



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

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# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: Abertay University

### Context

The new Enhancement Theme is both topical and timely for Abertay in several ways. We are currently about to embark on our next strategic planning process and next term we will undertake an ambitious university-wide Institution-Led Review of all our taught provision in 2017/18 which will give us a baseline for future evaluation of our portfolio. We are also launching our learning analytics project and taking part in the JISC Student Digital Tracker Project. Further, we see the new Theme as a vehicle and catalyst for enhancing student-led work in partnership with our Students' Association. As such, a specific strand of Abertay's work on the new Theme will be student-led in terms of identification of priority areas for development and their subsequent implementation.

Making better use of Abertay data for internal and external purposes is also a key underpinning theme to our institutional work over the course of the Theme. We already collect large amounts of data and evidence but we want to ensure that we maximise its effective and efficient use to evaluate and improve processes and practices.

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

*Our work during year 1 indicated that there was a need to support staff and students in their understanding of the evidence which is available to them and how to use that evidence when evaluating practice, programmes, performance and self-development. We have visited other universities and gained ideas from where they are making progress in this area and are part of a collaborative cluster focusing particularly on programme leader development.*

## Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Dr Julie Blackwell Young (Academic Quality Manager)	Dr Julie Blackwell Young (Academic Quality Manager)	
TLG staff representative	Dr Julie Blackwell Young (Academic Quality Manager)	Dr Julie Blackwell Young (Academic Quality Manager)	
TLG staff representative alternate	Ms Andrea Cameron (Head of the School of Social and Health Science)	Ms Andrea Cameron (Head of the School of Social and Health Science)	
TLG student representative	Mr Tam Wilson (SA President)	Mr Tam Wilson (SA President)	
<i>Add additional rows for additional members</i>	Mr Owen Wright (student)	Mr Owen Wright (SA Vice-President)	
	Mrs Caroline Summers (Director of Planning)	Mrs Caroline Summers (Director of Planning)	
	Dr Alastair Robertson (Director of Teaching and Learning Enhancement)	Dr Alastair Robertson (Director of Teaching and Learning Enhancement)	
	Mr James Nicholson (Director of Student Services)	Mr James Nicholson (Director of Student Services)	
	Mr Alexander Fernandez-Ritchie (student)	Mr Alexander Fernandez-Ritchie (student and SA Executive Officer)	
	Mr Laurie O'Donnell (Development Director, School of Design and Informatics)	Mr Laurie O'Donnell (Development Director, School of Design and Informatics)	
	Dr Greg Bremner (Lecturer, Division of Accounting, Finance and Economics)	Dr Greg Bremner (Lecturer, Division of Accounting, Finance and Economics)	
	Mr Eddie Simpson (Lecturer, Division of Natural and Built Environment)	Mr Eddie Simpson (Lecturer, Division of Natural and Built Environment)	
	Dr Euan Dempster (Lecturer, Division of Computing and Maths)	Dr Euan Dempster (Lecturer, Division of Computing and Maths)	

	Dr William Graham (Academic Curriculum Manager, School of Social and Health Sciences)	Dr William Graham (Academic Curriculum Manager, School of Social and Health Sciences)	
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## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Over the next three years we have a number of key priorities. These include:

- Developing a new strategic plan to take the University forward from 2020.
- Better data integration between systems, particularly with the introduction of learning analytics at Abertay in September 2017.
- Improved student experience (retention, attainment and graduate employability as per our 3 year operational plan 2017-2020).
- Evaluating initiatives initiated during the Student Transitions Enhancement Theme.
- Gathering richer insights into the wider benefits of an Abertay student experience– what are students getting out of their experience apart from grades and graduate employability.
- Further evaluation of our Abertay Attributes.

Outcomes:

- New Strategic Plan.
- Better use of Abertay data for internal and external purposes.
- Better understanding and evidence of impact of key initiatives to further improve and enhance the student and staff experience.

Activities:

- Working groups created to scope, investigate and make recommendations on evaluations, initiatives and uses of data.
- Student-led strand of work supported by the Abertay Students' Association.
- Staff workshops on using data effectively.
- Portfolio review (autumn 2018).
- Abertay Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (ATLEF) projects.
- Development of a selection of good practice case studies around "evidence for enhancement".

The benefits at institutional level will be a greater sense of what evidence we use and how best to utilise that evidence to inform decisions and evaluate our practice. By the end of the theme we are anticipating a more integrated approach to the use of evidence for policies, processes and practices. We are also anticipating that we will have an enhanced student and staff experience at Abertay.

The benefits for the sector will be an increase in the body of knowledge available on how to effectively collect and use different forms of data for evaluation and enhancement purposes. Through shared practice across the sector, institutions will be able to make use of any lessons learned in Abertay about our work on learning analytics, curriculum reform, learning spaces, wider student experience and from the student-led strand of work, to inform their own development priorities.

## **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Our key priorities:

- Review and evaluation of central data-based processes related to enhancing the student experience.
- Evaluation of key initiatives e.g. learning analytics, surveys, new learning spaces and portfolio.

Outcomes:

- Review and monitor processes that to ensure synchronicity between university processes.
- Identify and share examples of existing good practice and future enhancements to e.g. our new learning spaces.
- Lessons learned re the recent curriculum reform exercise (implementation 2016/17) for similar future initiatives.

Activities:

- Review of annual monitoring processes and uses of data with a view to linking process with the proposed portfolio review in year 2 of the theme.
- Evaluation of new learning spaces (implemented in October 2016).
- Evaluation of curriculum reform (implemented in September 2016).
- Evaluation of our new student-voice initiatives (implemented in September 2017).
- Student-led strand to be developed and supported by the Abertay Students' Association
- Re-approval of the Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching as the Post-graduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP).
- Abertay Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund projects.
- Digital tracking project on students' use of learning technologies with JISC.

At an institutional level, we intend to finalise a set of recommendations based on the evidence and evaluations conducted this year which we will implement and monitor in years 2 and 3 of the theme. We will also have an enhanced PGCAP which will be ready to deliver in September 2018.

At sector level, our work and recommendations may be of value to other institutions planning similar work. We will engage in dissemination of our activities through a variety of fora ranging from formal presentations at conferences, published case studies and informal networking e.g. through TLG and SHED.

## **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Key priorities for year 2:

Supporting staff to understand and use relevant evidence effectively in the context of our whole portfolio Institution Led Reviews (ILRs) last academic year, recommendations from ILR/NSS/retention data etc re curriculum and our current Portfolio Review exercise.  
Supporting students to understand and use relevant evidence effectively.

Using the outcomes from the evaluation work undertaken in Year 1 e.g. learning spaces, digital literacy (staff and students), to make the changes recommended.

Build an evidence base around our “access” students and their student journey.

Development of a new strategic plan.

**Outcomes:**

Support resources developed for staff and students including online resources and face-to-face workshops.

Better use of data as evidenced in annual reporting, better student satisfaction (e.g. as reported by students in qualitative/quantitative/formal/informal fora) and more evidence-based decision-making and enhancement e.g. references to literature, analytic frameworks, benchmarks and evidence in planning and review documentation.

More confident staff in the use of evidence and enhancing their practice.

More confident students in the use of evidence and their student journey.

Evidence to influence sector policy in the area of widening participation.

New strategic plan to be developed by July 2019.

**Activities:**

Workshops and focus groups on staff and student needs re evidence

Creation of resources which are evaluated

Abertay Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund pedagogic projects

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.

Learning and Teaching Conference on the theme of “Learning through co-design”

Collaborative cluster work and cross-institutional work

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

Benefits to Abertay will include a better use of evidence which will lead to an enhancement in policy and practice.

Benefits to the sector will include a sharing of resources and working across institutions. The conference is open to external delegates and has been promoted within the Scottish HE sector.

**Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

Internal dissemination will centre around Abertay's established monthly Teaching and Learning Enhancement Seminars, Students' Representative Council, Society Council, Abertay Teaching and Learning Conferences (2018 and 2020), Yammer (our internal social network) and internal webpages.

External dissemination will include: case studies to be submitted to QAA if requested, presentations at the Enhancement Themes conferences, presentations at other relevant conferences, publications (where appropriate).

**Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

Internal dissemination will centre around Abertay's established monthly Teaching and Learning Enhancement Seminars, Students' Representative Council, Society Council, School Academic Committees, Teaching and Learning Committee, Abertay Teaching and Learning Conference in October 2018, internal news fora and internal webpages. Our Enhancement Themes internal webpages will be revamped this academic year in order to promote this dissemination.

External dissemination will include: case studies to be submitted to QAA if requested, presentations at the Enhancement Themes conferences, presentations at other relevant conferences, publications (where appropriate).

**Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We would be interested in engaging in collaborative cluster work on the topics of:

1. Students as partners in evidence-based enhancement with any other interested institutions
2. Learning analytics and targeted interventions with any other interested institutions
3. Attainment, retention & employability either with regional Universities or Post-92s
4. LEO data

We would be happy to take a leading role with 2. and 4.

**Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

*We are part of the collaborative cluster working on Programme Leader support and we are also leading the collaboration of a project with Napier and the University of the West of England on intangible aspects of enhancement.*

**Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Tbc.

**Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

*We collaborated with UWS last year in relation to annual monitoring data and would like to continue that collaboration and potentially expand this in collaboration with other institutions.*

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Our Institutional Enhancement Team is seeking to add another four members of academic staff to act as a further link between the Enhancement Theme and work within the academic schools at Abertay. Some of the funds from QAA will support the community to deliver on the activities e.g. through ATLEF and funding travel to relevant events.

Part of the work over the first year of the theme will be to dedicate a set amount of funding for a student-led strand which will be led by the Students' Association. The Students' Association will be supported by the Institutional Enhancement Team in carrying out their planned activities.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

*We have increased our team and have representatives from all the academic schools. These representatives feed from the Schools into the activities of the Enhancement Theme and vice versa. Funds from QAA are used to support staff in attending events e.g. the Enhancement Themes conference, visits to other institutions and ATLEF.*

*We will again be dedicating a set amount of funding to the Students' Association to lead a student-led strand. We have three members of the Students' Association on the institutional team and the rest of the institutional team support the Students' Association in carrying out their activities.*

*The use of focus groups will enable us to engage staff and students in the work of the enhancement theme and then appropriately support both staff and students in our planned activities.*

*We will also specifically ensure that we include groups which may be overlooked such as postgraduate research students.*

### **Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

Activities will be set clear milestones which will be monitored by the Institutional Enhancement Team for progress. The impact of the activities will be monitored through a variety of means such as the uptake of recommendations made through evaluative activities.

The Institutional Enhancement Team reports to the University Teaching and Learning Committee which will have formal oversight of theme activities, including monitoring progress and impact.

### **Evaluation – year 2 update**

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

Members of our institutional team have been interviewed by Liz Thomas and will also be speaking to Pete Cannell and Alison Gilmour as part of their evaluation activities.

Activities will be set clear milestones which will be monitored by the Institutional Enhancement Team for progress. The impact will be monitored through a variety of means such as the uptake of recommendations made through evaluative activities.

The Institutional Enhancement Team reports to the University Teaching and Learning Committee which will have formal oversight of theme activities, including monitoring progress and impact.



<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Julie Blackwell Young
<b>Date:</b>	29/11/17

**Year 2 sign-off**

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Julie Blackwell Young
<b>Date:</b>	05/09/2018



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: University of Aberdeen

### Context

Over the three years of the Theme we aim to develop a better understanding of what constitutes evidence across a variety of disciplines, how to interrogate the evidence we collect in all its different formats, identify what is missing (and how we might generate the missing evidence) and how to use the evidence to improve the student learning experience at a number of points along the student journey. Some of this will require greater use of digital technologies which brings with it the challenge of engaging staff, students and employers and showing them the advantages to be gained from their use. Importantly projects that have been devised from a firm evidence base will be evaluated in terms of their impact both for that specific project and across the wider Institution and, potentially, sector.

### Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Institutional lead</b>	Prof Kathleen I J Shennan	Prof Kathleen I J Shennan	
<b>TLG staff representative</b>	Prof Kathleen I J Shennan	Prof Kathleen I J Shennan	
Personal Chair, Business School ( <b>and alternate TLG Lead</b> )	Prof W David McCausland	Prof W David McCausland	
Senior Lecturer (Scholarship), School of Biological Sciences	Dr Martin G Barker	Dr Martin G Barker	
Senior Adviser (Student Surveys), Centre for Academic Development	Dr Colin J Calder	Dr Colin J Calder	
Deputy Academic Registrar	Katja Christie		
Senior Lecturer (Scholarship), School of Natural and Computing Sciences	Dr Peter A Henderson	Dr Peter A Henderson	
Dean of Undergraduate Studies for Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business	Prof Hazel Hutchison		
Dean of Undergraduate Studies for Science,	Prof Alison Jenkinson	Prof Alison Jenkinson	

Engineering and Healthcare			
Dean of Postgraduate Taught Studies for Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Business	Prof Christopher Kee	Prof Christopher Kee	
Head of Postgraduate Research School	Prof Judith F M Masthoff	Prof Graeme Nixon or Dr Lucy Leiper	
Vice-Principal for Learning & Teaching	Prof Peter McGeorge	Prof Peter McGeorge	
HE Progression Routes Manager, Student Recruitment and Admissions Service	Dr Sally Middleton	Dr Sally Middleton	
Dean of Postgraduate Taught Studies for Science, Engineering and Healthcare	Prof Ekaterina E Pavlovskaja	Prof Ekaterina E Pavlovskaja	
Educational Development and Employability Adviser, Careers Service	Dr Joy Perkins	Dr Joy Perkins	
Manager, Centre for Academic Development	Patricia Spence	Patricia Spence	
Senior Lecturer (Scholarship), School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition and Chair of the Student Retention Taskforce	Dr Steven J Tucker	Dr Steven J Tucker	
Directorate of Planning representative	Dr Amanda Wilson	Dr Hulda Sveinsdottir or Emma Towler	
Lecturer (Scholarship), School of Natural and Computing Sciences		Dr Silvia Wehmeier	
TLG student representative	Donna Marie Connelly	Donna Marie Connelly	
Student representative	Aneta Fortelkova	Aneta Fortelkova	
Student representative (Taught Postgraduate)	Daniel Kaminek	Replacement TBC	
Student representative	Darryl Peers	Tanya Ilieva	

## Planned activity: Year 1 - 3

### Overall Outcomes/Activity

#### Key priorities and activities over the course of the three-year Enhancement Theme

*This is a list of institutional priorities, questions we aim to address and activities and collaborative intentions which will be initiated over the three years of the Theme. This is a dynamic document which may change as the Theme evolves.*

1. Ongoing institutional evidence project
  - a. Promote a culture of learning from others, trying new ways of doing things, taking risks, evaluating practice and disseminating the impact and outcomes of our teaching to colleagues
  - b. Determine our evidence base; how do we use evidence and how might we make better use of the evidence we collect?
  - c. Having identified a gap in our evidence base, how can we correct this to develop a policy or strategy to improve the student experience?
  - d. Provide development opportunities to ensure that staff have the skills to use the evidence available
  - e. Improve students' understanding of the importance of evidence by showing them the value of the different kinds of evidence and how we use it, and in turn improving their engagement
  - f. Engage with sector initiatives relating to all the above
2. Continue to use technology to improve the student experience
  - a. Enhance the student learning experience by improved use of digital technologies
  - b. Provide opportunities to improve staff and students' digital skills
  - c. Continue our work on open badges by enhancing our understanding of employers' perspectives on the use of open badges
  - d. Engage with ongoing Learning Analytics Cluster across the sector which has been successful in gaining approval to proceed in Year 2 of the Theme
3. Continue to encourage academic staff to engage with scholarship and pedagogical research
  - a. Provide a supported development pathway for potential National Teaching Fellowship applicants and collaborating with UHI to promote the Scheme
  - b. Launch a new round of the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme in Autumn 2018 to encourage evaluation of teaching practices
  - c. Launch new Good Practice Case Study Award scheme in Autumn 2018
  - d. Provide events and development opportunities
  - e. Support a network of interested academics through the Pedagogical Lab and other initiatives
  - f. Identify evidence of what constitutes good teaching and learning practice through scrutiny of applications for Higher Education Academy fellowships
4. Continue to explore ways to measure impact
  - a. The Student Course Evaluation Form (SCEF) working group will continue its work over the next academic year as described below.
  - b. Close the student to staff feedback loop; encourage student feedback by showing students the impact, i.e. how their feedback has been addressed
  - c. Close the staff to student feedback loop; in conjunction with the Institution's Feedback and Assessment Task Group we aim to encourage students to make better use of the feedback they receive and monitor how this improves performance

- d. Explore ways to measure the impact of awareness raising/dissemination activities that we provide for staff

5. Engage with the following sector-wide collaborative clusters

- a. Learning Analytics
- b. Others as they are agreed for Year 2

6. Continue to raise awareness through various activities

- a. Collect examples of current use of evidence (see Section 1 above) including launching new Good Practice Case Study Award, and disseminate through various channels
- b. Run theme-related events e.g. Annual Academic Development Symposium, Annual Learning & Teaching Network event, monthly Learning & Teaching Network meetings
- c. Use existing committee structures and task forces to raise awareness of Theme-related activities

### **Anticipated benefits at institutional and sector-wide levels**

By the end of the three-year Theme:

- Both staff and students will be more aware of what evidence we can gather and how we optimise its use to improve the student experience
- At sector level the sharing of good practice will lead to improved practice in evidence gathering and use.

### **Year 2 Outcomes/Activity**

*Many of the activities listed in the overall Theme plan above will begin in Year 1 and carry on over the three-year period. Those which are specific to Year 2 and should be completed by summer 2019 are listed below.*

1. Institutional evidence project Year 2

- a. *Good Practice in Learning & Teaching Case Study Award*: the Institution seeks to encourage and support staff to enhance their teaching through sharing examples of effective and innovative practice. This involves promoting a culture of learning from others, trying new ways of doing things, taking risks, evaluating practice and disseminating the impact and outcomes of our teaching to colleagues. Examples will not necessarily have to be successful; knowing that we can benefit from others' constructive failures can be valuable too and we encourage the sharing of colleagues' thoughts and experiences of such activities. In autumn, a mechanism to reward the contribution of good practice case studies will be launched to encourage and support staff to share examples of their effective and innovative practice. Staff will complete a form and case study to submit to the Good Practice webpages through a competitive process. Four monetary prizes will be awarded over the course of Academic Year 2018/19.
- b. *Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP)*: the next round of LTEP will be launched in autumn and will focus on generating, rather than disseminating evidence. It will be themed around the three institutional task forces, which were established to support the University's Strategic Plan 2015-20. The Task Forces cover the broad themes of: Positive Outcomes, Assessment & Feedback and Retention & Progression. Proposals which address the needs of the taught postgraduate community will also be encouraged. It is likely that a further round of LTEP to support dissemination will be launched in 2019.

- c. *Postgraduate (Taught) student (PGT) experience*: A second project focusing on the enhancement of the PGT experience will continue in Year 2, building on the institutional PGT Experience Survey which closed earlier in the year.

## 2. Using technology to improve the student experience

- a. Following the move to the 'Ultra Experience', consultations at School level will begin in the autumn to support Schools to plan how they will make better use of MyAberdeen, the institutional virtual learning environment. This is also in preparation for a more significant change to Blackboard Learn Ultra from Academic Year 2019/20. As a result of these consultations, Schools will be provided with central eLearning resource to implement their plans.
- b. In Academic Year 2017/18 the University approved the policy of routinely recording lectures unless permission is requested to not do this for pedagogic reasons. The numbers of lecture recordings and the use students make of them will be assessed by the end of Academic Year 2018-19 to determine the impact of this policy.
- c. Once institutional approval has been given, we will (i) undertake two pilot badge projects (the new GP Curriculum Model and Career Mentors) (ii) explore and confirm badge branding with the newly established Brand Communications Team and (iii) activate the digital badge functionality platform in MyAberdeen and familiarise ourselves with procedures. Full evaluation will be undertaken and outcomes reported internally and externally through the Theme.

## 3. National Teaching Fellowship Scheme

The National Teaching Fellowship Scheme requires staff to consider and evidence the impact that they have had on student outcomes and the teaching profession in HE. The University of Aberdeen has recently engaged with the Scheme and for Academic Year 2018/19 has developed a pathway to support a group of potential nominees to work towards fellowship over 2018/19 or beyond. This will involve collaboration with UHI including the organisation of shared events to promote the scheme and support potential applicants.

## 4. Measuring impact

A student intern was employed over the summer to run focus groups with various stakeholders of the Institution's SCEF process and to identify good practice both within the Institution and across other Institutions. Focus groups were held with students, academic staff and administrative support staff and a common theme emerging from all groups was a lack of understanding of the SCEF process, i.e. who was responsible for authoring questions, what level of freedom academic staff had over the questions asked and the timing of the surveys and what the results of SCEFs are used for. Student focus groups in particular felt the SCEFs were "generic" and not related to their course and some said they did not receive any feedback from the course coordinator on SCEF results (despite this being a requirement of our annual course review process) and therefore felt their feedback was not valued. Students also saw SCEFs as an opportunity to feedback on problematic issues rather than using them for positive feedback about a course. Academic staff felt that they were unable to adapt the SCEF to make it more specific to their course (but in reality all forms are adaptable) and there was a fear that results may be used for performance management (although they are not). There also seemed to be confusion about whether the SCEFs were an academic or administrative task. Academics wanted to be more invested in the process but there was a misunderstanding that the process was an administrative one. Overall the intern's focus groups showed that communication around the SCEF process to all stakeholders needs to be improved and that showing staff and students the use and value of the process would in itself help alleviate some of the negativity around this way of obtaining student feedback.

A number of areas of the University were identified as having very positive ways of closing the feedback loop to students and as a result have high SCEF completion rates. The SCEF working

group will continue by reviewing the information that goes out to students, academics and administrative staff on the purpose of the SCEF process and we will showcase good practice in closing the feedback loop on our good practice website.

### **Dissemination of work**

In Year 2, we will continue to disseminate our activities and outputs through various channels including:

- Internal Enhancement Themes webpages (see [www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/enhancement-themes--7249.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/enhancement-themes--7249.php))
- The new Good Practice webpages (see [www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/evidencebased-enhancement--7244.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/evidencebased-enhancement--7244.php))
- Collecting examples of current use of evidence through new Good Practice case study award (see section 1 above)
- A new round of the Institution's Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme which will launch in autumn 2018. The Programme will provide 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
- Existing committee structures and institutional task forces
- Contribute to the University-wide weekly ezine which is sent to all staff. The online document includes a new regular 'On our own doorstep' feature ([www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/school-examples--7246.php](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/school-examples--7246.php))
- Theme related events eg. Annual Academic Development Symposium, Annual Learning & Teaching Network event, monthly Learning & Teaching 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 can disseminate to School Convenors/Class Representatives, and by publishing information in the student paper, Gaudie.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

- We will continue to be involved in the Learning Analytics cluster and will contribute to other clusters of relevance as opportunities are made available.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

- We are exploring ways to support the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme in collaboration with UHI and hope to identify further opportunities for wider inter-institutional collaboration.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

- By continuing to provide training and development opportunities
- By continuing to encourage and provide funding to attend sector-wide events
- By involving student representatives from the Theme Steering Group to inform Class Representatives about the Theme

**Evaluation**

- We will continue to monitor progress by working under the guidance of, and reporting to, the Enhancement Theme Institutional Team
- Updates will be provided through institutional committee structures, primarily the University Committee on Teaching and Learning but also the Undergraduate, Postgraduate (Taught) and Postgraduate Research Committees.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Kath Shennan
<b>Date:</b>	13 September 2018



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: University of Dundee

### Context

*Provide any statements that might be helpful in explaining your institution's context and approach and how this plan supports the achievement of institutional priorities. In subsequent years, any context statement could draw on salient points from the previous year's learning/outcomes and reflect any changes in the strategic direction of your institution.*

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

The University of Dundee's core purpose is to transform lives locally and globally through the creation, sharing and application of knowledge. Our current strategy is informed by our core purpose, and below we would like to highlight the key strategic goals that 'Evidence for Enhancement' aligns with. Our Enhancement Theme activities have been planned in a way that will help us achieve our vision and implement our strategy.

University of Dundee strategic goals that align with the Theme:

- Enhance University performance and reputation
- Enable our people to flourish
- Advance our values
- Intensify our impact locally and globally
- Embed interdisciplinary research and teaching
- Grow and diversify our student community
- Embrace the One Dundee approach
- Deliver sustainable ambition

Engaging with the theme will contribute to our strategy in several key areas. Our priorities in relation to the theme have been formulated with the strategic goals and aspirations in mind and in alignment with the three sector-wide strands. They are as follows:

- 1) to develop and implement a systematic approach to reviewing evidence on the entire student journey to encompass recruitment, retention, attainment and employability.
- 2) to support staff and student representatives so they can use data ethically and effectively whilst ensuring compliance with GDPR.
- 3) to maximise our responsiveness to the student voice for the purposes of enhancement of

student learning, teaching and the wider student experience.

### Institutional team

*Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title.*

Institutional team, University of Dundee			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&T, School of Humanities	Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&T, School of Humanities	
TLG staff representative	Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&T	Aliki Varvogli, Associate Dean L&T	
TLG staff representative alternate	Lorraine Anderson, Academic Skills Centre	Lorraine Anderson, Academic Skills Centre	
TLG student representative (Year 2 Representative also a member of SHEEC)	Sean O'Connor, DUSA president	Charlie Kleboe-Rogers, DUSA Vice-President, Academia	
TLG student representative alternate/Team member	Ellen Brooks, Vice-president, DUSA	Sofia Skevofylaka, DUSA president	
SCHHEC/TLG Team member	Karl Leydecker, Vice-Principal, Learning and Teaching	Karl Leydecker, Vice-Principal, Learning and Teaching	
Team member	Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel, Lecturer, Psychology	Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel, Lecturer, Psychology	
Team member	Linda McSwiggan, Senior Lecturer, Nursing	Linda McSwiggan, Senior Lecturer, Nursing	
Team member	Naomi Jeffery, Senior Planning Officer, Strategic Planning	Naomi Jeffery, Senior Planning Officer, Strategic Planning	
Team member, alternate	Wesley Rennison, Director of Strategic Planning	Wesley Rennison to act as alternate for Naomi Jeffery	
Team member	Lesley McLellan, Director of Quality and Academic Standards	Lesley McLellan, Director of Quality and Academic Standards	
Team member	Lissa Monk, Senior Lecturer, School of Business	Lissa Monk, Senior Lecturer, School of Business	

Team Member		Persefoni Stylianoudaki, Lecturer in technology and Innovation, School of Medicine	
Team Member		Mary Knight, Education and Social Work, Associate Dean L&T	
Team Member		Stella Howden, Associate Dean Q&AS, School of Medicine	

### Planned activity: Year 1

#### **Overall outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?  
What outcomes do you want to achieve?  
What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

#### **Priorities**

Our key priorities are:

to develop and implement a systematic approach to reviewing evidence on the entire student journey to encompass recruitment, retention, attainment and employability.

to support staff and student representatives so they can use data ethically and effectively whilst ensuring compliance with GDPR.

to maximise our responsiveness to the student voice for the purposes of enhancement of student learning, teaching and the wider student experience.

#### **Outcomes**

Our successes will be evidenced by sustained and improved University performance in a range of indicators including NSS (especially the new student voice section), retention, achievement and graduate level employment; this will also be reflected in outcome data relating to a range of characteristics (widening access, ethnicity, gender, disability etc.). In addition, we will demonstrate increased student participation in democratic processes, such as DUSA elections, and increased confidence amongst staff and student representatives in using data and evidence to drive enhancement.

#### **Activities**

We will deliver a range of activities including data-handling OPD courses for staff and equivalent courses for student representatives, focus groups that bring staff and students together to co-produce enhancements in learning and teaching workshops and seminars that can involve nearby institutions, and by commissioning creative work from students to bring the student journey to life.

During the life of the theme, we aim to use evidence to help us explore the whole student journey

(especially but not only for widening access (WA)). We will draw on data and evidence from application through to study and ending with Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE)/Graduate Outcomes (and even long-DLHE/Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO)) data.

At institutional and sector level, our activities will promote the importance of data literacy, and help us to understand widening access, retention, progression and attainment from the student perspective. We will thereby contribute to a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the student experience.

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

### **Priorities**

- 1) To understand factors which impact on retention of widening access students.
- 2) To develop a training programme for staff and student representatives on the use and interpretation of data and evidence.
- 3) To improve the closing of the feedback loop so that students are aware of the actions that have been taken in response to their feedback.

### **Activities**

- Our Student Partnership Agreement is already operational at institutional level, but during Year 1 we will extend this approach to the level of individual Schools. Academic Schools and their student representatives, supported by DUSA, will develop School Partnership Action Plans suited to the needs of the learners in each School and the particular challenges they face.
- We will develop a structured outreach approach to Schools and Directorates on core data sources (e.g., student numbers, league tables, retention, outcomes), using OPD training and making presentations to School boards so we can reach as many staff as possible.
- We will look in more detail at retention and progression data for WA using existing structures within the institution, such as L&T committees and sub-committees or working groups.
- We will begin to look at data on the impact of the Student Transitions Theme initiatives, such as the STEP UP module.
- We will work with DUSA to make sure that students are aware of academic, pastoral, financial and other kinds of support available at institutional level. We will help and support DUSA to disseminate that information.
- We will use NSS evidence to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in relation to closing feedback loops to students.
- We will explore ways we can see the student journey from the student's perspective using approaches such as:
  - 1) shadowing a student through parts of their experience, such as their interaction with technology (reading lists, VLE etc)
  - 2) creating a generic student email account so we can assess the volume and usefulness of the communications they receive

3) 'adopt a student' small focus groups to meet once a month

- We will evaluate the effectiveness of our new approach to attendance monitoring, whose main aim is to offer advice and support as needed so as to improve retention.
- We will create a work-based learning community of practice to share best practice in delivering work-based learning. We can learn from similar activities employed by our distance learning communities.

### **Outcomes and Benefits**

Greater student participation in democratic processes.

Better understanding by more key staff (for example, but not limited to, planners and Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching) of data relating to progression and attainment.

Improved retention rates for students from WA backgrounds.

Improved NSS performance on student voice.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

### **Priorities**

**We aim to continue and develop further the work we started during year 1. In addition, we will focus on specific areas of activity that are outlined below.**

- 1) To understand factors which impact on retention of widening access students.
  - 2) To develop, implement and evaluate a training programme for staff and student representatives on the use and interpretation of data and evidence.
  - 3) To improve the closing of the feedback loop so that students are aware of the actions that have been taken in response to their feedback.
- We will place greater emphasis on Distance Learners by commissioning relevant projects using Y2 funding.
  - We will work with Susie Schofield, our newly appointed University lead for DL, to design and promote activities aimed at making this the year of the distance learner at our University.
  - We will enable more Schools to engage with the theme by liaising with Associate Deans L&T and identifying opportunities for funded projects or other types of data analysis in Schools.
  - We will create theme/data champions in Schools who will help to explain the relevance of the theme and of data to their colleagues and encourage further work relating to the theme.
  - We will systematise module feedback collection. We will achieve this by working closely with the Associate Dean for QAS in the School of Science and Engineering, Dr Andy Munns, who leads a team investigating the possibility of a standardised module feedback questionnaire

across the University.

- We will continue to work on using evidence to enhance Widening Access, Retention and progression. On 7 September 2018 we held a University-wide Retention forum where Schools shared good practice around the use of data as evidence to aid retention, with an emphasis on WA students. We had participation from all Schools and will be using this type of forum again to keep up engagement with the theme.
- We are in the process of strengthening our advising system, and its aims include to improve retention and to support WA students effectively. We will review evidence to assess its impact by liaising with newly appointed Senior Advisers in each School and student reps such as School Presidents.
- We will encourage the creation and sharing of case studies around DL and WA.
- We will fund and facilitate the dissemination of Y1 project results through Highlighter newsletter and through a conference in the summer that will be supported by the Academic Skills Centre.
- We will continue to raise the profile of the theme and encourage the use of data by demonstrating its relevance to scholarship and teaching practice. As part of our Y2 activities we have already given Evidence for Enhancement presentations at two forums: the University's Scholarship symposium which took place in September 2018 and which aims to encourage career planning and progression for colleagues on T&S contracts, and the University's Induction programme for all new staff, run by the Academic Skills Centre in September 2018.
- Registry have introduced new, even more user-friendly datasets that are updated live and can be accessed through Power BI. We will work with Schools through School Managers and ADs L&T to promote the new datasets and explain their uses and applications in systematic reviews of our teaching provision and beyond.
- We have scheduled a number of OPD courses that aim to enable staff to use data and evidence.

### **Outcomes and Benefits**

Greater student participation in democratic processes.

Better understanding by more key staff (for example, but not limited to, planners and Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching) of data relating to progression and attainment.

Improved retention rates for students from WA backgrounds.

Improved NSS performance on student voice.

### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

#### **Internal**

- Learning and Teaching Development Forum, which is an existing and well attended series of events during the academic year.
- Specific staff development events.
- Joint staff and student events.
- Publication of data (internally) to VLE/My Dundee or other online spaces such as Box.
- Use of Enhancement Theme corporate branding to ensure activity is flagged as being part of ET
- Standing agenda items on L&T and/or QAS committees.

### **External**

- Institutional pages on the QAAS Enhancement Theme site.
- Participation in annual conference.
- Explore possibility of co-hosting events / workshops (with other universities in the region).
- Alumni communications.
- DUSA social media channels and content on their site (video is used very effectively and we are keen to support the creation of further short, informative videos by and for students).
- Commissioning of creative work such as a comic/graphic novel or a play with the aim of affirming our commitment to the individual and to human stories.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

- Theme-related presentation at Scholarship symposium.
- Theme-related presentation at new staff induction.
- Liaise with Associate Deans through Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.
- Use module/programme monitoring.
- Appoint evidence/theme champions in Schools to promote use of data and feedback in L&T activities.
- We will highlight relevant activities on our website.
- We will use the University's weekly What's On email newsletter to promote key activities.
- We have commissioned a student from the School of Art and Design to create a short video that dramatizes issues around attendance monitoring and its positive outcomes. This will be disseminated via our web pages, through the Students' Union, through VLE pages and social media, and further afield pending further consultation with the student.
- Highlighter newsletter.
- Dissemination of results from funded Y1 projects.
- OPD courses are advertised in a brochure sent to all staff, and email communications highlight relevant courses to potential audiences. Yearly OSARs encourage staff and their managers to identify training needs that can be met by OPD.
- During September-October 2018 we will start planning a conference for staff and students in Summer 2019.
- Dissemination at sector-level events.
- We will work with DUSA to identify effective ways of promoting and communicating our work to

the student body.

