



End of Year 2 Report for: Open University in Scotland

The key purposes of this report are to:

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

Please report under the headings below. The report should be about 6 to 8 sides of A4 in length.

Institutional team

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

Institutional Lead:

Shona Littlejohn: Depute Director (Student Experience & Widening Access)

TLG Staff Rep:

Ruth Whitney: Senior Manager Access, Participation & Success (from appointment until leaving date of 17th June). New staff rep to be identified for third year of theme.
Previously Viki Soper: Access, Participation & Success Manager.

TLG Student Rep:

Currently vacant

Additional Enhancement Theme Institutional Group (ETIG) members include:

Eddie Tunnah: Senior Careers and Employability Manager

Moira Weir: Information Analyst

Sylvia Warnecke: Staff Tutor

David McDade: Staff Tutor

Sally Crighton: Staff Tutor and Associate Lecturer

Gill Ryan: Access, Participation & Success Manager

Kitty Chilcott: Staff Tutor

Patty Watters: Manager, Student Support (Operations)

Paula Cuccurullo: Senior Advisor, Student Support

Rebecca Boyd: Senior Careers and Employability Consultant, Academic Services

Evaluation of activities/outcomes

To make evaluation processes more accessible and user friendly, we have attempted to simplify (not minimise) the evaluation reporting process into 7 key questions (see below). Prior to completing these, it would be useful to refer to the QAAS website resource: [A Guide to Basic Evaluation in HE](#) (specifically, Section 8, Summary overview on page 23, and the Evaluation Checklist – Appendix A, on pages 28-29).

Please report each activity/intervention against the following questions in the Evaluation part of the template.

N. B. You may have already realised some of your objectives and/or these might be ongoing, so please delineate each question according to whether activities or interventions have been completed already in this reporting year or are in process.

(Easiest way is to delete **either/or** options highlighted in **red** in questions below):

Evaluation

Please complete the following 7 questions for each activity or intervention (N.B. Just cut and paste the table below as many times as necessary)

Title of project/activity
Open to People: Forced Migration project development (Lead: Gill Ryan)
1. What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)
In partnership with the Scottish Refugee Council and Bridges Programmes Glasgow we have run a pilot programme for two cohorts of learners from a forced migration background, providing study support from an OU tutor to develop readiness for higher education. This started in November 2021, starting with 22 participants, and ran for 18 weeks. This part of the programme has now been delivered and 13 learners have completed. Finally, we have been providing information, advice and guidance (IAG) sessions for learners planning their next steps into higher education, including entry level Access Courses, micro-credentials, or OU modules.
2. Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)
<p>In January 2021, we invited third sector and community groups that support forced migrants in Scotland to a virtual roundtable event called Open to People. We invited them to contribute ideas for how the OU in Scotland could support their work and partner with them to improve learning opportunities for these communities. The projects build on the ideas and contributions of participants, who identified gaps in provision that the OU's expertise in online learning could help address.</p> <p>The implementation of this partnership project contributed to us meeting three of the long-term outcomes of our work within the Theme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Widening Access: To provide access to education for people from the widest range of backgrounds - Increasing Success: Once here, we aim to support all students in achieving their goals (personal, academic and professional) and to ensure a positive student experience - Enhancement Activity: We work collaboratively to support, evaluate and improve learning, teaching and support activity. <p>This activity also contributes to the OU's bid to become a University of Sanctuary. Engaging with forced migrant communities also aligns with priorities in our Access, Participation & Success Scotland Plan and Outcome Agreement to make learning accessible to the widest range of learners, with specific targets for BAME and SIMD20 communities and for disabled people. Forced migrants are disproportionately represented in all three groups and experience intersectional disadvantage as a result.</p>
3. What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change made successfully or envisaged)
<p>This programme will support their integration in Scotland and help them rebuild their lives. The Pathways into Study programme will support the development of the skills and confidence participants will need to succeed in higher education. We intend to track learner journeys through the programme and into formal study with the OU or other providers.</p> <p>The learning from the pilots will inform how we respond and scale up the project in subsequent years. It will also help us identify what works and how the model can be adapted to meet the challenges that impact the most disadvantaged groups from accessing education or employment in Scotland.</p> <p>The impact of the pilot will be assessed against our medium-term Theme outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an increase of engagement with OpenLearn resources and registration for Access and/or Stage One modules following the pilot

