A seminar was also delivered, open to all staff, entitled: Taking an evidence-based approach to learning and teaching which used the findings from year 1 to shape discussions as well as using participants’ comments to shape the 2nd year of our ET work. Also, as noted below the outcomes of the e-democracy
Project work

In Year 1 of the Enhancement Theme, we undertook two projects. The first was an investigation into what and how Programme Leaders (PLs) use the data available to them, and the second, student-led investigation led by SAUWS explored how student engage with the feedback processes available to them.

Briefly, the PL project found that PLs: make use of data from a range of sources including but not exclusively Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs) and Staff Student Liaison Groups; they make changes in response to these data; most of the changes are fairly minor. The student-led project provided strong evidence that our current MEQ system is not working, and that the student rep system was not always as transparent as it could be.

These two projects have directly influenced the work of year 2. The institutional group met to discuss these findings and came up with two clear priorities for year 2: exploring the use of mid-module evaluations; and exploring student representation at UWS in the broadest sense. Also, given our hope that MEQs might be removed from our quality framework, the group was keen to ensure that the student voice would still be heard, the third priority was to explore the use of technology to democratise quality enhancement.

In order to undertake this work, a call for tenders was launched in November 2018 (the tender application form and guidance can be found in Appendix 1). The successful tenders were each awarded £2000, and are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Successful Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid module evaluations</td>
<td>Ian Gillan, Suzanne Gallacher-Graham, John Quinn, Marjorie McCrory (School of Media, Culture and Society) and Eilidh Kane (UWS Academy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student representation</td>
<td>Sabina Lawrie, Margo MacMillan, Student Project Interns (Student Association at UWS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using technology to democratise quality enhancement</td>
<td>Linda Crearie, Costas Iliopoulos, Sarah Wilson (School of Computing, Engineering and Physical Science) and Moira Lewitt, (School of Health and Life Science)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A brief summary of each project is included below.

Mid-module evaluation project

A project entitled Reflection on Module Engagement (RoME) was undertaken to pilot the use of a structured mid-module engagement survey to complement existing quality assurance and student satisfaction survey mechanisms. Students completed the survey in real-time, viewing the results immediately in the classroom to enable conversations about learning and engagement. The survey aimed to identify those aspects of each module which were enabling student engagement- and (within reason) what might be possible to amend during the present module delivery. The model aimed to move away from a unidirectional and transactional approach to student feedback based solely on satisfaction, towards one that is dialogical and focused on enhancing engagement.
Research highlighted that there were a large number of examples across the sector in the UK of mid-module surveys and processes in Higher Education which shared the rationale of addressing the range of challenges of end of module reviews, but there was a continued focus on student satisfaction rather than on enhancing engagement contrary to the aim of this current project. Academic Literature also suggested the importance of measuring student engagement and the relationship of engagement with student satisfaction. The indicators and manifestations of student engagement found in the research informed the design of the survey via an experimental approach to generate insights and learning into the use of a mid-point engagement survey and dialogue.

The pilot survey was conducted using Mentimeter across five modules (six classes) and five programmes in the School of Media, Culture & Society. This involved 7 lecturers and 103 students drawn from both Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels of study, engaged via both campus-based and distance learning modes. The results within each module are outlined, and positive feedback and suggestions from the staff and students informed 8 key recommendations for potential wider implementation and development.

Overall, the results of this pilot and report suggest that a survey which measures and encourages discussion about engagement during a module is a useful tool. Next steps will involve some further refinement of the survey and software, an agreed institutional understanding on the nature of ‘engagement’, and agreement of protocols for managing and how results are monitored and reported. The outcomes of this project have directly influenced planned work to change UWS’s monitoring processes.

Student representation project

A project entitled Student representation structures at UWS: Current and future was undertaken by SAUWS. UWS staff members in various roles from Deans to Programme Leaders to School/Student Enhancement Developers and School Administrative Assistants have been interviewed about their perceptions of student reps at UWS. The 2018/2019 class reps, the Institutional Trainers who trained them and Sabbatical Officers were also surveyed. Alongside this the policy documents that UWS and SAUWS use in partnership to support student representation have been reviewed. We have been particularly interested in mapping student representation in meetings and committees and boards.

