



Resilient Learning Communities: New Theme 2020-23

Institutional Plan for: Glasgow School of Art

Outline of the Theme

Resilient Learning Communities explores the changing needs and values of an increasingly diverse student community and a rapidly changing external environment.

At the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Committee in September 2020, GSA agreed to move the forward with the theme in a manner that would:-

- Support a close collaboration between GSA's **Learning and Teaching Committee** and the **GSASA**;
- Be overseen by GSA's Learning and Teaching Committee;
- Involve the identification of a theme working group which will operate as a sub-group to the Learning & Teaching Committee.

This agreement was a result of discussions during August 2020 between the Senior Head of Schools, the Head of Learning and Teaching, and the Student President. In these discussions the focus of possible interpretation of the theme was made with reference to lessons through the Student Engage COVID-19 workstream implemented during the lockdown period, as well as insights that emerged latterly from the previous theme regarding the development of professional practices in a considerably changed creative economy within Scotland and beyond.

As the key questions informing the Theme work are focused on learning communities of students and possible changes in the nature of their learning and needs, the sub-LTC Enhancement Themes working group will be tasked with responding to the questions established by the new theme brief:

- What will our learning communities look like by 2023? And how can we prepare for the learning communities of the future?
- Who are our students and how will they want to learn? How will we gain a clear understanding of the nature and learning needs of our current and likely future student

population? What granular information do we need to enable us to support their learning better?

- How can we capitalise as a sector on the attributes students bring into their learning?
- How do we ensure we are able to support our diverse learning communities? What might this mean for our staff and our infrastructure?
- How should we anticipate, influence and respond to the changing external environment? How can we engage with our stakeholders and ensure we are influencing strategy and policy both in Scotland and beyond?

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

The post pandemic landscape in which the GSA, its students and graduates will operate, will stress many of the infrastructures we rely upon for success: the creative education pipeline in schools and colleges; our studio and workshop based learning environments; and the local and national networks of SMEs and small arts organisations who provide support on course and in employment opportunities.

As an institution the GSA has had to adapt at speed to the COVID emergency and is now focusing on how to mainstream some of these adaptations and develop resilient and sustainable models of community to address the long tail of the crisis.

This enhancement theme provides a useful framework in which to situate aspects of this work and will help us to co-create change with students.

Institutional team

Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title. Where the Theme Leaders' Group (TLG) staff or student nominee is unable to attend meetings, an alternate can attend on their behalf. This need not be named individuals, which may help support Theme involvement across a range of staff and students.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Institutional lead	Maddy Sclater		
TLG staff representative			
TLG student representative	Spike Wright		
<i>Add additional rows for additional members</i>	TBC		

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?

Introduction

'Student Engage' was introduced by the Learning & Teaching Team to support student community building from April to June 2020. During full lockdown, this became the remote hub for a range of curated academic, social, and intellectual events and engagements with students. This was to ensure that whilst assessment for progression and completion happened, there was a continued (no risk) educational offer running alongside any programme communications with students. Total student numbers that engaged with the site as follows: From April-August 1385 students accessed the site and 452 students have looked at the site between August and early October (Evidence that students continued to access the site after formal 'Student Engage' was paused in the Autumn of 2020). This project provides a backdrop and potential model for the next phase of our activity upon which we would like to build.

Project Aims/Priorities

1. To support the continuing development of informal learning communities within GSA, and to enable the GSA staff and student communities to develop their wellbeing and resilience during these particularly challenging times.
2. To build upon the work and momentum of the Student Engage Group that was set up in March 2020 to support students during the pandemic, and to use this initiative as a platform to further develop the GSA student community.
3. To enable students to actively engage with a programme of informal extra-curricular activities as a means to complement and develop their studio learning and professional practice.
4. To provide an accessible project framework that invites student input and/or direct involvement in proposing and undertaking mini projects that also offer benefit to the wider GSA community.
5. To develop a closer partnership between The Glasgow School of Art and GSA's Students' Association to enable students to influence and shape the direction of the overall project in terms of activities and inputs.
6. To develop Inter-institutional links between GSA and the other art programmes/art schools in Scotland.

Objectives/Activities

1. To set up a **programme of events/projects/talks/activities** that will run initially from the beginning of Feb to the end of June (2021) to be held initially via Zoom until such time that UK and Scottish Government restrictions allow campus-based activity.
2. To set up a **steering group** comprising various key stakeholders – staff, student representatives, and members of the student association that will focus on the identification of key themes/topics arising from student consultations. The steering group will direct the programme of events.
3. To establish a **network** between GSA and other art programmes/Schools of Art in Scotland.

Project Outcomes

1. Ongoing evidence of a resilient learning community at GSA
2. A sustained and effective steering group with evidence of productive dialogue between stakeholders
3. A renewing and engaging programme of events, projects, talks and activities; this will be significantly available online but also suitable for hybrid participation
4. A thriving inter-institutional network for community development, supporting the exchange of ideas and practice

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?

Project Outcomes/Activities/Benefits

1. Preliminary evidence of a more resilient learning community at GSA
2. A functioning and effective steering group with evidence of productive dialogue between stakeholders which is overseen by Learning & Teaching Committee
3. The establishment of a programme of events, projects, talks and activities; this will be significantly available online but also suitable for hybrid participation
4. The establishment of an inter-institutional network for community development, supporting the exchange of ideas and practice.
5. A set of resources that can be used institutionally and at 'sister' HEIs.

Dissemination of work

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

1. An interim workshop for staff and student representatives with whom preliminary materials and activities will be shared. Participant views will be sought, preliminary evaluation undertaken, and co-design sessions offered to make further enhancements.
2. Presentation of outcomes for QAA Enhancement Themes workshop
3. Conference paper/web presentation developed by project participants (staff and students)

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.)

GSA has an ambition to build a collaborative cluster focused on art and design HE student network building to ensure that our resilient community project builds a shared ecology of key principles of inclusion (diversity and equality) in innovations in practice across the sector. The institutions with whom we propose to work are: Gray's School of Art, Robert Gordon's University, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh College of Art, University of Edinburgh, Napier University. Glasgow School of Art would hope to take the lead in building this collaboration, following on from its successful Creative Disciplines Collaborative Cluster for the last Enhancement Theme (evidencing enhancement).

Supporting staff and student engagement

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

Staff and student members of the steering group will report back, using co-designed presentations, to their respective constituencies from whom feedback will be sought. This will establish a multiple dialogue between staff, between students and between students and staff.

Evaluation

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

We will combine evidence from several sources to build up an in-depth understanding of the impact which our project has had institutionally. Evaluation methods will include formative feedback from colleagues and students, examples of changes and plans made as a consequence of engagement, changes in student behaviour, and institutional or course level data - where appropriate - and Staff development activity. For example, evidence will be

drawn from steering group members by asking them at a specially convened meeting: what have the progress and impacts been in your area? In addition, a convenience sample of staff and students from the wider GSA community will be polled using a summative online questionnaire with some follow up with online interviews. Teaching staff will be asked to reflect on the impact they perceive of the Enhancement Themes project, including the impacts of wider network cluster project. Further evidence on their teaching practice and student learning will be sought through the Programme Monitoring and Annual Reporting (PMAR) process.

Plan author:	Dr Madeleine Sclater
Date:	11 Dec 2020

Financial Annex Year 1

Student project support	£2400.00 (8 projects at £300 per project)
Programming and Advertising Support	£450.00
Administrative support	£750.00
Financial support for external speakers	£1500 (for 6 high profile speakers)
Materials and sundries	£100.00
Catering for Dissemination (June 2021)	£500.00

TOTAL **£6000.00**