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support needs identified to help students through their learner journeys are implemented and existing policies are adapted to support these. <p>We envisage the pilot in 21/22 will form part of an online toolkit to be hosted on our free OpenLearn platform, along with learning, case studies, co-created resources and other outputs from the project. This will remain accessible to organisations and individuals beyond the lifetime of this project to extend its impact. Our goal is to provide tools and learning pathways for forced migrant communities to access education and employment.</p>
<p>4. How will we know? (How is the change measured)</p>
<p>During the programme, the tutors had regular 1:1 review and planning sessions which will help us identify the progress they have made. We will follow up with a survey and request for interview in June 2022 to evaluate learners' experiences and identify outcomes such as intended journeys into formal education, improved confidence and increased skills for study. We will also interview the tutors and the partners who have supported learners through the programme, to enable us to capture all the learning from the pilot. This learning will inform future programmes.</p> <p>We hope to create case studies, where students consent to this, which will contribute to a possible toolkit for organisations supporting forced migrants on their learning journeys. This toolkit will also include the programme and resources used in the pilot. We hope to host this on our OpenLearn Create platform.</p> <p>Along with evaluation against these short-term outcomes, we will also evaluate against the medium and long-term outcomes mentioned above to ensure that the impact of the pilot is supporting our institutional strategic objectives.</p>
<p>5. Who is involved in making any judgements? (Who decides on effectiveness)</p>
<p>Throughout the project, there has been strong involvement from our partner organisations, who have been very honest and constructive about what works for their clients and what doesn't. The students' reported experiences and outcomes will also be indicators of effectiveness</p>
<p>6. Any lessons learned to apply already? (Applied ongoing learning)</p>
<p>We learned early on that while students were provided with digital equipment and had significant confidence with being online, their digital skillset did not include things like creating a Word document (for assignments). In hindsight, we would spend more time at the start of the course establishing what skills the group had and what needed to be worked on before proceeding and incorporate a session on using Word or Google Docs.</p> <p>As we went through the course, we had a shared document to which the tutors and other staff involved in the delivery contributed their learning week by week, so we could in some cases respond to it as we went through. We also had mid-programme reviews with the learners.</p>
<p>7. Any things you have stopped doing? (Any unsuccessful elements)</p>
<p>We had to amend our criteria for successful completion of the course (80% attendance plus completion of final assessment) as attendance was so variable throughout.</p>

<p>Title of project/activity</p>
<p>Sense of belonging Toolkit refresh (Lead: Linda Thomson)</p>
<p>1. What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)</p>
<p>The Sense of belonging toolkit is an output from a collaborative cluster from the previous theme, but the work fits in with current theme. The toolkit is focussed on creating a sense of belonging in online communities. It is an existing resource but needs updating with learning from COVID and we need to promote it more effectively to ensure that the learning from it can be embedded in practice across the sector.</p>

2. Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)
The changes to the resource are being made as a response to COVID-19 which has highlighted issues of isolation and loneliness within our student body and to tie-in with the current Theme activity within OUIS.
3. What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change made successfully or envisaged)
We hope that the resource will become widely used across the sector, that it will support educators in taking their teaching online and will lead to an improved sense of belonging for students in online learning communities.
4. How will we know? (How is the change measured)
Measuring the impact of the resource has been challenging so far as there is no requirement to enrol before using the toolkit so we are not able to obtain data as to how many people have accessed it or ask users for feedback. Part of the work being done under this current Theme will be to incorporate a feedback loop into the toolkit to provide us with clear data as to how it is being used and its impact.
5. Who is involved in making any judgements? (Who decides on effectiveness)
We will involve partner institutions and students, as well as senior academics in our own institution, in determining the effectiveness of the project.
6. Any lessons learned to apply already? (Applied ongoing learning)
This project has been negatively impacted by staff absence and we haven't had the capacity to progress it in Year 2. We hope to have more progress to report on this in Year 3
7. Any things you have stopped/need to stop doing? (Any unsuccessful elements)
N/a