- We will work closely with the University's Centre for Technology and Innovation in Learning (CTIL) to identify further opportunities for training as well as dissemination through blogs, VLEs and social media.
- We will work with team member Dr Carolina Kuepper-Tetzel who runs the TILE (Teaching Innovation & Learning Enhancement) Network to promote our work.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

- Creative industries cluster working with The Glasgow School of Art (GSA-led).
- Cluster on staff training on interpreting data, potentially through the umbrella of the Scottish Planners Forum.
- Potentially interested in graduate level apprenticeships cluster (but do not have capacity to lead this).
- Open to involvement as participant in other clusters that emerge in the sector.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

- We will remain actively engaged in learning analytics cluster work.
- We will continue to be represented at Scottish Planners events, and we are also members of HESPA (Higher Education Strategic Planners Association).
- Shona Johnston from Careers Services is leading a cluster on 'Developing Graduate Support in Scotland.'

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

- Scottish Planners Forum
- Organising regional events
- Acting as a hub for collaboration (offering availability of our spaces for working together).

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

- Ongoing work in Scottish Planners group.
- The University of Dundee has two TLT members, Vice-Principal L&T Prof Karl Leydecker, and DUSA Vice-President Academia, Charlie Kleboe-Rogers.
- We will be contributing to QAA's webinar series in Spring 2019.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

We are exploring ways for staff and students engaging with the theme to have their time recognised using some of the following approaches:

- Define involvement with the theme as scholarship activity for staff on T&S contracts.
- Offer seed funding for small projects.
- Allocate time spent on ET activities in the workload model.
- Open badges to recognise and reward work by students.
- Make student involvement with the theme part of Dundee Plus award.
- Pilot the employment of Student Voice Support Officers assigned to several Schools.

### Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

In addition to offering training through OPD courses throughout the academic year, we will use the following mechanisms to support staff and student engagement:

- Starting in September 2018, we are appointing Student voice support officers to work with all Schools.
- We will continue to use Twitter and other social media and seek more systematic ways of promoting Theme work that is taking place throughout the institution.

### Evaluation

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

- Progress will be formally monitored by the University's Learning and Teaching Committee, with the ET a standing item.
- Through progress in relevant performance indicators under the University Strategy 2017-2022.
- Performance against Student Partnership Agreement KPIs.
- Improvement on the NSS questions relating to the student voice.
- Focus group sessions with staff and students.
- Numbers of staff and students engaging in events and activities associated with the Theme.
- How to evaluate student engagement

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

- Increase of applications for funding, especially from under-represented areas or Schools, will be a key indicator of successful engagement and promotion of the theme.
- We will monitor module/programme review forms to see if they show greater engagement with data.
- Standardised module feedback will enable us to monitor student views on how we use evidence for enhancement.
- Retention and progression data will be analysed.
- We will continue to monitor our score on the 'student voice' questions on the NSS.
- We will continue to work with Prof. Liz Thomas to ensure effective evaluation of our work.

**Plan author:**

Aliki Varvogli, on behalf of the Enhancement Theme Steering Group

<b>Date:</b>	23 November 2017
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### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Aliki Varvogli, on behalf of the Enhancement Theme Steering Group
<b>Date:</b>	19 September 2018



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: University of Edinburgh

### Context

This plan reflects the early stage of the Enhancement Theme and outlines in broad terms the approach the University will take to engaging with the Theme. The plan will be considered by the Institutional Team at its first meeting on 14 December 2017.

#### Context – year 2 update

Due to the timing of this report, it has not been discussed with the Institutional Team so some activities may be subject to change. It is, however, informed by Institutional Team discussions and priorities identified in year one of the Theme. It also aligns with other areas of work across the University. The plan will be considered by the Institutional Team at its next meeting on 23 October 2018.

### Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Professor Tina Harrison (staff), Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance	Professor Tina Harrison (staff), Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance	
TLG staff representative	Nichola Kett (staff), Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services	Nichola Kett (staff), Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services	
TLG staff representative alternate	<i>Will depend on meeting content</i>	<i>Will depend on meeting content</i>	
TLG student representative	Bobi Archer (student), Vice President Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association	Diva Mukherji (student), Vice President Education, Edinburgh University Students' Association	
Edinburgh University Students' Association representative	Megan Brown (staff), Academic Engagement Coordinator	Megan Brown (staff), Academic	

		Engagement Coordinator	
Student Systems representative	Lisa Dawson (staff), Director of Student Systems	Lisa Dawson (staff), Director of Student Systems	
Learning, Teaching and Web representative	Melissa Highton/Anne-Marie Scott (staff), Director/Deputy Director	Melissa Highton/Anne-Marie Scott (staff), Director/Deputy Director	
Governance and Strategic Planning representative	Lynda Hutchison (staff), Governance and Strategic Planner	Lynda Hutchison (staff), Governance and Strategic Planner	
College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences representative	Dr Lisa Kendall (staff), Head of Academic and Student Administration,	Dr Lisa Kendall (staff), Head of Academic and Student Administration,	
Academic Services representative	Gillian Mackintosh (staff), Academic Policy Officer	Gillian Mackintosh (staff), Academic Policy Officer	
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine representative	Dr Claire Phillips (staff), Vet School Director of Quality	Dr Claire Phillips (staff), Vet School Director of Quality	
Institute for Academic Development representative	Dr Jon Turner (staff), Director	Dr Jon Turner (staff), Director	
College of Science and Engineering representative	Dr Gordon McDougall (staff), College Dean, Quality Assurance,	To be confirmed.	

### Planned activity: Year 1

<b>Overall outcomes/activity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be gathering the right data to be able to evaluate and effectively enhance the student experience.</li> <li>• For that data to be easily accessible, understood and used by staff to evaluate and effectively enhance the student experience.</li> <li>• To have had active engagement of students and staff in the work of the Enhancement Theme.</li> <li>• To have shared good practice internally and externally.</li> <li>• To have worked collaboratively across the sector.</li> </ul>

<b>Year 1 outcomes/activity</b>
<p><b><u>Institutional Team</u></b></p> <p>The University has a number of existing and planned activities relating to the Enhancement Theme (detailed below), many of which have their own governance, representative and reporting structures. Therefore, the Institutional Team will have oversight of these key institutional activities relating to the Enhancement Theme, with the aim of sharing information and identifying links and synergies. They will support engagement with and work on the Enhancement Theme within the University and the sector, including the requirements set by the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland. They will also facilitate communication on the Enhancement Theme across the University and promote the use of data for enhancing the student experience.</p>

### **Alignment of Activities with Sector Strands**

The activities align with the following priorities for implementation from the [University's Learning and Teaching Strategy](#): 'working in partnership with students' and 'nurturing a learning community that supports students'.

#### **Optimising Evidence**

- Continuing to develop systematic access to data to support quality assurance and enhancement processes, including the development of the student data dashboard
- Developing strategic performance measurement dashboards

#### **Student Engagement**

- Implementing the priorities of the Student Partnership Agreement
- Analysing peer learning and support data (Students' Association)
- Analysing Teaching Awards data (Students' Association)
- Participating in student representative diversity work (Students' Association with sparqs)
- Enhancing student representation (led by the Students' Association)
- Developing minimum standards for the use of virtual learning environments
- Analysing student survey data

#### **Student Demographics and Success**

- Finalising and implementing the Widening Participation Strategy
- Developing learning analytics policy, procedure and governance
- Carrying out the thematic review of mature students (including students as parents/carers)
- Interim evaluation of lecture recording implementation
- Developing employability and enterprise supporting data

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

A key priority in year two of the Theme will be supporting staff to make evidence-informed decisions to enhance the student experience. Proposals for how to do this include:

- Sharing good practice at relevant internal network meetings.
- Reviewing the 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.
- Developing new training opportunities for staff (examples could include: practical sessions to work through key data; an online recorded demonstration of the student data dashboard; and developing case studies of how the student data dashboard has been used).
- 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.

Other activities will likely include:

- 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.
- Academic Services and Student Systems evaluating the pilot to provide a standard high-level analysis of student feedback to School student representatives.
- Further work to investigate specific non-continuation challenges.
- 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).
- Sharing the graphically designed visual representation of the new student representation system.
- The Students' Association implementing a handover document for all programme representatives to fill in at the end of their tenure.
- Exploring options for a postgraduate research strand of activity.
- Project funding.

The Institutional Team will continue 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); minimum standards for Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) (Learning, Teaching and Web (LTW)); analysing student survey data (Student Systems); and evaluation of lecture recording implementation (LTW).

### **Dissemination of work**

**Internally:** email communications; Institutional Team; Senate Quality Assurance Committee; Teaching Matters website; Learning and Teaching Conference; and a wiki.

**Externally:** Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC); Theme Leaders' Group (TLG); Enhancement Themes conference; and the University's website.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

Work will continue to be disseminated as detailed above.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

As it has not yet been confirmed what the collaborative clusters will be, we are unable to confirm our intended level of involvement. Areas of interest for the University are: student voice; data skills for non-specialists (quantitative and qualitative); student surveys (what works); learning analytics (beyond retention); and sharing evaluation expertise. Our enhancement activities are outlined above.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

As it has not yet been confirmed what the collaborative clusters will be, we are unable to confirm our intended level of involvement. Involvement in the collaborative clusters will be encouraged as in year one of the Theme.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

Due to the early stage of the Enhancement Theme, we have not yet held discussions with other institutions about potential collaborative work. It is anticipated that this will be facilitated through SHEEC and TLG meetings. Areas of interest and enhancement activities are outlined above.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

As outlined above, we are hoping to host an event to which we will invite representatives from across the sector. Both formal and informal discussions at Theme Leaders' Group meetings in year one of the Theme proved useful in terms of discussing common areas of work and to share ideas and this will continue in year two of the Theme.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

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.

We are exploring with the Students' Association how we can creatively engage students with the work of the Theme as it develops. We also anticipate that we will provide funding towards Enhancement Theme-related projects/activities (either existing, planned or new).

### Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

As outlined above, a key priority in year two of the Theme will be supporting staff to make evidence-informed decisions to enhance the student experience. Consideration will be given to different ways of working with students and staff as the plans for delivering our activities are developed. Staff and student workshop events on particular topics proved effective in year one of the Theme and are likely to be used in year two.

### Evaluation

Progress will be monitored through Institutional Team meetings. Consideration will be given to evaluation of impact as the areas of work develop.

### Evaluation – year 2 update

The Theme Leader participated in a telephone discussion as part of the formal Theme evaluation work and the University will continue to contribute to this important area of work as requested.

In terms of our activities, progress will be monitored through Institutional Team meetings and individual activities will be evaluated as outlined above.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Tina Harrison and Nichola Kett
<b>Date:</b>	17 November 2017

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Tina Harrison and Nichola Kett
<b>Date:</b>	13 September 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: Edinburgh Napier University

#### Context

The focus of this Enhancement Theme aligns directly with Edinburgh Napier's institutional strategy and commitment to deliver an excellent, personalised student experience and to key areas of our Academic Strategy. Listening and responding in a timely way to student voices, drawing on evidence and insights from our own practice, and harnessing the power of research and scholarship from across the sector is at the heart of this Theme and to our ongoing institutional work. In part this Theme challenges us to consider how we engage with our KPIs, data sets and league tables. It also focuses attention on how we build an evidence-based approach in to our planning and review processes that reflects the diversity of voices, interests and needs of our students.

The *Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience* Theme provides a timely opportunity for Edinburgh Napier University to enhance existing practice in this area, amplify the impact of current initiatives, and initiate a series of 'creative thinking / innovative practice' projects to explore aspects of the Theme. This Theme offers the opportunity for new conversations and collaborations to develop across the University. We will use this Theme to explore the diversity of available evidence and enhance how staff and students engage with it to make a difference to learning, teaching and the wider student experience.

The Theme also provides a welcome opportunity to share our practice with the sector and to benefit from collaborative work on key areas related to Theme activity. This collaboration is particularly important in exploring how we can, as a sector, make the case for the unique benefits that arise from the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework, explore indicators and evidence of Enhancement in sector-context, and support the capacity-building of the sector as whole in this area.

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

The general context of our work remains in line with that set out in Year 1. The focus on understanding how best to utilise insight from a diverse range of evidence to enhance practice has deepened as an area of interest and practical focus across the institution.

Substantively, two areas have increased in institutional significance (a) supporting Programme Leaders and (b) enhancing understanding of learning communities and deepening a sense of 'belonging'. These were key thematic areas which emerged from recent student surveys and other evidence sources, with both areas requiring further consideration, development and practical action.

## Institutional team

Given the breadth and scope of this Theme we are seeking broad participation in the Theme. We will engage a wide range of staff in institutional conversations around the Theme and the development of specific strands of work. To facilitate effective communication and collaboration, a core Institutional Team has been identified. Members will focus their input on specific aspects of the programme of work and on communicating with the wider staff groups they represent.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Dr Martha Caddell, Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement	Dr Martha Caddell, Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement	
TLG staff representative	Dr Martha Caddell, Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement	Dr Martha Caddell, Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement	
TLG staff representative alternate	Dr Katrina Swanton, Head of Quality & Enhancement	Dr Katrina Swanton, Head of Quality & Enhancement	
TLG student representative	Hannah Markley, ENSA	Ashley McLean, ENSA	
Team Member	Hannah Macleod, ENSA	Jenni Behan, ENSA (staff member)	
Team member	Dr Colin Smith,(School of Computing)	Dr Colin Smith,(School of Computing)	
Team member	Dr Jackie Brodie (Business School)	Dr Jackie Brodie (Business School)	
Team member	Dr Christine Haddow (School of Applied Science)	Dr Christine Haddow (School of Applied Science)	
Team member	Dr Louise Ker (Planning)	Dr Avril Gray (School of Creative Industries)	
Team member	Dr Katrina Castle (Head of Widening Participation)	Liz Scott, (Head of Widening Participation)	
Team member	Dr Nicola Kivlichan (Planning)	Dr Nicola Kivlichan (Planning)	
Team member	Prof Kay Sambell (Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement)	Prof Kay Sambell (Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement)	
		Dr Sandra Cairncross, Assistant Principal, Widening Participation & Community	
Transitions Theme Legacy Lead	Julia Fotheringham (Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement)	Julia Fotheringham (Dept of Learning and Teaching Enhancement)	

Further members will be co-opted as appropriate throughout the Theme. We are particularly focused on securing representation that will facilitate communication across all Schools in the University.

## Planned activity: Overall Theme

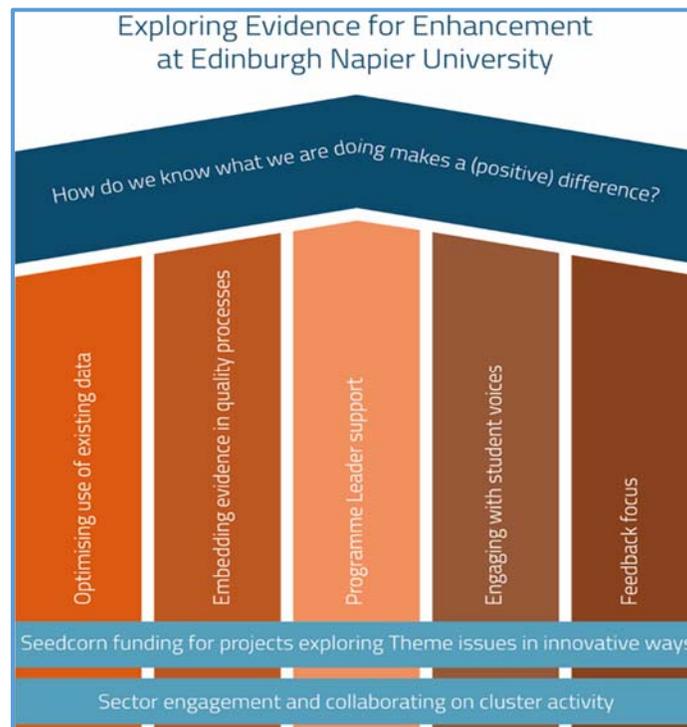
### Overall outcomes/activity

ENU will use this Theme to (a) amplify the visibility, connections and impact of priority work areas within the University, (b) bring groups across the university together to collaborate and share practice and (c) support a set of creative development projects to explore new ways of evidencing impact on aspects of the student experience.

Over the three-year period of work, the Theme umbrella will harness learning from activities across the institution and from our sector collaborations, as outlined in Figure 1.

Specifically, the Theme umbrella will draw together our work to:

- a. Make data accessible and useable at points where it can make most difference to student learning, teaching and wider student experience.
- b. Embedding appropriate evidence-use in planning and quality review processes at institutional / School / Programme and module levels;
- c. Explore the role of Programme Leaders in quality enhancement processes, focusing on any support needed to engage with evidence and take action to support enhanced practice.
- d. Enhance how we capture, listen, and respond to student voices.
- e. Focus on student engagement and understanding of feedback and other evidence to enhance their learning.
- f. Explore 'student belonging' and 'community'. This will build on work from the *Student Transitions* Theme and offer scope for creative-thinking around evidencing impact.
- g. We will also engage in exploratory work, institutionally and in collaboration with others in the sector, around approaches to 'learning analytics' and the ethics and risks associated with 'big data' use.



The additional funding linked to this activity (£6k / year of Theme) will be used to support cross-workstream collaboration and communication and to support a number of innovative practice projects linked to the Theme.

Sector-wide efforts linked to the Theme will be critical in ensuring we do not re-invent the wheel in terms of training and support for key staff. We would welcome specific events targeted at key staff and student rep groups and in the development of shared, open, and customisable training and development resources. We would welcome the development of shared resources around navigating the HE data landscape and practical, targeted work-in opportunities on engagement with diverse sources of evidence. Critically, the Theme should also provide space for learning 'what makes a difference (and what doesn't)' to the student experience in specific areas. A sector focus on listening to student voices, for example, will offer practical insight and learning across institutions.

### Year 1 outcomes/activity

Through Year 1 we will gain an enhanced understanding of existing practice, how we currently know 'what works', and the points where additional engagement with various sources of evidence would make a difference. Activity this year will provide the springboard from which to meet the overall Theme goals, noted above.

Specific deliverables for Year 1 include:

- Develop an evaluation plan for the Theme activity.
- Mapping existing activities linked to the Theme – institutional, School-based and student-led.
- Initiate a portfolio of student-led and co-developed projects focused on theme of amplifying 'student voice'.
- Initiating communication across the core longitudinal projects:
  - **Key workstream (1): Optimising use of existing data:**
    - Amplify awareness of existing data tools and staff engagement with training and support.
    - Map data use and data needs of key staff groups.
  - **Key workstream (2): Embedding Evidence in Quality Processes:**
    - Mapping of programme development and review processes to identify key points where data / evidence is used and effective ways of supporting staff to engage with available evidence and make appropriate enhancements to practice.
  - **Key workstream (3): Programme Leader Support:**
    - Explore the support and development needs of this key group of staff.
  - **Key workstream (4): Engaging with Student Voices:**
    - A student-led initiative exploring 'belonging' from a range of perspectives.
    - Seminar / roundtable events to bring together learning from across the University focused on of student engagement / student 'belonging' / student 'voice'.
    - Support a number of innovative practice projects linked to the Theme
  - **Key workstream (5): Feedback Focus:**
    - School based workshops and activity to enhance focus on assessment as learning, supporting student engagement with feedback for learning.
    - Amplifying learning from innovative practice in engaging students with feedback.
  - **Exploratory Workstream:** Host an Institutional '*Exploring Learning Analytics*' event.
- We will also actively engage with sector-wide and cluster activity and present at the Enhancement Themes Conference in June 2018.

### Year 2 outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

The institutional workstreams and priorities identified in Year 1 continue to be key areas of development. Our approach institutionally is to use the Theme as a catalyst for making the connections between these different strands of work. We aim to pull together conversations and work at School and institutional level that focus on engaging effectively with evidence to enhance student learning and the wider student experience. In doing so, we anticipate benefits to the university in terms of (a) shared language of impact, (b) clarity over the range of evidence available for decision-making, and (c) clear mapping of the processes and key touchpoints where data and evidence is available and can be used to enhance practice.

Our key priorities for *additional* Theme supported activity in Year 2 are (a) supporting programme leaders to use evidence for enhancement and (b) developing our institutional conversation and action around 'belonging' and learning communities and the evidence that informs our work in this area.

The key outcomes we wish to work towards through year 2 and 3 are:

- Strengthened institutional confidence in discussing and using evidence for enhancement, specifically in programme and project contexts.
- Joined-up strategy and action across the range of projects focused on evidence for enhancement related areas (see above).
- Greater confidence of Programme Leaders as they navigate the evidence landscape and make decisions about enhancement activity.
- A strengthened awareness and understanding about evidence and action related to learning communities and belonging, based around a suite of mini-projects and examples of practice form across ENU.
- Increased visibility of range of approaches for student engagement and collaboration in Enhancement activity.
- Awareness of impact of student transitions Theme work and review of implications for approach to Theme activity.

We will be working towards these outcomes via a suite of Theme related activity:

#### **Supporting an Institutional Conversation on Evidence to Enhance 'Belonging'**

- Belonging symposium and practice sharing event
- Continuation of 'Belonging' mini-projects and initiation of a new tranche of student-staff collaborative work in this area.
- Exploration of what evidence matters, which voices are heard, and what this means for action to develop learning communities and a sense of 'belonging' to ENU.
- Construct impact narrative, including a baseline report on evidence from NSS, as focus for evaluation.

#### **Supporting Programme Leaders to Explore Evidence to Support Enhancement of Practice**

- Establish PL reference group to support the various PL related work strands currently in train.
- Mapping of data landscape from programme leader perspective and production of associated guide to data and evidence for PLs.
- Development of workshop and quick guide to Data and Narratives of Change, aimed at PLs.
- Engagement with sector cluster activity on support for PLs.

#### **Impact Narratives: How do we know we are making a difference?**

- Over Year 2 and 3 of the Theme we will work to develop impact narratives on the Belonging and PL workstrands.
- Produce a Quick Guide to impact narratives.
- Explore the impact of past Themes (esp student transitions) to glean insights into what approaches are most effective in supporting engagement with enhancement activity.

#### **Learning Analytics**

- Our institutional scoping work will continue to be informed by our engagement and learning from the sector cluster activity. This will, through Year 2 and 3, lead to a defined implementation plan.

**The key benefits** will be the strengthened conversations across the university on the use of evidence for enhancement and the more confident engagement with a range of data and evidence in decision making processes, particularly at project and programme levels.

### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

- An *Evidence for Enhancement* Institutional Web-page has been set up.
- Seminars and Tweetchats will be held throughout the year on issues linked to the Theme. (We would welcome the opportunity to co-badge appropriate Tweet Chats or events with QAAS)
- Publicity via the *ENU Teaching Fellows Journal* and the ENU Learning and Teaching Conference
- Institutional Team meetings will be held and update papers presented to key School and University Committees.
- Engagement with sector events and the ET conference.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

In addition to the routes identified in year one, we will focus on engagement with programme leaders forums as a key route for exploring the PL and Belonging strands of work. We will also focus on ensuring joined up working with key committee and project areas, notably Student Retention and Success group and our institutional focus on the academic calendar and student induction.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

Specific areas of involvement will depend on the cluster work that is supported. We would propose possible engagement in these areas:

- Communicating data to help staff ‘make a difference’ (From Planning and Data to Enhanced Teaching Practice).
- Sharing approaches to building evidence-informed practice (Evidencing culture shift in institutional approaches)
- Supporting Programme Leaders
- Student Voices: Creative approaches to listening and responding to students
- What evidence ‘works’ for the creative industries? (School of Creative Interests – specific link)
- Learning Analytics: Ambitions, Ethics and Practical Challenges

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

We will be developing the cluster on *E4E: Supporting Programme Leaders*.

We will continue our involvement and support of the Learning Analytics cluster and Creative Industries cluster. Both of these forum offered valuable learning and engagement opportunities in year 1.

ENU is also represented on the ‘student belonging’ cluster activity.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

To ensure this Theme has real impact, identifying common interests and linked initiatives with key networks and programmes of work will be essential. As a result of institutional engagement across a range of areas and at various levels of seniority, we would anticipate strengthened links with groups such as Scottish Planners Group, TQF, US Learning and Teaching Committee and ongoing HEA work to support Programme Leaders.

We will be able to better define collaborations following TLG discussions re cluster and priority work areas.

### Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Inter-institutional collaboration is primarily via the cluster work. However, conversations sparked through Theme activity and the ET Conference have identified areas of common interest. As a result, we will open up events (such as our 'Belonging' symposium in October) to others across the sector and ensure when guest speakers are invited to ENU others in Scotland are able to attend and benefit from these events.

### Supporting staff and student engagement

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

- Provide platforms for both formal and informal interaction.
- Seedcorn funds to open opportunities to develop new activities.
- Opportunities to share practice via seminars and other linked events.
- Publicity of sector and institutional training and development events.

### Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Our focus will be more targeted this year, with funding specifically ear-marked for student-staff collaborative work. We will also be focusing on Programme Leader engagement.

### Evaluation

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

A key activity in the first period of work is to develop an evaluation plan that incorporates both the specific 'additional' activity supported by Theme funding and captures the wider institutional activities in train that are linked to this area of Enhancement. We will specifically focus on the 'value-added' of the Theme in opening space for collaboration and intra-institutional learning.

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

Year 2 (and into Year 3) will see us focus more directly on the development of impact narratives.

- We will produce exemplar impact narratives linked to the two focus areas of work:  
Programme Leader use of E4E and *Student Belonging: What matters? What counts?*
- We will also explore the impact of the student transitions theme.
- A quick guide on impact narratives will be produced.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Martha Caddell
<b>Date:</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2017

## Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Martha Caddell
<b>Date:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: Glasgow School of Art

#### Context

The timing of this theme is opportune for GSA:

1. *Learning & Teaching Enhancement Working Group Coordinated Activities*: As we are undertaking significant enhancements to the student experience over the next three years, it is essential that we develop and manage a strategy for evaluating the impact of these activities. Given that many of the coordinated actions were developed in the light of repeated concerns expressed by our students in the NSS, we need to be able to understand the relationships between the introduction of these changes and related outcomes in the NSS, for example.
2. *PGT Credit Reform*: As we move forward on PGT credit reform, with a new curricular structure in place for September 2019, we want to have confidence in our management of evaluation data so that we can communicate the positive impact of these changes as well as gathering the information necessary to make subsequent changes as the programmes are encountered by our students.
3. *The First-Year Experience*: Whilst the impact of this on students, like that of the PGT credit reform, is delayed, the new first year experience will run in the last year of this theme. It is imperative that we have an effective evaluation strategy in place for the inception of the new first year. This should include at the minimum, a through the year qualitative, year-long evaluation with an end of year questionnaire.
4. *ELIR 4*: Will occur during the course of this theme and, as an institution, we will be expected to demonstrate the robustness of systems we have for gathering data on any activities we take to improve the student experience at undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research levels.
5. *RIBA Revalidation*: Will also occur during the time of the theme and requires the same quality of reflective analysis of data and other evidence forms of improvement as ELIR.
6. *GSA Strategic Cycle*: GSA is also undertaking the strategic planning round for 2018-2021 and the activities of the new Enhancement Theme will be incorporated into a renewed Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy

## Context – year 2 update

If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.

You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.

In June 2018 GSA's normal business was interrupted by the impact of the Mackintosh Fire.

With this in mind, we are choosing to focus our year two activities around two defined themes:

- Developing new sources of discipline specific evidence gathering. (Work package 1: detail below)
- Evidencing how we maintain this year's student experience in the face of the disruptions caused by the fire. Such an extraordinary event has facilitated additional measures around how best to communicate and manage belonging at GSA, particularly for the incoming first years in the two schools most effected. This work is intrinsically tied in with the activities of the GSA's new First Year Experience Coordinator and also the role of GSA's (Work package 2)

The following activities from year 1 will be continued as part of normal business.

## Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Vicky Gunn Head of L & T <a href="mailto:v.gunn@gsa.ac.uk">v.gunn@gsa.ac.uk</a>	Vicky Gunn Head of L & T <a href="mailto:v.gunn@gsa.ac.uk">v.gunn@gsa.ac.uk</a>	TBC
TLG staff representative	Mark Charters Academic Development Coordinator <a href="mailto:m.charters@gsa.ac.uk">m.charters@gsa.ac.uk</a>	Mark Charters Academic Development Coordinator <a href="mailto:m.charters@gsa.ac.uk">m.charters@gsa.ac.uk</a>	
TLG staff representative alternate	Lesley Black Careers <a href="mailto:l.black@gsa.ac.uk">l.black@gsa.ac.uk</a>	Lesley Black Careers <a href="mailto:l.black@gsa.ac.uk">l.black@gsa.ac.uk</a>	
TLG staff representative alternate	Katie McKee Academic Coordinator (GSA Singapore) <a href="mailto:Ka.mckee@gsa.ac.uk">Ka.mckee@gsa.ac.uk</a>	Gina Wall Deputy Head, School of Fine Art <a href="mailto:g.wall@gsa.ac.uk">g.wall@gsa.ac.uk</a>	
TLG student representative	Laura Glennie Student President <a href="mailto:l.glennie@gsa.ac.uk">l.glennie@gsa.ac.uk</a>	Harriet Gould Student President <a href="mailto:h.gould@gsa.ac.uk">h.gould@gsa.ac.uk</a>	
TLG project rep		Rudy Kanye GSA ET Project Assistant <a href="mailto:r.kanye@gsa.ac.uk">r.kanye@gsa.ac.uk</a>	
Additional student voice input		Laura Glennie Student Engagement Lead (GSA Recovery) <a href="mailto:l.glennie@gsa.ac.uk">l.glennie@gsa.ac.uk</a>	
Cover for VG	Maddy Sclater Senior Academic Fellow <a href="mailto:m.sclater@gsa.ac.uk">m.sclater@gsa.ac.uk</a>	Maddy Sclater Senior Academic Fellow <a href="mailto:m.sclater@gsa.ac.uk">m.sclater@gsa.ac.uk</a>	

## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

What are your key priorities?

GSA's key priorities with regards to Evidence for Enhancement are summed up under the following questions:

- What methods and different types of evidence do we gather already that best provide us with workable insights about why teaching approaches don't always work in the way we hope?
- How do we ensure any growth in the use of metrics does not foreground student satisfaction at the expense of the importance of the disruptive development of creativity, soft-power, and characteristics of an Art School education that don't easily fit into the current metrics of external reporting requirements?
- What methods / different types of evidence as relevant to the Creative Practices can we develop to mitigate the increasing regulatory dependence on numbers?
- Do the creative practices' subjects have research methods which we could transfer into providing rich evidence of how our students learn and how enhancement impacts on their learning?
- How do we manage small numbers in the face of big data-sets? How do we clarify why small numbers makes the metrics much less reliable to use for making decisions about changing practice?

Over the three years of this theme, we would aim to:

**(Aim 1)** Grow 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 have 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.

**(Aim 2)** Play a lead role in a creative arts, cross-Scotland cluster focused on:

- (1) Raising awareness of Graduate Outcomes (new DLHE) metrics: insights and concerns;
- (2) How to communicate teaching enhancement to those who employ our graduates from the evidence we gather about the student experience now.

## Year 1 outcomes/activity GSA-specific

### Year 1 Focus:

- Build an understanding of evidencing enhancement in GSA's UG and PG Taught offer to staff and students (Aim 1);
- Review and renew GSA's Code of Assessment and its implementation in the light of evidence (primarily NSS and PTES) (Aim 1);
- Build a space and time for guided reflection around DLHE (Graduate Outcomes) as part of Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting processes(Aim 1)

Activities:

- 1. *Work-package 1 (semester 2):*** Use the new student experience survey to identify student experience in each year of the student experience from first year undergraduate through to postgraduate taught and from this build confidence in using such material to make sustainable, impactful changes to learning, teaching & assessment practices; Employ a communication design student to work as an intern for semester 2 with a brief to build a learning and teaching team internal (to GSA) communication approach to raise awareness of the collection and use of evidence in order to improve student experience at all stages from UG year 1 to PGT. This intern will work closely with the Student President and Mark Charters with input from Maddy Sclater in terms of implementing and analysing the in-house PGT survey.
  - Key outcome: systematically applied use of a range of evidence for identifying and evidencing teaching enhancement within the UG/PGT space that fully aligns with evidence-based decision making for enhancement throughout all the stages of an education at GSA.
  - How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1: 30% response rate in the in-house, survey in semester 2 and in the end of year surveys – UG to PGT.
- 2. *Work-package 2 (semesters 2-3):*** Audit assessment and feedback evidence, renew the Code of Assessment to change how GSA manages assessment and feedback more consistently.

Produce a user friendly code of assessment with examples of what requirements mean practically. Vicky Gunn, Mark Charters and Katie McKee will play a role in this, as will GSA's Learning & Teaching Enhancement Working Group.

- Key outcome: systematically renewed Code of Assessment Practice on the basis of pre-existing evidence regarding the need for enhancement of the way Assessment and Feedback operates.
- How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1: improvement in the Assessment & Feedback item NSS steadily building over the next three years

### 3. **Work-package 3 (semesters 2-3):**

Considering the relationship between Graduate Outcomes, LEO, and Singapore GO data to inform curricular interventions connected to the Enterprise Framework by fostering reflective practice via Programme Annual Monitoring discussions. Activity around: *Focus on*: What does the data for DLHE (Graduate Outcomes) offer to GSA in terms of insights for improving in-course and additional enterprise and employability attributes? Lesley Black & Vicky Gunn will direct this.

- Key outcome: *Workshop for each School's PLS demonstrating importance of engagement around with GO and what pedagogic opportunities arise from engaging with it*
- How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1: PLs more confident responding to GO results for their programmes in PMAR

## **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

As over-riding priorities post-fire, GSA is looking particularly at how creative arts methods may be used to generate alternative forms of evidence regarding our student experience. It will also have an immediate context specific focus on managing belonging in the student experience in a disrupted estate and evidencing the impact of this activity. With this in mind GSA has employed Laura Glennie as Student Engagement Lead (GSA recovery).

The key outcomes from these two priorities will be a successful pilot of the participatory art project and effective evidencing of student engagement in the unexpected situation in which GSA finds itself.

The two additional, post-fire key priorities are outlined as work package 1 & 2:

### **Work package 1:**

Creative practice activity focussed on asset mapping.

Key contacts: Rudy Kanhye, Gina Wall, Vicky Gunn

**Introduction:** 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. It entails the self-identification of community assets, meaning that the community 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.

GSA will implement a version of this process in the School of Fine Art over the forthcoming session, targeting specifically year 3 students.

**Drawing on The Installation at Cooper Union:** Caroline Woolard worked with curator Stamatina Gregory to select tools from artists and collectives that would enable students to be drawn into an evaluation of their experience through artistic practices and methods. The

project that emerged from this was Wound. Caroline's social practice involves community members collectively mapping information about what they understand to be their community's tangible and intangible strengths, sources, and resources, including individual and collective knowledge and skills. Community assets might also include both formal institutions (libraries, schools and health care clinics) and informal institutions (block associations, community gardens and food co-ops). Intangible resources might include offering emotional labour such as friendship and care. The Glasgow School of Art is, under that description, a community asset; students need to understand that while studying. If the NSS is an accurate barometer, students are already aware that they are part of the community but they seem not to connect this to their experience of the learning and teaching environment.

**Enriching the metrics we are asked to use:** The creative arts cluster across Scotland that is exploring the role of evidence in learning and teaching enhancement has established the following as a key question: How can creative practices be used within the student experience to enrich more common student focused metrics?

