



Institutional Plan for: Edinburgh Napier University

This document will form your year 2 plan and should be around three to four sides of A4. You can find your year 1 plan 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.

During the course of year one, Edinburgh Napier published its [Learning and Teaching Strategy 2020-2025](#) which builds on our reputation as an accessible and applied University. The strategy has particular focus on:

- Our Student Experience: continue to develop a stimulating and transformative learning environment where students develop the attributes that will equip them for successful, adaptable careers through active engagement in programmes that integrate leading advances in academic, vocational and professional practices.
- Our High-Quality Curriculum: We will set a new benchmark for curriculum design – Edinburgh Napier Gold Standard – that will recognise excellence and drive continued enhancement in programme design and delivery by encapsulating the very best principles of learning and teaching.
- Our Academic Signature: Academic disciplines connected to contemporary challenges aligned to our academic themes and workforce needs through strong networks with employers, public, private and third sectors.
- Our Impact: High quality challenge driven projects, underpinned by business and public engagement that prepares graduates for impactful careers.

Our year two plan has been informed by this strategy as we intend to use Enhancement Theme activities as enablers to delivering our strategic goals, as well as continuing to build upon work undertaken in year one.

We remain committed to ensuring that the Enhancement Theme provides opportunities for staff and students from across the University to influence and shape our Institutional activity and for the wider University community to have opportunity to define what a

resilient learning community means more broadly and to showcase initiatives and projects demonstrating what this looks like in practice for us all to learn from.

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 and TLG staff representative	Dr Ingeborg van Knippenberg, Lecturer, Department of Learning and Teaching Enhancement (DLTE)
TLG alternate staff representative	Katrina Swanton, Head of Quality & Enhancement, DLTE
TLG student representative	Heloisa Fyfe, President for Societies and Community, Edinburgh Napier Students' Association (ENSA);
TLG alternate student representative	Matthew Akinpelu, ENSA President for Education & Employability
Team members:	Louise McCarte, DLTE Administrator
	Campbell Millar, Head of HR Capability & Engagement
	Dr Stuart Taylor, Lecturer, DLTE (representative of the ENU Learning & Teaching Network)
	Dr Sam Campbell Casey, Lecturer, School of Applied Sciences (representative of the ENU Learning & Teaching Network)
	Prof Catriona Cunningham, Head of DLTE
	Dr Marita Le Vul - Grimwood, Associate Professor, DLTE

Overall outcomes/activity

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

The University Learning & Teaching Strategy was still being developed at the start of the Theme. It has since been approved and published and this provides the Enhancement Themes Team with a more focussed lens in which to continue our work. Year Two will see a shift in our focus as we place greater priority on the development and implementation of Edinburgh Napier's [Gold Standard Curriculum](#) which seeks to enhance curriculum design at the University and align it to the University's strategic ambition for its students.

A significant focus during year one was on ensuring that the Digital Support Partnership had a wider legacy and significant work has been undertaken to evaluate its impact and while the project is now in its closure phase, there will be a number of dissemination activities continuing during this year.

We plan to offer a second round of mini-projects to increase the breadth of engagement from students and staff from across the University, though will permit projects funded during the first year opportunity to bid for further funding to extend the breadth and impact of work undertaken during year one.

Edinburgh Napier Students Association work on supporting a resilient learning community through a student buddying scheme will continue to be supported into year 2 and we will continue to work in partnership with ENSA to scope out further approaches to support the student community.

Year 2 outcomes/activity

In answering the following, identify what is continuing from year 1 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?

Output 1:

Resilient Learning Communities – Mini Projects

We will continue the approach of undertaking a University-wide call for student-staff collaborative mini-projects which commenced in year one to broaden the portfolio of projects supported under the theme and further develop the definition of resilient learning communities at Edinburgh Napier.

The majority of the projects will be new – though it is anticipated that some successful project investigators from year one may wish to submit proposals to further extend their projects. We are also actively encouraging internal and external dissemination of Year 1 projects to explore and capture their impact, all of which will feed into our evaluation in Year 3.

A key priority of the mini projects is achieving wider staff and student engagement in the Enhancement Theme from across the University - and to raise awareness of the Theme more generally, achieved through the call-out for funding and through the dissemination activities.

Output 2:

Student Buddying Scheme

We will continue work started in year one to launch the ENSA student buddying scheme. Year 2 activity will be focussed on implementation and evaluation (See further details below).

Output 3:

***New* Building Resilience through the Gold Standard Curriculum Framework**

Building on themes emerging during the Digital Support Partnership Project evaluation conducted in year one, we plan to draw on our evaluation of the learning gained during the response to the pandemic to inform and influence current and future curricula to make it more flexible and more resilient.

A new activity for year 2 will be to incorporate Enhancement Theme activity into work on our Gold Standard Curriculum Framework, which aims to enhance institutional confidence and expertise in curriculum design. We will align this work with the learning from our

evaluation of the Digital Support Partnership Project to help us identify and further explore the ways in which our curriculum can become more flexible and resilient across the disciplines. We will empower the newly established School Curriculum Leads to lead on collaborative work with staff and students to develop and co-create guidance and resources to support curriculum design.

This final output for Year 2 will focus on our enhancement-led approach in developing the first stage of the implementation of Gold Standard Curriculum. We will be able to draw on a range of data as it accumulates over the year, which may include surveys for staff and students, MS Teams communications, other written online communications, focus groups, reflective programme team conversations, autoethnographic reflections, creative or reflective outputs produced in workshop sessions, and programme documentation and case studies.