Title of project/activity
Supporting Students from Deprived Backgrounds' project (Lead: Ruth Whitney)
1. What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)
<p>As part of our 2017-20 Enhancement Theme activity, we researched and produced a report to better understand the extent of the SIMD20 attainment gap and to gather evidence to inform targeted interventions to support student success. This project was formed in three phases; research activity, collation and analysis of data and designing potential interventions based on work completed in phases 1 & 2 to reduce isolation and facilitate a sense of belonging. Phases 1 & 2 of the project in Y1 of this theme and by the previous project lead. The plan was to move onto phase 3 – disseminating the report outcomes and designing interventions. This phase has not been completed due to a change in staffing and capacity within the team.</p> <p>At the start of 2022, OUIS began a new project called 'Unlocking Potential'. This project was led by the Marketing and Communications team with input from the Access, Participation and Success (APS) team and External Engagement and Partnerships team (EEP). The overarching objective is to identify how best to give those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland the capability, motivation and opportunity to access further or higher education.</p>

The main objectives were as follows:

OU Outcomes:

- How better to reach out to this audience through your communications
- Enable you to focus on the most important barriers and concerns through your marketing
- To produce communications that inspire and increase the number of potential students that will step back into further or higher education

Wider Outcomes:

- To support wider development plans
- To provide insight to support government lobbying

2. Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)

The new project was the result of discussions with the marketing teams and within the wider OUiS on how we could increase our engagement with people who may not consider university as an option.

The primary focus for stage one was to understand and explore the journey of OU students who have returned to study with the OU. Understanding the triggers / motivations and challenges overcome by OU students from deprived areas of Scotland will enable the OU to help others in multiple areas of deprivation to return to education

Stage two, which is a pilot of 2 areas, is to deepen the understanding of those living in areas of multiple deprivation and identify the most important barriers and concerns to access further or higher education. The OU will have clear recommendations on how best to develop inspirational communications that inspire and encourage an increase in the number of potential students from these areas returning to further / higher education.

3. What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change made successfully or envisaged)

Phase 1 (students) of our research project was completed in May 2022. Phase 2 (potential students) has also been completed in the two pilot areas; one rural (Dumfries & Galloway) and one urban (Rutherglen & Cambuslang). The analysis of the data is currently underway.

4. How will we know? (How is the change measured)

The data collected will help us to understand why students/potential students/those with no intention to study do and do not engage in university study, with a particular focus on the Open University.

5. Who is involved in making any judgements? (Who decides on effectiveness)

The Open University in Scotland (OUiS) directorate, Marketing and communications team, the Access, Participation and Success (APS) team and External Engagement and Partnerships team (EEP) along with the central Open University Insights team.

6. Any lessons learned to apply already? (Applied ongoing learning)

At this stage of the project, it is too early to determine the results and outcomes.

7. Any things you have stopped/need to stop doing? (Any unsuccessful elements)

N/A at this time

Title of project/activity
EmployAbility programme (Lead: Eddie Tunnah)
1. What change has been made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)
<p>EmployAbility is a not-for-profit organisation that offers and charges employers for their consultancy services, so that they can provide free support to further the rights of disabled people. In early 2021 they offered a one-year collaboration with 10 universities in Scotland for a reduced charge to support disabled students and alumni. Three activities were delivered as part of this collaboration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three dedicated and tailored one-hour webinar sessions for Scottish university students were delivered between June 2021 and March 2022. These sessions were each run twice to maximise attendance. 2. Student 1:1 sessions were offered to provide individualised support and advice. 3. A two-part Empowering your students webinar was run for staff. <p>A key feature of EmployAbility's offer is an advocacy role around issues of disclosure and reasonable adjustments. The service was implemented as an enhanced offering to our students.</p>
2. Why have we made it? (Rationale for the change)
<p>The service provided additional support to enable disabled students and alumni to achieve positive career and personal development outcomes.</p> <p>Positive employability outcomes for disabled qualifiers are significantly lower than those for their non-disabled peers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 59% of disabled OUiS respondents to the Employability of Qualifiers (EQS)* surveys of 2017, 2018 and 2019 (combined) were in employment and 36% of these were employed in professional occupations. • 78% of non-disabled OUiS respondents to the EQS surveys of 2017, 2018 and 2019 (combined) were in employment and 50% were employed in professional occupations • The OU's Employability of Qualifiers Survey (EQS) is a survey of OU leavers that takes place approximately 3.5 years after qualification. It is run to collect additional information that is not collected through the Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey, such as career change and career progression, and to get a picture of performance further out from time of qualification. <p>Implementation of this service contributes to meeting the long-term outcomes of our work within the Theme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing Success: Once here we aim to support all student in achieving their goals (personal, academic and professional) and to ensure a positive student experience.
3. What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change made successfully or envisaged)
<p>83 OU students and recent alumni signed up to attend the webinars run by EmployAbility. The exact numbers of students and alumni that attended is unknown, but 20 OU students completed webinar evaluation forms and it is likely others attended too but didn't complete these forms.</p> <p>Feedback from the OU students that did attend the webinars was generally positive, for example one recent alumni commented <i>'this was an excellent session hosted by two extremely</i></p>

knowledgeable and supportive representatives of EmployAbility. They provided invaluable guidance'.