A number of themes have been identified and are summarised below.

Student reps at SSLGs, committees and boards:

- SSLGs are the primary focus of the student rep role
- SSLG processes are inconsistent across all schools.
- There are challenges around communication about scheduling meetings.
- Where there are placements for students it is more of a challenge to deliver SSLGs.
- Student representation is rare across schools at levels above SSLGs.

Recruitment and engagement

- It is often challenging to recruit students for committees and boards.
- Recruiting reps is challenging with many reps being appointed late in the academic year and thus are missing training opportunities, and SAUWS support.
- It is rare for reps to be appointed in a competitive process. Most commonly they are the sole volunteer
- Staff recognise that it is important for students to be recognised for their rep roles

**Skills and training**

- Staff have identified some skill deficiencies
- Reps would like more training in particular chairing meetings has been raised and that students are only rarely offered this training.
- The student rep training delivered by SAUWS has been highlighted as having a positive impact.

The challenges related to student rep recruitment appear to be universal and this project has not identified a solution; however, a number of changes could potentially strengthen the current representation system at UWS. These include:

- Using school officers effectively and outlining the role that they have to play in the structure.
- UWS should support SAUWS in ensuring that all reps are aware of training, and understand training to be a requirement of the role.
- Strengthening connections between class reps and sabbatical officers.
- Establishing processes to further engage students with prior representation experience.
- By assessing the effectiveness of feedback UWS collects.

**Using technology to democratise quality enhancement project.**

Taking a user experience/interface approach, the project has investigated the potential student experience with a UWS e-democracy platform. Six user personas were created for the project with five being for student end users of an e-democracy application and the sixth representing a moderator of the application. These personas are currently based on the demographics of the School of Computing and cover part time and full time students, Undergraduate, Masters and PhD students, those who live locally and those who commute to campus etc. Each of the personas have also had a visitors and residents map created for them to demonstrate how each of these personas interact with the web.

User journeys have been completed for the following actions that would be associated with interacting with an e-democracy platform

1. The submission of an idea
2. Having a submitted idea being considered and implemented
3. Experiencing moderation
4. Moderating

Three moodboards were created to show possible styles for the UX/UI design and based on feedback from a range of stakeholders, UWS Branded was identified as the best choice on the grounds of its high-fidelity design for the E-Democracy application. This is to reflect the notion that the student is having ideas and making suggestions that will be reviewed, considered and potentially implemented by the university. The branding of the application, following the style of UWS, reinforces that this is an officially supported application which can lead to real changes at UWS based on student ideas.
However, one of the major issues uncovered during the development phase was that such a platform would require ongoing moderation and that this brought with it significant resource issues. With this in mind, the project did not proceed to the app development phase.

Staff development plans

Outcomes of Year 1 of the institutional work have so far been disseminated at the Learning, Teaching and Research Conference in June 2018 and at a UWS Academy seminar in October 2018 (Taking an evidence-based approach to learning and teaching). We had also intended to provide further staff development events and resources. These have been delayed because of a lack of UWS Academy website but are currently in development. The plan is to have resources and events related to evaluation and to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning available in 2019/20.

Dissemination of work

Which mechanisms have been most effective in disseminating outcomes and resources internally, and to the sector? Please provide examples.

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below, including web page hyperlinks. Please indicate where any resources have been shared across or beyond your institution, and whether any actions or further activity have been prompted as a result of having created them.

One of the most notable and unexpected outcomes of the ET has been the existence of the ET group itself. Bringing together colleagues from Quality, Education Futures, UWS Academy, and Strategic Planning has enabled us to do some high level strategic work not previously undertaken. For example, in reviewing UWS assessment processes, UWS Academy and Strategic Planning have worked closely together. This has resulted in a new Assessment Breakdown dashboard that allows Programme Leaders and others to analyse the range and number of assessments by module across and entire programme.