Underneath this, GSA needs to consider the following questions:

- What are the challenges for students in bringing these systems of signs (metrics / qualitative evidence/ alternative ways of assigning value and worth) and assets together?
- What are the challenges for teaching staff if one set of signs show dissatisfaction and another one excellent achievement?

This participatory art *event sequence* is a novel way to understand how Asset Mapping efficiently identifies an inventory of resources and strengths in a learning and making environment. It asks the students to consider less the deficits in their experience and more the experiences of abundance through relationships and learning activities that they encounter and engage with whilst being students.

**The Practice – installation and process:** The project pilot was due to happen in August 2018, unfortunately due to the fire of the Mackintosh building this pilot was cancelled. The project will now go ahead in academic session 2018-19.

The activities planned are:

### **1.Lunch with Adam Sutherland from Grizedale Arts Centre**

This meal facilitates conversation regarding the ways in which art, artists, and culture can play a more useful role in society and evokes responses to questions around the connections between these roles and how students are learning at GSA.

### **2.Project 404 (Wound Project)**

Project 404 is an activity which is lead by an artist (possibly Anthony Schrag) with the students to look at how they remain remain fully, creatively engaged with the world in which they are learning and themselves while depending increasingly on technological devices to automate certain activities.

The practice itself consists of two phases:

- a silent phase of fifteen minutes during which the participants look intently together at a single image on their individual devices. The image will be chosen by someone offsite from among the images submitted by the participants in the practice.
- The subsequent phase is a colloquy of between 60 and 90 minutes, during which the participants discuss their experiences of the silent phase (with devices put aside).

This practice of attention is a particular way of being and becoming, one that revolves around the twin axes of creativity and generosity.

### **3.Asset Mapping (Wound Project)**

Participatory Asset Mapping enables communities to build political power through self-reliance and shared resources. It entails the self-identification of community assets, meaning that the community is not the object of external research. This would be lead by Caroline Woolard.

The studio can be conceptualized as a multitasking arena where images and objects cross over and are produced and discussed to lead students and teachers through the investigation of ideas, issues, opinions, and conflicts, this is what the installation focuses on.

After finding a space and starting interventions with a pilot group of students, Caroline Woolard will be invited to organise a talk at GSA and workshop with students. A series of external artists will be invited to join with GSA Staff and take part in the project as needed.

### **Important Dates to be confirmed**

- Decision regarding which student cohort could be the pilot year (suggestion either first year experience or School of Fine Art cohort – possibly year 3)
- Start of the project, meet with a group of student to build infrastructure of the space
- Install of the space
- First workshop
- Caroline Woolard Lecture + Workshop
- Adam Sutherland dinner
- Anthony Shragg workshop
- Rudy Kanhye dinner

### **Work-package 2: Supporting and evidencing the student experience in an unexpected estates situation**

Key contacts: Laura Glennie, Vicky Gunn, Ken Neil.

This work has been necessitated by the events of the Fire in June 2018. We are including it within this current QET plan, because evidencing the impact of the Fire on the first semester of this academic for the student experience is particularly important.

**Work-package 3: Growing confidence in reflecting on DLHE/ Graduate Outcomes for Curriculum Development** from year 1 will also continue (semesters 2-3) as noted below. Key contacts: Lesley Black, Vicky Gunn.

Considering the relationship between Graduate Outcomes, LEO, and Singapore GO data to inform curricular interventions connected to the Enterprise Framework by fostering reflective practice via Programme Annual Monitoring discussions. Activity around: *Focus on: What does the data for DLHE (and its forthcoming replacement, Graduate Outcomes) offer to GSA in terms of insights for improving in-course and additional enterprise and employability attributes? Key outcome: Workshop for each School's PLS demonstrating importance of engagement around with GO and what pedagogic opportunities arise from engaging with it*

- How we'd measure a positive outcome by year 3: PLs more confident responding to GO results for their programmes in PMAR

### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

The key method of dissemination internally for year 1 will be via Boards and Studies and into Academic approvals, Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy, GSA Staff Updates (as outlined within a forthcoming internal communications strategy), and student feedback loops (through the Student Voice and the Lead Rep system).

Externally, the key communication network additional to the Enhancement Themes network, would be via CHEAD (Council for Higher Education in Art and Design). More opportunities will emerge relevant to activities and outcomes.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

The key method of dissemination internally for year 2 will be via Boards and Studies and into Academic approvals, Learning & Teaching Enhancement Strategy, GSA Staff Updates (as outlined within a forthcoming internal communications strategy), and student feedback loops (through the Student Voice and the Lead Rep system).

Externally, the key communication network additional to the Enhancement Themes network, would be via CHEAD (Council for Higher Education in Art and Design). More opportunities will emerge relevant to activities and outcomes.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

**Possible Collaborative Leads:** Vicky Gunn GSA, Jamie Mackay RCS

**(Aim 2)** Given the specific nature of creative practice-based disciplines, GSA is concerned that the conversation about evidence should not be overly dominated by metrics and learning analytics. Methods of practice-based activity generate a range of artefacts, not always ones that sit easily with typical definitions of evidence (reports or raw numerical data) and it would be interesting to explore how we create *rich-evidence* that is recognised for its insights as well as disrupting the increasing dependence on data-sets which the sector has some concerns about. Additionally, creative practitioners are increasingly finding themselves facing requests from funders for forms of evaluation that *do* involve surveys attempting to put numerical outcomes to the impact of a performance, exhibition, or artefact. As part of our engagement in this theme, GSA has already summarised some of the key questions that a creative arts cluster might need to address as:

- What methods / different types of evidence as relevant to the Creative Practices can we develop to mitigate the dependence on numbers?
- How can we demonstrate that creative practice outcomes as evidence of teaching enhancement are reliable and valuable? How might alternative creative practices (from immersive and participatory workshops to simulated activities to physical artefacts as an outcome of learning a creative practice) be translated into evidence? How do these activities also provide a context for understanding the impact of our teaching activity in both technical / practical shifts in outcomes as well as in terms of the soft power as cultural influencers creative practice education aims to inculcate?
- How do we manage small numbers in the face of big data? How do we clarify why small numbers makes the metrics much less reliable to use for making decisions about changing practice? And how do we remind big HEIs and regulators that specialist HEIs can't rely on datasets in the manner a bigger institution might?

How can we use data to inform Creative Industries about what we do in higher education now? It would be of especial use for the cluster to host a day long symposium on "communicating the evidence of our teaching enhancements to those who employ our graduates" and possibly invite Creative Industries Federation, Creative Scotland, Saltire, Entrepreneurial Scotland, and CHEAD to have representation. (Ideally in March/ April 2018). In the first year, anticipated costs for such a sector-wide cluster would focus on:

1. Project assistant.
2. Pre-symposium materials gathering from the Scottish sector (travel costs) – tying into each institution's approach to this enhancement theme.
3. Developing a year one briefing about activity.
4. Identifying a communications strategy and protocol to structure sustainable interaction between enhancement in learning and teaching in the sector and the creative ecology employers in Scotland.
5. Identifying plan for years 2 & 3.

(Anticipated costs £3k project assistant 0.2 FTE for five months; £2k materials and travel costs: Total for cluster £5k)

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

GSA has received funding to continue co-leading the creative arts collaborative cluster (along with RCS and Edinburgh University):

The original aims of this project as outlined in the year 1 scoping document remain. The original benefits from year 1 also continue:

- Improve impact of the enhancement-led approach to evidence within a clearly defined disciplinary context;

- Build on collaborative approaches within the creative arts subjects that were initiated in the last Enhancement Theme;
- Link the Enhancement Theme with creative ecologies work on a Scotland-wide basis, thereby tightening links between teaching and post-graduation experiences;
- Link practice-based research as evidence generation (a research question in the disciplines) with teaching practice and evidencing enhancement (the teaching agenda in the disciplines).

This expression of interest is for a second year of activity to fulfil the year 2 outline within the scoping report and build the network to engage with the longer terms approaches that have emerged during the first-year scoping activity year of the creative cluster.

As with year one this project fits with the '*optimising the use of existing evidence*' strand of this theme.

### 1. **Benefitting the sector:**

- Creative practices higher education* – year 2 continues the benefits from year one and would explicit aim to widen engagement within creative arts HE contexts as well as link to nationwide discussions about evidencing the learner journey, skills gaps, and enhancement in learning and teaching in the higher education sector. It aspires to move beyond HE to connect its work into debates around graduate apprenticeships as well as the circular or gig economy needs (recognising that especially within craft-based industries, innovation tends not to be scaleable, but collectively often can play a role in regional regeneration). This is to maintain the clusters aim to encourage coherent and holistic approaches to evidencing the impact of creative arts students (ie their impact whilst studying) and graduates.
- More broadly* the project outcomes will provide a model for how cross-institutional collaborative disciplinary activity focused on the impact of learning and teaching can enable targeted and relevant interventions which respond to both student expectations (disciplinary orientations) and graduate outcomes (broader educational needs of our students).

### 2. **Benefitting students in the creative arts:**

*Engagement* – The second year of the project will focus on student engagement in the process of developing an understanding of the impact of creative arts higher education as emerging from evidence being used as well as how this evidence can be improved through the student voice;  
*Transparency* – This project is looking to develop a clearer, more effective set of indicators for the creative arts' student experience of their teaching and enhancements to it as well as graduate outcomes. In this, the project is underpinned with an understanding of the need for students to have transparent information regarding their potential higher education choices.

### 3. **Student engagement:**

The cluster recognise that student engagement is critical to the project work and will be seeking to co-opt two undergraduate student interns on to the coordinating group to assist in the design of a student-led element to the creative cluster symposium in Edinburgh in March/April 2019.

### 4. **Plans for disseminating across the sector:**

- Cross-Scotland focused symposium (in Edinburgh, March/April 2019);
- Repository of materials via the QAA ET website (To include: an updated scoping report as well as a briefing on exploring the impact of creative arts students and graduates in the creative ecology through an understanding of the learner journey);
- Presentation at ET Conference & CHEAD annual conference (Sheffield Hallam, 2019).

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

This will be achieved through the Creative Practices cluster and currently Duncan of Jordanstone (Dundee) and Royal Conservatoire Scotland have expressed an interest in working with GSA on this.

RCS in particular are interested in doing collaborative activity regarding the development of evidence that draws on creative practices' forms of evidence.

**Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

See section on creative collaborative cluster year 2 above.

**Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Still to be identified but primarily through normal academic approvals channels via leadership from the Learning & Teaching team.

**Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Through normal academic approvals channels and the Learning and Teaching Committee

**Evaluation, years 1-3**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

Reporting of impact to go to Learning & Teaching Enhancement Working Group

Following GSA's Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee (Sept 2017) and the Enhancement Theme launch in early October, GSA's overall contextual focus for the three year enhancement theme is conceptualised in the diagram below (updated for year 2). Evaluation of the progress and impact of the activities will be underpinned by this overall conceptualisation.

<b>GSA's ET Plan</b>			
<p><b>Phase 0 (2017-2020)</b></p>	<p><i>Focus over the three years is on building robust answers to the following questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What methods / different types of evidence as relevant to the Creative Practices can we develop to mitigate the dependence on numbers? Can practice-based research methods be adapted?</li> <li>• How do we manage small numbers in the face of big data? How do we clarify why small numbers makes the metrics much less reliable to use for making decisions about changing teaching practices?</li> <li>• How do we achieve confident use and critique of data for making decisions about and measuring the outcomes of teaching enhancement:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engaging students with the use of data?</li> <li>2. Engaging students in generating evidence that most speaks to what they value as evidence?</li> <li>3. Facilitating engagement with data and other evidence forms by all teaching staff at GSA, so that confidence in what they see in the data grows?</li> <li>4. Working with student voice and visuals that contradict that metrics and words?</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Existing GSA Developments aligned to ET work-packages</b></p> <p>Gathering and curating evidence as in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. External datasets</li> <li>2. Internal datasets and a range of creative arts evidence forms?</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Phase 1 (2017-18)</b></p>	<p><b>Managing the evidence we have and are expected to use</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Focus on:</i> Strategies and analysis for evidencing enhancement to assessment and feedback in ELIR4, RIBA Validation, TEF3.</li> <li>2. <i>Focus on:</i> How can GSA best use Graduate Outcomes evidence to enhance the curriculum?</li> </ol> <p><b>Operational:</b> <u>Work packages 1-3</u></p>	<p><b>Operational:</b> Use evidence to understand the student experience of our learning &amp; teaching enhancements as well as creating new ways of communicating about the insights from the data:</p>	<p><b>Operational</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring PTES in house – address problems with response rate and build confidence in an internal postgraduate survey that occurs twice within the programmes;</li> <li>2. Use appropriate data confidently in ELIR4, subject review, and PMAR</li> <li>3. Enable judgement of efficacy and robustness of initial insights from GSA's existing datasets and compare those insights with insights from other forms of evidence.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Phase 2 (2018-19)</b></p>	<p><b>Building new, creative forms of evidence that serve our disciplines and can be used for communication of enhancement internally and externally</b></p> <p>Additional Work-packages 1&amp;2, continuation of work-package 3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Focus on:</i> developing new sources of discipline-specific/relevant forms of evidence, which answer the following questions:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we ensure any growth in the use of metrics does not foreground student satisfaction at the expense of the importance of the disruptive development of creativity, soft-power, and characteristics of an Art School education that don't easily fit into the current reporting requirements?</li> <li>• What methods / different types of evidence as relevant to the Creative Practices can we develop to mitigate the increasing regulatory dependence on numbers? Do the creative practices' subjects have research methods which we could transfer into providing evidence of how our students learn?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <i>Focus on:</i> The student experience in an unexpected estates context.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student comms intern each semester over the three years?</li> </ol>	<p><b>(Phase 3 2019-20 - will pull everything together with one work package focused on evidencing the First Year experience) and Focus on:</b> Understanding the impact of developing enhancements on students who will leave the institution before the enhancements are fully implemented: <i>Focus on:</i> Using student voice mechanisms to understand and where necessary mitigate the impact of developing enhancements for the future that current students will not experience or only experience in the later stages of their degrees. (Particularly with respect to the new first year experience, the development of a common academic framework, and other strategic foci that emerge following the 2018 fire). (<i>Work package 3 to be designed and confirmed</i>)</p>



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: University of Glasgow

#### Context

The University of Glasgow has worked closely with students in its decision-making processes about learning, teaching, and student support for many years but recognises that further development is required in some areas, and that better use could be made of evidence to support this partnership. Two areas of the current Learning and Teaching Strategy align closely with this Enhancement Theme:

- *Empowering People: Deeper Student Engagement*, which aims to engage students more actively in the co-creation and evaluation of the learning experience
- *Focus: Supporting Transitions*, which relies heavily on evidence to support a broader range of student transitions into an the learning environment

The priorities proposed in the Institutional Plan, reflect (1) making better use of evidence to enhance the student experience e.g. developing interventions for particular student groups such as widening access students, graduate level apprentices, and students articulating from various pathways into study; (2) strengthening the student voice and supporting this with the creation of resources for students and staff that guide engagement with students, student representation and ensure we close the feedback loop; and (3) improving our Annual Monitoring process as a key process that underpins much of (1) and (2) and that feeds into Periodic Subject Review.

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

**No update required**

## Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Assistant Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching)	Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Assistant Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching)	Professor Moira Fischbacher-Smith, Assistant Vice Principal (Learning & Teaching)
TLG staff representative	Dr Jack Aitken, Director, Senate Office	Ms Jane McAllister, Assistant Director, Senate Office	Ms Jane McAllister, Assistant Director, Senate Office
TLG staff representative alternate	Mr Martin Boyle*, Director, Planning & Business Intelligence	Mr Martin Boyle, Director, Planning & Business Intelligence	Mr Martin Boyle, Director, Planning & Business Intelligence
TLG student representative	Hannah May Todd	Emma Hardy	TBC (depending on Council Elections)
Vice Principal	Professor Frank Coton	Professor Frank Coton	Professor Frank Coton
Dean of Learning & Teaching (Science & Engineering)	Professor John Davies	Professor John Davies	TBC (new appointment)
President, Student Representative Council	Kate Powell	Lauren McDougall	TBC (depending on Council Elections)

## Planned activity: Year 1

Overall outcomes/activity
<p>Key <b>priorities</b> are in relation to optimisation of the existing evidence that we have on students and student success, and on teaching; and strengthening student engagement in the creating of evidence and use of evidence. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimising the use and reporting of existing evidence on student performance, progression, attainment and outcomes.</li> <li>• Enhancing our understanding of the student experience, drawing on, integrating and generating new sources of evidence for use by students and staff.</li> <li>• Enhancing the evidence used in, and influence of our annual monitoring reporting process (AMR) and Periodic Subject Review (PSR).</li> <li>• Strengthening and diversifying the ways in which the student voice is captured within our course, programme and subject review processes.</li> <li>• Supporting students' use of evidence through more consistently and clearly closing the feedback loop following student evaluations of teaching.</li> </ul> <p><b>Outcomes</b> we intend to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data visualisation models that allow programme teams to better understand where their students are succeeding, and where they are not, such that targeted interventions can be developed.</li> </ul>

- Enhanced understanding of the student population and their needs again, to target support and interventions concerning transition into, through and out of study (e.g. cohort analysis of direct entry students, widening participation students, students from FE or other pathways).
- Revised AMR process that allows greater insight into course and programme level enhancements and areas for improvement that can be drawn upon in PSR, and shared across the institution both to encourage reflection and action on improvements and to share good practice.
- A greater appreciation amongst students and staff of the value of various forms of student feedback, a stronger culture of student-staff partnership in relation to the student voice, in particular within Periodic Subject Review and ensuring alignment with AMR (above) where appropriate.
- Greater awareness amongst students and staff, of the importance of closing the feedback loop, and a 'menu' of approaches students and staff can draw upon to support a dialogue and partnership around learning and teaching. This includes creating a shared understanding of the limitations of some of our current approaches and exploration of more effective routes for engaging all students.

**Activities** will include, but are not limited to:

- A set of data analytics projects within our Planning & Business Intelligence Service, to generate the data sets and analysis outlined above.
- A review of our Annual Monitoring processes, that involves students and staff across the University, and that can lead to meaningful changes in our policy and practice in this area. This activity will be built upon a set of workshops that support creative dialogue about evidence and how it might be meaningfully gathered and used in support of course, programme and subject/discipline level changes as well as how we might integrate evidence across the University.
- The creation of a 'student evaluation and representation toolkit/portfolio' that is evidence-based, and supports student rep training, PSR training, staff-student partnership, the feedback of outcomes to students and the enhancement of learning and teaching across the University. (This builds on our work in developing an Assessment & Feedback toolkit that is both student and staff focused and is proving effective in supporting changes in practice across the Institution: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/leads/aftoolkit/>)

The institutional benefits have been outlined above. The **sector** benefits are likely to be:

- Generic insight into how to support transitions into, through and out of study. Although this is the previous enhancement theme, it is one that is a continual challenge given the changes in the sector and it continued to feature during discussions at the launch meeting of this new theme as it is something institutions continue to grapple with.
- Changes we make to annual monitoring are likely to be transferable in some form to other institutions and of course we would wish to draw on existing good practice elsewhere in the sector and we see this linking well with revisions to ELIR, and the ethos of sharing practice on enhancement.
- All Universities are looking to find authentic approaches to engaging students and staff in dialogue and closer partnership. Any toolkit/portfolio we develop will be available to others to draw on in the same way as our Assessment & Feedback Toolkit.

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

Progress in year 1 was not as we would have liked. The work was delayed and we did not make the progress with the AMR developments and toolkit. We did, however, continue our work on data analytics, particularly around supporting 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year undergraduates. In particular, we have developed data visualisation and reporting in relation to first year retention, progression and

continuation. This is supporting greater insight for those who oversee student transitions and has led to a new reporting and action planning approach.

There has been ongoing work in support of the student experience, drawing on, integrating and generating new sources of evidence for use by students and staff. We have been involved in reviewing student feedback, involving students in focus groups and student experience mapping work, to identify gaps in support and to improve our student support. This is only part of what we had intended to do in our theme work, but it has led to some improved practices and so far, appears to have resulted in an enhanced arrival at the University in the first few weeks.

It had been our intention to progress further in our work but there have been a number of internal changes, in particular some University Services restructuring that have had an impact to some extent on our progress.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Our priorities remain as they were last year. The project on annual monitoring reporting (AMR) will be prioritised. Interns will be appointed shortly to work with staff across the University and with the student body to take a fresh view of our AMR process.

Following discussion of potential content by SRC Council members, we will work further on identifying forms of evidence that might be included in the student evaluation and representation toolkit. A priority within that will be to ensure that the approaches to gathering evidence about learning and teaching experiences, will be profiled and implemented alongside the new approach to annual monitoring. Work will also include determining and developing an effective means of presentation for the 'toolkit' and ensuring that it supports students in their representation activities as well as it supports staff in engaging with students and their feedback.

We will begin evaluation of data models produced in Year 1. This will include further exploration of how central teams can support local areas with the analysis of qualitative data on a more routine basis so that qualitative and quantitative evidence is combined into richer and more nuanced understanding of retention and success. The influence of different entry routes on progression in mathematical programmes will be a particular focus so that students in need of support are identified as early as possible.

We will develop a further Student Journey project to investigate factors that determine success or failure from entry through to graduation. The evidence produced by this project will feed into curriculum review and will also help us to understand patterns of course choice which, in turn, will enable us to achieve some predictability in class sizes to better manage the performance of our teaching estate.

Benefits at sector and institutional levels are expressed above.

### **Dissemination of work**

- We work closely with the Student Representative Council on any projects that involve students. In keeping with this, we would identify opportunities within existing committee / away day and council structures, to promote the work internally, and are likely to host dedicated events and feature the work at the University's annual Learning & Teaching

Conference. The SRC would also draw on their own avenues for student engagement such as their academic forum, and the class representative conference.

- Externally we would plan to present the work at the Enhancement Themes Conference as we have done in the past.
- One of the projects (the toolkit) will be an enduring, externally facing, website that can be accessed by colleagues across the sector and we would intend to promote that through social media, events and attendance at sector-wide ET meetings.

### Dissemination of work – year 2 update

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

**As above**

### Collaborative cluster work

For a range of reasons, we don't currently think we would wish to lead a cluster. We would be willing to draw on colleagues in the University with expertise in the areas outlined below, to work with others and we think colleagues would welcome that opportunity.

### Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

Potential for collaborative working on the data aspect of our theme work is constrained by the sensitive nature of the data sets produced. We will, however, continue to share our approach through TLG/SHEEC meetings and as other opportunities arise.

We anticipate that, as work progresses, we will be able to share more readily our work on annual monitoring and student representation.

We will continue to respond to opportunities to feed into work at other institutions as opportunities arise.

### Wider inter-institutional collaboration

We and GCU have expressed an interest in use of mental health services and effective interventions in relation to that – geographically this is a particularly convenient potential collaboration. If Edinburgh were interested too, we would find that helpful given the many institutional similarities. We have not begun a dialogue with either yet on this.

We would be interested in contributing to cluster work around widening access, graduate level apprenticeships in universities with a similar academic profile and employability.

### Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

**As above**

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**Supporting staff and student engagement**

The institutional team members are in key positions within the University, allowing them to make decisions, develop policies, and lead on projects. We intend to highlight the projects outlined here, at key University committees and events that we know are well attended. Much of what we are proposing has come from discussions with staff across the University and we are well placed to promote the work and draw on colleagues with expertise who will then also be local ambassadors for and change agents of the activities we are proposing.

**Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

**No update**

**Evaluation**

The institutional team plans to meet every 6 weeks and we will review our progress and impact through close working as a team. The activities all have defined outputs (data analysis, a toolkit/portfolio and changed AMR reporting) and so we will develop a project plan and monitor progress against that.

**Evaluation – year 2 update**

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

We will continue to engage with formal theme evaluations and to participate actively in theme events, particularly those that related to our projects. We are eager to learn from the evaluation techniques employed by other institutions.

We will monitor progress with our project through our Committee structure, utilising relevant forums such as the Quality Officers Forum and the SRC’s Academic Forum. We will also establish a focus group of academic and professional staff to evaluate ongoing impact post implementation.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Moira Fischbacher-Smith
<b>Date:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> November, 2017

**Year 2 sign-off**

<b>Plan author:</b>	Jane McAllister
<b>Date:</b>	21 September 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: Glasgow Caledonian University

#### Context

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) is a vibrant multi-cultural modern university in the centre of Glasgow and is placed amongst the top 150 modern Universities in the world (THE, 2017). Our welcoming community of 20,000 students from more than 100 countries enjoy a wide range of award-winning support services and state of the art facilities. Our University mission, commitment to the Common Good and core values; integrity, creativity, responsibility and confidence is integral to everything we do and how we deliver our mission.

As the key outcome of the GCU institutional meeting at the QET launch in October 2017, it was agreed by the DVC (Academic) and the GCU Team that the work of the QET would be aligned to and integrated with the GCU Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP).

The GCU SEAP has four main themes:

1. Student Engagement and a Sense of Belonging
2. Programme Organisation and Management
3. Assessment and Feedback
4. Wider Student Experience

An integrated forward plan embeds a collaborative and aligned approach to the theme from the beginning. To achieve key objectives we will access a broad range of internal and external data and evidence to; measure, evaluate and describe student achievement and success contextualised to internal and external benchmarks<sup>1</sup> and high level institutional priorities<sup>2 3</sup>.

The main aim of the QET; evidencing enhancement of and improvement in the student experience is wholly coherent with the strategic goals and priorities of the University. These centre on student achievement and success contextualised to the whole student journey from pre-entry to exit into employment or education. This takes account of the overall student experience and that of stratified and differentiated groups. It is intended that there will be a focus on different student groups throughout the three years of the theme.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/gcalwebv2/theuniversity/gaq/gaqfiles/strategyforlearning/GCU\\_SfL\\_2015-2020\\_update\\_16.11.16.pdf](https://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/gcalwebv2/theuniversity/gaq/gaqfiles/strategyforlearning/GCU_SfL_2015-2020_update_16.11.16.pdf)

<sup>2</sup><http://www2.gcu.ac.uk/strategy2020/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.gcu.ac.uk/academicqualityanddevelopment/academicdevelopment/curriculumdesign/commongoodcurriculum/>

## Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Professor Nicky Andrew Institutional Theme Lead	<b>Professor Nicky Andrew</b> Institutional Theme Lead	
TLG staff representative	A/A	<b>Professor Nicky Andrew</b> Head of Academic Quality, and Educational Research & Evaluation	
TLG staff representative alternate	TBC	<b>Dr Colin Milligan</b> Education Researcher	
TLG student representative	Chris Daisley Student Institutional Theme Lead (VP School of Engineering and the Built Environment)	<b>Eilidh Fulton</b> Student Institutional Theme Lead (VP School of Engineering and the Built Environment)	
Student representative	Yetunde Ogedengbe Students' Association; VP School of Health and Life Sciences	--	
Staff representative	Professor Ruth Whittaker Director of Academic Quality and Development	<b>Professor Ruth Whittaker</b> Director of Academic Quality and Development	
Staff representative	Jackie Main Director of Student Life	<b>Jackie Main</b> Director of Student Life	
Staff representative	Dr Nichola McLarnon Associate Dean Learning, Teaching and Quality, School of Health and Life Sciences	<b>Dr Nichola McLarnon</b> Associate Dean Learning, Teaching and Quality, School of Health and Life Sciences	
Staff representative	Dr Shirley Rate Associate Dean Learning, Teaching and Quality, School for Business and Society	<b>TBC</b>	
Staff representative	Ian Stewart Associate Dean Learning, Teaching and Quality, School of Engineering and the Built Environment	<b>Dr Morag Ferguson</b> (Acting) Associate Dean Learning, Teaching and Quality, School of Engineering and the Built Environment	
Staff representative	Marty Wright Academic Head, School for Work Based Education	<b>Marty Wright</b> Academic Head, School for Work Based Education	

Staff representative	Ruth Marciniak Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead, CGU London	<b>Ruth Marciniak</b> Learning, Teaching and Quality Lead, CGU London	
Staff representative	Lesley McAleavy Academic Quality	<b>Lesley McAleavy</b> Academic Quality	
Staff representative	Dr Colin Milligan Education Researcher	<b>Dr Colin Milligan</b> Education Researcher	
Staff representative	Vicky Johnstone Strategy and Planning	<b>Jacqueline Ramsay</b> Strategy & Planning	

### Planned activity: Year 1

Overall outcomes/activity
<p>Evidence a cross university approach to enhancement led practice (informed by an evidence base) that is wholly coherent with the strategic goals and priorities of the University focussed on student achievement and success contextualised to the student journey from pre-entry to exit into employment or education.</p> <p>Develop an approach that aligns and integrates QET activity with the SEAP (<b>Appendix 1</b>).</p> <p>Work in partnership with the Students' Association, specifically the nominated Institutional Theme Lead to implement QET/SEAP activity across the University. SE Scholarships, Student Summit and Student Partnership Agreement activities are examples of this.</p> <p>Focus on the student journey of stratified and differentiated student groups Currently Widening Participation (WP) and access and inclusion (MD20 students) are key areas of focus, reflected in an institutional wide WP impact evaluation to inform production of a new GCU WP Strategy.</p> <p>Build QET output from year one to reflect the integrated nature of the SEAP/QET activity underpinned by a robust evidence base (Appendix1).</p> <p>From year one build an approach to evaluation underpinned by 4 key questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How will we measure impact?</li> <li>2. How will we demonstrate value?</li> <li>3. In what ways will we engage and work in partnership with students to ensure the student voice is heard?</li> <li>4. How will we share good practice across the university and beyond?</li> </ol>

Year 1 outcomes/activity
<p>Establish a cross university Strategic Team ensuring representation from student representatives, academic and professional staff to plan, direct and oversee QET activity.</p> <p>Take account of Professional Services contribution to student success and achievement linked to WP strategy.</p> <p>School based staff in collaboration with Students' Association lead the major strands of work supported by the QET Strategic Team e.g. Student Experience Scholarships, Student Summit.</p> <p>Focus on the student journey of stratified and differentiated student groups to inform policy and practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross university WP impact evaluation to inform the production of the GCP WP strategy.</li> </ul> <p>Link to existing data to measure, triangulate and evaluate existing demographics that will inform the institutional approach to student retention, achievement and success.</p>

Benchmark to external data sources to measure student performance to inform wider SEAP activity.

Implement and establish an approach to institutional level monitoring, reporting and evaluation through the GCU Committee structure.

Submit Year 1 QAA Report

### Year 2 outcomes/activity

The GCU Strategic Team is led by the DVC (Academic) and includes representation from the Students' Association, wider academic Schools and Departments and the Support Services.

Planned activity for year 2 builds on the completed actions as reported in the Yr1 Report (above).

In year 2 we expect to:

Continue to evidence a cross university approach to enhancement led practice (informed by an evidence base) that is wholly coherent with the strategic goals and priorities of the University focussed on student achievement and success contextualised to the student journey from pre-entry to exit into employment or education.

Continue to adopt an approach that aligns and integrates QET activity with the SEAP building a robust evidence base for both QET and SEAP activity.

Work in partnership with the Students' Association, specifically the nominated Institutional Theme Lead, to implement QET/SEAP activity across the University. SE Scholarships, Student Summit and Student Partnership Agreement activities are examples of this partnership approach.

Focus on the student journey of stratified and differentiated student groups. For Yr2, students with disabilities, those with mental health wellbeing issues and Trans, non-binary and gender neutral students provide the focus of activities. We continue to undertake Widening Access and inclusion activities as part of the ongoing development of our Widening Participation approach.

In addition, we will monitor the efficacy of these enhancement activities through a range of evaluation approaches, aligned to the theme evaluation approach developed by Liz Thomas Associates, exploring short-term benefits, medium-term outcomes and long-term impact. Evaluation activities will focus on the impact and value of activities, and will reflect student and staff perspectives.

Through the joint activities of the QET Team and ETSE Group, the following activities will be undertaken in Yr2 (2018-19):

- 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.
- 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.
- 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).
- Develop an evaluation strategy for the forthcoming WP Action Plan and initiate evaluation activities around identified priority areas.
- Implement revised, and evidence-led, approach to personal tutoring (academic advising).
- Monitor and evaluate the efficacy of the Student Partnership Agreement.
- Evaluate GCU Graduate Apprenticeship provision.
- Bid to Co-lead collaborative cluster: Supporting Programme Leaders to Navigate Evidence and Enhance the Student Experience.
- 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).

- Submit Year 2 QAA Report.

School based staff in collaboration with Students' Association lead the major strands of work supported by the QET Strategic Team E.g. Student Experience Scholarships, Student Summit. Professional Services staff are also involved as required for example working with Registry to monitor student attendance, the Careers Service to consider graduate employability and Student Life to enhance student communications.

### **Dissemination of work**

Attend, participate and share examples of practice at QAA Sector events, institutional Learning and Student Experience events and the Student Summit.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

Attend, participate and share examples of practice at QAA Sector events, institutional Learning and Student Experience events and the Student Summit which this year has a focus on the student voice.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

This is still to be decided.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

In Yr. 1 of the QET Theme, GCU representatives were actively involved in the Learning Analytics collaborative cluster led by U of Strathclyde and we are currently supporting the graduate interns for this cluster. This cluster has been also funded for 18/19.

Dr Sam Ellis, of the Academic Development Team at GCU is named as co-lead on a (funded) collaborative cluster (with Dr Martha Caddell, Napier University) entitled 'E4E: Supporting Programme Leaders'.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

New opportunities are most likely to arise out of our involvement in collaborate cluster activities; however we are always looking for opportunities to collaborate with other institutions.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

Our primary involvement is working with other institutions in collaborate cluster activities as demonstrated above.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

The work of the QET will be aligned to and integrated with the GCU Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP). This is now established and already has the buy in of both staff and students.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

The work of the QET continues to be aligned to and integrated with the GCU Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP). This plan was developed in Session 16/17 and is now established as a core University activity with buy-in of both staff and students. This provides theme activity with heightened visibility across the institution.

### **Evaluation**

QET progress and impact will be monitored by the GCU Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee (LTSC) and relevant outputs reported to the Academic Policy and Practice Committee (APPC).

### **Evaluation – year 2 update**

QET progress and impact is tabled at the Enhancing the Student Experience Steering Committee and is monitored by the GCU Learning and Teaching Sub-Committee (LTSC) and relevant outputs reported to the Academic Policy and Practice Committee (APPC).