Unfortunately, the student 1:1 sessions didn't happen in a way that was possible to offer them to OU students. Nine OU staff attended the 'empowering your students' webinars, and informal feedback received was that the sessions were useful and informative.

We hope that attendance at the sessions contributes to meeting our medium-term Theme work goal of:

- Support needs identified to help students through their learner journeys are implemented and existing policies are adapted to support these.

4. How will we know? (How is the change measured)

It is soon to measure the longer-term impact that attending the EmployAbility webinars had on the students. We are planning to check whether the students and alumni that attended the webinars have gone on to seek support from the OU's Careers and Employability Services department.

This data will allow us to understand whether the service has contributed to meeting the long-term outcomes expected, and therefore whether it is supporting our institutional strategic objectives and therefore contributing positively to the overall student experience.

5. Who is involved in making any judgements? (Who decides on effectiveness)

Careers and Employability Services and Open University in Scotland (OUiS) staff.

6. Any lessons learned to apply already? (Applied ongoing learning)

Running the EmployAbility pilot just in Scotland proved challenging – it was difficult to market the scheme solely to students and alumni in Scotland.

Also, as we worked with EmployAbility as part of a multi-university collaboration it was difficult to ensure that the OU's needs were met, particularly in the monitoring of attendance at webinars and the evaluation process.

7. Any things you have stopped doing? (Any unsuccessful elements)

Careers and Employability Services are currently deciding whether the collaboration with EmployAbility is continued in its existing form, is enhanced, or is discontinued. Levels of engagement by students and alumni were relatively low, but those that did engage reported that the sessions were beneficial. If we do continue with the collaboration we are likely to want to extend it across the four nations of the UK.

Title of project/activity

Big Blether Series: Lidia Dancu

1. What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)

The APS Scotland team has led on developing a series of 'Big Blether' events over the course of 21/22 where students can come together online in an informal setting to discuss areas of interest. The sessions are co-produced with the OU Students Association, by students for students, supported by staff at the Open University in Scotland. The 2021-22 pilot was funded from The

Small Grants Scheme from the Think Positive Project of NUS Scotland, to deliver on actions in the Student Mental Health Agreement (SMHA).

The initial pilot ran in March, June and November in 2021 and in March 2022. This has been extended with the next session taking place in June 2022, to coincide with the end of exams at the OU.

2. Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)

The implementation of the Big Blether series aims to meet the long-term outcomes of our work within the Theme:

- Increasing Success: We aim to support all students in achieving their goals (personal, academic and professional) and to ensure a positive student experience
- Student Voice: We will work in partnership with our students to ensure that the student voice informs all areas of our work
- Enhancement Activity: We work collaboratively to support, evaluate and improve learning, teaching and support activity.

Sense of Belonging and Student Community: We will foster a sense of belonging for our students as part of the Open University student community and help them forge their student identity.

3. What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change made successfully or envisaged)

The aim of the series is to engage students meaningfully in the development of healthy cultures and communities, promoting good mental health and wellbeing through the sharing of knowledge and expertise. We will assess the impact of the series against medium term outcomes:

- Support needs identified to help students through their learner journeys are implemented and existing policies are adapted to support these
- Initiatives promoted more meaningfully using social media and marketing channels

Feedback surveys are sent to students after events and opportunity to collect qualitative feedback relating to impact is embedded in these.

The feedback obtained after each session has helped us shape the next iteration of the event. For instance, we obtained feedback and suggestion about improving accessibility and inclusion, so we included questions about accessibility needs in our registration, to allow us to plan better.

Student feedback suggests the events have contributed to a sense of belonging:

“The session was well organized, welcoming, and inclusive. It was engaging and fun.”

“I enjoyed being online amongst other people from OU and hearing them talk about things I related to. It made me feel motivated and less alone.”