Inter-institutional collaboration

What was achieved with respect to collaborative working with other Higher Education institutions and what do you perceive as the benefits and challenges – please provide examples. Note that this relates to work funded through institutional contract finance rather than the collaborative cluster activity.

Of course UWS collaborates with many other HE institutions but, other than our involvement in the Learning Analytics and Programme Leader clusters outlined below, there have not been any other explicit collaborations under this Enhancement Theme banner.

Collaborative cluster

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to collaborative cluster work. What benefits and challenges are there in your cluster involvement?

We have only tangentially been involved in the Learning Analytics cluster. This is because 2017/18 and 2018/19 have been periods of evaluation of UWS’s own learning analytic provision.

More meaningful is our more recent engagement with the Programme Leader cluster. Peter McGuire, a member of the UWS institutional group was invited to become part of the Programme...
Leader cluster this year. Coincidentally, Peter is now exploring the role of PLs as part of his professional doctorate studies.

Sector-wide work

Identify the ways in which your institution has contributed to sector-wide work project strands. What benefits and challenges are there in your involvement?

UWS has contributed significantly to the HE planners work.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples along with an indication of the impact of their engagement.

Please report on any work (current or planned) around upskilling staff and students in the use of evidence to improve the student experience. Would you be willing to share any of your materials with the sector?

How has your institution made use of the materials produced as part of the Theme? For example, have you attended the webinars? Have you used the principles of responding to the student voice activity cards? Where you have used or engaged with materials, please indicate what impact such engagement has had.

The progress of the Enhancement Theme work is discussed regularly at Institutional group meetings (~ every 6 weeks). It is the role of group to inform their colleagues in Schools and departments about the progress of the Theme. Further, twice a year the progress of the Theme is reported to the Education Advisory Committee.

The institutional theme lead regularly sends update emails to the Institutional Group, Deans and Deputy Deans to flag up QE webinars, Focus on events and encourage the submission of abstracts to the forthcoming Conference.

There have been several UWS Academy events related to this and previous Enhancement Themes this year. Notably, the institutional lead provided a seminar entitled Taking an evidence-based approach to learning and teaching, and a further workshop was run based on the the “What does student-led teaching award nomination data tell us about student perceptions of good feedback” resources.

SAUWS has been represented on the institutional group since the Theme started and the VP Education each year has attended most national meetings.

Processes

Detail any changes over the year, in the way the Theme has been organised and delivered within your institution.

What are you learning from the processes, approaches and structures you are using to support this Theme?

How will this report be used/distributed within your institution?

One challenge we experienced this year was that the call for tenders for the Enhancement Theme projects was announced at the same time as the call for bids to our new Learning and Teaching Enhancing Fund. This led to some confusion and we only received one tender. It is not clear whether people thought that they could only apply to one fund or that being asked to tender on a given topic was less attractive than having free rein to work on a topic of their choice. Although we will not be seeking bids to undertake Enhancement Theme work in Year 3, we have taken this
on board for the launch of LTEF in the coming year and are ensuring that our branding and messaging are much clearer.

We have also discovered that our HR processes make it difficult to hire Research Assistants and UG interns on short term contracts and that this may be discouraging people from undertaking Enhancement Theme and other teaching development projects.

We also realised early in year 2 that the lack of representation across all 5 schools was problematic which is why we now have another two representatives from the Schools of Media, Culture and Society, and Computing, Engineering and Physical Sciences.

**Evaluation**

List the light-touch evaluations that have been completed and attach appropriate documentation to the report (use the Evaluation template for smaller projects).

Provide, and update on progress with the in-depth evaluation projects, evidence relating to short-term and medium-term (where available) impacts, and reflection on likelihood of achieving some of your longer-term impact goals.

What are your key learning points from the Theme evaluation work, led by Liz Thomas?