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Nicky Andrew
<b>Date:</b>	22/11/2017

**Year 2 sign-off**

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Nicky Andrew/Dr Colin Milligan/Lesley McAleavy
<b>Date:</b>	13/9/1018

## Appendix 1: Integrated Approach

QET	SEAP	Alignment	Outputs
Optimising the use of existing evidence	NSS data, GCU Other Years Survey, ISB/PRES/PTES, Module Evaluation, SSCGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Monitoring</li> <li>• NSS and Other Years survey</li> <li>• ISB/PRES/PTES</li> <li>• Retention and Progression statistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• NSS and Other Years Survey Action Plans</li> <li>• Strategy and Planning reports</li> </ul>
Student engagement	Culture, Identity, Sense of belonging and community, Student satisfaction, Student voice, Transition, WP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and Teaching Events (staff and students)</li> <li>• WP Impact Evaluation</li> <li>• Annual Student Summit (student Led)</li> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• Academic Development Framework (Staff)</li> <li>• Student Partnership Agreement</li> <li>• Common Good Curriculum (Students)</li> <li>• Student Experience focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website content and social media</li> <li>• Learning and SE event outputs</li> <li>• Student/Staff Consultative Group Reports</li> <li>• Student Summit outputs</li> <li>• <b>Student Experience Scholarships</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contemporary Academic Advising and Mentoring</li> <li>2. Enhancing the GCU Online Student Experience</li> <li>3. Enhancing and promoting support for international students</li> <li>4. Improving Assessment Rubrics and Marking Guidelines</li> <li>5. Mini Mooc (QET Student Transitions link)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Student Partnership Agreement activity</li> <li>• WP Strategy</li> </ul>
Retention, attainment & success	Use of metrics to contextualise and describe the GCU student journey from pre-entry to exit and beyond. Using a stratified approach to look at attainment and success from the perspective of differentiated groups of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progression and retention statistics</li> <li>• Survey statistics</li> <li>• Annual Monitoring</li> <li>• Module Evaluation</li> <li>• Contextual admissions</li> <li>• WP Impact Evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progression and retention reports</li> <li>• WP Strategy</li> <li>• NSS and survey analysis</li> <li>• Annual Monitoring Reports</li> <li>• Student Staff Consultative Group Reports</li> <li>• Module evaluation reports</li> <li>• WP Strategy</li> </ul>



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: Heriot Watt University

*This document is intended to be a cumulative plan for your institution, which you will add to year on year as the Theme progresses. At the end of the Theme, this document will show how plans may have developed and changed over time. The plan for each year should be around three to four sides of A4.*

*Italicised text in this document can be removed as it is advisory.*

### Context

There are two key areas of present Heriot-Watt priorities that have synergy with “Evidence Based Enhancement”. These are:

1. our present considerations around enhancing our use of student surveys and the resultant action plans, and
2. improving our student retention success.

It is our intention to focus our Enhancement Theme activities on the use of student surveys and their resultant action plans in the first year of the Theme. We include work on evidence based enhancement of our student retention in subsequent years.

### Student Surveys

The student survey has become an important instrument in assessing the quality of the student experience and for identifying areas where universities could improve their approaches and processes for the benefits of their students. Over the last decade, the number of such national surveys has increased, as has the number of participants in each survey. To date, at Heriot-Watt, our main focus has been to analyse each of these surveys at an institutional, campus or School level and for any resulting actions to be planned at a similar level. The success of these interventions is usually measured through the next (or future) iterations of the survey.

The potential of learning from the richness of the data in these surveys (NSS, PTES, PRES, institutional surveys, etc.) has not been fully realised. We recognise that with adopting new approaches to analysing the data within these surveys we may gain useful insights into how we might further improve our student experiences. This might be through analysis at a discipline level, or through comparing the data on certain elements across a number of different surveys rather than just for one student group.

In 2015, Heriot-Watt instigated a University-wide Survey Framework and Process to enhance the management and oversight of our student surveys through a Student Survey Management Group.

Through our activities under the Enhancement Theme banner, we intend to examine our present approach to survey analysis and trial new approaches to improve the quality of the information we get from these surveys and to improve our action planning. In addition, we intend to carefully consider how we might best identify if actions taken in response to survey data do, or do not, have the intended positive impact on the student experience.

## Approaches

We envisage three different approaches to achieving the expected outcomes of this work.

1. Institutional level projects
2. Local level projects
3. Student-Led projects

### 1. Institutional Projects

This work will include further development and enhancement of existing institutional processes where evidence is used to improve the student experience, e.g.

- a) Reviewing present institutional practice in survey analysis
- b) Identifying ways to fill current gaps in the use of student survey data
- c) evaluating the impact of the actions taken to address issues raised by students,

### 2. Local Projects

Projects which bring together groups of related individuals across the institution in order to develop a more uniform, coherent approach to use of evidence in key areas or to tackle particular issues in the priority areas of Student Surveys, e.g. Senior Programme Directors of Studies; Programme Directors of Studies; Year Co-ordinators.

Projects could be topic-based or could be more generic, e.g. a learning and teaching survey/focus group of all multi-campus Programme Directors of Studies with a view to considering how evidence is used to enhance the student learning experience.

### 3. Student-Led Projects, (including multi-campus projects)

These projects will be led by HWU students to carry out useful work to support the theme activities. These might include:

- a) Analysis of Learning and Teaching Oscars Nominations and Winners (a rich source of evidence for good practice and a potential resource for change based on positive rather than negative responses from students);
- b) Analysis of data from surveys other than NSS (HWU's Course Feedback Survey and Annual Survey, as well as PTES and PRES);
- c) Student Campaigns/Initiatives on key areas emerging from student surveys, e.g. coursework deadlines mapping is already underway (NSS issue re: "Organisation and Management") as a joint project between the three Student Presidents. Other potential areas include: feedback; identity and belonging; projects identified with Learning and Teaching Partnership Agreements.

As part of our Enhancement Theme work, we intent to take an "Evidence Based Enhancement" approach to these activities to try to ensure that we have all of the useful information to inform our actions. In addition, we will explore new ways to evaluate the impact of these actions to identify to what extent the intended outcomes are realised.

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

*Insert update text here*

Our 5 Schools will continue to contribute £3000 each to this work in the forthcoming year.

During the second year of the Theme, we intend to continue our work on enhancing our use of student surveys and the associated action planning.

We will continue to use funded projects as a key enhancement vehicle and all of the QAA funding, along with much of the funding from our Schools will be used to fund these projects.

### **Retention Strategy**

Alongside our survey related activities, our year 2 work will also include a significant focus on enhancing our student retention success and a number of initiatives to collect data around this and to use this data to drive enhancement.

One element of the University's present Learning and Teaching strategy is Retention, with a separate Retention Strategy having been developed in 2016. (see <https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/retention-strategy.htm>.) Key elements of this strategy include:

- Actions aligned with a comprehensive analysis and mapping of contributing issues/factors;
- Recognition that tackling retention is a long-term project, requiring changes to culture as well as to practices (e.g. recognition that responsibility for improving retention is shared by all);
- Partnership/alignment between Schools and Professional Services;
- Learning from the actions and initiatives of other HEIs.

Present initiatives to support improved student retention include:

- A "Thinking of Leaving" service, where students thinking of leaving the University can discuss their situation in confidence and receive advice from trained staff.
- An enhanced personal tutoring process where every student has a member of academic staff allocated to them who will be a key source of advice, guidance and support during their time at the University.
- A new model of student induction to ensure student integration in the crucial first few weeks and to promote the development of a range of student social networks. This is evaluated through an annual Welcome Survey which collects data on students' experiences during the first few weeks of their study at Heriot-Watt.
- Student Success Advisors – During the summer of 2018 we appointed six recent graduates of the University to new "Student Success Advisor" roles. The purpose of these roles is to provide staff members with recent personal experience of being a student at Heriot-Watt to provide advice and guidance to present students. This recent experience should ensure that current students will find them approachable and credible, and will overcome some of the significant barriers that students face when seeking support. Three of these posts are based at our Edinburgh campus with one at each of the Dubai, Malaysia and Scottish Borders campuses. These posts are situated within the University's Wellbeing Services.

Student Success Advisors will also be involved in a range of activities to promote retention, including:

- Pre-entry advice and guidance;
- Induction programmes;
- Orientation and welcome activities for students in on campus accommodation;
- Providing targeted updates and information about news and events on campus relevant to students;
- Advice and guidance to students at all stages of study;
- Working with Schools and other professional services to develop and deliver initiatives and activities which will enhance the student experience and student success;
- Targeted interventions to support students at risk of leaving the University early.

## Institutional team

Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Professor John Sawkins, <i>Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)</i>	Professor John Sawkins, <i>Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)</i>	
TLG staff representative	Dr Rob Daley, <i>Academic Programme Leader</i>	Dr Rob Daley, <i>Academic Programme Leader</i>	
TLG staff representative alternate	Wendy Pirie, <i>Head of Academic and Learner Services</i>	Wendy Pirie, <i>Head of Academic and Learner Services</i>	
TLG student representative	Hugo Barker, <i>Student Union Executive Member</i>	Alexander Hedlund, <i>Student Union Executive Member</i>	
<i>Institutional team member</i>	Em Bailey, <i>Planning Manager</i>	Em Bailey, <i>Planning Manager</i>	
<i>Institutional team member</i>	Diarmuid Cowan, <i>Student Union President</i>	Rahul Singh, <i>Student Union President</i>	
<i>Institutional team member</i>	Dr Ian Glen, <i>Quality Enhancement Officer</i>	Dr Ian Glen, <i>Quality Enhancement Officer</i>	
<i>Institutional team member</i>	Dr Maggie King, <i>Head of Academic Quality</i>	Dr Maggie King, <i>Head of Academic Quality</i>	
<i>Institutional team member</i>	*Dubai Campus Representative (TBC)	*Dubai Campus Representative (TBC)	
<i>Institutional team member</i>	*Malaysia Campus Representative (TBC)	Stella Marie C. Galimpin <i>Effective Learning Manager (Malaysia Campus)</i>	

## Planned activity: Year 1

<p><b>Overall outcomes/activity</b>  <i>What are your key priorities?</i>  <i>What outcomes do you want to achieve?</i>  <i>What activities will you deliver?</i></p> <p><i>What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?</i></p> <p><b><u>Key Priorities</u></b></p> <p>The key priorities for this year's activities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Enhance our analysis of student surveys;</li> <li>II. Identify ways of evaluating the impact of actions taken resulting from student survey analysis;</li> </ol> <p>Priorities for student retention will be determined for Year 2</p>
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### **Outcomes we want to achieve**

Our overarching aim is to be able to use the outcomes of this work to improve our student experience. A significant expectation is that the outcomes of this work will provide a substantial element of the evidence presented in our ELIR4 submission in 2019/20.

Some of the more detailed outcomes expected are:

#### *Student Surveys*

1. Obtain a clear understanding of the present approaches to survey analysis and related action planning across the University
2. Identify areas for improvement in our survey analysis approaches and associated action planning
3. Identify some possible improved approaches to survey analysis
4. Trial two of these new approaches
5. Develop action plans based on these two trials
6. Set-up an evaluation process for each of these two action plans

### **Activities we will deliver**

#### *Student Surveys*

1. Undertake an audit of the present approaches to survey analysis and related action planning across the University
2. Trial two of these new approaches to student survey data analysis
3. Develop action plans based on these two trials
4. Set-up an evaluation process for each of these two action plans

### **Anticipated benefits at sector and institutional levels**

It is anticipated that we will share our learning from these activities with other institutions in the sector. Other institutions will be able to consider our approaches, and the barriers and enablers we identify, and be able to apply them within their own institutions. If successful, we will endeavor to share our learning with the organisers of the various national student surveys (e.g. HEA) to incorporate our analysis approaches into the advice and good practice that they provide to survey users.

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

### **Key Priorities**

The first year of this theme will mainly focus on scoping out the approaches we are going to use to enhance our approaches to survey analysis and identifying how we might best evaluate the outcomes of specific actions initiated in response to the survey analysis.

This will include both a review of present approaches to survey analysis and the identification of improved approaches to survey analysis. We will trial some of the newly identified approaches to test how well they work and to ensure that they

### **Outcomes we want to achieve**

We want to achieve a situation where we have clearly understood approaches to survey analysis that are shared by staff and student representatives across the University. These approaches will provide in-depth analysis leading to more focused and impactful action plans. In addition we want to have identified appropriate approaches to evaluating the outcomes of the action plans to clearly

identify which aspects work, and how well they work, and which do not.

At this point, it is too early to predict the exact outcomes of this work. However, possible outputs are that

1. we will develop a Heriot-Watt Framework for Survey analysis, which would then be used for key student surveys or
2. we will develop a tool-kit of different approaches to survey analysis that we can share with staff and student representatives across the University for use both during the three years of the theme and beyond;
3. we will develop a University wide action plan evaluation framework or a toolkit of approaches for the evaluation of action plans;

### **Activities we will deliver**

1. A review of present approaches to survey analysis,
2. A review of present approaches to identifying action to be taken in response to survey analysis and of how these approaches are presently evaluated,
3. Trial at least two new approaches to survey analysis and develop appropriate evaluation plans for the resulting actions.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

### **Our key priorities**

#### ***Student Surveys***

To continue the work of year 1 in improving our analysis of student surveys and evaluating the impact of actions taken in response to student surveys.

In Year 2, our specific focus will be on implementing the recommendations from a comprehensive internal review our student survey processes undertaken during summer 2018, Review Report on Student Survey Processes: Closing the Feedback Loop and How Do We Know If We Have Made A Difference. The Report, comprising a series of 20 recommendations, was considered by the Student Learning Experience Committee on 30 August (for our Course Feedback Survey) and by the University Committee for Learning and Teaching on 5 September 2018 (for NSS, PTES and HWU's own Annual Survey).

In addition to progressing the recommendations related to surveys, there will also be a funded project on addressing one of the recurring areas for development from the surveys, namely Assessment and Feedback.

#### ***Student Retention***

Improve our understanding of why students leave the university before completion of their studies

### **Outcomes we want to achieve**

#### ***Student Surveys***

Our outcomes regarding student surveys remain unchanged from Year 1.

#### ***Student Retention***

From 2017/18, the Learning and Teaching Student Partnership Agreement will be extended to cover the wider student experience, with three strands forming our new Student Partnership Agreement: Academic; Community; Wellbeing. The Community strand in particular seeks to address one of the actions in our 2018/19 Retention Strategy Operational Plan: "Opportunities for students to create (through learning and wider experience) own identities and communities".

Other aims for student retention in Year 2 of the Theme are:

- Establishment of the Student Success Advisors to provide support, guidance and advice to students, with the specific aim of improving retention;
- Specific focus on particular student groups, (e.g. commuting students, Direct Entry students) and consequent targeted interventions;
- Improved information on reasons for students leaving;
- More comprehensive data on Year 2 to Year 3 retention;
- Ongoing pilot of peer mentoring scheme;
- Initial development, through the Student Information Desk, of an early alert and early intervention systems.

### **Activities we will deliver**

#### **Student Surveys**

1. Continue to deliver on existing projects funded.
2. Have calls for new projects focusing on further student survey work.

#### **Student Retention**

1. Student Success Advisor Posts.
2. Enhancement of Personal Tutoring process.
3. Analysis of data from student portal.
4. Evaluate the success of our student retention initiatives.
5. Possibly have a call for projects focusing on student retention.

### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

#### **Internal Promotion**

This work will initially be communicated to those staff and student representatives presently involved in survey analysis and resultant action planning, to engage them in the review processes and to elicit their contributions to the work going forward.

Regular reports of the work will be reported to the University Committee Learning and Teaching, which has strategic responsibility for the Theme work. These reports will also be shared with the Student Survey Management Group and with other university committees and working groups involved in survey analysis or resultant action planning. (e.g. Student Learning Experience Committee (SLEC), Research Student Coordinators Group (RSCG) etc.).

Regular articles will be written for the University internal newsletters to inform the wider University membership of this activity.

As this work progresses, workshops and dissemination events will be run by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Services (LTES) to share the learning from this work and to engage staff and student representatives in the next stages of this work.

Internal social media channels will also be used to raise awareness amongst members of the University and to report elements of progress etc.

#### **External Promotion**

We will provide regular updates on progress to colleagues at other Scottish HEIs at the Theme Leader Group meetings.

We would expect to report the progress of this work and any learning from it at the next QAA Enhancement Themes conference as well as at any other appropriate QAA events.

We would also expect that aspects of the learning from this work will be presented at other conferences and events within the UK.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

#### **Internal**

1. Internal Web Pages: We will continue to use the internal Enhancement Theme web pages to communicate to staff and students across the University information relevant to the Theme activities.
2. Formal reporting: Reports on progress will be presented regularly to the University Committee for Learning and Teaching. Reports on Theme work will also be presented to other internal committees including the Student Learning Experience Committee, the Student Survey Management Group,
3. Symposium: during the second semester we will hold a Symposium for staff and students to share progress on this work and to encourage engagement of those not already working on Theme related projects. It is expected that this event will provide a forum for completed projects to present their findings as well as allow discussion of future plans including activities for Year 3.

#### **External**

1. We will continue to provide updates to colleagues at other Scottish HEIs through the Theme Leader Group meetings.
2. We would expect to present elements of our learning at Enhancement Theme conferences and associated events, in particular the Principal Investigators of completed ET projects would be encouraged to submit papers and posters for these events.
3. We would also be looking to share these findings with the wider sector through other conferences and opportunities (e.g. HEA Survey Conference, discipline focused conferences etc.).
4. We expect that any significant findings from our funded projects would be submitted for publication in appropriate journals. A number of the proposals for these projects included peer reviewed publications in their dissemination plans.
5. Staff active in the Theme work will continue to share our learning through their various professional networks.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We do not envisage HWU leading a cluster in year 1 of this theme.

We would give due consideration to joining a cluster led by another institution if the focus aligns with our Enhancement Theme work. We would expect that some of the staff and student representatives involved in the relevant institutional work would participate in such cluster activity.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

The Planning Manager will continue to contribute to the E4E Planners sub-group.

We do not envisage HWU leading a collaborative cluster but would be interested in contributing to any cluster activity that aligns with our internal Theme work.

Heriot-Watt is a partner in the Learning Analytics Collaborative Cluster being led by the University of Strathclyde. During this year, we will be contributing information to the student interns working on this project and will be contributing feedback and guidance to the interns and the project lead on the resources being developed through this project.

Heriot-Watt University is participating in a Collaborative Cluster with several other HEI's in Year 2, focusing on Programme Leaders.

A number of Scottish universities have prioritised support for programme leaders as part of their ET activity for 2017-2020. As we enter the second year of the Theme, this Cluster will bring together thinking and learning from across the sector to explore evidence for enhancement from the vantage point of programme leadership. Specifically, the Cluster will share emerging ideas, practice and resources that focus on linking evidence with support for practical pedagogic action for enhancement. The outcome will be practical conversations and pooled resources aimed at understanding – and closing– the gap between evidence and action.

This work is likely to involve a range of stakeholders from across institutions. Student participation will be key to shaping and framing our discussions, particularly in relation to effective use of evidence from class reps / Student-Staff Liaison Committees. We would also anticipate engagement from planners, education developers and – of course – programme leaders.

#### **Outcomes**

- Greater understanding of what the evidence for enhancement landscape looks like from Programme Leader perspectives.
- A culture of sharing practice and experience of programme leadership across Scottish institutions.

#### **Deliverables**

##### **1. Series of Roundtable discussions on key issues for E4E and Programme Leadership**

The precise format of these collaborative spaces will vary and will focus on a range of stakeholders, including programme leaders, student reps, Enhancement leads, planners. Depending on Cluster interest these may be a combination of virtual and real-world gatherings.

The topics will be identified at our start-up workshop, but may include:

- Understanding the data landscape from Programme Leaders' perspective;
- Student-Staff Liaison: Evidence, Action and Communication;
- Establishing Action Learning Sets for Programme Leaders;
- Creating cultures of enhancement within Programme Teams;
- Evidencing the impact of support for Programme Leaders.

We anticipate these events will include invited speakers as well as input from Cluster institutions sharing practice.

- ##### **2. A series of Think Pieces based on discussions from the roundtables.** This will enable us to share practice and thinking on key areas of practice with the wider sector.

##### **3. Quick Guide on *Evidence for Enhancement: The Landscape from Programme Leadership Perspective***

This overview piece will highlight key areas for consideration and link to case studies and resources from across the Scottish sector.

- As appropriate, a **proposal for additional training resource aimed at 'closing the evidence – practice gap' for programme leaders.**

As discussions and practice develop, we will identify any gaps in resources and – if appropriate – develop a proposal for a sector resource. This may link to the wider Theme interest in developing training resources or could form a proposal for Year 3 funding and development activity.

#### **4. A workshop / dissemination event at the 2019 Themes Conference.**

This will disseminate thinking from the work of the Cluster.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

At this early stage, it is difficult to identify which other institutions it would be beneficial to work with. However, through the Theme Leaders Group, we will be seeking institutions who are planning similar or complementary work with whom to collaborate. It may also be possible to identify synergy with elements of the work of sector-wide organisation such as the HEA, UKCGE, VITAE, SEDA etc. who may be interested in some partnership arrangement. As we progress through the first year of the Theme, we expect the details of these collaborations to become clearer and that this section of our plan will evolve.

These collaborations are likely to take a number of different forms. Possible examples include: joint-project work, sharing of project outcomes, as exchanges of expertise and approaches etc.

We are keen to benefit from any support that other institutions or organisations may be able to provide to enhance our work and we are equally keen to share our learning and expertise to support the work of others.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Our Student Induction and Transition Manager is an active member of the Scottish Induction Network and will continue to work with colleagues from other HEIs around induction and retention challenges.

Our Planning Manager will continue to contribute to the E4E Planners sub-group.

Details on Collaborative Cluster, led by Edinburgh Napier and Glasgow Caledonian, has been provided in the preceding section.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

The Institutional Team will provide a central focal point for this work and will act as a first point for support of staff and student representatives involved in this work. We envisage the Institutional Team acting as a broker of support for individual work elements and for those involved in carrying out that work as well as providing their own individual expertise to others involved in this work.

As the work progresses, we would expect to run internal sharing events (at least one per annum, organised by LTES) where those involved in individual strands of this work can present their work to date and draw upon the wider Heriot-Watt academic community for input into how they might address any challenges or barriers they have identified.

This work will also be supported by our Schools' Directors of Learning and Teaching ensuring that staff and student representatives involved in this work have support at a local level.

Finally, as a means of sharing information and providing support, we will create an internal online space (either on our institutional intranet or through our one-drive facility). This facility will provide a space for curating reports and associated papers etc. that all involved in the work will be able to access.

## Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Our plans in this regard remain unchanged from Year 1.

## Evaluation

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

This work will be overseen by the HWU Institutional Team, which will meet each semester to consider progress and plans for future work. A report on progress to date and a plan for the next six months will be produced after each meeting. This group will also oversee the budgeting and spending of all Enhancement Theme funding. Reports from this group will be presented to the University Committee for Learning and Teaching (UCLT) and UCLT will provide strategic direction to the work of the Institutional team.

The Institutional Team will have oversight of all projects relevant to the Enhancement Theme and will identify appropriate reporting and evaluation mechanisms. As one focus of this work will be identifying evaluation mechanisms for action plans resulting from surveys, it is expected that some of the identified approaches could be applied to elements of the enhancement theme work. As well as the specific evaluation of actions taken, it is expected that future student surveys will provide a measure of the success of various elements of the work undertaken within the Enhancement Theme.

## Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

### Theme Evaluation

Through the TLG staff representative we will contribute to the formal Theme evaluation. This will be through providing the evaluation team with relevant information and data and playing a full part in TLG discussions pertaining to evaluation.

### Other evaluation/monitoring activity

All of the projects funded internally through the Enhancement Theme funds are expected to submit final project reports detailing their approaches and outcomes. We will be using these reports as a key element of our internal evaluation processes to identify successful outcomes as well as identifying useful learning which we can use internally going forward and can share with colleagues in other HEIs as appropriate. It is also likely that towards the end of Year 3, the Student Success Advisor posts will be evaluated as to their effectiveness and to inform decisions regarding the continuation of these posts beyond their initial two-year period. Other work related to our enhancement theme activity is likely to produce useful data that will help to evaluate specific element of this work or can be used in the wider Theme evaluation across the University.

Activities related to retention will be evaluated through the University Committee for Learning and Teaching's biannual retention review process. The University Committee for Learning and Teaching will also have oversight, through review process (September, October, December and March), of the outcomes of the ongoing review of our student survey processes.

Evaluation of the success of the new student induction will be carried out through the Welcome Survey and other activities.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Rob Daley
<b>Date:</b>	November 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2017

## Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Rob Daley
<b>Date:</b>	September 12 <sup>th</sup> 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: University of the Highlands and Islands

*This document is intended to be a cumulative plan for your institution, which you will add to year on year as the Theme progresses. At the end of the Theme, this document will show how plans may have developed and changed over time. The plan for each year should be around three to four sides of A4.*

*Italicised text in this document can be removed as it is advisory.*

#### Context

*Provide any statements that might be helpful in explaining your institution's context and approach and how this plan supports the achievement of institutional priorities. In subsequent years, any context statement could draw on salient points from the previous year's learning/outcomes and reflect any changes in the strategic direction of your institution.*

Our approach to the new enhancement theme will be to develop, implement and evaluate three longitudinal initiatives that will collectively align to both the three Sector Strands for the Enhancement Theme, while also directly addressing institutional priorities including actions and recommendations resulting from our last ELIR, and the work now underway to implement our new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy 2017-2021.

The Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES) is a values-based strategy covering dimensions that are consistent with the new Enhancement Theme including 'Evidence-based educational practice', 'Reflective practice and continuous improvement' and 'Engaging our students as researchers'. The LTES also comprises a number of implementation objectives that will complement or directly support the work to be undertaken for the theme. The LTES can be accessed at <https://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/t4-media/one-web/university/learning-and-teaching-academy/files/other-docs/Learning-and-Teaching-Enhancement-Strategy-2017-2021.pdf>

The three projects we identified were selected from a potential pool of five, and were chosen on the basis of the strength of alignment with the Enhancement Theme, ELIR actions, and the university's new LTES.

In summary, our selected projects to be undertaken over the period of the Enhancement Theme are:

- Linking evidence to learning
- Linking student representation to enhancement and belonging
- Linking feedback to progression

Please see **Appendix I. Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience – Mapping of Institutional Projects for UHI** for an indication of our selected projects, their alignment to the three Sector Strands, and their alignment to internal priorities including ELIR actions and to key dimensions of the LTES.

In addition to the selected projects to be taken forward for the theme, we will also be aligning our wider activities for the theme to other relevant initiatives that are already underway in the university (for example the development of a set of Student Engagement Indicators), and to a programme of engagement activities for staff and students.

### Context – year 2 update

If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.

You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.

Our Enhancement Theme work remains focussed around the three longitudinal projects outlined in our year 1 plan. As indicated in our end of Year 1 report, we have completed detailed plans for each project, along with evaluation and dissemination strategies. This has led to the retitling of one of the three projects (from Linking evidence to learning to Linking evidence to curriculum enhancement). The focus of this project remains the same.

### Institutional team

Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead		Professor Keith Smyth, Professor of Pedagogy and Head of Learning and Teaching Academy	
TLG staff representative	Professor Keith Smyth, Professor of Pedagogy and Head of Learning and Teaching Academy	Professor Keith Smyth, Professor of Pedagogy and Head of Learning and Teaching Academy	
TLG staff representative alternate	Dr Iain Morrison Dean of Students	Dr Iain Morrison Dean of Students	
TLG student representative	Sorcha Kirker HISA VP for HE	Sorcha Kirker HISA VP for HE	
<i>Add additional rows for additional members</i>	Rhiannon Tinsley Academic Registrar (additional alternate TLG staff representative)	Dr Gary Campbell Dean of Science, Health and Engineering and Assistant Principal for Curriculum Enhancement (Chair UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group)  Dr Heather Fotheringham Quality Enhancement Impact Officer (Enhancement Themes Project Coordinator)  Jessica Borley Quality Manager Perth College UHI (Member, UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group)  Liz Cook Quality Manager Inverness College UHI (Member, UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group)	

		<p>Professor Chris O'Neil Principal, Inverness College UHI (Member, UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group)</p> <p>Rhiannon Tinsley Academic Registrar (Member, UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group &amp; additional alternate TLG staff representative)</p> <p>Pamela Urquhart Student Engagement Manager Highlands and Islands Students Association (Member, UHI Enhancement Theme Steering Group)</p>	
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**Planned activity: Year 1**

<p><b>Overall outcomes/activity</b>  <i>What are your key priorities?</i>  <i>What outcomes do you want to achieve?</i>  <i>What activities will you deliver?</i></p>
<p><i>What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?</i></p> <p>Our three key priorities and the related priority outcomes are to enhance and further develop institutional policy and practice in the three selected areas of:</p> <p>Linking evidence to learning;  Linking student representation to enhancement and belonging; and  Linking feedback to progression.</p> <p>A full explanation of these areas, and their implications as the focus for selected projects, are outlined in Appendix 1. The specific deliverables for each area require further shaping at this stage, and our initial work for the theme will be dedicated to refining our projects.</p> <p>However, we are seeking to (1) directly impact and improve the translation of student feedback data into timely, evidence-based teaching interventions designed to improve the learning and teaching experience of our students (Linking evidence to learning); (2) Increase engagement within and through the student representation system to effect change in learning and teaching and inclusion in the wider student and university community (Linking student representation to enhancement and belonging); and (3) extend notions of feedback and feedforward to support our students in utilising their feedback in dialogue and action to support successful transition through the different stages of their chosen programme of studies (Linking feedback to progression).</p> <p>Beyond the expected institutional benefits relating to the above, and which we hope will be evidenced through increased student satisfaction, engagement, retention and quality of learning, we envisage wider benefits to the sector being exemplars of policy and practice, case studies illustrating interventions and their impact, and a focused set of repurposable models, protocols and resources.</p>

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Our immediate priority in year one will be to further refine the projects we have identified, review relevant literature and exemplars within the sector, and use this work to (i) benchmark and inform our own approaches in the three priority areas of activity, (ii) develop a project plan for each project to be undertaken, (iii) form project implementation teams, and (iv) design and produce the guidelines, plans and resources that will allow the interventions in each area to be implemented.

As we are seeking to undertake three longitudinal projects over the duration of the Enhancement Theme, we anticipate the above activities being completed in Year 1 with implementation in Year 2 commencing with the academic year 2018/19. However some initial small scale piloting work may be undertaken as part of the research, benchmarking, and project planning activities for Year 1.

Our likely benefits institutionally during Year 1 will be the revision and extension of existing policy and practice, addressing logistical challenges, and design of relevant staff and student development interventions to support the implementation of the projects. For the sector, we expect benefits during Year 1 would be through disseminating the outcomes of our benchmarking research, and sharing our intended approaches and interventions with institutional teams undertaking similar projects.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Our key priority in year 2 of the Enhancement Theme is to engage in focused work with academic colleagues to plan, undertake, and evaluate evidence-based enhancement activities. Key outcomes to be achieved within this year are: enhanced staff and student engagement with each of the projects, and increased institutional awareness of the Theme. These will come from working directly with members of academic staff and student reps as part of each of the three projects, but also from activities aimed at engaging colleagues beyond this, including relevant webinars, symposia and workshops, and project outputs such as conference papers, case studies and exemplars.

We will also use Year 2 to engage more widely with the sector, including through involvement in two collaborative cluster projects, and knowledge exchange activities with other HEIs (more detail given in relevant sections below).

Benefits for the institution will be in the enhancements to the student experience that will hopefully arise from each of the three projects, and the wider influence on practice that cascading the learning from these projects will have. This learning will also contribute to institutional strategy, policy and practice around the use of evidence for enhancement such as: survey instruments used, survey policies, and guidelines for staff, and involvement of student reps in the analysis and interpretation of student feedback data. We expect a key benefit from project 2 (student representation) to be an enhanced student representation system, and raised staff awareness of this.

Wider benefits will be from the sharing of outputs from our work, including benchmarking reports, case studies and exemplars. We also envisage that the outputs of the collaborative clusters will have sector-wide application.

### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

We are currently working on a communication and dissemination plan for our Enhancement Themes work, to outline both our internal and external engagement strategies.

What we can say at this stage is that internal activities will involve reporting on progress via our Enhancement Themes steering group to our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, a programme of internal workshops and webinars to be offered through the university's Learning and Teaching Academy, and engagement and dissemination via the network of colleagues across the UHI partnership who comprise the Learning and Teaching Academy Forum.

Specific dissemination activities to be organised through the Learning and Teaching Academy will be offered openly, and we hope other colleagues engaged in the Enhancement Theme will partake in our online webinars. However, in addition to our engagement in the Theme Leaders Group we will be seeking to participate actively in the dissemination activities of the Enhancement Theme itself (including the conference next year) and will align our work for the Enhancement Theme to relevant scholarly opportunities including digital dissemination (e.g. through blog and other social media updates) and academic publications (which initially may include short articles and in time hopefully a select number of full journal papers). The institutional lead for the UHI team was one of the co-editors who brought together the Special Issue of the Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice that was published in conjunction with QAA Scotland for the previous Enhancement Theme, and the UHI team would be willing to contribute to similar initiatives for the theme as a whole.

**Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

Progress on Enhancement Themes work continues to be overseen via our Enhancement Themes Steering Group and reported to our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, ensuring that senior colleagues are informed of work taking place. We have a SharePoint project site (with internal working spaces and outward facing sections) for University colleagues to see in detail the work being undertaken. Internal dissemination will also take place through a planned programme of events for Year 2 including: workshops with programme teams involved in each of the three project strands; online webinars relating to each of the projects (including one on student representation on 20 September 2018); a class rep and academic staff symposium in October 2018, and a university-wide Learning and Teaching conference in June 2019 in which outcomes from each of the three projects will be presented.

Wider dissemination is through an outward facing webpage through which we will share relevant outputs including the benchmarking report produced in year 1, and case studies, conference papers and evaluations which are produced throughout the year. We aim to present the learning from each of our projects at QAA events, and other relevant conferences (e.g. SEDA, AdvanceHE)

**Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We note the current call, open to December 15<sup>th</sup>, and that collaborative cluster work is on the agenda for the TLG meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>. We expect our own position to be informed by the meeting.

**Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

We are involved in two separate collaborative cluster projects: 'Enhancing Programme Leadership Support' (led by Edinburgh Napier and GCU), and 'Developing a toolkit for tutors to promote a Sense of Belonging for online, distance and rural learners at the module and programme levels' (led by QMU). Our role within the first project has not been agreed to date. For the 'Sense of belonging' project, we will be co-ordinating the production of institutional best practice case studies relating to creating a sense of belonging among distance and online students. (This relates directly to an

Enhancement Themes event that we ran in Year 1 in which we held a two-day symposium on this topic. UHI will be drawing upon the presentations given at this event in the production of our case study)

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Please hope to clarify this after the meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

We are scoping out other ways in which to collaborate with HEIs in Scotland, beyond the cluster work outlined above. One way in which we will do this is to invite external colleagues to present their Enhancement Themes work to UHI staff via events hosted by the University's Learning and Teaching Academy. We have one such event confirmed with the Open University Scotland giving a seminar on Learning Analytics and Engagement Indicators with an accompanying knowledge exchange meeting in which further opportunities for collaboration will be explored.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Please see information in previous sections. We will further refine our plans in this area as we develop our communication and dissemination plan, which will cover staff and student engagement.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Our three projects involve academic staff from programme teams which have either (a) responded for an open call to become involved with the work of the Theme, or (b) are programmes which are undertaking action planning following results in this year's National Student Survey. They will all be supported by a dedicated project lead from the Enhancement Theme steering group, and also by the University's NSS Strategic Steering Group.