4. How will we know? (How is the change measured)

In the short-term, we will be able to measure awareness and engagement through:

- Student awareness, registration and attendance are high
- Students engage with events or programmes during the sessions
- Feedback surveys are sent to students after events
- Students should have the opportunity to make suggestions within these so that future planning is informed by student voice

- Internal communication methods are utilised to raise staff awareness so they can signpost students to the series

Following each event, we will evaluate against these short-term outcomes, but also the medium and long-term outcomes mentioned above to ensure that the impact of Big Blether series is supporting our institutional strategic objectives and therefore contributing positively to the student experience.

5. Who is involved in making any judgements? (Who decides on effectiveness)

Decisions about planning for future events and understanding the effectiveness and impact of the Blethers will be a collaboration between the APS team and the OU Students Association representatives involved with planning. The idea of the Big Blether series is that it is 'by students, for students' and so OUSA involvement in analysis of survey data is key to determine effectiveness.

6. Any lessons learned to apply already? (Applied ongoing learning)

June & November events saw a decline in performance against short-term outcome measures which affects ability to assess impact against medium and long-term outcomes. Reflection and evaluation of these events highlighted an issue of timing (June was exam period and November was Student Voice Week where 90 events were offered across the University and therefore students may have been experiencing 'event fatigue'). For future events, careful consideration of timing is vital and addressing this for the March '22 event saw increased registration and attendance.

More meaningful use of OUIS social channels as well as OUSA social channels (OUIS & OUSA Tweets, LinkedIn, the Hoot, blogging to promote event) could also have contributed to increased awareness.

Consideration to be given to how we request feedback from students about events in the series following learning from Using Evidence for Enhancement action learning set. A survey may not be the most effective way to gather data (evidenced by low number of respondents). Student Consultation events include 10 minutes after the session where staff facilitators leave and student association reps gather feedback. This approach was incorporated into the June 2022 Big Blether event.

It has proven challenging to have enough student volunteers to co-create the event, particularly at certain times of the year when students have end of modules assignments or examinations. Attracting volunteers continues to be a challenge at the OU. We are hoping to address this with the recruitment of a Student Consultant in 22.23.

7. Any things you have stopped doing? (Any unsuccessful elements)

Powerpoint presentations for the first 20 mins of the session can be off-putting and inaccessible. Feedback from students at the March event highlighted that they preferred the more informal, conversational approach so we will stop formal 'presentations' for future events.

We have also reframed our evaluation tools to ensure we are capturing more meaningful data which aligns more closely with the strategic outcomes for this area of work.

Title of project/activity

Student community & Computing Club Lead: formerly Janet Hughes (now retired)

What change **has been/is being** made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)

After stalling in 2020 after the student chair graduated, the project lead also left her role at the Open University. The project was not restarted as Janet retired from the OU this year, so no activity has taken place over the reporting period and we are unsure about the future of the project.

Dissemination of work

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

If there are materials and resources you can share with the sector, please provide details below.

To share outcomes and resources internally, we have used our FIKA sessions which were an output of the last Enhancement Theme and have continued into this period. These are informal staff events where all staff can come together and learn about a project or initiative that other teams are working on to foster cross-institutional collaboration and engagement in an informal setting. These sessions used to be held as face-to-face events in our office however we have successfully moved them online since the pandemic. These events may well stay online as it allows for colleagues across Scotland and the other nations to attend.

In December 2021, the Open University delivered a 2-day mental health and wellbeing conference focusing on inclusivity. The conference supported the objectives of the Student and Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the holistic approach taken. This also included an overview and of details of work taking place in this space across the university. It provided an opportunity for staff and student representatives to come together to celebrate the work taking place to develop our understanding of and support our staff and students with their mental health and wellbeing.

The APS team and other teams that feed into the Enhancement themes work have collaborated more closely with the marketing and communications team(s) this year to allow us to better understand the engagement with our social media posts on enhancement related work. The Marketing and Communications teams have provided us with an overview of the Big Blether social media statistics. The upcoming 'Calm in a Teacup Special' Big Blether is still to take place so the figures below are for the posts about that event so far. On social media our Big Blether events have made over 52,000 impressions, resulting in over 900 engagements so far.

