



Resilient Learning Communities

Institutional Plan for: University of Strathclyde

This document will form your year 3 plan and should be around three to four sides of A4. You can find your year 1 and plans through this [web page](#).

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. Any context statement could draw on salient points from the previous year's learning/outcomes from Theme work and reflect any changes in the strategic direction of your institution.

In recent years, the University of Strathclyde has invested in our learning communities through a number of collaborative, student-led and student-focused projects that focus on the various types of student journey and learning experience. These include:

- The expansion of the Learner Experience Framework (LEF) to include indicators around resilience, innovation and atypical learning experiences (such as industry placements);
- The development of our online learning capacity and capability, with the approval of institutional standards, governance and oversight, amidst the expansion of our Graduate Apprenticeship and Degree Apprenticeship programmes and online learning degree portfolio;
- The implementation of a Learning Analytics system that allows us to identify where students may need further support, through enhanced reporting for staff;
- The continued development and use of Strathclyde's system for academic management information through the work of the Strategy and Planning Directorate and the SUnBIRD system (Strathclyde University Business Intelligence Reports and Dashboards);
- Substantial expansion of mental health and wellbeing services;
- The establishment of the Race Equality Steering Group; and
- The establishment of the e-FIRST (education – Future Innovation and Reflection on Strathclyde's Teaching) framework, to integrate existing strategic priorities for Education with planning and oversight of the delivery of blended learning as a result of the ongoing pandemic;

- The embedding of the Strathclyde Doctoral School, and initiation of an institution-wide project aimed at producing sector-leading PGR student lifecycle that supports positive outcomes and world-leading research;

All of these can be clearly mapped against our Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to provide an outstanding experience for students and staff. These activities have proven to be of significant benefit in our ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and provide the foundation on which we will explore the impact of the pandemic and evaluate our response to the changed learning and teaching environment, and the consequent impacts to our learning community and its diverse needs.

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.

Institutional lead	Helyn Gould, Deputy Associate Principal (Learning and Teaching)
TLG staff representative	Dr Chris Bovis, Learning Enhancement Officer
TLG student representative	Arran Lamont, Vice-President Education (Strath Union)
Institutional lead (alternate)	Brian Green, Deputy Associate Principal (Quality Assurance and Student Experience)

Overall outcomes/activity

Are there any changes to your key priorities, outcomes and delivery activities that you identified at the start of the Theme?

Through discussion with colleagues across the institution, Strathclyde adopted a community-led approach with departments/schools/faculties and other teams, who identified areas within their own remit for prioritisation, which aligned with the institutional priorities, as indicated within the Context above. Colleagues were encouraged to put forward proposals on areas that benefit from student-staff partnership and intern involvement.

Given that the theme has the potential to reach out to a broad range of colleagues, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic response, it was felt that this enhancement theme would offer the opportunity to empower colleagues to identify, collaborate and enhance their learning communities.

The key priorities for the overall theme are therefore:

- Defining what a learning community looks like (in the context of online and blended learning precipitated by the pandemic response) and what resilience means for students and staff;

- Exploring the ways in which these learning communities have proven resilient, identifying best practice, and sharing amongst colleagues;
- Instituting the findings of the above key priorities to ensure that the 'new normal' at Strathclyde includes all students (undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research) and staff, regardless of their learning experiences.

These key priorities remain in place for the theme. Year Three will focus on reviewing the work that has been undertaken so far and exploring potential frameworks for embedding activities and structures that facilitate, support and enhance our learning community.

By the end of the three-year Enhancement Theme, the expected outcome would be a range of case studies exploring resilience within our learning community, as well as activities, structures and best practice that can support our communities beyond these exceptional circumstances.

Year 3 outcomes/activity

In answering the following, identify what is continuing from year 2 and what is new:

What are your key priorities?

What outcomes do you want to achieve?

What activities will you deliver to achieve your key priorities?

The key priorities of the previous two years (outlined in the institutional plans for years one and two) remain in place. Year Three will see a continuation of the previous years, so far that proposals for student-staff partnership will be sought and funded, alongside a dedicated stream of activity focused on embedding, evaluating and reflecting holistically on the work of the theme. This is conducted with oversight of the University's Learning Enhancement Committee, with onward reporting to Senate. This will be accompanied by work to ensure the theme's legacy at Strathclyde, with a particular focus on what future enhancement work will look like, and how new structures and systems can be resilient in the light of external pressures. Key focus areas include:

- The fostering of a community of practice, using an integrated archive of resources developed over the previous years of the theme;
- The development of a scholarship hub, that focuses on encouraging enhancement activity across the institution, and provides space for collaboration, discussion, the sharing of best practice;
- To reflect on ongoing activity and existing projects from the first and second years of the theme, alongside the (yet to be chosen) third-year projects;
- Exploring options for embedding and evaluating the major outcomes and outputs of the Enhancement Theme into standard practice.

To advance in these key focus areas, we at Strathclyde are keen to continue ensuring that all our learning communities have the opportunity to feed in and shape the Enhancement Theme activity. This means continuing our engagement with all types of student learning experiences, especially those communities who often face difficulties in Higher Education in 'normal times'.

Using Theme resources from sector projects

In the year 3 report we will ask you what resources you have used and which you have found to be most valuable. It would be helpful for us to know now, how, and which resources, you may be planning to use in year 3 of the Theme and beyond (from the Anti-Racist Curriculum project, Valuing and Recognising Prior Learning and Experience, Understanding Micro credentials and Small Qualifications in Scotland, the Student-Led Project, Student Mental Wellbeing).

Evaluation

How do you intend to evaluate your year 3 projects and activities?

Prior to completing this section, 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 complete briefly the following 5 questions for each activity or intervention (N.B. Just cut and paste the table below as many times as necessary). This will help you complete your end of year 3 report.

Title of project/activity
The specific projects will be selected through a competitive bid process during the coming academic year.
What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)
The bid process will require this information to inform the evaluation and award process.
Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)
The rationale will be clearly identified in the bid stage.
What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)
For some projects, this will be focused on exploration and building understanding, therefore the potential changes will organically emerge rather than be predefined. Others will have clear plans up front. Our evaluation will be managed appropriately for all instances.
How will we know? (How the change is measured)
Identification of appropriate measures will be incorporated in the expected planning and reporting activities from the start of all activities.

Dissemination of work

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

Dissemination of this work will primarily be communicated through internal workshops, however papers may be presented at external conferences if appropriate.

Supporting staff and student engagement

How will you support your community to engage with planned activities?

The broader institutional activity will be overseen by the institution's Learning Enhancement Committee. Through this the intern-supported projects will report to the Learning Enhancement Committee and also through targeted showcase events to the wider Strathclyde community.

A panel of senior staff and student executive members, supported by the Education Enhancement Directorate, will manage the project bids and funding for interns, following the same model successfully utilised during the Student Transitions theme. This model opts for an approach whereby staff and students in departments, schools, faculties, and professional services submit projects which determine the priorities of the theme. These projects involve both students and staff, and the students are paid for their time and involvement.

Supported for the ET Student Interns will be delivered through the existing infrastructure developed for this purpose, as Strathclyde continues to work with student interns across several enhancement activities beyond the Enhancement Theme.

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