The class rep and academic staff symposium taking place in October 2018 is the first in a series of joint staff-student engagement activities which will take place across year 2, using the student reps as a key group through which to secure broader student engagement with the Theme.

### **Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

Please see information in previous section relating to what, at a broad level, would evidence the impact of our projects and interventions. We will also be producing an evaluation plan for our Enhancement Theme work overall, and for each of the three longitudinal projects identified.

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

Our Enhancement Theme lead recently participated in our first evaluation interview with Professor Liz Thomas, who is undertaking the overall evaluation of the theme, and will be engaging in the further evaluation activities Professor Thomas will be undertaking. We have also participated in the Learning Analytics benchmarking work for the theme recently undertaken by the University of Stirling, and at the time of writing are seeking a date to engage in the evaluation work relating to retention and progression that Peter Cannell and Alison Gilmour are undertaking for the theme.

We have produced an evaluation strategy for the work of the Theme overall, and for each of the three projects. This involves monitoring both hard indicators (number of events, number of attendees, impact on student satisfaction in NSS and module evaluation surveys) and soft indicators (influence on university strategy, policy and practice; impact on the staff and students beyond those immediately involved in projects).

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Keith Smyth
<b>Date:</b>	27.11.17

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Heather Fotheringham, Professor Keith Smyth
<b>Date:</b>	07.09.18

## Appendix I. Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience – Mapping of Institutional Projects for UHI

**Key :** \*\*\* Strongly meets strand \*\* Meets several aspects of strand \* Meets specific element of strand (Did not apply to the selected projects)

Institutional projects (and their general focus)	Sector Strands for the Enhancement Theme			Alignments
	Optimising the use of existing evidence	Student Engagement	Student demographics, retention, attainment	
<b>Linking evidence to learning.</b> Focus on improving staff capability to analyse and act upon student feedback data (e.g. NSS, module survey, Red Button) to enhance learning and teaching. Possibly linked to ‘just one thing’ approaches for making timely enhancements and interventions at module, programme, and possibly Subject Network level.	***	***	**	Relates to ELIR recommendations pertaining to student feedback and closing feedback loop. Aligns to ongoing work to improve how we respond to NSS and module survey feedback. Aligns to LTES values of ‘Evidence-based education practice’ and ‘Reflective practice and continual improvement’.
<b>Linking student representation to enhancement and belonging.</b> Developing and harnessing the student class rep system to drive enhancement, potentially through empowering our class reps as creators and users of evaluation and feedback data, and as partners in identifying and implementing data-based enhancements both to learning and teaching and to wider wellbeing issues pertaining to student identity, and sense community and belonging.	***	***	**	Linked to HISA objective to increase participation in, and influence of, class rep system. Links to several ELIR recommendations and actions including in area of ‘working in partnership with students’. Aligns with Student Working Group, and with LTES values of ‘Evidence-based education practice’, ‘Reflective practice and continual improvement’, and more broadly to ‘Engaging our students as researchers’.
<b>Linking feedback to progression.</b> Developing and implementing approaches to feedback as data for supporting students to progress in	**	***	***	Relates to ELIR recommendations and actions around ‘student retention and support’, and more

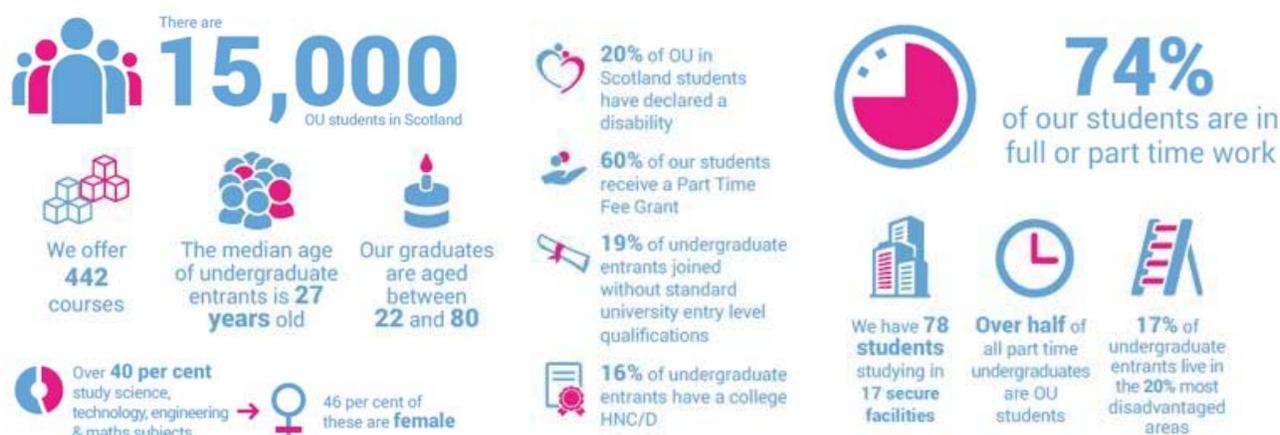
<p>their studies, for example utilising feedback to support progression from one stage of a programme to the next, perhaps linked to PAT support and dialogues.</p>				<p>widely to notions of a supported learner journey. Aligns with and extends Assessment, Feedback and Feedforward work. Aligns to LTES values of 'Assessment and feedback for learning' and 'Supporting the learner as an individual'.</p>
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## Institutional Plan for The Open University in Scotland

Social justice and equality of opportunity are at the heart of everything The Open University in Scotland (OUiS) does and widening access to higher education is the ambition on which our institution was founded. We are committed to extending opportunities for educational success to those who would otherwise be excluded from higher education. The flexibility of our curriculum and approach to learning and teaching mean that our students are not required to attend a campus and can instead study with us wherever they are, at an intensity which suits them, and with access to whatever support they require to succeed in their learning.

Here is a snapshot of our unique student body:



In addressing the challenge of the *Evidence for Enhancement* Theme over the period 2017-2020, OUIS will focus on the priorities underpinning our new [Students First strategy](#) and our current [OUiS Outcome Agreement](#). These documents set out our vision and strategy for *reaching more students with life-changing learning that meets their needs and enriches society*. Making the most of the resources available to our institution in order to maintain our unique approach to widening access and to offer our students the opportunities and support which lead to good student experiences and outcomes depends, more than ever before, on the promotion and embedding of evidence-based practice across all of our work. **Institutional team**

### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

*Insert update text here*

Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title.

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
Institutional lead	<b>Shona Littlejohn</b> Depute Director, Student Experience and Widening Access	<b>Shona Littlejohn</b> Depute Director, Student Experience and Widening Access	
TLG staff representative	<b>TBC</b> Learning Enhancement Co- ordinator	<b>Heather Gibson</b> Widening Participation and Enhancement Manager (until Feb 2019)	
TLG staff representative alternate	<b>William Hasty</b> Learning Enhancement Officer	<b>Amy McDermott</b> Widening Participation and Enhancement Officer	
TLG student representative	<b>Laura Riddall</b> Student	<b>Mark Cameron</b> OU Students Association Area Representative	
<i>Add additional rows for additional members</i>	<b>Avi Boroowa</b> (staff) Senior Product Development Management	<b>Avi Boroowa</b> (staff) Senior Product Development Management	
	<b>Ebony Carberry</b> (staff) Projects and Events Team Co-ordinator and Associate Lecturer	<b>Ebony Carberry</b> (staff) Projects and Events Team Co-ordinator and Associate Lecturer	
	<b>Susan Fish</b> (staff) Student Numbers and Funding Manager	<b>Susan Fish</b> (staff) Student Numbers and Funding Manager	
	<b>Heather Gibson</b> Associate Lecturer	<b>Kenny Stewart</b> (staff) Head of Communications, Open University in Scotland	
	<b>Patricia Gray</b> (student) OU Students Association Area Representative	<b>Janet Hughes</b> (staff) Staff Tutor	
	<b>Hannah Jones</b> (staff) Information Analyst	<b>Hannah Jones</b> (staff) Information Analyst	
	<b>Nicola Simpson</b> (student) OU Students Association President	<b>Cath Brown</b> OU Students Association President	
	<b>Aisha Shahid</b> (Staff) Associate Lecturer	<b>Aisha Shahid</b> (Staff) Associate Lecturer	
	<b>Sylvia Warnecke</b> (staff) Staff Tutor and Associate Lecturer	<b>Sylvia Warnecke</b> (staff) Staff Tutor and Associate Lecturer	

## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

In addressing the challenge of the *Evidence for Enhancement* Theme over the period 2017-2020, The Open University in Scotland (OUiS) will focus on the priorities underpinning our new [Students First strategy](#) and our current [OUiS Outcome Agreement](#). These documents set out the OUiS vision and strategy for *reaching more students with life-changing learning that meets their needs and enriches society*, and make clear that improving how we generate, use, and share evidence and insight will be crucial to realising this vision and meeting our key objectives.

Making the most of the resources available to our institution in order to maintain our unique approach to widening access, and to offer our students the opportunities and support which lead to good student experiences and outcomes, depends – more than ever before – on the promotion and embedding of evidence-based practice across our work.

To fully embrace the opportunity of the *Evidence for Enhancement* Theme, OUiS will use the Theme as a mechanism for measuring progress and driving change in the following areas:

#### **1. Student outcomes: Retention, success and community**

Our Theme work will further underpin our commitment to improving retention and enhancing student success in preparation for, during and following study. The use of a wide variety of data and the development of innovative evidence-based practices will be used to inform and refine interventions targeting key areas of interest, including retention, employability, success and community.

#### **2. Confidence in evidence: Skills development and support around evidence-based practice**

- a. Staff: Key to our work and the success of this Theme at OUiS will be a measurable change in how evidence is understood across the institution and in how it is used by staff in student-facing and study-related roles.
- b. Students: We will also work to enable students to lead a project which explores the role of learning and teaching data in their study experience. This work will consider what evidence means to students, what is useful to them, and how we can support them in using evidence to improve their learning experience and outcomes.

#### **3. Sharing what works: Internal knowledge-exchange**

More effective sharing of learning from evidence-based practice across the institution will be an important strand of our Theme work. As a part of the largest academic institution in the UK and the only university to operate across all four national contexts in the UK, OUiS has the unique opportunity of learning from colleagues working with similar learners, resources and methods, but in quite different contexts. Joining-up and scaling-up practices and resources shown to have impact across contexts, and establishing what works only in particular situations or circumstances, will depend on enhancing internal communication and knowledge exchange mechanisms.

Therefore, our overarching aim for this Theme is: **to work with our university community to foster a culture of critical engagement with evidence, in all its forms, to improve student experience and outcomes.** This will involve embedding opportunities for staff and student development and support around the generation, use and sharing of evidence, particularly where these activities have

the potential to translate into positive impacts on access and student retention and success.

Realising this aim depends on achieving a range of positive outcomes (or changes) in each of the areas of focus identified above. For example:

- Contribution of Theme work to improvements in rates of retention and/or enhanced employability and career progression among key groups resulting from evidence-focused and targeted projects and initiatives.
- By exploring how evidence matters to different groups of staff and students, and then evaluating the impact of development and support interventions on this over time, we will be able to see a change in how evidence is generated and used across different areas of the OU to improve the student experience.
- We will see a series of changes in how evidence is shared and communicated throughout the OUIS through strengthened and enriched partnerships across our wider university community.

Our work on this theme will be delivered through a combination of scholarship, projects and interventions, and communications and events activity. We will embrace the principle of partnership working within OUIS, OU and beyond, foregrounding students' participation throughout and upholding the principles of our [Student Charter](#). This work will be directed by our Institutional Team, 25% of whom are student members. Overall, our activities will move from scoping, exploring and project planning in Year 1, to project focussed interventions in Year 2, to stronger focus on evaluation and dissemination work in Year 3.

We anticipate a range of benefits will accrue to the OU as a result of this Theme, some of which are indicated above, with others emerging as our work progresses. We expect that the OU's position as a four-nation, distance and part-time focused institution, with significant expertise in, among other things, digital learning, learning analytics, widening access, and student support, will allow us to contribute to the debates, discussions and developments of the Theme across Scotland, working in partnership with our students, other institutions and sector agencies wherever possible.

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

In Year 1 of the Theme our activities will focus on scoping, research and development work and will therefore explore the priorities and outcomes outlined in the overview box above.

Through our Institutional Team, we will use the first year of the Theme to build and support relationships and partnerships around the Theme and identify the areas of substantive focus for our project work (e.g. college-OU articulation; employability; informal to formal learning transitions; etc.).

#### **Specific outcomes for Year 1 include:**

- a series of scoping documents examining current practices within OU and across the sector, focusing on our challenges and opportunities, around the generation, use and sharing of evidence, particularly in relation to factors affecting student outcomes and experience;
- the development and embedding in practice of a new shared logic model and evaluation framework, and associated resources;
- a successful staff development programme around evidence in the OU learning, teaching and support context which starts to change how staff approach evidence in their day-to-day work and in project work; and,

- establishing a staff forum as a means of developing a community of practice and stronger partnerships across OUiS around the use of evidence.

As indicated in the overview box above, the specific activities that will deliver these outcomes will be directed by our Institutional Team, and the impact and main benefit of these outcomes on the OU will centre on fostering a stronger and more inclusive culture around evidence and how it impacts on student outcomes and experience.

## **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

After revising the scoping activity our meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018 we refined our long term outcome for the Enhancement Theme to:

Support the emergence of a robust culture of engagement with practice and evidence<sup>1</sup> in all its forms that aims to support the success of our students. This work will be directed through three main strategic pathways focussing on the development of:

- Student outcomes: Retention, success and community – how evidence informs us about these and helps us put into place interventions that can help address these and evaluate that these work.
- Skills development and support around evidence-based practice – including how and when to use what kinds of evidence to support what we do, improving data literacy and capability
- Sharing what works: Internal knowledge-exchange – encouraging internal dialogue and discussion

The outcomes for year 2 of the Theme will be

- A number of projects (number to be decided) investigating how data and evidence can support better student outcomes and which aim to increase data literacy in staff and share good practice. Project teams will be encouraged to involve staff across the University and produce case study like reports that will capture reflections about the use of evidence throughout the project as well as reporting on any impact on student success. Projects will be incentivised by small amounts of funds from the Enhancement budget. These projects will also include a project run and managed by students.
- Development of a Theme project management and evaluation toolkit used to support Theme projects to work in the ways noted above.

We will also seek to keep working with the wider University as part of our approach reflected in ‘an OUiS focus through a four nations lens’. This means we will actively seek to engage and involve colleagues who work in other areas of the OU in the Theme to harness their experience and work. We will also be better placed to determine how insights and learning that we obtain as part of the Theme can influence the rest of the University.

### **What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional level?**

We anticipate that at institutional level:

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<sup>1</sup>Evidence: A body of facts or information that can be presented to inform any kind of enhancement activity and measure or indicate impact. Evidence can be quantitative or qualitative, and may come from various sources including performance monitoring, research, evaluation, statistics and expert opinion (Superu project, New Zealand)

- We will have a better understanding of how data and evidence supports the enhancement of student success.
- We will have established better links between different areas of the University

At sector level:

We will share our work with sector colleagues with the aim of contributing to the overall development of data capability and understanding within the sector.

### Dissemination of work

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

Developing and enhancing our approach to sharing evidence and evidence-based insights across the institution and maintaining dialogue with colleagues and students around key issues will be a central and crucial element of our Theme work. Specifically, in our Theme work in Year 1, we intend to:

- **develop new opportunities for staff and students around evidence** (e.g. a staff development workshop series; one-off workshops for staff development conferences; written and podcast based briefing notes and papers; establish internal *Sharepoint* page for new resources; etc.);
- **highlight our Theme work through existing structures and opportunities** (e.g. OUIS lunch-time seminar series; written papers for internal OU-wide publications; multi-media pieces for public-facing blog; etc.); and,
- **organise Theme-related events for OU colleagues and ensure contributions to external Theme-related events** (e.g. 1<sup>st</sup> annual symposium for OU colleagues on issues raised and ideas generated by Theme work; attendance at Theme conferences and related events organised by others in across the sector; etc.).

### Dissemination of work – year 2 update

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

We will develop and implement a dissemination plan that will include the creation and use of new cross-University forum called the Student Success Action Group, which will allow us to link our work to strategic priorities but provide opportunities to collaborate, discuss and share practice. The plan will also involve creating a series of webpages for Theme work to allow us to publish our Theme outputs within and outwith the University. We are investigating the production of a bi-annual newsletter. This activity will include Theme projects but will also involve other University work relating to the subject of the Theme. We will also seek to present Theme related material at internal University workshops and conferences and also externally within the Scottish higher education sector.

As well as continuing our successful packed lunch sessions, we will be holding a number of online and face-to-face seminars and workshops that will aim to share practice around the Theme within the University.

### Collaborative cluster work

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We are very open to the idea of working with other institutions through a formal collaborative cluster and would welcome conversations with colleagues in other institutions where our interests overlap and mutual benefit and broader impact for the sector is likely.

### Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

We are currently involved in two of the collaborative clusters. These are the “Learning Analytics” cluster being led by the University of Strathclyde and the ‘Belonging and Sense of Community’ being led by Queen Margaret University.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

We see collaboration as an important part of successful Theme activity. We are, therefore, very keen to collaborate around key issues such as **retention, community, belonging, attainment and success** in a **part-time, distance** and/or **online** learning contexts, and especially where the student body is shaped by similar characteristics such as **articulation, care experience, rurality, age, and disability**, or where substantial differences in these factors would make for interesting comparisons.

We have begun to approach colleagues informally and will update this section of our plan as conversations and collaborations develop.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

We are happy to collaborate with other institutions, particularly around work on data competency and have already made links with the University of Dundee on this.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

We have indicated throughout this plan the importance of this issue and the role it will play in our Theme work. We see staff development around the generation, use and sharing of evidence as crucial to student success overall and we intend to use this Theme to explore how staff use evidence in specific circumstances, in relation to particular groups, and in response to particular concerns. We will use the Theme to enhance the work we do with evidence through staff development opportunities, co-creation of resources with staff and students, and through creative and thoughtful dissemination of Theme outputs to colleagues (e.g. use of infographics and other visualisation-based approaches, multi-media, partnership work, etc.).

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

We will support our community by:

- Creating the opportunities for funded project work
- Acting as ‘critical friends’ for project teams
- Supporting project teams by developing our evidence-based project toolkit
- Providing support for organisation of workshops and events
- Supporting the development of a new cross OUiS Student Success Action Group
- Supporting students to engage with and manage their own Theme project

### **Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

We will plan, organise, and manage our Theme work through our Institutional Team with the aid of a new **shared logic model** and associated resources (e.g. planning documents) to be embedded in **all** projects and initiatives from conception through to evaluation and dissemination. This model will ensure that outcomes are clearly identified and related to OUiS strategic priorities and that specific impact indicators and sources of data/information are identified at the beginning of each project and intervention.

We will monitor progress through regular Institutional Team meetings and by using an **evaluation framework** which will be developed in Year 1 and used to structure evaluation activities. This will ensure that **consistency** in tone, structure, and, in specific circumstances,

question type and approach, is maintained **across different projects** and **throughout the duration of the Theme**.

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

We see the formal Theme evaluation work as providing an element of 'externality' for Theme work that will allow us to reflect critically on the work of the Theme, and to help keep us focussed on our primary objectives.

Internally, every Theme project will have an evaluation strategy built into their plans. This will aim to unearth the impact but why and how any impact came about. Each project will be encouraged to develop its own Theory of Change and use a Realistic Evaluation process.

Although Theme projects will form a small part of the University's activity related to student success, we will also monitor our institutional KPIs for any evidence of impact.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Shona Littlejohn and William Hasty
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2017

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Heather Gibson and Shona Littlejohn
<b>Date:</b>	13 September 2018



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: Queen Margaret University

### Context

QMU's institutional strategies make a strategic commitment to enhancing access, inclusion and retention (AIR), and this will be a major focus of our EfE work over the three year period. The QMU Student Experience Strategy [SES] (2015-20) indicates that we will '*Develop approaches to gathering and using data on the student experience*', while our Outcome Agreement aims at '*Continued embedding of equality and diversity across all aspects of the University's activities, and to monitor progress against an established set of quantified indicators e.g. annual application, admission, progression and retention statistics.*' The International Strategy has a key action to '*continue to monitor enhancement of support for students on campus: outcomes from relevant student surveys to remain constant or improve over time.*' These strategic imperatives are complemented by real interest from across the institution in how we can make better use of existing data, and equip colleagues for the next stage of evidence-informed approaches to enhancing the student experience.

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

*Our investigations into the collection of data that can be used at QMU revealed that there is an enormous wealth of data being collected, and our conclusions were that by and large there was only one particular area where a more structured approach was required to the gathering of data. In essence, we realised that the issue is getting relevant parties to know what data is available to them and where, and to engage with the data that is already there in a way which leads to actionable insights, rather than collecting more data. This understanding has shaped the design of the projects we have chosen to develop under the theme in year 2.*

### Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Professor Roni Bamber, Director, CAP	Semester 1: Professor Roni Bamber, Director, CAP Semester 2: Jo Rowley, Head of Learning Services	tbc
TLG staff representative	Professor Roni Bamber	Semester 1: Professor Roni Bamber	tbc

		Semester 2: Jo Rowley, Head of Learning Services	
TLG staff representative alternate	Jo Rowley, Head of Learning Services	Semester 1: Jo Rowley, Head of Learning Services Semester 2: tbc	Jo Rowley, Head of Learning Services
TLG student representative	Suzanne Ewing, Student rep, ASSAM (Psychology)	Suzanne Ewing, Student rep, ASSAM (Psychology)	Suzanne Ewing, Student rep, ASSAM (Psychology)
TLG student representative	Andy Zelaya, Student rep, HS (BSc Physical Activity, Health and Wellbeing)	tbc	tbc
SHEEC representative	Professor Monika Foster, Head of Division of BEAM	Dr Richard Butt, Deputy Principal (Academic)	Dr Richard Butt, Deputy Principal (Academic)
Institutional team member	Sarah Bond, Assistant Lecturer, Physiotherapy	Sarah Bond, Assistant Lecturer, Physiotherapy	Sarah Bond, Assistant Lecturer, Physiotherapy
Institutional team member	Gordon Craig, Head of Planning	Gordon Craig, Head of Planning	Gordon Craig, Head of Planning
Institutional team member	Caroline Gibson, Senior Lecturer, Nursing	Caroline Gibson, Senior Lecturer, Nursing	Caroline Gibson, Senior Lecturer, Nursing
Institutional team member	Hilary Glendinning, Student Retention and Surveys Manager, GQE	Hilary Glendinning, Student Retention and Surveys Manager, GQE	Hilary Glendinning, Student Retention and Surveys Manager, GQE
Institutional team member	Susan Hood, Assistant Registrar (School Operations and Resources)	Susan Hood, Assistant Registrar (School Operations and Resources)	Susan Hood, Assistant Registrar (School Operations and Resources)
Institutional team member	Gavin Hughes, Software Development Manager, Information & Learning Services	Gavin Hughes, Software Development Manager, Information & Learning Services	Gavin Hughes, Software Development Manager, Information & Learning Services
Institutional team member	Karl Johnson, Lecturer in Sociology, WISeR Coordinator for ASSaM	Karl Johnson, Lecturer in Sociology, WISeR Coordinator for ASSaM	Karl Johnson, Lecturer in Sociology, WISeR Coordinator for ASSaM
Institutional team member	Dawn Martin, Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement	Dawn Martin, Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement	Dawn Martin, Assistant Secretary, Governance and Quality Enhancement
Institutional team member	June Ross, Assistant Secretary, Registry and Academic Administration	June Ross, Assistant Secretary, Registry and Academic Administration	June Ross, Assistant Secretary, Registry and Academic Administration
Institutional team member	Dr Anthony Schrag, Lecturer in Creative Industries and Cultural Management	Dr Anthony Schrag, Lecturer in Creative Industries and Cultural Management	Dr Anthony Schrag, Lecturer in Creative Industries and Cultural Management
Institutional team member	Craig Warrack, Management Information Officer	Craig Warrack, Management Information Officer	Craig Warrack, Management Information Officer
ET project officer	Dr Sally Anderson, CAP	Dr Sally Anderson, CAP	tbc

**Note: while the project officer was a part of the team during the first year of the project, she had not yet been appointed at the time of the first plan and this is, therefore, the first time her name has been added to this list.**

## Planned activity: Year 1

### 1 Overall outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

QMU's **key priority** is to gain a better understanding of our current and potential uses of data, and use that understanding to improve how staff and students use evidence to enhance the student learning experience, with a specific focus on access, inclusion and retention (AIR).

**Outcomes** - By the end of the three year Theme, we will:

- Improve our awareness of good practice in using evidence for enhancement
- Work collaboratively across the sector and with other institutions to develop and share thinking and practices
- Engage students and staff in helping develop evidence-informed approaches
- Implement improved approaches to using evidence in a range of QMU contexts, relating to AIR
- Improve the use of evidence in existing AIR projects and initiatives, linked to AIR and the Student Experience Strategy
- Implement improved approaches to using evidence in a range of QMU contexts
- Share enhanced thinking and practices with collaborative partners.

In the first year this will involve the activities mentioned below in addressing our *current* use of evidence, while in the subsequent years we will also work on:

- Undertaking fresh evidence gathering and analysis, eg a project to gather evidence from alumni or direct entrants
- Explore learners' perspectives/ideas on how they might use evidence, in conjunction with tutors, to enhance their learner experience
- Look to other institutions to consider their approach to similar issues to see where there are areas of synergy and possibilities of joint working, possibly via learning analytics, widening access or the overarching topic of impact of student services, and using data for intervention.

**Activities:**

- Scope our current use of data
- Plan and implement small scale projects on use of evidence
- Work collaboratively with other institutions

### 2 Year 1 outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

In the short term (Year 1), our **priorities** are to:

- a. Establish an effective institutional team
- b. Develop a logic model for the three years of the Theme
- c. Scope current use of evidence, as a baseline for future work, to ascertain how we might improve the quality, use of and engagement with that evidence

- d. Work on a QMU approach to use of evidence (including joined-up evidence gathering, efficient collection and sharing of evidence, closing the loop), informed by sector-wide discussions
- e. Assess what evidence our staff and students need
- f. Complement and support current strategic initiatives, eg one or two of:
  - i. Develop, use and evaluate student and staff dashboards
  - ii. Examine module evaluation, in support of the Module Evaluation Working Group
  - iii. Pilot the Student Induction and Transitions Framework
  - iv. Improve our use of NSS / survey data.

These priorities will allow us to make progress on the **Outcomes** listed in Box 1 above.

Our **activities** will include:

- Undertaking a scoping exercise: what evidence is being gathered, by whom and with what purpose, and how well is this done currently? How might that be improved to enhance AIR?
- Investigating staff and students' perspective on particular aspects of this, relating to AIR
- Issuing guidance on good practice in using evidence for enhancement
- Engaging current working groups and project teams to adopt good practice when using evidence for enhancement
- Building on the outputs from the previous Enhancement Theme on student transitions.

Benefits will be better understanding of the use of evidence, and the implementation of some fresh practices at QMU, in collaboration with others in the sector.

### Year 2 outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

*We have chosen some key areas on which to concentrate our efforts for year 2 of the Theme: Information Pack: 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.*

#### **Gathering institutional evidence**

*While there is much data available, one area which we recognise is less strong than others, is the collection of qualitative data, particularly on student views. Therefore, one of the things we will investigate during year 2 of the Theme is the use of mechanisms to collect such data, such as a 'question of the month', 'impromptu' postcard surveys, electronic viewpoint stands, clickers, etc.*

#### **Making use of institutional evidence**

- **Five Things** (working title): *This project is aimed at helping staff to engage with the data about their programmes that are already available, and using this data to gain insights into their course delivery, issues and success. Some ideas and suggestions will be provided on what the data might be revealing and how to make best use of this information to plan enhancement. This project will make use of and link some initiatives which have already been developed but are not yet widely or easily available, such as programme information dashboards and monthly data reports.*
- **Module evaluation information:** *Develop a more structured approach to gathering and working with this data, so that information is used not only at specific module level but can be aggregated to provide broader information for action.*

#### **Making use of external evidence**

- **Top Tips** (working title) *A literature-based project looking at the habits of successful students and the features of successful programmes, distilling relevant aspects and making this information available to staff and students in an engaging format. 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.*

### ***Institutional participation***

*During this year of the Theme, seed funding will be made available to staff to undertake projects relating to the Theme's aims and our particular emphases on access, inclusion, retention.. Bids for the funding will be gathered during October/November; successful projects will be undertaken from November to May with an interim report in March 2019; final reports will be submitted by 24 May; completion information will be included in the 2019 QAA report; a showcase event will be held in the institution in June.*

### ***Wider sector participation***

- *Participation in sector strands.*
- *Lead institution in one collaborative project – 'Fostering a sense of belonging'*
- *Participating institution in two other collaborative projects.*

## **3 Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

Internally, we will develop a QMU EfE Engagement Plan, to ensure that we engage relevant groups and individuals in the Theme work.

Externally, we will encourage dissemination of QMU findings at appropriate events, and in appropriate publications / outlets.

## **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

- *The information packs mentioned above will provide a useful tool for disseminating information about the Theme and its work to staff at a number of levels in the institution.*
- *A regular newsletter is published and made available to staff both in paper form and electronically. In year 2 of the theme, we plan to extend the availability of a newsletter to students as well. Mechanisms for this are being investigated.*
- *The institutional showcase event for ET-funded projects will be made available to all staff and provides a platform to make the work of the Theme more widely known across QMU.*

## **4 Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We will identify and participate in collaborative clusters which would be beneficial for our purposes, and would be particularly keen to engage with clusters around learning / learner analytics.

Of the clusters discussed in the Analysis of the Launch Event paper, several would be of particular relevance for our aims, eg:

- impact of student services, and using data for intervention
- widening access
- direct entrant support
- online learning
- graduate apprenticeships.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

- *Lead institution for ‘Fostering a sense of belonging’ project*
- *Participating institution in ‘Programme leader guidance on EfE’, Edinburgh Napier-led project*
- *Participating institution in ‘Learning analytics’, Strathclyde-led project.*

### **5 Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Again, we will be happy to participate in sectoral activities which are aligned with our aims. In the Analysis of the Launch Event, the topic of understanding data, data principles, evidence in decision making and data methodologies and approaches is of particular interest. We have not yet identified other institutions to work with, but will be keen to be part of relevant inter-institutional work.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

*Members of the ET institutional team and other university staff are participating in sector work on:*

- *Learning analytics: Strathclyde University, with Abertay, SRUC, Stirling, HWU, RGU and UHI*
- *Programme-level evidence, with Edinburgh Napier University, SRUC, UHI, HWU, RGU, Abertay, Stirling, Strathclyde*
- *Sense of Belonging: Queen Margaret University with OUScotland, UHI, Dundee.*

### **6 Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

We plan to appoint a Project Officer, who will do some work on behalf of the institutional team, including engagement activities, such as dissemination of information about the Theme, and events.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

*An ET Project Officer has been reappointed for Year 2.  
Seed funding for small projects relating to the Theme.*

### **7 Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

The institutional team will monitor progress, and will report to the Student Experience Committee. The impact data we collect will depend on the indicators we agree on for our emerging logic model, but is likely to involve us in gathering illustrative examples and cases, eg:

- Evidence of engagement with the Theme by both staff and students
- Staff and student accounts of experiences of good practice

- Examples of good practice in different contexts
- Inter-institutional work outputs collected and published with demonstrable benefit evidenced in institutional practices
- Examples of where students' experiences of evidence reflect enhanced approaches
- Evidence that resources have been used to enhance AIR

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

*We have responded to calls for information from the Learning Analytics collaborative cluster, and we have been interviewed by Liz Thomas.*

*The institutional team will monitor engagement with the Theme at institutional level, reporting to our Student Experience Committee.*

<b>Plan author:</b>	Professor Roni Bamber
<b>Date:</b>	8 October 2018

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Sally Anderson, Professor Roni Bamber, Jo Rowley
<b>Date:</b>	8 October 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

#### Context

The new Enhancement Theme is particularly timely and supports many of our institutional priorities:

#### Strategic Plan

We are currently in the middle of the realisation of our 2015-20 Strategic Plan: *Delivering a Defining Performance*. In our plan we state that:

*Our goal, through our students, staff and graduates, is to raise the transformative power and reach of the performing arts in Scotland and to project our distinctiveness to the wider world.*

As a small-specialist organisation, staff at RCS often have the privilege of working with learners in one-to-one and small group environments, regularly on 'live' projects that require a significant degree of creative collaboration. Across the staff and student community, there is significant anecdotal evidence that learning within a performing arts discipline can indeed lead to powerful transformations. The focus of this theme will allow us to explore how we might capture the evidence of those transformations.

#### Undergraduate Academic Framework and Review

Last academic year our Undergraduate Academic Framework was revised in response to emerging priorities drawn primarily from our Strategic Plan. In developing programmes for Undergraduate Review, programme teams have been engaged in redesigning their curriculum to include opportunities for their students to develop pedagogical skills and to have the opportunity to have an enhanced provision for choice and collaboration. Pending successful revalidation events, these programmes will begin delivery in September 2018. This theme will allow us the opportunity to gather and utilise a range of data to evaluate the success of the new programme designs. Postgraduate programmes will also be reviewed within the scope of this theme, so will also benefit from this work.

#### ELIR

In response to the recommendation outlines in our report from ELIR 3 in 2013, we created a position for a statistical analyst to assist us in finding ways to engage staff and students in a more meaningful application of our performance indicators. We are currently making preparations for ELIR review in the New Year, and are directly engaged in looking at how we build robust mechanisms for gathering data on the student experience and use that data to guide ongoing enhancement. This theme will allow us to fully explore how we might engage our students and staff in finding meaningful ways to interpret, communicate and apply learning from the data we are already engaged in collecting.

### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

In year 1 of the theme, we achieved a positive outcome from our ELIR review. We also successfully validated our Undergraduate programmes and are now in a review of our PG provision. We gained a Professional Learning Award for our Organisation from the General Teaching Council Scotland and had our PG Cert in Learning and Teaching in Higher Arts programme revalidated by AdvanceHE (HEA), all of which provide evidence that we are able to demonstrate engagement with external metrics in the form of professional and educational standards. Our new Assistant Principal has a core remit for learning and teaching and is leading on the ethos and delivery of our upcoming Learning and Teaching Conference. This conference culminates in an Open Space Event designed to engage all staff in contributing to the development of our next institutional strategic plan.

### Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional Lead	Jamie Mackay Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development	Jamie Mackay Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development	Jamie Mackay Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development
TLG staff representative	Jamie Mackay Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development	Jamie Mackay Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development	Jamie Mackay Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development
TLG staff representative alternate	Jesse Paul Fair Access Manager	Jesse Paul Fair Access Manager	Jesse Paul Fair Access Manager
TLG student representative	William Stringer Student Union President	Jasmine Munns Student Union President	TBA
Other team members	Christoph Wagner Lecturer in Lighting Design and PhD student	Christoph Wagner Lecturer in Lighting Design and PhD student	Christoph Wagner Lecturer in Lighting Design and PhD student
	Jackie Russell Director of Human Resources	Jackie Russell Director of Human Resources	Jackie Russell Director of Human Resources
	John Gormley Head of BEd Music	John Gormley Head of BEd Music	John Gormley Head of BEd Music
	Suzanne Daly Academic Registrar	Suzanne Daly Academic Registrar	Suzanne Daly Academic Registrar
	Stephanie Burns Statistical Analyst	Stephanie Burns Statistical Analyst	Stephanie Burns Statistical Analyst

	Joanne Louise Turbitt MEd Learning and Teaching in the Performing Arts student	Joanne Louise Turbitt MEd Learning and Teaching in the Performing Arts student	TBA
	Neal Clark BA Production Technology and Management student	Neal Clark BA Production Technology and Management student	Neal Clark BA Production Technology and Management student
	Deborah Keogh Knowledge Exchange Manager	Deborah Keogh Knowledge Exchange Manager	Deborah Keogh Knowledge Exchange Manager

## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

At RCS, our key aims for the theme are:

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

Across programme teams, there is a recognition of how Performance Indicators (PIs) can be used as a mechanism to measure the success of a programme. However, the relatively small data sets we tend to work with, can potentially present a distorted view of the success of the learning experiences we offer. At this point, PIs have had limited use in determining strategic development priorities, certainly in comparison to other qualitative feedback that is gathered formally and informally from students, however there is a building recognition of the potential learning that lies behind the numbers. Similarly the NSS provides data on our success at a programme and institutional level. Again this data does not always communicate the depth of feedback that can help us ensure we are truly enhancing the student experience. We would like to use this theme to support the development of a shared language of learning and teaching, helping us build an evidence base on the expectations of learners and teaching staff in relation to what we are actually measuring. In terms of impact we believe that this work will improve the quality of discourse between staff and students around the process of learning and practices of teaching, increasing student engagement with programme development and helping staff better understand the increasingly diverse range of learner preferences and needs.

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

Related to the first priority we would like to use the theme to build an understanding of student perceptions of success before, during and after studying at our institution. By gathering qualitative data on what our learners consider to be the criterion for success (and crucially those perceptions evolve with experience) we can build an evidence-informed data set to better understand our learners, their expectations and aspirations. We understand that many potential students consider our institution to be beyond their aspirations. This data could be used to inform our recruitment materials and activities, encouraging more diversity in applications. For students currently studying on a programme, the data would provide a mechanism for reflecting on growth and change. For teaching staff, the data would provide a rich source of information on the priorities for their learners, helping programme design and delivery to maximise engagement.

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

The intensive nature of study at a conservatoire can lead staff and students to have limited ability to engage in any sector-wide initiatives. There is an inherent danger in the focus of this theme that it could be interpreted as being remote from the direct experience of learning. To specifically challenge this from the outset, we are aiming to focus on projects that we hope will engage our staff and students across the institution. In addition to the projects that aim to develop the shared language and perceptions of success, we are planning to set up a small project fund that is open to all staff and students from our institution. Successful projects must engage with the focus of the Enhancement Theme in some way. To increase engagement with the use of data to guide development, we are joining with Glasgow School of Art's cluster group to explore methods for gathering and presenting data appropriate to a creative arts organisation, so that we can increase engagement with the ways in which data can enhance the student experience.

**Aim 4: To evaluate the effectiveness of support mechanisms**

Following on from our work from the previous theme on understanding and beginning to address mental health issues faced by our student cohort, we aim to build an evidence-base to help us evaluate the effectiveness of the mechanisms we are using to better support learners.

**Year 1 outcomes/activity RCS-specific****Year 1 Focus:**

The focus for year 1 activities will be primarily on designing and setting up the mechanisms that will ensure that we can gather useful data through each project. All of the projects below will be go through our Ethical Approval process, and the online nature of projects 1 and 2 will require some significant technical preparation to ensure they can work effectively. Over the duration of the 3 year period we will be working closely with our Statistical Analyst to ensure that we are maximising the opportunities for gathering and utilising data. In year 1 we expect that she will play a key role in helping us set up the required mechanisms. Another focus of year 1 will be on raising awareness across the institution of the projects to be launched in year 2 to ensure maximum engagement in years 2 and 3.

Activities:

**Project 1: Good Teacher/Good Learner (Aim 1)**

The key focus of this project is to gather data on the definitions of a good teacher and good learner at the RCS so that we can share this resource with current and prospective students and staff to improve recruitment materials, inform programme development and student perceptions (NSS)

The project addresses a number of our institutional priorities to accommodate a range of learning preferences through providing flexible and responsive teaching practices. Whilst our existing structures allow programme level feedback on delivery, we don't have a mechanism for those broader discussions across the institution.

Performance Indicators provide information on progression, but we feel a richer dialogue would be possible if we were to enhance this data with direct qualitative feedback on what we mean by quality in teaching and learning. This project helps us progress our aspirations to provide our students with some of the pedagogical awareness that will impact on their future employability

For staff this project allows a similar discussion to emerge around the likely diverse range of responses from students and staff, and could ultimately be used as a key resource to shape programme design, delivery and the ongoing professionalisation of teaching staff.

**Key outcome:**

This will be an online resource, available to all staff and students. We expect responses to be submitted in a number of modes including video, audio, image and text files. A key outcome for year

1 would be to have developed the best platform for this resource, and to have established a set of clear instructions for the task and for the process of uploading content. To engage as many staff and students as possible we would provide these instructions on a variety of formats.

How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1:

By the end of year 1, we would be in a position to launch the online space for all new and returning students as they begin academic year 2018-19

**Project 2: Definitions of Success (Aim 2)**

The aim of this project is to analyse the evolution of perceptions of success before study, during studies and after graduation We can understand and better support the student learning journey, share the information with students and staff to aid programme design and marketing material. Our initiatives around widening access are helping us reach an increasingly more diverse range of learners. At the same time, the range of career pathways open to our graduates continues to expand radiantly.

This is leading to an increasingly individualised range of learning journeys across our programmes, supported by the addition of increased choice and opportunities for creative collaboration.

If this range represents the vertical axis of change, the ways in which perceptions of success change throughout each learning journey, creates another dimension to this work.

It is our aim within this project to gather data across our learner cohort, tracking perceptions of success from pre-HE, through HE, and beyond into the many professions our graduates find career opportunities.

For each student this offers an opportunity to reflect on the breadth of responses received but also on their own changing responses over time.

Key outcome:

As with the previous project, this will be an online resource, available to all staff and students. Again we expect responses to be submitted in a number of modes including video, audio, image and text files. A key outcome for year 1 would be to have developed the best platform for this resource to build, and to have established a set of clear instructions for the task and for the process of uploading content. To engage as many students as possible we would provide these instructions on a variety of formats.

How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1:

By the end of year 1, we would be in a position to launch the online space for all new and returning students as they begin academic year 2018-19

**Project 3: Evidencing Enhancement Project Fund (Aim 3)**

As part of our curriculum reform process we identified a Bridge Week in the academic year where students would have no timetabled classes and could bid for funding to develop and share work. This has been so successful that we are considering organising a staff equivalent. In the last few years we have launched additional small funds for equality and diversity and for teaching, and have found them to be equally popular, and providing a rich and engaging range of original and innovative work. We would like to offer a similar fund that would be available to all staff and students across the institution who are able to demonstrate that their proposed project addresses the Enhancement Theme priorities. A panel of staff and students would make decisions on those projects to be funded. We would expect that the projects would culminate in some form of data-rich resource that we could disseminate across the institution.

Key outcome:

We do not expect to allocate the finance for this project until year 2, therefore in year 1 the activity will be modest, seeking to establish the timeline of applications, criteria for selection and the appropriate panel membership.

How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1:

We would be in a position to launch the fund for all staff and students as they begin academic year 2018-19

**Project 4: Collaborative Cluster work on Creating Rich Evidence (Aim 3)**

(see collaborative cluster work section)

**Project 5: Evaluation of Mental Health support mechanisms (Aim 4)**

We felt it was important to maintain the continuity of our work on the previous theme, particularly in relation to the ways in which we support learners (and staff) who are experiencing mental health issues. This project is designed to evaluate new processes that we are piloting across the institution with the intention that they help staff and students experiencing mental health issues to have an increased level of support. Along with a number of other educational organisations we are about to begin introducing the digital support and recovery service Big White Wall. Designed for people who are stressed, anxious or not coping, the community of members support each other in a safe and anonymous environment. As a small specialist institution with one counsellor, the 24/7 support this resource offers would appear to be of great potential. Having established the benchmark in her research for the Student Transitions team, staff member Dr Rachel Drury will undertake further research into the efficacy of this new resource and any other mechanisms engaged with over the period of this theme.

Key outcome:

The bulk of this work will take place in years 2 and 3 of the Theme and the focus for year 1 is on developing a research strategy to begin in year 2.

How we'd measure a positive outcome in year 1:

Having successfully been cleared by our ethics committee, we would be in a position to begin to undertake the research work in academic year 2018-19

**Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

**Key Priorities**

As the majority of the work of year 1 was to set up the mechanisms that will help us achieve our aims, our key priorities remain the same as we go into year 2.

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

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

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

**Aim 4: To evaluate the effectiveness of support mechanisms**

We see these aims in an increasingly integrated way, understanding that they do not stand in isolation. Our approach has been to set up projects that will be accessible and we hope engaging to all of our stakeholder groups. The projects are seeking to explore how we might engage staff and students not just in what they are learning, but how and why they are learning. The projects are open and simple to explain, however the simplicity is designed to allow the widest range of qualitative responses. Aim 1 is designed to establish what lies at the heart of the learning and teaching process. Aim 2 is designed to provide information on why our students engage in the process of learning in the first place. Aim 4 is designed to help us identify how our most vulnerable students are being helped to address the barriers to full engagement with that process. Aim 3 is designed simply to ensure we maximise the number of voices that contribute to this dialogue.

The following information details progress made on the projects since the submission of the end of year 1 report:

### **Project 1: Good Teacher/Good Learner (Aim 1)**

- *Sept 2018 – Introduce the key question 'What Makes A Good Teacher?' to staff at our Learning and Teaching Conference*

We launched this as planned and have delivered a 90 minute parallel session with staff from across the institution with the title *'What makes a good teacher?'* This session was delivered 4 times and around 110 RCS staff members at the conference engaged with the session. The focus of the 3-day conference is on the student experience, and this session provided an opportunity for staff to engage with the question from their own experience as a learner, through responding to a variety of metrics (NSS (National Student Survey), HEA (AdvanceHE) – UK Professional Standards Framework, QAA – Subject Benchmark Statement for Youth and Community Work, Scottish Government - Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges) and through considering their own personal motivation to teach. At the end of the session, each participant was invited to write their own response to the core question on a specially designed postcard. We In the social space we had a specially designed video booth for staff to provide a videoed response to the core question. The session has been designed and was delivered by:

- Jamie Mackay – Head of PG Learning and Teaching Programmes and Academic Development, and QAA ET lead
- Angela Jaap – Lecturer in Professional Learning
- Jasmine Munns – Student Union President
- Yvonne McLellan – Learning Technologist and Developer

Our Assistant Principal, Dr Lois Fitch was present on all four of these sessions and gathered information on the key themes that emerged over the two days they were delivered. Lois reported these emergent themes back to the full conference at the end of day 2. At the end of the Conference we had gathered around 110 postcard responses and about 8 video responses. We anticipate greater engagement with the videobooth at the student launch.

- *Early Oct 2018 - include a slide in the RCS information screens that simply says 'What Makes A Good Teacher?'*  
We launched this ahead of the Learning and Teaching Conference and our information screens throughout the building now include this core question as they scroll through other relevant messages and information.
- *Late Oct 2018 - add a twitter address to the question, allowing staff and students to contribute responses to the online space.*  
We have this animation ready to add to the scrolling images on the monitors after the Learning and Teaching Conference is complete. The online platform has been designed with the same branding as the postcards, videobooth and screen images to create a visual

continuity. The postcards also provide a link to the platform and the Twitter feed. The platform will act as a space to access the responses from the videobooth, Twitter and postcards and will build over the year.

- *Nov 2018 – organise first live event in the café to engage students in the question*

We are integrating this event with the launch of the 'Make It Happen' sessions in November, connecting this project with Project 3.

- *Nov/Dec 2018 - begin to stream responses to the question on our TV screens alongside existing messages. Also have this running on our Facebook page, perhaps with a distinct page for this theme work*

We have been working with our marketing team to set this up and the responses to the question can be integrated within our existing and familiar digital information channels.

- *Jan/March 2019 - effect a similar launch but this time flipping the question to 'What Makes a Good Learner?'*

We have commissioned the graphic design work in such a way that the 'What Makes a Good Learner?' print and digital copy looks like a flipped version of the original 'What Makes a Good Teacher?' branding. We have this design work ready to launch in January as planned.

- *April-June 2019 - gather and disseminate responses*

We have decided to use the online portal space as a place where anyone with an RCS email address can access the responses. Our postcard responses will be scanned rather than types up so will retain the visual quality of the originals. The video content will be available to screen when uploaded after each event. The Twitter responses will also be available to view throughout. There is a missing stage in this initial plan, in that the gathered responses will need to go through a process of analysis, with the hope that we can represent the key findings in visually stimulating, informative ways. We will be seeking to identify themes within the responses, ideally culminating in a range of metrics that we believe to be most valuable within our community.

## **Project 2: Definitions of Success**

*Stage 2 of this project is already about to begin, with Stephanie now about to canvas our staff to ask for their predictions of the student responses. She will also launch the same questions to PG students beginning in Sept 2018. Stage 3 will commence in February 2019 where Stephanie intends to present the findings to the original first year cohort at a point of reflection and an opportunity to capture responses to provide data on the anecdotally reported second year 'slump'.*

Our statistical analyst Stephanie presented the initial findings at the QAA Enhancement Theme Conference in June. The project is designed to align with the new intake and more specifically will feature in a new module that all first year students undertake called 'Introduction to Collaboration'. We will continue with the plan as stated above.

## **Project 3: Evidencing Enhancement Project Fund (Aim 3)**

*Project 3 will contribute to a specific event in this year's Make It Happen Month which will focus on how emerging graduates can secure their first project investments and the myriad of ways that this can happen. We intend to hear from Creative Scotland, Crowdfunding Specialists, Sponsors and RCS Alumni about how to generate those all-important first funds. In line with the sector strand of optimising the existing evidence, we intend to use this integrated project to help students gain a deeper understanding of the evidence that will genuinely make a difference to the progression of their careers as professional artists.*

We saw a clear and natural alignment between the aims of project 3 and the Make It Happen events planned in min-November, however we struggled to clearly identify what added value the enhancement theme would bring. The Make It Happen sessions are designed to encourage entrepreneurial thinking for our own students and students from Glasgow School of Art. We have

designed a fund that anyone who attends the sessions can apply for to support the development of a piece of new creative work. The key criterion for selecting the successful project will be the response to the question 'How will you evidence the success of your project?' We will integrate this question within the sessions during the week, connecting the evidence required to demonstrate success in a project to the academic evidence required to demonstrate success in module of study. The projects will be undertaken in the remainder of the academic year, and the evidence presented in a format and mode appropriate to the project, as defined in their proposal.

**Project 4: Collaborative Cluster work on Creating Rich Evidence**  
(see section on inter-institutional collaboration)

**Project 5: Evaluation of Mental Health support mechanisms (Aim 4)**

*The project is on track to begin as planned for academic year 2018/19. The focus of this project will be focused specifically on the impact of the introduction of the Big White Wall online support, but we hope that this project will connect with other work our institution is engaged in around the topics of mental health, suicide prevention, safe space and gender-based violence. The research proposal is being prepared ahead of the next meeting of our internal Ethics Committee.*

The Big White Wall has now been available to our students for one academic year and the system has generated a significant amount of data that can serve as a baseline for the research that will happen over this academic year. Dr Rachel Drury will be undertaking this research looking at mental health provision across the conservatoire. Our annual Counselling and Disabilities report provide some statistical data in relation to mental health issues and the volume and nature of the support sought. Mental health is a priority area for us and features prominently in the Learning and Teaching Conference as the focus of one of our four parallel sessions – 'Happiness, Well-being and Mental Health'. Again this session will be delivered 4 times and all 120-150 RCS staff members at the conference will engage with this session which will be co-delivered by

- Dr Jill Morgan, a lecturer in learning and teaching on the PG Learning and Teaching programmes
- Jane Bamforth – our Counsellor and Disabilities Officer
- Sarah Ward – our Assistant Registrar with responsibility for International Students and Student Experience

Our Head of Research and Knowledge Exchange, Dr Stephen Broad will sit in on all four of these sessions and gather information on the key themes that emerge over the two days they are delivered. He will report these emergent themes back to the full conference at the end of day 2.

Dr Jill Morgan and Dr Rachel Drury both teach on the RCS PG Learning and Teaching programmes are currently undertaking a joint research project into teacher/performer identity in relation to mental health. They presented initial findings at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Biennial ISME World Conference in Azerbaijan in June this year and will focus on writing up the full results of the study for publishing by December. We expect this work will feed into the work of this theme, providing a specific focus on the mental health issues often faced by performers learning in a Higher Education context.

#### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

The proposed projects will require significant engagement from staff and students to be successful. In year 1 we will use existing programme management structures to share the projects in

development, and provide information on how and when they will be launched. Programme Committees offer a key opportunity to share the project work ahead of launch, and the Student Union will play a key role in engaging students in preparation for their input. As we move into year 2, the results of the project work will be shared at more senior management levels. In year 3 we will have gathered a significant amount of data that would be shared across institutions in the sector (also see collaborative cluster work).

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

We have been careful to design projects that we hope will be relevant and engaging to as wide a spectrum of our student and staff contingent.

In very broad terms, year 1 was focused on setting up the mechanisms with which we could use in year 2 to gather the data that we will analyse and disseminate in year 3. Having said that, each project present opportunities to make that data accessible to staff and students throughout years 2 and 3. The online portal designed as part of Project 1 will become live in October and all staff and students will be able to engage with the responses as they build over the year. In the group reflection sessions planned for Project 2, students will be able to reflect on how their initial definitions of success may have shifted. Staff will also have the chance to reflect on the gaps/similarities between their predictions of the student responses and their actual responses.

Project 3 will have dissemination strategies built into the project proposals, so will be dictated by the successful participants.

Our annual Learning and Teaching Conference (LTC) presents an excellent opportunity to both disseminate and critically reflect on the work of all of these projects. Mental health has been a central theme for the last 4 years at our LTC and project 5 in particular is likely to feature strongly here, with the dissemination of key findings, particularly in relation to the use of the Big White Wall online support platform.

Whilst we will continue to gather data into year 3 of the theme, the emphasis will shift towards the ways in which we can communicate data more effectively with our students and staff, exploring different Business Information visualisation systems, and ways in which the information gathered can be used in practical and useful ways to inform the design and delivery of our programmes of study.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

**Possible Collaborative Leads:** Vicky Gunn GSA, Jamie Mackay RCS (text duplicated from GSA submission)

**(Aim 3)** *Given the specific nature of creative practice-based disciplines, GSA is concerned that the conversation about evidence should not be overly dominated by metrics and learning analytics. Methods of practice-based activity generate a range of artefacts, not always ones that sit easily with typical definitions of evidence (reports or raw numerical data) and it would be interesting to explore how we create rich-evidence that is recognised for its insights as well as disrupting the increasing dependence on data-sets which the sector has some concerns about. Additionally, creative practitioners are increasingly finding themselves facing requests from funders for forms of evaluation that do involve surveys attempting to put numerical outcomes to the impact of a performance, exhibition, or artefact. As part of our engagement in this theme, GSA has already summarised some of the key questions that a creative arts cluster might need to address as:*

- *What methods / different types of evidence as relevant to the Creative Practices can we develop to mitigate the dependence on numbers?*
- *How can we demonstrate that creative practice outcomes as evidence of teaching enhancement are reliable and valuable? How might alternative creative practices (from immersive and participatory workshops to simulated activities to physical artefacts as an outcome of learning a creative practice) be translated into evidence? How do these activities also provide a context for understanding the impact of our teaching activity in both technical / practical shifts in outcomes as well as in terms of the soft power as cultural influencers creative practice education aims to inculcate?*
- *How do we manage small numbers in the face of big data? How do we clarify why small numbers makes the metrics much less reliable to use for making decisions about changing practice? And how do we remind big HEIs and regulators that specialist HEIs can't rely on datasets in the manner a bigger institution might?*

*How can we use data to inform Creative Industries about what we do in higher education now? It would be of especial use for the cluster to host a day long symposium on "communicating the evidence of our teaching enhancements to those who employ our graduates" and possibly invite Creative Industries Federation, Creative Scotland, Saltire, Entrepreneurial Scotland, and CHEAD to have representation. (Ideally in March/ April 2018). In the first year, anticipated costs for such a sector-wide cluster would focus on:*

1. *Project assistant.*
2. *Pre-symposium materials gathering from the Scottish sector (travel costs) – tying into each institution's approach to this enhancement theme.*
3. *Developing a year one briefing about activity.*
4. *Identifying a communications strategy and protocol to structure sustainable interaction between enhancement in learning and teaching in the sector and the creative ecology employers in Scotland.*
5. *Identifying plan for years 2 & 3.*

*(Anticipated costs £3k project assistant 0.2 FTE for five months; £2k materials and travel costs: Total for cluster £5k)*

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

We were very pleased that the work of our Collaborative Cluster group was to receive support into year 2 of the theme. As this work is being reported on through the cluster, I will refrain from reporting this here

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

*This will be achieved through the Creative Practices cluster and currently Duncan of Jordanstone (Dundee) and Royal Conservatoire Scotland have expressed an interest in working with GSA on this. RCS in particular are interested in doing collaborative activity regarding the development of evidence that draws on creative practices' forms of evidence.*

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Due to the scale of the Collaborative Cluster work we are engaged with GSA, ECA, RGU and other arts institutions we feel that additional inter-institutional work cannot be supported at this stage. The work of this cluster relates directly into our core aims for our institutional work and will help us gather vital sectoral context, and innovative approaches to the generation and use of data and metrics. Year one of this work has allowed us to state the main areas of concern and identify the key priorities for us as a sector. We anticipate that year 2 will allow a real exploration of how we might achieve a better balance and begin to utilise more meaningful and relevant metrics to define and capture the varied ways in which success can be achieved, measure and communicated.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

We will engage in regular and ongoing meetings throughout the year. In terms of engagement with the theme, the project outlines above identify the specifics, however in short, the aim is to engage the maximum number of staff and students through a combination of:

1. Posing open questions that are relevant to all members of the community and providing mechanisms for them to respond in a way that suits their learning and creative preferences
2. Offering opportunities for staff and students to apply for project funding relating to the Theme
3. Creating easily accessible resources that help provide a richer source of data on what our staff and students believe defines quality in education and industry.
4. Focusing on the gathering of qualitative evidence of the transformative nature of learning in the performing arts, to augment and contextualise the quantitative data currently being used to evaluate success

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Each of our projects has been designed with the above priorities in mind.

Project 1 is focused on posing two open questions – ‘What makes a Good Teacher?’ and ‘What makes a Good Learner?’, seeking responses from across the Conservatoire at a series of events. These events will be very public and we have made the decision to run them across our two campuses. Responses can be provided through Twitter, by videobooth or by postcard and the responses are shared in one online portal accessible to all.

Project 2 has more a more targeted approach, but again the emphasis has been on gathering qualitative data, and we have designed the gathering of this to align with points where full cohorts of students are present and the questions are relevant to their experiences.

Project 3 funding is now more targeted in relation to a specific series of events, which brings a clearer rationale to the funding and helps make it more accessible to interested students.

We expect the engagement to be much broader ranging than in previous theme work where the work was hugely important but slightly less visible to the wider institution.

**Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

A major role for the team and our Statistical Analyst will be to ensure that each project gathers a rich range of data that can actually be used to enhance the student experience. Evaluation of the first year of the Theme will primarily be a responsibility of the Institutional Team, with key additional members involved in preparing the project work. The Evaluation will include management teams and programme committees in year two and will have a larger scale evaluation within year three through our Quality and Standards Committee and Academic Board.

**Evaluation – year 2 update**

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

The above methods of evaluation will continue into year 2. These are robust mechanisms and we will augment them with project specific evaluations on the quality and usefulness of the data gathered.

Aim	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Aim 1: To develop a shared language of Learning and Teaching</b>	<b>Project 1: Good Teacher/ Good Learner</b>		
	Phase 1: Develop online portal space for storage of video/audio resources.	Phase 2: Uploading of content continues across the institution. Quantitative data extrapolated from qualitative responses.	Phase 3: Uploading of content continues across the institution. Quantitative data extrapolated from qualitative responses. Responses from the project are disseminated widely across the institution in a range of sensory-rich methods. Results to be included as a resource to accompany the Academic Framework/ Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.
<b>Aim 2: To track and understand student changing perceptions of success</b>	<b>Project 2: Definitions of Success</b>		
	Phase 1: Design and create online mechanism to gather student perceptions of success	Phase 2: Continue gathering data from existing students and introduce mechanisms for pre-HE students and graduating students.  Quantitative data extrapolated from qualitative responses.	Phase 3: Continue gathering data from existing students and introduce mechanisms for pre-HE students and graduating students. Follow up study on perceptions of success from alumni in the year following graduation. Responses from the project are disseminated widely across the institution in a range of sensory-rich methods.
<b>Aim 3: To generate engagement with the Theme across the institution</b>	<b>Project 3: Evidencing Enhancement Project Fund</b>		
	Phase 1: Design the process for application, criteria and process for selection of successful bids, and for panel selection.	Phase 2: Launch fund to staff and students. Gather evaluative data from participants and stakeholders.	Phase 3: Continue fund.  Gather evaluative data from participants and stakeholders.  Generate final evaluative report/ sensory rich dissemination resource to share findings.

	<b>Project 4: Collaborative Cluster work on Creating Rich Evidence (See GSA proposal as Cluster leads)</b>		
	<i>Phase 1:</i>	<i>Phase 2:</i>	<i>Phase 3:</i>
<b>Aim 4: To evaluate the effectiveness of support mechanisms</b>	<b>Project 5: Evaluation of Mental Health support mechanisms</b>		
	Phase 1: Introduce the Big White Wall resource to students. Develop research project and gain Ethical Approval	Phase 2: Undertake interim research to determine impact of introduction of Big White Wall	Phase 3: Undertake follow-up research to evaluate the success of the Big White Wall and other support mechanisms



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: **Robert Gordon University**

### Context

Effective use of institutional evidence to understand our student body is fundamental to RGU's longstanding approach to quality management and to initiating enhancements, and in addition was fundamental to our approach to the previous theme of Student Transitions.

Core quality assurance processes include systematic consideration of a suite of key performance indicators, and analysis underpins targeted action as appropriate. Moreover, shaped directly by students' feedback, a culture of engagement and partnership is encouraged and supports the ethos of continuous improvement.

RGU's recent *Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)* report commended the strategic use of management information 'to monitor and analyse institutional effectiveness across the totality of the student lifecycle'. This outcome was instrumental in enabling a strong provider submission for the *Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)*. In June 2017 the university was delighted to receive a TEF Gold Award, and this has reinforced commitment to further enhancing, extending and embedding our analytical capacity.

Looking forward, our new strategic framework for the period 2017-2021 outlines a desire to develop a distinctive university model and articulates a clear commitment to '*cultivate student success*' and '*enrich the student experience*'. The strategic ambition will be supported by a number of associated developments - within the context of the enhancement theme these include substantial investment in a new business intelligence reporting tool and the establishment of new functional areas to undertake integrated analysis of key metrics [*Learning Analytics and Student Partnership Team*] and retain oversight of institutional learning and teaching projects [*Step-change Team*]. Working in partnership with colleagues across the university these functions aim to deliver measurable enhancement to learners' experiences and ensure there is a focus on achieving project outcomes and targets.

It is fully recognised that to continue to effectively drive change there must be alignment of institutional priorities with practitioner enhancement activity, and that this should be underpinned by a robust and responsive evidence-base. The new Enhancement Theme will enable us to reflect on the journey to date and to fully consider how we continue to develop our approach.

## Context – year 2 update

If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.

You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.

RGU recognises the significant opportunity the Theme presents to shape and drive a culture of evidence-based enhancement both within the institution, and collaboratively across the Scottish sector.

During Year 1 the opportunity to bring together expertise from different parts of the institution in support of developing our collective understanding of evidence for enhancement was highly valued and supported the successful progression of institutional-level projects.

In the period since the original RGU context was provided the university has continued to identify, initiate and progress enhancement activity informed by evidence. However, in support of implementation, the *Department for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Access (DELTA)* now plays a greater role in prioritising – and driving - cross-institutional enhancement, coordinating activity across our subject areas to provide improvements to the experience of students.

Examples of this approach include institutional coordination of:

- The further roll out of lecture capture
- Process development, training and support for the extension of online submission, marking and feedback

Notably, interest in the Theme amongst both academic and professional support services has grown. In response the university will consider opportunities to support a wider network of practitioners to engage, and to support 'local' activity aligned to institutional priorities.

Whilst the Year 1 projects will continue to evolve and be advanced executively, new activity to be progressed under the auspices of the Theme is outlined in the sections which follow.

## Key institutional contacts:

	Year 1	Year 2 update
Institutional lead / SHEEC member	James Dunphy, Director of Teaching and Learning	
Theme Lead / TLG staff representative	Kirsty Campbell, Learning Analytics and Partnership Lead, DELTA	
TLG student representative	Kerry Harrison, President Education and Welfare, RGU:Union	Adam Johnston, President Education and Welfare, RGU:Union

An early action will be to establish an *RGU Enhancement Theme Leadership Group (RGU:ETLG)*. This group will consider additional staff and student membership appropriate to the agreed year one activity. Furthermore it is anticipated that staff and student membership be reviewed on an annual basis.

## Year 2 update

The membership of the *RGU Enhancement Theme Leadership Group (RGU:ETLG)* will be refreshed to reflect the nature of institutional projects, as well as collaboration with sector clusters. In addition the Group will formally report to our *Teaching Learning and Assessment Sub-Committee (TLASC)*.

## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

The overarching objective of the university, and RGU:Union's, engagement with the *Enhancement Theme* is to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of students to inform effective, timely and sustainable enhancement activity. This enhancement activity may pertain to learning and teaching, or to aspects of university life which contribute to the wider student experience.

Over the duration of the theme key **priorities** will be:

- **Effective engagement at a sector level.**
- Harnessing of institutional expertise and **increased use of evidence to support institutional change and to facilitate impactful interventions.**
- **Engaging learners** to create a culture of co-ownership of the projects developed under the theme and to ensure that they have real and meaningful impact.
- **Empowering colleagues**, both academic and support, as enablers of evidence-based enhancement within their own contexts.
- Consideration of the **ethical implications** of use of student data, and of what lies beneath the data.

It is anticipated that the primary **outcome** will be influence to the design of our teaching, learning and assessment, as well as development of our student-facing support services resulting in tangible enhancements to the student learning experience. This will be enabled by:

- **Greater understanding of the core evidence-base**, the interpretative use by different functions of the university, and the role in both strategic decision making and local interventions.
- **Further development of RGU's capacity to deliver high-impact actionable insights**, including new, innovative and agile approaches to identifying and developing metrics.
- Consideration of mechanisms to **maximise the impact of staff as change agents**, with an emphasis on a holistic and triangulated approach to analysis of evidence.
- **Investigation of the potential for learning analytics** to empower learners to shape their learning experience, through exploratory work into the 'digital footprint' of our students.

**Activity** will be aligned to the university's strategy, outcomes of institutional processes and the sector strands of the theme.

**Benefits** are expected to be both tangible and intangible:

- **Students** – will be supported to become enablers of evidence-based enhancement in the co-creation of curriculum design, and of service delivery.
- **Discipline/service areas** – will be empowered to interpret the core evidence base and define appropriate interventions.
- **Institution-wide** – there is improved understanding of valid metrics and their definitions, resulting in evidence-driven teaching and learning and business process improvements.
- **Sector-wide** – institutions are able to celebrate excellence in pedagogy and service delivery, and in turn share, shape and learn from effective practice.

## Year 1 outcomes/activity

Overarching **priorities** and **outcomes** are outlined in Section 1 above. In support of these, during the first year of the theme specifically, early **activity** will include:

- Active engagement in the *Theme Leaders' Group (TLG)* and in relevant collaborative clusters.
- Establishment of the *RGU Enhancement Theme Leadership Group (RGU:ETLG)*, which will maintain oversight of the development and implementation of activity under the auspices of the theme. The group will also act as conduit between sector strands and institutional initiatives.
- Launch of the theme to staff and students, and engagement with key stakeholders across the university.

Institution-wide activity aligned to the sector strands will comprise:

### **Optimising evidence**

#### ***Further development of our analytical capacity through the phased roll-out of a new business intelligence reporting tool***

The university recognises the need to continue to evolve our evidence-base, to both monitor progress from a quality assurance perspective and support strategic and operational enhancement activity. As a result significant resource has been committed to the implementation of a new reporting tool which will facilitate more sophisticated levels of interrogation and analysis.

Roll-out will encompass the development of a suite of core and kitemarked reports to support core quality assurance and enhancement processes. In due course this will include the development of interactive dashboards with end-user functionality, and, longer-term will facilitate investigation of new data sets, including those pertaining to the learning infrastructure, such as the VLE and library service.

### **Student Engagement**

#### ***Extension of the reach and impact of the suite of internal student evaluation questionnaires***

Analysis of evaluation sources in Session 2016/17 indicated that although students felt they had appropriate opportunities to provide feedback, they were less clear as to how this was acted upon. In response a new pilot Semester One feedback mechanism will supplement existing staff-student liaison opportunities and provide an additional in-year vehicle for the 'student voice', facilitating any concerns to be addressed via more timely interventions. In conjunction the 'Student Voice' will be an objective of our 2017/18 Student Partnership Agreement; activity in this regard will give consideration to closing the feedback loop and communicating enhancements which have been 'Achieved in Partnership'.

### **Student demographics, retention and attainment**

#### ***Support the implementation of our new Employability Hub, and graduate-level employability aspirations***

Informed by the outcomes of recent university review activity, during Session 2017/18, an *Employability Hub* will be established and combine the related activity of placement, careers education and study abroad within one organisational entity.

The purpose of this strand is to explore qualitative and quantitative metrics which can inform the work of the new student-facing service, and ultimately the successful transition of students into graduate level employment.

In addition the *RGU:ETLG* will identify **short-term project initiatives** within both a discipline and service area, to be supported by the Enhancement Theme funding.

It is anticipated that **benefits at sector and institutional levels** will include:

- Positive influence to students' experience, and performance.
- Common understanding of meaningful evidence sources, and institutions being better placed to respond to the evolving nature of metrics.
- Wider engagement of colleagues in a culture of evidence-based enhancement owned and valued both top down by senior management, and bottom up locally within course teams.