Collaboration outwith your institution

How have you collaborated with other institutions? This could be informally by growing networks or contacts, or more formally for example, through collaborative clusters or sector work. If you have been collaborating with others, briefly explain what this has involved and what have been the benefits and challenges.

The Forced Migration programme outlined above would not have been possible without collaboration with Scottish Refugee Council and Bridges Programmes Glasgow. These organisations supported us with recruiting suitable learners for the pilot programme. Additionally, we worked with Connecting Scotland to be able to provide laptops and connectivity packages for the students on the programme.

We have continued our involvement on the Hub for Success steering group, a collaboration of local authority, HE, FE and third sector partners involved in access and participation for care experienced people. In 2021/22, our colleagues in the Young Applicants in Schools Programme (YASS) have also been involved in the Hub's schools outreach pilot.

We have also been involved in the working group for the Scottish Community of Access and Participation Practitioners (SCAPP) accreditation pilot. Five institutions have been involved with the SCAPP coordinator to develop an accreditation scheme to professionalise the access and participation sector. The pilot began in January this year, with 11 applicants across three levels: Affiliate, Practitioner and Leadership levels. These applicants have now been peer reviewed and the panel met in June 2022 for final review. We now intend to carry out an external evaluation to capture learning from the pilot with the intention of rolling it out across the sector.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How have staff and students been supported to engage in Theme activities? Please provide examples.

The monthly ETIG (Enhancement Themes Institutional Group) meets to discuss individual project updates but also ideas and suggestions for the Enhancement theme work. The ETIG meeting for May 2022 focused on how the meeting could be more effective as attendance and engagement have been decreasing over this academic year. The discussions on the focus, purpose and effectiveness for the ETIG will continue over summer with the aim of having a new format and Y3 plan in place for the 22/23 academic year.

A key focus for us in increasing staff engagement has been relating to sharing the learning from the Building Confidence in Using Data and Evidence for Enhancement 6-week programme offered by QAA. OUIS had two staff members attending this course and the value was evident in relation to understanding how to better evidence impact of our enhancement activity and the importance of asking critical questions when engaging with evidence. Through this course we have been able to rethink our approach to the ETIG group and consider members in relation to their role as data subjects as well as key stakeholders.

We hope that by reframing our approach in this way, we will be able to better engage staff by mutually beneficial collaboration; sharing our learning from this course for others to embed into their own practice but also gaining an enhanced understanding of the work being undertaken within the institution that supports enhancement activity and its impact on both students and staff. In addition, learning from this course and feedback on our Year One report from the external evaluation specialists lead us to develop outcome statements against which we have been able to better evidence the impact of the projects listed above. These outcome statements allowed us to rationalise our data gathering to understand what we really wanted to know.

Processes

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

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

As was the case last year, The Enhancement Theme Institutional Group (ETIG) is facilitating conversations about a range of projects, programmes that are happening within the University that support enhancement activity but that we might not have been aware of if it wasn't for these cross-institutional conversations within the group. A key lesson learned has been that there is a wide range of work happening across the university to support resilience within our student body and the importance of having structures in place to make explicit the work that is happening within the

organisation. Nations, faculties and the student association (OUSA) have policies, projects and resources for supporting students to develop their resilience in these ever-changing times.

This report will be shared with all members of the ETIG to then be disseminated by them to their respective teams. In addition, we will present this report at our Senior Staff Group meeting and share with OUSA to ensure they have sight of our enhancement activity. The report will be used by the Access, Participation and Success team to deliver against our Year 3 plan for the Theme as well as share internally to raise the profile of the work being done and encourage engagement.

We also aim to increase engagement in the ETIG and encourage a wider range of voices to contribute to our institution's views and suggestions on what the next Enhancement Theme could be.

Looking ahead

In session 2022-23 we will be starting to consider what the next Enhancement Theme might focus on. We are interested to know about the discussions, hot topics and issues that are emerging in your practice and gaining increasing attention. Please share your thoughts and views below.

In the coming year, we will be refocusing Open University in Scotland activity to align with our new business plan (OU in Scotland) and the OU-wide Learn and Live Strategy 2022-2027. As the Open University is a widening access university without the traditional barriers of access to higher education, our focus will be on retention, ensuring we set our students up to succeed in their studies. There will also be a focus on equity across all of our learning and teaching activity. Our suggestion would be that these strategic areas are reflected in the new Enhancement Theme.

Report Author:	Shona Littlejohn
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