All of the projects undertaken in the past two years have included elements of evaluation either directly or indirectly. The Institutional Group has reflected on the outcomes of this work over the past two years. We have produced a lot of baseline information: this includes producing evidence that backs up what previously were only assumptions, e.g. students do not feel that end of module questionnaires are meaningful, and students are concerned about the representativeness of their reps. While this might not seem important, it has turned out to be significant as the University is now considering how it gathers student data. A paper is currently being developed for the Academic Quality Committee to reconsider how feedback is gathered from students. The paper will include a number of options including the abandonment of end of module questionnaires, their replacement with module evaluation and evaluation at programme level. Our hope is that this work will lead to more meaningful feedback measures that students value and trust.

While we have found Liz Thomas’s approach to evaluation thoughtful and thought provoking, we have not been able to fully engage with it and its focus on impact. We have learned from all 3 projects this year. The first on mid-module evaluations is informing some policy development around when and how to evaluate the student experience. The second on student representation has made a number of recommendations on the recruitment and support for student reps. The third has demonstrated that the provision of a student democracy platform will not be possible at UWS in the short term. It is difficult to ascertain longer term impact at this point.

Our plan for year 3 is to have a dedicated project officer working on aspects of dissemination and impact and will be guided by Liz’s work.

**Looking ahead**

At the end of 2018-19 we have one year of the current Theme remaining. Looking beyond this Theme, please share any observations and views to help shape the final year of the current Theme and to identify a topic for the next Theme.
We believe there is huge merit in having longer-term Enhancement Themes as with this one; however, it is likely that some aspect of institutional priorities and direction will change over that period of time that might make it difficult to implement proposed work. We have discovered this ourselves when we had intended to undertake some learning analytics work in year 1 at the same time the institution was changing direction re: learning analytics. I think it is therefore vital that the proposal and reporting processes remain flexible.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Author:</th>
<th>Jane MacKenzie</th>
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<td>Date:</td>
<td>08 July 2019</td>
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### Appendix 1 Enhancement Theme Institutional Fund Tender Application Form and Guidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key topic</th>
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<td>• Mid-module evaluations and their alternatives</td>
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<td>• Student representation</td>
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<td>• The use of technology to democratise quality enhancement</td>
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**Project title:**

**Project leader¹:**

**Project leader’s Affiliation (school or department):**

**Other Contributors and their affiliation (please indicate if contributor is a student):**

**Summary:**

*No more than 150 words. See Application Guidance document for more information.*

**Plans for dissemination:**

*No more than 200 words. See Application Guidance document for more information.*

¹ Although student-staff and student-led projects are encouraged the Project lead must be a member of UWS or SAUWS staff.
Case for Support:
500-1000 words - see Application Guidance document for more information.

Budget:

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Line manager's signature __________________________
Submit by email to uwsacademy@uws.ac.uk by 5 pm 16 November 2018.
ETI Application Guidance

Summary
- No more than 150 words
- Briefly outline the tender and how it will address the key topic
- Identify how the work can have an impact beyond one School or department

Plans for reporting/dissemination
Fund holders will be required to complete a written end of project report by 1 June 2019. Fund holders will also be expected to contribute to UWS’s report to the QAA on the outcome of Year 2 of the Enhancement Theme.

Tenders that show how its outcomes can be shared across the institution will be looked upon favourably. Outcomes might include a case study, a short film, a digital resource, app, or a seminar. Other ideas for dissemination will be considered.

Case for Support
- Describe the intended outcomes and how these relate to one of the three key topics
- Describe the project activities and products, explaining the aim of the project, what the project proposes to do and how it will achieve the aims and deliver the outcomes
- Clearly outline the timeframe for the project including key milestones
- Identify how the proposed work will result in recommendations or actions for changes in practice
- Identify how the potential benefits of project outcomes will be transferred or be transferable to other areas of UWS
- Explain how the project will be evaluated, specifying any indicators to be used in the project to evaluate changes in student learning
- Tenders with a research component should demonstrate awareness of any potential ethical issues and build in time to complete the ethics approval process.

Line Manager’s Signature
The application should have the approval of the Project Leader’s line manager. Where the proposed project crosses more than one School, a signature should be obtained from a contributor’s line manager in each School involved.

If you have any questions about the Enhancement Theme Institutional fund please contact UWS Academy (uwsacademy@uws.ac.uk).