## **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

A number of the Year 1 projects will continue to be progressed executively in Year 2. In addition new activity aligned to the sector-strands, will encompass the following:

### **Supporting our Course Leaders**

*Sector Strand: Optimising Evidence*

*Key stakeholders will include: Course Leaders, Academic Strategic Leads, Heads of School*

In summer 2018 the university appointed Course Leaders to a new role descriptor which makes explicit the importance of effective course delivery and enhancement as a core aspect of the role. This project will fully engage with the activity of the collaborative cluster and seek 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
- Facilitate the sharing of practice across our subject areas

### **Development of 'Borderless Learning'**

*Sector Strand: Student Engagement*

*Key stakeholders: IT Services, VLE, Course Leaders, distance learning students*

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 will identify, analyse and discuss data pertaining to online learning. It will aim to develop an understanding of 'what works' for our current students in order to inform the ambitions for growth.

### Understanding the Graduate Apprentice student experience

*Sector Strand: Student demographics, retention and attainment*

*Key stakeholders: GA students, employers, Course Leaders*

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 will explore the experiences of students, employers and staff to understand areas of positive practice, as well as areas for development.

### **Dissemination of work**

A range of mechanisms will be employed to inform and engage the staff and student bodies internally, as well as promote activity externally:

- **Theme leadership** - The RGU:ETLG will, itself, act as an agent of dissemination and retain oversight of communications and events pertaining to the theme.
- **Reporting requirements** – The activity of the theme will be reported to formal committees of the university, facilitating additional feedback on progress and future plans.
- **Ownership at discipline/service level** – It is anticipated that named contacts be identified to assist with the flow of information. RGU:Union will facilitate the communication of relevant information to the student body.
- **Sharing and shaping** – To maximise the reach and impact of work strands it is envisaged that academic and support staff will be encouraged to provide examples of effective practice and share resources. The *DELTA Web* [The university's staff VLE area] will act as a repository for associated resources/products/case studies etc.
- **Events, staff development and networking opportunities** – There is an expectation that activity will be showcased via the suite of existing teaching and learning events (For example: our annual conference, Network for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, Focus On CPD series) as well as via bespoke events as deemed appropriate (For example: annual showcase).

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

The mechanisms outlined above will continue to be utilised to disseminate the activity undertaken institutionally, as well as at sector level, as appropriate.

Specifically – moving into years 2 and 3 – greater use will be made of standing committees to distribute key messages to our academic leaders. [For example; *Teaching Learning and Assessment Sub-Committee (TLASC)* and *Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)*]

In addition our new student leaders for session 2018/19 received early induction to the theme and will identify additional opportunities to engage in discussions with their representative networks, as well as the wider student body, on academic interests pertaining to the theme.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

RGU would be willing to lead a collaborative cluster related to the 'Student Voice' and the ethos of students being active – and equal - partners in their learning.

In addition RGU would welcome the opportunity to engage with the strand clusters of:

- Learning analytics; and
- Understanding data/data methodologies.

Other areas of interest include:

- Graduate Apprenticeships
- Widening Access
- Online learning/learners
- Impact of student services

Following further sector-level discussion on the collaborative clusters - RGU would welcome the opportunity to discuss possible inter-institutional collaboration with relevant colleagues.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

The university will be actively engaged in the following collaborative clusters:

- Learning Analytics
- Enhancing Programme Leadership Support
- Student-led project 'Responding to the Student Voice: Communicating the Impact'

These sector-level themes will provide valuable opportunities to explore our current thinking and positioning on key topics.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

Please refer 'Collaborative cluster work' section above.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

As outlined in the section above collaboration with institutions across Scotland will continue via the TLG and input to collaborative clusters.

In addition to the university will seek to further develop meaningful opportunities for dialogue with regional partners; and specifically with Abertay University and North East Scotland College.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

In addition to the mechanisms outlined in the 'Dissemination' section above, it is anticipated that a core aspect of each project plans which will be proposed mechanisms to engage staff and students.

Furthermore it is anticipated that each strand of activity will result in a relevant 'output' which can be shared appropriately (For example online video resource, guidance).

## Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

In addition building on the successful approach of Year 1 project work strands will continue to engage relevant staff and students directly in their development process as appropriate. In this regard a greater focus will be places on identifying evaluation indicators from the outset.

## Evaluation

Evaluation will form a key part of activity on a project-by-project, and overarching annual basis. Project scoping will include identification of the desired project goal and outputs. Evaluation will be conducted against these and include consideration of:

- Pre-defined measures [quantitative and qualitative]
- Summary of activity
- Engagement of stakeholders
- Key achievements
- Future opportunities/considerations
- Fully involving students in the development of initiatives will be key to the success of the theme.

RGU will also welcome the opportunity to input to the development of a common evaluation framework for all Enhancement Theme projects.

## Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

The university will engage fully in the sector evaluation activity to be progressed by Liz Thomas Associates, and in this regard will:

- Participate in collaborative evaluation discussions
- Select activities to be evaluated for 2018-19
- Consider the development of baseline indicators and targets as appropriate

Internally the *RGU Enhancement Theme Leadership Group (RGU:ETLG)* - as well as relevant standing committees - will continue to support both staff and student engagement as well as oversee and monitor progress.

<b>Plan author:</b>	James Dunphy, Director, DELTA Kirsty Campbell, Learning Analytics and Partnership Lead, DELTA
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2017

## Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	James Dunphy, Director, DELTA Kirsty Campbell, Learning Analytics and Partnership Lead, DELTA
<b>Date:</b>	13 September 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: SRUC (Scotland's Rural College)

#### Context

SRUC is currently developing its new strategy with outcomes and actions linked to the five key drivers: integration; innovation for impact; industry facing; international; and inspiring. The institutional plan for this Enhancement Theme is intended to support this strategic direction particularly in relation to SRUC's education portfolio, across all levels of delivery from further education at SCQF levels 4-6 through undergraduate higher education up to postgraduate taught and research provision. Note that integration of research and education activity to form an Academic Division is underway as part of SRUC's strategic development. Our approach to this Theme, as indicated in the plan that follows, is therefore one of inclusivity and engagement across the institution.

At the start of this academic session SRUC established a Business Intelligence (BI) Steering Committee responsible for aligning BI functionality with our strategic needs. There are two Education representatives on this Committee including the institutional lead for this Theme, and there is an Education Business Intelligence Team with wider membership that operates as a sub-group of the steering committee. Compiling and using information to inform decision-making, planning and management processes is therefore part of SRUC's strategic development and the work undertaken within the Enhancement Theme will complement this institutional approach.

#### Context – year 2 update

As mentioned above, SRUC is undergoing strategic change, and a new structure comprising three faculties (North, Central and South & West) is currently being developed alongside the creation of an Academic Division to integrate research and education activity. Faculty Deans have been appointed who are responsible for developing clearly distinctive but complementary plans for each faculty, with the outline business case for the South & West being the most advanced.

A Strategic Plan 2018-23 has been published which indicates SRUC's aim towards University status and Degree Awarding Powers. SRUC's continued work within the Theme will contribute to this strategic direction where there is a strong focus on the use of evidence to inform decision-making, planning and management processes. The Business Intelligence Steering Committee continues to drive this work forward, supported by an Education Steering Group and an Education Operational Group. A MyDay student portal is under development.

## Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Kyrsten Black Assistant Principal HE	Kyrsten Black Assistant Principal HE	
TLG staff representative	Lesley Howie Learning & Teaching Enhancement Manager HE (Member of SRUC's Academic Development Team)	Lesley Howie Learning & Teaching Enhancement Manager HE (Member of SRUC's Academic Development Team)	
TLG staff representative alternate	Sonia Filby Student Experience Manager	Ann Wood Senior Tutor (Elmwood Campus) and Core Skills Coordinator	
TLG student representative	Gemma Jones SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA) President	Andrew Robinson SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA) Vice President	
Additional Institutional Team Members	Louise Bulmer Programme Leader, Horse Care and Forgework (Oatridge Campus)	Louise Bulmer Programme Leader, Horse Care and Forgework (Oatridge Campus)	
	Paula Cuccurullo Learner Engagement Officer	Paula Cuccurullo Learner Engagement Officer	
		Sonia Filby Student Experience Manager	
	Jennifer Volk Business Intelligence Analyst	Jennifer Volk Business Intelligence Analyst	
	Adam Wardrop Programme Leader, Agriculture (Barony Campus)	Adam Wardrop Programme Leader, Agriculture (Barony Campus)	
	Linda Whillans Education Business Support Manager	Linda Whillans Education Business Support Manager	

## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

A key priority is to ensure that our activities continue to build on the integration of further and higher education at SRUC. This inclusivity was identified as an output, albeit unintended, from the previous Theme of Student Transitions - which was an ideal topic to breakdown any artificial or perceived barriers between these levels of delivery.

The overall outcome that we would wish to achieve is to foster an ethos that demonstrates the importance of considering evidence for enhancement across the whole student learning experience. We need to ensure that the necessary evidence (quantitative and qualitative) is available (and timely) and that this is used to reflect on and evaluate both good practice within SRUC and challenges/issues that exist and need to be addressed.

The internal activities that we deliver will be specific projects that help SRUC achieve this outcome and that foster both staff and student engagement.

Producing an SRUC Education Manual that is inclusive for both further and higher education has been a

major activity over the past few years and the Theme can help to support and further embed some of these policies and procedures e.g. there needs to be a stronger evidence base as part of annual monitoring.

There are many benefits that should result from this Theme for SRUC and there have been a range of discussions, beyond members of the institutional team, about our key areas of work. We would expect that specific projects undertaken at SRUC, for example developing Technical/Graduate Apprenticeships building on our experience in delivering Modern Apprenticeships, would be of interest to other Higher Education Institutions.

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

Year one activities will support the key priorities and outcomes we wish to achieve (noted above). The intention is to carry out three projects as follows:

#### Strengthen the Annual Monitoring and Institution-led Review Processes through improved use of Learning/Learner Analytics

SRUC has recently reviewed and updated its procedure for Institution-led Review (ILR), mainly to ensure that it includes all levels of delivery (SRUC expects FE provision to be in scope) and to indicate a greater emphasis on the student voice throughout the process, from initial preparation for review through to the development and implementation of the resulting action plan. A major building block for ILR is the annual monitoring process and SRUC introduced, for review of 2016-17, a common approach to annual programme monitoring which spans all further and higher education delivery. The expectation that support services would provide an annual monitoring report (which includes a quality enhancement plan) was also introduced. This project will work with teams to strengthen the evidence base that informs annual monitoring reports and hence lead to a more robust process and ultimately to an enhanced and more effective ILR. Activities should include:

- working with teams to develop reflection and evaluation based on the range of data available
- more effective evaluation of student retention, progression and achievement e.g. explore engagement of students receiving personal, learning or financial support
- enabling early interventions that impact positively on student outcomes
- strengthening the student voice in the annual monitoring process e.g. refresh of the unit/module evaluations, discussion of the 'live' quality enhancement plan with students

#### Investigate current delivery of Modern Apprenticeships to inform development of Technical/Graduate Apprenticeships

SRUC delivers a range of Modern Apprenticeships/SVQ2 and Modern Apprenticeships/SVQ3 which equate to SCQF level 6/7. However these are provided in a range of formats, some are entirely delivered through work based learning and others involve a varying level of on campus delivery. As part of our Theme activity we intend to evaluate existing data on the student experience to determine what mode of delivery is the most effective for the learning experience. This should then optimise the potential for delivery of Modern Apprenticeships at SRUC and inform the development of Technical/Graduate Apprenticeships. This is information that we would hope to share with the sector - see collaborative cluster work (below).

#### Assessing digital technologies in curriculum delivery

Perceptions around a sense of learning community was identified as part of the discussion at the launch event for the Theme and is of interest to SRUC with its disperse campus structure and use of both blended and distance learning. National Student Survey 2017 scores indicated a positive rating for

SRUC students agreeing that they felt part of a community of staff and students and that they had the right opportunities to work with other students as part of their course. This is something we need to be mindful of in this project which seeks to assess our current use of digital technologies and their future use in the development and delivery of the curriculum.

These Theme projects will be supplemented by pedagogic research activity - SRUC allocates funding, annually, to support a small number of research projects that link to the Enhancement Theme. The call for proposals for 2017-18 indicated the three proposed sector strands and submissions should be received and assessed for suitability (by the institutional team) within the next few weeks.

## Year 2 outcomes/activity

A key priority 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 across SRUC. The institutional team felt that the first year of the Theme gained some considerable momentum in staff and student engagement, both in internal activities and also externally in sector events and collaborative work, and we must not lose this.

During year two we wish 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 on aspects of the student learning experience. As part of this the institutional team has had discussions around the ethics of learning/learner analytics and this will continue as our work develops during year two. The involvement of students is pivotal as this is not neutral data but is about our students, and how we use it needs to be properly documented and understood by all.

Although there is a strong focus across the institution on Business Intelligence and therefore a high level of activity and a number of projects will be ongoing during 2018-19, it is anticipated that within the umbrella of the Enhancement Theme the focus will be on two project areas. These are:

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

This will continue and further embed the work undertaken in year one of the Theme - it became apparent early in this project that strengthening the evidence base that informs annual reporting, both through availability of learning/learner analytics and encouraging 'ownership' and analysis of this data to inform decision making, would be an activity that would likely run for the full length of the Theme. Activities in year two should include:

- Continuing to work with teams and with students to develop a sense of 'ownership' of data, leading to increased reflection and evaluation within the annual monitoring process across all curriculum departments and all levels of delivery.
- Further strengthen the annual monitoring process across student support services. The teams first participated in the annual quality dialogues in October 2017 based on their institution-led review. Full participation in the annual monitoring process is now expected.
- Exploring the use of data to address institutional challenges identified by internal monitoring procedures and external review/verification. SRUC is a multi-campus, small specialist institution and it is essential to focus support services where and when they are most needed e.g. addressing mental health issues or providing career advice.
- Continued work to strengthen the student voice in the annual monitoring process e.g. SRUC will again benefit from the input of an Education Scotland Student Team Member to facilitate focus groups with SRUC students. This will be in October at the Barony and Edinburgh campuses and the topics will be *induction/enrolment* and *support for progression*.
- Working with SRUC Students' Association (SRUCSA) on ways to further encourage student feedback and, most importantly, ensure that the response to this feedback is clearly and promptly

provided to students (closing the feedback loop).

#### Digital technologies in curriculum delivery

This is again a continuation of a year one project aimed to improve the use of technology in learning and teaching to enhance the student experience. Work for year two should include:

- The development of the digital classroom at the Barony campus. This was agreed during the last academic session and is now in place for 2018-19.
- Further work to support the use of video conferencing in cross campus teaching delivery - an area which constantly receives negative feedback from students, and staff.
- Activities to increase engagement of students with unit/module evaluations and ensure timely interventions, as appropriate, to improve the learning and teaching experience. This will include using an app based survey in pilot modules taught across a range of programmes.

This Theme work will again be supplemented by pedagogic research activity - SRUC allocates funding, annually, to support a small number of research projects that link to the current Enhancement Theme. The call for proposals for 2018-19 is currently 'live' with the expectation that projects will be approved, and appropriate funding allocated, by early/mid October.

#### **Dissemination of work**

In the previous Theme SRUC used an existing committee (staff membership comprising primarily department QA/QE leads) as institutional team. This was generally effective although engagement and dissemination of both institutional and sector outputs beyond the curriculum departments was limited. Therefore for Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience a specific group has been constituted to widen engagement across SRUC, including with key teams in other Divisions such as Information Systems. This institutional team is also more inclusive of both further and higher education delivery.

The team will report to both the Learning and Teaching Committee and the Education Divisional Management Team ensuring engagement with, and endorsement of, Theme activities at strategic level within SRUC. It is essential that there is engagement with the Theme at the operational level and the institutional team will therefore also report to the Quality Assurance/Enhancement Group which includes key quality leads from within each curriculum department. Student representation and engagement should be established and promoted through both of these routes. The work within the Theme will also be communicated more widely across the institution through the Business Intelligence Steering Committee, as mentioned in the context for this plan.

Considering that SRUC delivers its education provision across six disperse campuses, dissemination is always a challenge. Therefore the QA/QE leads (Department Quality Enhancement Coordinators) are pivotal to staff and student engagement - supported by the staff on the institutional team from the Barony, Elmwood and Oatridge campuses involved in further education delivery and management. Dissemination will take place through staff communications such as the E-Staff Information Note which is produced monthly by the Academic Development Team ('quality' team), via department staff meetings and management team meetings, and by incorporating Theme activities within training sessions and workshops e.g. on policy and procedure (as indicated above). Promoting student engagement should be further supported by including a Learner Engagement Officer on the institutional team.

It is expected that outputs from Theme activities, including funded projects, will be shared via the annual Learning and Teaching Conference. Although there has been external input to this conference through workshop facilitation, plenary presentations and poster contributions, SRUC has not been able

to invite attendees from other institutions due to limited space. This is one development we would like to see over the next few years, that we can widen attendance at SRUC's Learning and Teaching Conference to other institutional teams.

There are also weekly pan-SRUC seminars which are delivered by video conference to all campuses and other sites e.g. research farms, consultancy offices. Currently, topics are mainly based on research outputs and it would be desirable to increase learning and teaching activities disseminated through these seminars.

SRUC institutional team members will be expected to engage with Theme events and to collaborate with other institutions where appropriate.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

The end of year report for the first year of the Theme was very positive about the various channels used to disseminate the work internally, and the resulting increase in student and staff engagement with Theme activity both internally and externally. Therefore little change in institutional team structure is expected. The internal reporting mechanisms outlined in the year one plan of work will also be the same - both to practitioners and students, and to senior management.

The outputs from Theme activities, including funded projects, will again be shared via the annual Learning and Teaching Conference. At the 2018 Conference a set of three posters were displayed covering the Quality Enhancement Framework and therefore including the work undertaken during year one of this Theme. Additional copies of these posters have been printed to provide a more permanent display at each campus which should further aid staff and student awareness. The plasma screens at each campus could also be used to promote activities.

SRUC institutional team members will be expected to engage with Theme events and to collaborate with other institutions, as indicated in the section below, and therefore communicate work externally. Attendance at the 2018 Enhancement Theme Conference was very encouraging although there were no conference proposals forthcoming from SRUC staff or students. We will further encourage submissions of posters, workshops and presentations etc. for year two of the Theme in 2019 and for the conference in 2020 when the Theme draws to a close.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

It is unlikely that SRUC has the capacity, currently, to lead on a cluster although we are interested in being involved in appropriate work. There were a range of topics discussed at the launch event and, should these come to fruition, SRUC would seek to engage with:

- Sense of community, dispersed HEIs and rural learning; and
- Graduate/Technical apprenticeships

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

There is a risk, because of the large number of topics and activities that are potentially 'on the table', to over commit on inter-institutional engagement and collaboration - although there are tremendous benefits to SRUC to engage with these sector activities. It would be sensible for SRUC to work with institutions around articulation and widening access (which might be a collaborative cluster) and that could involve e.g. UHI, UWS and Edinburgh Napier. This would also fit with learning/learner analytics and our proposed work around progression, retention and attainment. SRUC has experience of measuring success in progression from SQA Higher National to degree level study (the 2+2 degree model).

If the topic around creating/maintaining a sense of learning community is not progressed as a cluster

activity, SRUC would be interested in inter-institutional collaboration on this area in relation to curriculum development.

As a general comment, how to work together would need to be discussed although one overarching consideration will have to be the time commitment - it will be important to identify common activities at institutional level that would be supported and enhanced by collaboration, and then explore linkages with other institutions and be realistic in how we take this forward. Although it may be appropriate to meet face-to-face we also need to make use of digital technologies to support inter-institutional collaboration.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

SRUC has 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 will 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.

Both of these projects fit very well with SRUC's main project regarding strengthening the use of evidence in annual monitoring. In particular the second one should assist SRUC in addressing the challenge of 'ownership' of data by programme teams, leading to a greater likelihood of in-depth analysis and informed decision making at programme level.

One member of the institutional team, a data analyst, attended a recent workshop on Datafication of Higher Education at the University of Stirling. This provided an opportunity to discuss the ethical considerations surrounding the use of data to enhance the student experience, and feedback has already been shared with institutional team members and other interested colleagues. It is very important that students are also engaged in further discussion on ethics as SRUC develops additional reporting through the business intelligence project. Should there be further events in this area SRUC would be keen to participate.

Also during year one, there was a workshop in which SRUC participated around distance and belonging and if this was to continue in some way then it may be of interest.

There will also be sector-wide activities that SRUC will engage in.

However with the level of strategic change and restructuring that is currently taking place, coupled with SRUC undergoing Enhancement-led Institutional Review in the latter part of 2018-19, we have to be careful not to over commit to inter-institutional engagement.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

Staff and student engagement will be encouraged and supported through the various routes indicated above. The grant available for Theme work will be used to support the projects, together with staff and student participation in internal and external activities. There is a small amount of additional financial support through the annual funding allocated to pedagogic research projects.

One of the projects currently being undertaken as part of SRUC's Student Partnership Agreement, is a continuation of a Student Evaluation project which will focus on the improvement of student participation in, and feedback on, student surveys. This work is under the leadership of the Learner Engagement Manager and the SRUCSA President, and will be supported by Academic Development Team as appropriate.

## Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

SRUC is a multi-campus institution and therefore providing support can be more challenging. However the intention is to build on the work that the institutional team and in particular Academic Development Team undertook last year by engaging with as wide a group of staff as possible through roadshows, workshops etc. This support will be linked to the projects/activities outlined earlier in the plan.

Close liaison with SRUCSA is essential for student engagement and this will be supported through the Learner Engagement Officers (LEOs). The TLG staff representative should continue to work closely with the SRUCSA Vice President and the LEOs on theme related activities e.g. the project within the Student Partnership Agreement which focuses on the improvement of student participation in, and feedback on, student surveys will continue as least for the early part of 2018-19. In addition to membership of the institutional team, the SRUCSA Vice President is a member of the Quality Assurance/Enhancement Group and this will further aid student engagement.

As in previous years, SRUC will use Theme funding to support staff time for participation in and engagement with Enhancement Theme activities. There is also funding support for pedagogic research projects linked to institutional Theme activities as previously mentioned.

## Evaluation

There will be regular meetings of the institutional team to monitor progress and the team will report at both management and operational levels. Due to the disperse nature of SRUC there will be limited face-to-face meetings so regular use of Skype for Business will be important to ensure that our planned work is progressing on track.

Measuring impact of Enhancement Theme activities is always a challenge as they tend to form part of a wider approach to quality enhancement. We do, however, expect that departments will reflect on engagement with the QAA Enhancement Theme as part of their annual monitoring report. It is also a topic for discussion as part of the annual quality dialogues with individual departments. These involve Senior Managers, members of the Academic Development Team, a SRUCSA representative and a Learner Engagement Officer in discussion with the Head of Department, Programme Leaders and the Department Quality Enhancement Coordinator. There are strong linkages between members of the institutional team and the annual monitoring process, and it is expected that this will help to identify impact of the Enhancement Theme.

## Evaluation – year 2 update

The institutional lead and the TLG staff representative participated in an interview with student interns based at the University of Stirling who were conducting a research project on learning analytics (part of the collaborative project led by the University of Strathclyde). Both institutional team members also participated in a phone interview with Professor Liz Thomas as part of the Theme evaluation commissioned by QAAS. SRUC found these discussions extremely valuable for reflecting on work to date and as an aid in formulating our plans for the remainder of the Theme.

SRUC has also agreed to participate in the project commissioned by QAAS on retention and progression.

Within SRUC the institutional team will continue to meet on a regular basis to monitor progress against this institutional plan and to ensure that progress reports are discussed at both management and operational levels.

As an overall outcome for the Theme, SRUC would expect to foster an ethos that demonstrates the importance of considering evidence for enhancement across the whole student learning experience, and at all delivery levels. The institutional team will monitor/evaluate a range of ways in which this cultural change could be demonstrated, for example:

- Additional functionality being developed in our reporting mechanisms with the focus clearly on improving the student experience.
- An increase in student engagement in surveys.
- A notable change in the focus of discussions with curriculum departments and support services teams during the annual quality dialogues. These discussions are based on the annual monitoring reports and we would expect to see a stronger evidence base being used by teams to support their action plans for the coming year.
- Feedback from external review e.g. SRUC has an annual review from Landex (Land Based Colleges Aspiring to Excellence) and this includes evaluation of SRUC progress around the use of data.
- An increase in staff and student participation in pedagogic research activity.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Lesley Howie, Learning and Teaching Enhancement Manager Higher Education
<b>Date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2017

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Lesley Howie, Learning and Teaching Enhancement Manager Higher Education
<b>Date:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: University of Stirling

*This document is intended to be a cumulative plan for your institution, which you will add to year on year as the Theme progresses. At the end of the Theme, this document will show how plans may have developed and changed over time. The plan for each year should be around three to four sides of A4.*

*Italicised text in this document can be removed as it is advisory.*

#### Context

*Provide any statements that might be helpful in explaining your institution's context and approach and how this plan supports the achievement of institutional priorities. In subsequent years, any context statement could draw on salient points from the previous year's learning/outcomes and reflect any changes in the strategic direction of your institution.*

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

We have approached the implementation of the Enhancement Theme at Stirling through aligning 3 key outcomes, which use evidence for enhancement, to existing institutional strategies. By doing so we have created 3 clear work streams which are led by a named individual and supported by students, professional services and academic colleagues. This model has proved to be effective and efficient and will continue to be our approach for the coming year.

Our first year has been largely involved in scoping and evidence gathering. Our year 2 plans will build on this towards implementation. Dissemination will increase as implementation develops. We are also thinking about how we will measure interim impact of our work towards the end of the second year, on the way to achieving our overall outcome aims thereafter.

Having reflected on each of the three outcomes, we have decided that though outcome 3 will remain centred around the institutional priority of enhancing graduate outcomes for our students to the level of 85% obtaining graduate level jobs by 2021, the work on developing a new approach to PDP will not be the main focus of activity for the coming year. Nevertheless, there will be ongoing scoping work and discussion around exploring options for pilot PDP activity continuing. In year 2, the primary enhancement activity under Outcome 3 will focus on the collection, dissemination and use of employability related data and its most effective use. This aligns to our Institutional Employability Strategy and to the work being undertaken in the Cluster (see below)

#### Institutional team

*Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title.*

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
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Institutional lead	Prof Alison Green Dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement	Prof Alison Green Dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement	
TLG staff representative	Lesley Grayburn	Lesley Grayburn	
TLG staff representative alternate	Elizabeth Robertson	Elizabeth Robertson	
TLG student representative	Matt Adie	Daniel Wright	
<i>Outcome 1 leader</i>	Elizabeth Robertson	Elizabeth Robertson	
<i>Outcome 2 leader</i>	Richard Aird	Richard Aird	
<i>Outcome 3 leader</i>	Lesley Grayburn	Lesley Grayburn	

## Planned activity: Year 1

### Overall outcomes/activity

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Key priorities for our institution in Learning & Teaching are:

- Student retention
- Student experience: as measured by NSS; PTES; PRES
- Graduate Outcomes (employment, further study etc.)
- Effective teaching & assessment
- Effective use of learning spaces
- Quality assurance

Through the Enhancement Theme we wish to improve outcomes in some of these areas:

### 1. Outcome

We wish to improve student retention figures institutionally to reduce non-continuation to <5% by 2021.

### Enhancement

As an institution, University of Stirling has robust methods of evidence gathering and evidence based decision making at institutional level. Our systems are less well developed at faculty and programme level where evidence is held but is often not processed and presented in user friendly and targeted ways. Our key priority is to ensure that the evidence and data we have, is used more effectively to inform the key aims for learning & teaching, particularly student retention, at faculty and programme level. Key student data should be routinely available, in accessible format to support evidence based decisions and interventions by module coordinators, programme directors and faculty staff.

This outcome will be informed by input from students, academic and professional staff.

**We will deliver** the following activities:

- 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
- train programme and faculty staff on the use of this data to achieve maximum, evidence-based impact on retention.

**The benefit** of this activity to the institution will be:

- impact on retention of student through improved targeting of intervention and resource to improve student experience

## **2.Outcome**

We wish to continue to improve student engagement across our programmes

### **Enhancement**

There is a growing body of evidence to suggest that “learning analytics-based practices hold the potential to transform traditional learning” (Ali, Rajan, & Ratliff, 2016). We wish to develop learning analytics with two aims:

- Analytics *for* learning – where students have access to data that help them to reflect on progress, set goals and measure progress. These data may be incorporated into a student dashboard
- Analytics *of* learning – where data are used to analyse student performance and identify where support might be targeted. This may alert us to patterns of behaviour that give an early warning of non-continuation. This will also alert us to what is working and what is not in our teaching.

Data relating to students will be obtained, stored and used in accordance with University policy, current regulation and law.

This outcome will be informed by input from students, academic and professional staff.

**We will deliver** the following activities:

- A review of the capabilities of our current systems to offer learning analytics
- Identify with academics and students the types of learning analytics which are helpful to them
- Provide analytic information to staff and students in an accessible format and support them to use this

**The benefit** of this activity:

- to the institution will be enhanced engagement by students in their learning and the ability to target intervention more effectively
- to the sector will be to add to the evidence base available to the sector and to share best practice, in this developing area of practice

## **3. Outcome**

We wish to enhance graduate outcomes of our students to the level of 85% obtaining graduate level jobs by 2021.

### **Enhancement**

In line with our Employability Strategy we wish to develop a new approach to Personal Development Planning (PDP) and create an accompanying e-portfolio that will provide support for the student's learner journey. It will also create a repository of evidence of graduate attributes, skills development and attainment that students can build up over their University career. This evidence will provide opportunities for reflection on skills and attributes students have acquired through their academic studies and opportunities in the co and extra curriculum, some of which can be used to develop CV's and job applications.

This outcome will be informed by input from students, academic and professional staff and learning from best practice elsewhere.

**We will deliver** the following activities:

- scope the requirements of PDP at Stirling
- procure relevant software, if necessary, which integrates with our current systems

- design and develop a PDP and accompanying e-portfolio system with input from relevant stakeholders including students
- integrate the PDP into some curricular activities and co-curricular activities
- launch the PDP to students, staff and employers
- review and measure the impact of a new approach to PDP and the use of the e-portfolio
- continue to develop the use and engagement in the PDP by staff and students

**The benefit** of this activity:

- will assist students in developing and articulating their employability skills during their University career to improve their student experience and graduate outcomes

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Outcome 1: complete scoping project and assess current data

- review data available
- work with faculties, students and programme teams to determine the type of information they require and the way it should be presented to meet our key aims

Outcome 2: complete scoping project and assess current data

- A review of the capabilities of our current systems to offer learning analytics

Outcome 3: complete scoping of approach to PDP and acquisition of platform to support PDP

- Wide consultation with relevant stakeholders on new approach to PDP
- Create proposal and seek institutional approval
- Scope appropriate platform for e-portfolio to support PDP
- Acquire platform
- Begin to develop content

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

#### **OUTCOME 1 (retention)**

##### **On-going activity:**

- Continue to review data available.
- Further stakeholder engagement with staff and students to define data entry requirements.
- Continue to work with colleagues in Information Services, Planning and Registry on delivery, analysis and presentation of data.

#### **OUTCOME 2 (learning analytics)**

##### **On-going activities:**

- Further stakeholder consultation with staff and students, regarding their requirements from learning analytics tools.
- Development of a business case by February 2019, to request investment in learning analytics tools.
- Development of a procurement specification for learning analytics.
- Commencement of Jisc LA pilot trial, by January 2019.

### **OUTCOME 3 (employability)**

#### **On-going activity:**

- Ongoing scoping work and work towards agreed institutional approach on PDP
- Explore options for pilot PDP activity and appropriate e-portfolio

#### **Additional activity:**

There is a wealth of employability linked data and relevant labour market information available at an institutional, local and national level. In order to enhance the student experience and improve on our graduate outcomes our key priorities are to:

- Provide a comprehensive dataset that meets the need of Faculties and supports evidence based decisions and interventions
- Provide effective, user friendly and engaging methods to share the data and the key messages that it contains with staff and students

This outcome will be informed from input from students, academic and professional staff.

We will deliver the following activities:

- Review the employability related data and evidence currently available
- Work with staff and students to review how it is currently used and determine any additional requirements in terms of timing, content or presentation
- Consider how the data could be presented to different stakeholders
- Explore how the data can be effectively used to identify and support specific cohorts and groups

The benefit of this activity:

- Improved understanding – students, academics, professional services
- Impact on graduate outcomes through targeting of interventions and resources

#### **Year 2 outcomes (additional activities)**

- Review data available and how it is currently utilised
- Work with faculties and students to determine the type of information they require and the way it should be presented
- Consider how the data could be presented to different stakeholders

### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

We will develop a communication strategy for both internal and external dissemination to engage staff, students and external stakeholders

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

We will continue to disseminate information to staff and students through institutional newsletters; focus groups and events. We will engage with external and internal audience through the website and social media around events.

We communicate our progress through the institutional governance committee structure including our Education and Student Experience Committee and Academic Council.

We recently held an event at Stirling on Learning Analytics with guest speakers from South Africa and Edinburgh. We promoted the event through the QAA and cluster networks and it was attended by 50 academics and professional services staff from throughout Scotland. There was significant

social media interest and artefacts from the day are being made available for use in the University and in the sector.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We would be interested in being involved in the employability collaborative cluster with the emphasis on DHLE and LEO. Lesley Grayburn joint Head of our Careers and Employability Service would lead this activity.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

#### **Outcome 1:**

We will actively engage with the collaborative cluster for supporting programme leaders.

#### **Outcome 2:**

We have actively engaged in the collaborative cluster for learning analytics, and recently hosted two QAA-funded student interns. During year two, we will continue to support the collaborative cluster, both in terms of direction of travel and practical assistance, such as hosting additional internships.

#### **Outcome 3:**

Part of the successful collaborative clusters bid that will see five universities work together to evaluate and provide enhancement to the careers support offered to students at the time of leaving a Scottish institution. Initially this will involve analysing existing data on the current services to graduates in Scottish universities and a research project which will ask final year students and graduates what services they want or need from a Careers Service to allow them to enter into an appropriate level outcome after graduation. Activities will then be piloted around the research results in order to evaluate relative impact.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

We are keen to work with Dundee University; Abertay University and others on collaborative work around widening access including integrated degrees and graduate apprenticeships under this theme. Initial contacts have been made by Prof Tim Whalley.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

#### **Outcome 1 (retention):**

In partnership with the working group on outcome 2 we are keen to work with other institutions and students to discuss and develop our ethical guiding principles on the use of data to inform retention activities.

#### **Outcome 2 (LA):**

Whilst we will engage with the collaborative cluster, we also have an appetite to develop a student-led ethical policy for learning analytics. If the collaborative cluster chooses focuses on other priorities, we plan to approach a range of external partners, including NUS Scotland, SPARQS and all 19 HEIs, to gauge interest in developing a nationwide Scottish ethical policy for learning analytics, led by students.

### Supporting staff and student engagement

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

We will support staff through providing administrative assistance to those involved in the theme. We will provide skills training as required, such as in presentation of data.  
We will work closely with our Student Union and students directly.

### Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Outcome 1, 2 and 3 need to run stakeholder engagement exercises in the coming year. We have agreed with the Student Union to run a joint event(s) to address the student consultation required on all three outcomes in Autumn semester. The Enhancement Theme will provide finance to organise and support this event. We will also identify key academic and professional staff who can support these events towards effective outputs.