Evaluation

How do you intend to evaluate your year 2 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 2 report.

Title of project/activity
Resilient Learning Communities – Student-Staff Collaborative Mini-Projects
What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)
In 2021-22 there will be a new round of Mini-projects, continuing the successful approach of Y1 and the previous Enhancement Theme. We will reach out across the University to identify how staff and students are exploring themes around resilient learning communities in the broadest terms. We allocate £3,000 of the funds for this work and will put a call out for proposals for small scale projects (requiring in the region of £200 – £500 each).
Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)
We have seen in the past that such small scale projects can make big differences to the student experience and value the contributions they make to the overall enhancement of learning across ENU.
What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)
The call for these projects will go out in September 2021, and we expect to fund in the range of 7 to 10 different projects. Based on experience from previous years we anticipate the outcomes will be varied in kind but consistent in making clear improvements in the student learning experience. Dealing with changes due to COVID in particular offers plenty of opportunities to improve the resilience of our learning communities.

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

A condition of funding is that each mini project lead completes their own evaluation form – using templates developed during the previous Evidence for Enhancement Theme (logic model). We will be asking for these to be completed during the course of the projects running, at the end of the project as well as being revisited at the end of the Theme as a whole to evaluate the mid/long term impacts of the projects and inform our Year 3 final evaluation.

Title of project/activity

Student buddying scheme (student-led project)

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

This is a continuation of the Year 1 project. In Year 1, a form for the buddying scheme was developed that will allow matching of new students to student buddies. This form will be implemented in 2021-22, to allow matching of new students with more experienced students as buddies. The buddies are supported by a Student Buddy Handbook, also developed in Year 1.

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

The student buddy system aims to:

- Enhance integration and confidence for new students
- Strengthen the Edinburgh Napier community spirit
- Prepare new students to the next years of their University life
- Foster a sense of belonging amongst students
- Improve peer to peer connection post-pandemic
- Develop a sense of purpose and care in current students

What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)

- Increased meaningful friendships between students
- Improved sense of belonging to the Edinburgh Napier community
- Improved mental health in the student population (reduction of loneliness and anxiety)

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

- Number of students signing up to the scheme
- Increasing number of students using the scheme year on year
- Direct positive feedback from students (through surveys – with oversight of the University Student Surveys Steering Group and word of mouth)
- Higher score in the NSS 'feeling part of Napier community' question.

Title of project/activity

Gold Standard Curriculum

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

The Gold Standard Curriculum Framework is being developed and launched during 2021/22 as part of a significant Edinburgh Napier project. As part of the Enhancement Theme work, activities will focus on resilience in curriculum design - exploring the understanding of resilience in the context of curriculum design; why it is important; how resilience can be incorporated into curriculum design.

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

The Gold Standard Curriculum Framework is a starting-point for enhancement conversations about curriculum design – at programme team and university levels. As well as providing a shared reference point and vocabulary for these conversations, it will be used to enable more systematic sharing of existing good practice and innovation in curriculum design at Edinburgh Napier. It will also facilitate future enhancements through a supportive process underpinned by resources and workshops. These will bring together curriculum design expertise from around the university to make it more accessible to programme teams.

What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)

This work will shape and inform the resources and guidance materials for all staff implementing the Gold Standard Curriculum – it will help to provide a clearer understanding of what is meant by resilience in terms of curriculum design at a programme level

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

Short term measures might include:

- fewer conditions made at scrutiny and approval
- Positive feedback from stakeholders, such as students and employers during the approval and review events
- Feedback from staff that they have greater confidence in building resilience into their curriculum design

The impacts are likely to be more evident over the longer term.

Dissemination of work

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

In 2020-21 the ENU Learning and Teaching Network (LTN) was revived and re-energised. It is now an active community collaborating via Teams. We will use this network both to contribute work on the Enhancement Theme and to disseminate our outcomes. The annual Learning and Teaching conference was replaced this year by an Exhibition where much of the theme's work was featured, and we will continue this at next year's event, whichever shape that takes.

We are planning a festival of mini-projects in October 2021, to present the outcomes of the Year 1 projects to ENU staff and students. To increase our reach, we are exploring a collaboration with Heriot-Watt University to do this jointly with their mini-projects, to foster cross-institutional exchange of ideas and experience. If successful this collaboration will be continued for the year 2 miniprojects.

Further, we will continue to take advantage of a range of approaches to promote and communicate our Institutional work. This will include, but not be restricted to:

- Develop our Institutional Theme webpage to provide updates on activities and to share resources produced.
- Regular updates on progress to ENU community via Learning & Teaching Matters and Bones newsletters and through ENSA newsletters
- Promotion of activity through our social media channels (internally and externally).
- Reporting through University Governance structures, such as University Learning, Teaching, Assessment & Student Experience Committee (which reports to Academic Board, our most senior academic committee, and includes representatives from across all Schools and student-facing Professional Support Services).
- The student buddying scheme framework will be shared as an open resource to benefit students across the sector

Supporting staff and student engagement

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

We have a dedicated Teams site for the Enhancement Theme where all people working on this can collaborate, including separate channels for separate strands. We will continue to foster links between this community and the Learning and Teaching Network to keep increasing the reach of our Theme's work.

The new call for mini-projects will go out University-wide shortly, to allow for people to attend the Y1 mini-project festival before submitting their ideas. Incoming and outgoing mini-project leads will be part of the same Teams channel to benefit from each other's experience.

The Institutional team will retain oversight of activity and provide additional support as required.

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