The Outcome leaders will liaise with each other on engagement required from staff along similar lines.

### Evaluation

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

We will monitor progress through a small Enhancement Themes Group which will meet at least 4 times year, which in turn will report to our Education and Student Experience Committee which governs the strategic direction and monitors the implementation of agreed strategy and policy relating to education and the student experience in the University. We will monitor impact on metrics through our existing strategic “Making it Happen” process.

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

We have already had preliminary discussions with Liz Thomas on the organisation of our work and how we measure impact. We will continue to work with Liz and engage in the events she is planning.

We are actively taking part in sector analysis of HEI practices around retention and learning analytics to inform sectoral evaluation.

Our two key measures of interim impact at the end of year 2 are:

- To have a process in place to describe and define, for the relevant audiences, the statistically significant data we currently hold on retention, learning analytics and employability as a basis for enhancement.
- To have produced guiding ethical principles on the use of student data.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Prof Alison Green, Dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement
<b>Date:</b>	21 November 2017

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Prof Alison Green, Dean for Teaching Quality Enhancement
<b>Date:</b>	11 September 2018



# Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

## Institutional Plan for: University of St Andrews

### Context

This plan of work was drafted in consultation with key stakeholders and the following strategies:

[University Strategy](#)

[Student Experience Strategy](#)

[Learning and Teaching Strategy](#)

[Quality Enhancement Strategy](#)

Key priorities for the institution in Academic Year 2017-18 were to: enhance the postgraduate student experience (taught and research); review teaching and learning space; and introduce new technologies to enhance and transform the student learning experience.

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

In year two, we plan to take a streamlined approach to managing our portfolio of Theme work. The large institutional team will be replaced with a small steering group (comprising the Theme lead, strand leads and the Director of Education from the Students' Association). The group will meet monthly instead of three times per semester. Other colleagues involved in the portfolio of Theme work will continue to provide support to the strand leads. The Enhancement Theme is now a standing item on the agenda of the University's Academic Monitoring Group, and a member of the steering group will formally report into the University's Student Experience Committee.

The University recently appointed a new Assistant Vice-Principal (Provost) and Director of the Graduate School (for interdisciplinary studies) who is responsible for improving the experience of all postgraduates (taught and research students). One of her priorities is to re-introduce a survey for PGRs, use an evidence base to identify areas working well/for development, and track improvements over time.

Preparations have now commenced for ELIR in anticipation of a Spring 2020 visit. Gerald Prescott will temporarily replace Ros Campbell as Theme Lead in Semester two of Academic Year 2018-19 to enable Ros to assist with the production of a Reflective Analysis report.

## **institutional team**

**Year 1:** Ros Campbell (Theme Lead and TLG staff representative); Zach Davis (TLG student representative); Nikki Broughton (Clerk to the institutional team); Jenni Awang (Information Analyst, Planning); Paul Gardner (Senior Lecturer, Psychology & Neuroscience); Elise Hugueny-Léger (Senior Lecturer, Modern Languages); Graham Kirby (Pro Dean Admissions and Advising [Science]); Sharon Leahy (Pro Dean Curriculum [Science]); David Rathel (Postgraduate Representative); and Stephen Tyre (Pro Dean Admissions and Advising [Arts & Divinity]).

**Year 2:** Ros Campbell (Theme Lead and TLG staff representative); Alice Foulis (TLG student representative); Nikki Broughton (Clerk to the steering group); Jon Issberner (Associate Dean [Science & Medicine]); Graham Kirby (Pro Dean Admissions and Advising [Science]); Sharon Leahy (Pro Dean Curriculum [Science]); Gerald Prescott (Senior Lecturer and TLG staff representative alternate); and Stephen Tyre (Pro Dean Admissions and Advising [Arts & Divinity]).

### **1. Overall outcomes/activity for the 3-year theme**

*What are your key priorities? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What activities will you deliver? What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

- a. Understand the nature of evidence in relation to the student experience, gather the right data and use this effectively to enhance the student experience.
- b. Contextualise and present data in an accessible and meaningful way.
- c. Deploy a better understanding of evidence in relation to learning and teaching space.
- d. Deploy a better understanding of evidence in relation to the postgraduate (PG) experience.
- e. Design a toolkit for staff who wish to enhance and evidence their teaching practice.
- f. Engage students and staff in the work of the Enhancement Theme.
- g. Work collaboratively across the sector.
- h. Contribute to at least one collaborative cluster.
- i. Learn from practice elsewhere in the sector and outwith Scotland.
- j. Share good practice internally and externally.
- k. Contribute to a common methodology at sector level for gathering evidence to demonstrate teaching quality to enable the sector to understand what good teaching means.

### **2. Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What activities will you deliver? What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

Our key priorities were aligned to the University strategies noted in the 'Context' section on page 1 of this document, and the sector strands set out by the QAA:

- 1. Optimise the use of evidence to improve the student experience:** Activity beyond regular discussion at institutional team meetings involved presentations and discussion at a learning and teaching away afternoon and two lunchtime workshops, focused respectively on "what we currently do" and "what would we like to do and how could we do it". A summary paper distilled conclusions and recommendations from the workshops, and informed next steps. Outcomes included an improved understanding of what data is currently collected, and the aspects of student experience enhancement that might be informed by it.
- 2. Use evidence to improve the design of learning and teaching space:** A professional survey of learning and teaching space was conducted, with a report published in February 2018. Anticipated outcomes included concrete plans to equip our learning and teaching spaces more

effectively; increased student satisfaction; staff better equipped to develop teaching; and a contribution to learning and teaching methodology at a sector level.

3. **Optimise the use of student-led teaching awards data:** Nominations from the student-led teaching awards were analysed for the first time to identify common themes and trends for dissemination and further use. Outcomes included the identification of good practice and excellence within learning and teaching, and an insight into factors that contribute to a high quality student experience.
4. **Explore potential opportunities to diversify the student demographic.** Preliminary work was carried out in year one to identify work streams and desired outcomes.

In addition, we identified markers to measure success and set up a funding scheme.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities? What outcomes do you want to achieve? What activities will you deliver? What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

#### **1. Optimise the use of evidence to enhance the student experience**

- a) **Investigate factors influencing degree outcomes:** This project will analyse existing institutional data on students' backgrounds and their academic records to investigate whether there are significant correlations between background and academic engagement, and academic outcomes. The outcome of this project will be to identify correlations, with the aims of providing insights to: better inform the recruitment and admissions process; and support targeted interventions with particular student cohorts. An analysis will be carried out, subject to ethics and data protection approval, of correlations between: previous school, previous school qualifications; postcode; academic alerts received; academic intervention warnings received; previous marks and grades; and patterns of access to learning resources on degree award, degree classification and success in progression between years. The benefits are unknown, depending greatly on whether not significant and interesting correlations are identified.
- b) **Create an online dashboard to make statistical analysis for survey data more accessible:** This project will make statistical analysis for survey data more accessible to schools and units via an online dashboard. We frequently collect views and/or information from staff and students and it is often useful to produce a report (with digested results) for easy decision-making. The outcomes will be an online tool that can be used to upload data, perform analysis and automatically generate a report for data routinely collected by the university. This will enable evidence-based decision making when making interventions to improve the student experience for both undergraduate and postgraduate communities. Enabling activities will include code writing for the analysis and automatic report generation for the survey data. An interpretation guide will also be produced to ensure the results are easy to understand by all. The benefits at the sector and institutional levels will be systematic treatment of routinely collected data with robust statistical methods, which provide 'colour coded' results for easy inspection. This will provide context for (point estimate) data which on its own may be unreliable for decision making.
- c) **Use nomination data from teaching awards to identify and share good practice:** Nomination data gathered as part of the student-led teaching awards was analysed for the first time in AY 2016-17 as part of the Theme. This report will be disseminated to academic

staff at Learning and Teaching Committee, and the Enhancement Theme steering group will discuss how to improve the template for annual reporting.

Activities in year two will include: the creation of a template report for the annual analysis of nomination data, the delivery of Master Classes (in Small Group Teaching, Taught Postgraduate Supervision, and Innovation) by award winners/nominees; the production of best practice guides (e.g. What makes a good lecturer?), and the creation of a guide for Directors of Education on how to effectively run Teaching Awards. We will also examine how the awards are advertised to students, and the ratio of nominations to students in each school. This work will take us further in our goal of capturing student perspectives on the factors that contribute to a high-quality student experience, and disseminating this good practice in a range of formats to support enhancement.

**2. Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces:**

This project aims to build a body of evidence from staff and students to allow us to evaluate the impact that modernised teaching spaces can have on learning and teaching. Through this process, we aim to establish a methodology for evaluating similar projects in the future. Using both formal and informal feedback methods, we will investigate and report on: the types of learning activities which work best in these spaces; any perceived changes in teaching practice and class interaction as a result of the changed environment; any effect on motivation; and the appropriateness and scalability of the furniture and technology provided in the new spaces. Benefits include the provision of a methodology that can be reused to evaluate future projects, the gathering of evidence which will ultimately help us to support a wider range of pedagogies and inform future procurement decisions for the University, and the sharing of the results and the methodology across the sector.

**3. Enhance attainment and build diversity across the student demographic:** This project aims to increase University staff involvement in the First Chances School outreach Programme to raise attainment levels in Fife Schools. Additional outcomes include enhancing the longevity of support to Schools through online resources, and greater staff understanding and expertise in relation to the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). Activities will include the delivery of Science, Maths and English Workshops in schools, and the creation of a bank of online materials for these classes.

Anticipated benefits are as follows:

- a) Increased engagement with, and enhanced commitment to, schools in the local area.
- b) Increase in widening access applications to the University.
- c) Further promotion of the University and its courses within the local area.
- d) Increased awareness of CfE at University level.
- e) Contributing to a unique outreach practice model, which may be rolled out in other local authorities.
- f) Contributing to the national framework by raising attainment and reducing the attainment gap.

**4. Develop the link between evidence and pedagogy:** This strand of work aims to: (a) raise awareness of the need for pedagogical research and (b) publicise existing research. Activities will include delivering a series of workshops designed to facilitate pedagogical research across the University, and sharing existing projects which link evidence to pedagogy development.

### 3. Dissemination of work

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

- a. **Internal:** Institutional team; Learning & Teaching Committee; Students' Association's Education Committee; School Presidents' Forum; PG Executive Forum; Student Experience Committee; Enhancement Theme web pages; annual Good Practice Exchange; and other events organised as part of our strands of work.
- b. **External:** Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC); Theme Leaders' Group (TLG); conferences including the Enhancement Theme conference; the University's website; meetings with counterparts in the sector.

### Dissemination of work – year 2 update

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

As above with the following additions: Postgraduate Research Committee and the introduction of Enhancement Theme champions in Schools. We will promote and communicate our work in relation to strand two ('Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces') via webpages and blog posts, social media, and the production, presentation and sharing of the final report.

### 4. Collaborative cluster work

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity? (Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We would encourage the QAA to ensure that collaborative clusters are ambitious in nature and drive the sector forward. As clusters are not yet established, we are unable to confirm our intended level of involvement. Areas of interest for the University are:

- a. The learner journey: collecting evidence for the preparedness of students entering University study. St Andrews is particularly interested in testing the assumption in the sector that students with Scottish school qualifications underperform at 1000 level Modern Languages. We would be interested to work with other institutions that may have a different approach.
- b. Sensitive contextualisation for measuring student employment and graduate outcomes across Scottish institutions.
- c. Student survey design. Many surveys are issued within institutions and are of varying quality.

### Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

**Learning Analytics:** St Andrews is part of a Learning Analytics collaborative cluster led by the University of Strathclyde. Colleagues from St Andrews attended two scoping workshops in year one. Two student interns based at the University of Stirling developed and implemented an information gathering strategy to collect an overview of the operational framework used by Scottish institutions when implementing the use of learning analytics.

Year two work will involve the development of a web-based resource populated with the research gathered by the Stirling interns, to enable the sharing and promotion of good practice across the sector. In addition, a sector-wide project will be undertaken to gain student views on learning analytics and the specific needs required by particular groups of students, leading to a report distributed to the sector. It is proposed that student interns take forward both these pieces of work.

Collaborative activities will include hot-desking support for the interns, liaising between the interns and student groups, and work around the creation of the framework, which will become clearer once the year one report is available.

**Retention and progression:** The Open University is undertaking commissioned work on retention and progression under the student demographics, retention and progression sector strand of the Theme. They have completed phase one of the project, which involved desk research, and have moved to phase two, in which they would like to explore issues related to retention, progression and the use of data and evidence in more depth. St Andrews agreed to complete a short survey and participate in a telephone interview in September 2018 to assist with the research.

## 5. Wider inter-institutional collaboration

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Potential inter-institutional collaborative work will become clear once Theme Leaders have met as a group and had sight of institutional plans. The sector will then be in a position to identify areas of commonality in relation to key institutional priorities and collaborative clusters.

## Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

The St Andrews Learning and Teaching Initiative (SALTI) will reach out to other University pedagogical research groups in the Scottish Sector and invite colleagues to contribute to the series of workshops. SALTI will hold an annual conference at which external speakers will be invited to speak and present data from their institutions.

The June 2018 Enhancement Theme conference featured a workshop on the use of nomination data from teaching awards. The session was delivered by colleagues from sparqs, Edinburgh and Stirling. Colleagues from Aberdeen, Abertay and Dundee were also in attendance, and expressed their interest in making better use of nomination data. We will make contact with these institutions in order to share our methods, learn from each other and generate ideas in relation to this strand of work.

## 6. Supporting staff and student engagement

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Staff and students will engage and be kept up to date with Theme planning and activities via the communication methods outlined in section 3. Wider student engagement could be achieved through School President emails and the Weekly Sabbaticals email. The institutional lead and team members will provide support and advice to the community, and discuss this area at the team meeting scheduled for 5 December. The team will provide funding to Enhancement Theme projects in a mixture of open bidding and commissioned strategic projects.

## Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

As above with following strand-specific additions:

**Create an online dashboard to make statistical analysis for survey data more accessible:** The dashboard tool will be advertised to the Directors of Teaching in academic schools and relevant staff in service units via email. The tool will also be accompanied by a user guide available for download.

### **Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces**

- a) By providing supported open access opportunities to the refurbished rooms
- b) By clearly communicating how valuable staff and student feedback is for both sets of stakeholders
- c) By providing both formal and informal opportunities to feedback
- d) By dealing with any technical or environmental problems identified through the feedback quickly, and communicating this to users.

### **Enhance attainment and build diversity across the student demographic**

- a) By working closely with the two First Chances coordinators within the University's Admissions Unit to develop a workshop programme.
- b) By promoting the benefits of the programme to lecturing staff in the Sciences and English and invite staff to contribute to these workshops.
- c) By working with local teachers for guidance on CfE and appropriately aimed activities for the age group and academic level of the pupils involved.

### **Develop the link between evidence and pedagogy**

- a) By actively disseminating previous Proctor's Office funded teaching development projects to self-identified members of the pedagogical research community.
- b) By developing the University wide pedagogical research themes into e-learning and assessment.
- c) By promoting the benefits of evidence based pedagogical innovation at annual meetings.

## **7. Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

The logic model issued during the previous theme was very helpful, particularly during the evaluation phase of the project. The team will identify outcomes and impact indicators to measure progress and impact during institutional team meetings and as the Theme progresses.

### **Evaluation – year 2 update**

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

We look forward to hearing QAA's plans for formal Theme evaluation work at the first Theme Leaders Group meeting of year two. We have agreed to participate in a telephone interview in September to assist Liz Thomas with a research project commissioned by the QAA.

Progress with the online dashboard will be monitored via milestones which can be checked with the outputs generated. For example, a prototype will be developed, and this will be tested by potential users, and error checked in stages.

Progress reports for the strand of work 'Gather and analyse evidence to inform the development of learning and teaching spaces' will be shared with the relevant committees, i.e. the Teaching Infrastructure Steering Group and Student Experience Committee.

In terms of our attainment and diversity project, we will continue to track pupil attainment across the programme, ask for pupil feedback after each session, ask lecturers for feedback to inform best practice going forward, and track destinations after high school.

We will monitor engagement in the workshops designed to facilitate staff who want to begin pedagogical research. As new projects are generated, they will be used to exemplify the links between evidence and pedagogy, as well as evidence of the development of pedagogical research within the University. The rate of new and completed projects can be monitored over time to track research output.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Ros Campbell
<b>Date:</b>	27 November 2017

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Ros Campbell
<b>Date:</b>	17 September 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: University of Strathclyde

#### Context

In recent years, the University of Strathclyde has invested in various data driven, evidence based and technology based projects. These included:

- the improvement of Strathclyde's system for academic management information, through the work of the Institution's Strategy and Policy Directorate and the SunBIRD system (Strathclyde University Business Intelligence Reports and Dashboards - a system based on QlikView)
- the development of the Learner Experience Framework, a measure of tracking Strathclyde's distinctive learner journey leading to positive graduate destinations
- the piloting of learning analytics in five distinct classes across all four faculties, capturing evidence of impact on learning, teaching and student success, to develop an institutional strategy
- the unified LMS project to introduce Myplace (a Moodle-based LMS)
- exploring more effective use of student survey data and piloting institutional systems for class evaluations
- partnership with MOOC provider FutureLearn, which was using the large amount of quantitative data available from a growing number of MOOCs, to reveal useful insights into the usage of video and behaviour of learners
- Effective Use of Data project to provide a reflective and stratified approach to understanding the data we have, at what level, and how it can be used

all of which can clearly be mapped against our Strategic Plan 2015-2020 to provide an Outstanding Student Experience to our student population.

#### **Context – year 2 update**

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below.*

*You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

*Insert update text here*

## Institutional team

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Helyn Gould	Helyn Gould	Helyn Gould
TLG staff representative	Ainsley Hainey	Ainsley Hainey	Ainsley Hainey
TLG staff representative alternate	Brian Green	Brian Green	Brian Green
TLG student representative	Mohammed Alhassan	Eyram Ahadzie	Vice President Education (elected post)

## Planned activity: Year 1

Overall outcomes/activity
<p>Strathclyde has identified three key priorities that will be explored through engagement in the Enhancement Theme. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. defining an outstanding student experience (Existing Project: Learner Experience Framework)</li> <li>2. exploring data potential and its impact on teaching and learning (Existing Project: Learning Analytics)</li> <li>3. using data effectively and for enhancement (New Project: Using Data Effectively).</li> </ol> <p>By the end of the three-year Enhancement Theme expected outcomes would be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementation and evidenced impact of the Learner Experience Framework</li> <li>2. Implementation and evidenced impact of a learning analytics approach to improve teaching and learning</li> <li>3. For Programme Directors to more effectively use data for enhancement of the student experience.</li> </ol> <p>This will be achieved by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of data capture methods, appropriate collation, interrogation and visualisation of the data measured against the Learner Experience Framework</li> <li>2. Development of data capture methods, appropriate collation, interrogation and visualisation of the data in a learning analytics approach to improve teaching and learning</li> <li>3. Understanding staff needs, developing and delivering appropriate staff development to enable understanding and more effective use of institutional data to enhance the student experience.</li> </ol> <p>Benefits at sector and institutional level will include a greater understanding of data and how it can be used for enhancement and in delivering an outstanding student experience.</p>

Year 1 outcomes/activity
<p>In Year 1, our main focus is on understanding, with years 2 and 3 focusing on using, and embedding, respectively.</p> <p>For the Learner Experience Framework strand, we will undertake student engagement activities, such as surveys and focus groups, through the use of student interns, to provide a student voice to the measures outlined in a draft version of the Framework, and to explore the potential of a student-owned Learner Development Portfolio for students to record and be recognised for their enhanced learning activities.</p>

For the learning analytics strand, we will undertake staff and student engagement activities, such as focus groups, to gain an understanding of the requirements for a learning analytics approach to the assessment and feedback institutional and sector wide challenge.

For the using data effectively strand, we will undertake a research project, through the use of student interns, to understand staff knowledge and understanding of the institutional data available, and their data literacy at interrogating that data, and using it for enhancement. This will feed into a new programme targeting the support and development of Programme Directors.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

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. In order to facilitate this, we will appoint student interns to explore key areas of understanding with students around their perceptions of opportunities within the University. Materials to increase awareness of opportunities will be designed and developed with input from the student interns, to allow students to better engage with the breadth of activities on offer.

For the learning analytics strand, the research in Year 1 surfaced the lack of understanding for student with regards to their digital footprint and data protection under GDPR. Providing a baseline level of knowledge for students prior to any implementation of learning analytics is crucial to its successful roll out. Student interns will be recruited in Year 2 to design a resource, that could also form part of We are Strathclyde (one of our Transitions activities from the previous Theme) to educate students in these areas, therefore providing a benchmark and upskilling student knowledge in this area before implementing of learning analytics.

For the using data effectively strand, the insight gained from our survey of Programme Directors will be mapped to the existing and planned academic development provision, again through the use of a student intern. This will allow for the survey data to be integrated into the institutions overarching academic development plan. An Institutional Data Guide will be designed, developed and produced along with staff development sessions in collaboration between our Organisational & Staff Development Unit, which is responsible for developing, promoting and delivering activities and opportunities that foster a learning culture within the institution, and Strategy & Policy departments, responsible for facilitating business planning and external & internal performance monitoring. Overseeing league table and HESA performance indicator analyses.

### **Dissemination of work**

Dissemination of this work will primarily be communicated through internal workshops, however papers may be presented at external conferences if appropriate.

### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

The Learner Experience Framework and learning analytics work from Year 2 will be 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.

The data strand work will be embedded into the Strathclyde Teaching Excellence Programme, an academic staff development pathway.

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.

### **Collaborative cluster work**

Strathclyde would like to be part of a collaborative cluster in learning analytics.

### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

Strathclyde will continue to lead the learning analytics collaborative cluster work which will involve 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 is also involved in the data literacy collaborative cluster work, led by Napier, and plan to share and disseminate the research undertaken in our institutional data strand work for the benefit of the sector.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

Edinburgh Napier University have also expressed an interest in a potential collaboration with Strathclyde around the using data effectively strand work. This could deliver joint workshop activity for staff development.

### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

The data strand work will also be shared across the Scottish Higher Education Developers (SHED) network.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

Strand-specific Working Groups will support the Enhancement Theme activity, which will formally report to the institution's Learning Enhancement Committee.

### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Strand-specific Working Groups will support the Enhancement Theme activity, which will formally report to the institution's Learning Enhancement Committee.

### **Evaluation**

Specific outcomes and deadlines will be put in place for each strand of work. Evaluation will also be built in to each strand.

Both aspects will be overseen by the Learning Enhancement Committee, who will then ensure dissemination through the Faculty Vice Dean Academics, and Faculty committee and communication structures.

### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

Strathclyde has already been involved in the formal Theme evaluation work by communicating with Liz Thomas & Associates and with Pete Cannell from OUIS.

Specific outcomes and deadlines will be put in place for each strand of work. Evaluation will also be built in to each strand. Such as, it is planned to re-run the Year 1 data strand survey in Year 3 of the Theme to evaluate impact of the Institutional Data Guide and embedding of data literacy activity into academic staff development activity.

All aspects will be overseen by the Learning Enhancement Committee, who will then ensure dissemination through the Faculty Vice Dean Academics, and Faculty committee and communication structures, such as Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees.

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Ainsley Hainey & Mrs Helyn Gould
<b>Date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2017

### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Dr Ainsley Hainey
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2018



## Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience

### Institutional Plan for: University of the West of Scotland

*This document is intended to be a cumulative plan for your institution, which you will add to year on year as the Theme progresses. At the end of the Theme, this document will show how plans may have developed and changed over time. The plan for each year should be around three to four sides of A4.*

*Italicised text in this document can be removed as it is advisory.*

#### Context

*Provide any statements that might be helpful in explaining your institution's context and approach and how this plan supports the achievement of institutional priorities. In subsequent years, any context statement could draw on salient points from the previous year's learning/outcomes and reflect any changes in the strategic direction of your institution.*

#### Context – year 2 update

*If you would find it useful to update contextual information, please add text below. You may want to reflect on your year 1 end of year report to help complete your updated year 2 plan.*

*Emma Shotter from SAUWS has moved from VP to Education to President. While her intention was to continue with the group, she has had to step down because of other commitments and has been replaced on the group by Margot MacMillan, the current SAUWS VP Education. Peter McGuire a Programme Leader from the School of Business and Enterprise replace Darryl Gunson early last year and will continue with the group for the remainder of the theme.*

#### Institutional team

*Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title.*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Jane MacKenzie, Head of UWS Academy	Jane MacKenzie, Head of UWS Academy	Jane MacKenzie, Head of UWS Academy

TLG staff representative	Jane MacKenzie, Head of UWS Academy	Jane MacKenzie, Head of UWS Academy	Jane MacKenzie, Head of UWS Academy
TLG staff representative alternate	Lee Ballantyne, Head of Education Futures	Lee Ballantyne, Head of Education Futures	Lee Ballantyne, Head of Education Futures
TLG student representative	Emma Shotter, VP Education, SAUWS	Margot MacMillan, VP Education, SAUWS	VP Education, SAUWS
Institutional Team member	Bre Edwards, Head of Student Life	Bre Edwards, Head of Student Life	Bre Edwards, Head of Student Life
Institutional Team member	Jennifer Ennis, Programme Leader, Education	Jennifer Ennis, Programme Leader, Education	Jennifer Ennis, Programme Leader, Education
Institutional Team member	Rachael Hamilton, Strategic Planner, Strategic Planning	Rachael Hamilton, Strategic Planner, Strategic Planning	Rachael Hamilton, Strategic Planner, Strategic Planning
Institutional Team member	Peter McGuire, Programme Leader, Business and Enterprise	Peter McGuire, Programme Leader, Business and Enterprise	Peter McGuire, Programme Leader, Business and Enterprise
Institutional Team member	Wendy Wright, Programme Leader, Health, Nursing & Midwifery	Wendy Wright, Programme Leader, Health, Nursing & Midwifery	Wendy Wright, Programme Leader, Health, Nursing & Midwifery

**Planned activity: Year 1**

**Overall outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

**Priorities**

Our key priority is to ensure that UWS is making strategic and operational decisions, particularly in relation to retention and progression, based on the best available evidence. In order to do this UWS's institutional work for this Enhancement Theme will be to ensure that the **data** we gather are optimal for our purposes, that the methods of **delivery** of data and their analyses are appropriate, i.e. they are at the right time to the right people,

and in an appropriate format to allow **decisions** to be made to enhance curricula and other aspects of the student experience.

### **Activities and Outcomes**

Alongside the elements of our Quality Enhancement Framework processes (e.g. external examiner reports, Staff-student liaison meeting minutes, end of module questionnaires and institutional led review) UWS has invested in a number of management information dashboards. The data gathered and presented include:

- student numbers (including recruitment, progression, retention, attainment and employment information)
- student satisfaction data
- performance indicators (including HESA PIs)
- league tables

Each dashboard is visible to all UWS staff, i.e. programme specific performance data is visible to all. Alongside this, work has been undertaken to develop MyJourney, a student-centred, personalised learning analytics platform that provides students and staff with access to programme-level engagement and performance data to allow comparison of individual student's engagement relative to their fellow students. MyJourney is not yet fully embedded with only approximately 10% of students using it and so one outcome of this project will be an optimised strategy to implement MyJourney across all programmes.

Our institutional work will therefore focus on 3 data sources: QEF, Dashboard and MyJourney. It will include an investigation of each in terms of the **data** gathered, how data are analysed and **delivered** to stakeholders and how stakeholders are able to make **decisions** in response to these evidence sources.

The investigation will allow us to identify gaps, overlaps and inaccuracies in the data gathered which in turn will allow us to develop additional instruments or guidelines and to streamline where necessary. A secondary strand is how students engage with these evaluation processes, and a third is how best to support both students and staff to engage with the different evidence sources and to empower them to make informed decisions.

Briefly, in Year 1 we will focus on auditing data gathering processes. Year 2 will focus on developing additional instruments/streamlining existing ones, while developing support and guidance for staff and students. Year 3 will implement and evaluate its staff and student development provision and evaluate the impact of changes made to our QEF, Dashboard and MyJourney processes.

### **Benefits**

The outcomes of our institutional work will benefit UWS in terms of informing and enhancing its use of dashboards and MyJourney but will also be of benefit to the sector in terms of linking learning analytics with business intelligence and QA/QE processes.

### **Year 1 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

#### **Priorities**

Key priorities are the formation of the institutional team and, given that we are currently quite late in the financial year, the formation of groups to undertake essential project work (in subsequent years we will invite project proposals to enable work to be done by Schools).

#### **Outcomes and Activities**

The projects in year 1 will adopt multiple methods (e.g. survey, desk-based research, focus groups and interviews) as appropriate to the topic. Projects implemented in year 1 will include:

1. A survey based investigation in to what data module and programme leaders currently use including end of module questionnaires and dashboard information. Is the data currently gathered helping them make decisions to enhance their courses? Are there obvious gaps? How are they making sense of qualitative data?
2. Student-led project investigating so-called 'questionnaire fatigue.' How do students engage with the various feedback gathering methods? What would encourage better engagement? How do they find out how their feedback brings about change?
3. An evaluation of the early implementation of MyJourney

Small teams will be identified to undertake these (and other) projects supported by small funds to employ students/staff to undertake the investigations.

### **Year 2 outcomes/activity**

*What are your key priorities?*

*What outcomes do you want to achieve?*

*What activities will you deliver?*

*What do you anticipate will be the benefits at sector and institutional levels?*

The institutional team is now well established and in a good place to oversee and steer the institutional work.

Our key aims are to:

- Disseminate the outcomes of the year 1 work
- Address the issues surfaced in year 1 related to student engagement with the quality enhancement agenda and,
- To provide staff development around using evidence for enhancement

## **Year 2 activities**

### **Disseminating the outcomes of year 1**

This is dealt with in more detail in the next section, but we plan to undertake Evidence for Enhancement 'roadshows' to three of our Scottish campuses and to make it a focus for a Programme Leaders event in Term 2.

### **Student engagement with Quality Enhancement**

Our student-led project work in year 1 uncovered that students often see **Module Evaluation Questionnaires (MEQs)** as a 'checkbox exercise' and were discouraged from engaging with them because they saw little evidence of change in response to their feedback. This has led to in depth discussions of this standard element of our QE processes at Enhancement Theme institutional group meetings. There is a general feeling that MEQs are not working and we want to explore how we might move away from using them and introduce earlier feedback opportunities that can be responded to within the module.

The second clear area that our year 1 work surfaced was the lack of engagement of the student body with the **Student Representative** system. Students complained of a lack of transparency regarding their reps. Some said they either did not have student reps or did not know who they were.

Discussions within the Enhancement Theme group has identified a third area that it would like to explore in some depth: how we might use technology to enhance engagement with quality enhancement and thus **democratise our learning and teaching**.

We therefore propose utilising the year 2 funds allocated to this work to fund staff and/or student-led development projects exploring:

- Mid-module evaluations and their alternatives
- Student representation
- The use of technology to democratise quality enhancement

We would aim to fund at least one project under each heading and we hope to encourage some exploratory and creative bids to address these areas.

### **Staff development activities**

Our year 1 work uncovered a couple of areas that need addressed. First, while we found that Programme Leaders (PLs) use a broad range of data/evidence to enhance their programmes and modules, not all use the whole range available to them. We therefore intend running two staff-facing workshops focused on Evidence for Enhancement. These will focus on making the most of our digital systems: Moodle/Dashboard/Banner and the newly launched MyJourney; and using NSS to drive enhancement.

### **Benefits to the sector**

We believe that the outcomes of the three strands of development work outlined above are likely to be of interest across the sector. The issues of gaining meaningful feedback from students and getting good engagement with the representative system are shared across the sector.

#### **Dissemination of work**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

We will keep all UWS informed through regular eBulletin pieces and either posters or presentations at our Annual Conference/seminar series.

External dissemination will depend on the phase and outcomes of the project but likely to include the production of posters, seminars or workshops for inclusion in an Enhancement Theme Conference.

#### **Dissemination of work – year 2 update**

*How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?*

The University's Education Advisory Committee has been informed of the work that was undertaken in year 1 and will be updated mid-way through this session on the year 2 work.

As touched on above, rather than running a single UWS-wide Evidence for Enhancement symposium, the ET institutional group believe it will get greater staff engagement by hosting 'roadshows' on each of UWS's main Scottish campuses in Paisley, Ayr and Lanarkshire. These roadshows will provide overviews of the year 1 work, will summarise some of the work of the clusters and inter-institutional work with a view to encourage broader engagement of UWS staff with the Theme.

A piece is currently being prepared for our eBulletin summarising the findings from year 1 work in order to promote the Enhancement Theme roadshows.

One of the criteria for applying for Enhancement Theme funding this year will be a proposal of how the outcomes can be disseminated across UWS and will include a requirement for successful bids to report on their outcomes at our Annual Conference and/or the UWS Academy seminar series.

#### **Collaborative cluster work**

*What is your intended involvement in formal collaborative cluster work? Do you intend leading a cluster? Who might be involved in cluster activity?*

*(Formal bids for collaborative cluster work will be managed separately.)*

We are not in a position to lead a cluster this year but would be interested in finding out more about any clusters related particularly to retention, progression and/or widening access.

#### **Collaborative cluster work – year 2 update**

*How will you be involved in collaborative cluster work in year 2?*

*We have not been involved in the Collaborative cluster work so far. This is in part because the agendas of the various clusters were not fully formed last year. We will await clarity about the direction and purposes of the various clusters before determining what involvement we will have.*

#### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

Not yet clear

#### **Wider inter-institutional collaboration – year 2 update**

*Who will you work with, and how, to help deliver on planned activities?*

*While we have not been involved in the sector-wide work this past year we will use the outcomes of the work in our support for UWS staff. Notably, the resources gathered on the 'Optimising the use of existing evidence' site will inform our staff development activities.*

#### **Supporting staff and student engagement**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

Through regular, structured meetings of the institutional team with defined agenda and clear actions. Support will be provided to students and/or staff in relation to undertaking the investigative projects.

#### **Supporting staff and student engagement – year 2 update**

*How will you support your community to deliver on planned activities?*

*As with last year, SAUWS representation on the institutional group is key on the institutional group and, while the group has decided not to stipulate who should receive funding for the teaching development projects outlined above, the expectation is that one or more bids will be led by SAUWS.*

#### **Evaluation**

*How will you monitor progress and impact of the enhancement activities?*

The work of the institutional team and the funded projects will have clear milestones in the appropriate phase of each year.

The Enhancement Theme work will be reported regular to the University's Education Advisory Committee.

#### Evaluation – year 2 update

*How will you engage with the formal Theme evaluation work?*

*What other evaluation/monitoring activity will you be engaged with in your HEI?*

*We will monitor progress against a set of milestones including the call for bids, funding allocation, final reporting and dissemination of outcomes.*

<b>Plan author:</b>	Jane MacKenzie
<b>Date:</b>	13/09/18

#### Year 2 sign-off

<b>Plan author:</b>	Jane MacKenzie
<b>Date:</b>	13/09/18