Resilient Learning Communities

Institutional Plan for: University of the Highlands and Islands

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 2021-22 the University will start to embed its new Strategic Plan which was launched in June 2021. We will also be evaluating the impact of the current Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES) and working on a new Strategy for launch and implementation in 2022-23 as well as undertaking a root and branch review of the curriculum, which will be ongoing for this and next academic year.

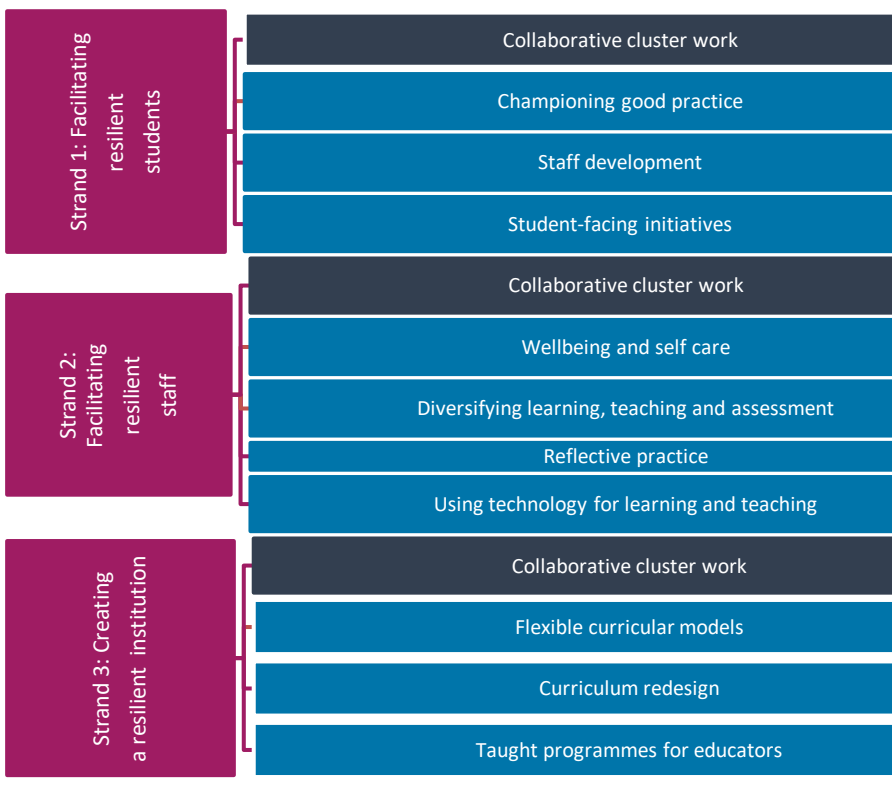| Institutional team	
Please specify for each member whether staff or student and for staff, their role title. Where the Theme Leaders' Group (TLG) staff or student nominee is unable to attend meetings, an alternate can attend on their behalf.	
Institutional lead	Dr Heather Fotheringham, Evidence-Based Enhancement Lead
TLG staff representative	Dr Heather Fotheringham, Evidence-Based Enhancement Lead
TLG student representative	TBC: The VPHE post in our students' association HISA is currently vacant. It is expected that the new VPHE will take on the TLG student rep role after elections in October 2021.
Add additional rows for additional members	Professor Keith Smyth, Professor of Pedagogy and Head of Learning and Teaching Academy (Chair, Enhancement Themes Consultation Group)
	Dr Iain Morrison, Dean of Students

	Rhiannon Tinsley, Academic Registrar
	Andrew Bowie, Student Voice Assistant, HISA
	Kevin Sinclair, Student Engagement Manager
	Dr Iain MacInnes, Subject Network Leader (Humanities and Gaelic)
	Iain Eisner, Careers Manager
	Elaine Dalloway, Educational Design and Development Leader

Overall outcomes/activity

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

We will continue to arrange our institutional Enhancement Themes work around three broad strands, as indicated in last year's plan, with identified areas within each strand with which activities in each year of the Theme will align:

Strand 1: Facilitating resilient students
- Collaborative cluster work
- Championing good practice
- Staff development
- Student-facing initiatives

Strand 2: Facilitating resilient staff
- Collaborative cluster work
- Wellbeing and self care
- Diversifying learning, teaching and assessment
- Reflective practice
- Using technology for learning and teaching

Strand 3: Creating a resilient institution
- Collaborative cluster work
- Flexible curricular models
- Curriculum redesign
- Taught programmes for educators

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?

Where work in year 1 focussed primarily on gathering and sharing best practice in supporting students during COVID and benchmarking current practice in relation to staff and institutional resilience, the key priorities for year 2 are implementing and evaluating a number of new projects, initiatives, resources, and events aligned to each of the three strands. These are further articulated in the table below:

Strand	Area of activity	Projects/initiatives in Year 2	New or continuing?
Facilitating Resilient Students	Champion good practice in teaching, learning and student support that can help to develop resilient learners.	Gather case studies of good practice from staff, including those emerging from the HISA staff awards and Student Support Initiative Award nominations	New and continuing
	Deliver initiatives directly to students to broaden their skillset and increase their confidence	Continue to embed careers and employability 'pathway' resources within individual programmes and programme areas	Continuing
		Devise and make available mental health modules to all students	New
		Run employability and mental health events including a one-day mental health conference, employability conference and mental health awareness week	New
		As part of engagement with PARC Collaborative Cluster, pilot the use of 'diagnostic testing' in a small number of programmes in order to more adequately support students' transition into study	Continuing
	Help staff to develop the knowledge and skills to encourage resilience in their students through	Create a Staff Training Framework and accompanying resources for staff about student mental health	New

	teaching, learning and support activities.		
Facilitating Resilient Staff	Develop staff knowledge, confidence and skills in the area of: Diversifying learning, teaching and assessment	Hold a two-day Assessment and Feedback Symposium relating to the topic of 'sustainable assessment'	New
		Devise the University's new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, embedding the concepts and values of resilience and resilient learning communities in the content of the strategy.	New
	Develop staff knowledge, confidence and skills in the area of: Reflective practice	Run a series of webinars and workshops relating to reflective writing and reflective practice	New
	Develop staff knowledge, confidence and skills in the area of: Using technology for learning and teaching	Support a network of practitioner groups/communities of practice ('Bright Sparks') relating to innovative use of the University's VLE, Brightspace	New
Creating a Resilient Institution	Develop flexible curricular models	Develop a micro-credential relating to the curriculum area of social sciences	New
	Foreground the notion of resilience in: curriculum design	Continue working with the Curriculum Review Group to foreground the notion of resilience in the University's approach to curriculum content and design	Continuing
	Foreground the notion of resilience in: taught programmes for educators	Create resources to support resilient practices in graduates of these programmes	Continuing

Evaluation

How do you intend to evaluate your year 2 projects and activities?

Strand 1: Facilitating Resilient Students

Title of project/activity	What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)	Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)	What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)	How will we know? (How the change is measured)
Case studies of good practice	Gathering examples of good practice in supporting student resilience through learning, teaching and assessment activities	To encourage other staff to innovate in their practice	Staff will access the resources, and start to take on new ideas, with the longer-term outcome of changing their practice and having a positive impact on student resilience	Number of staff accessing the resources

Positive staff feedback on the value of the resources |
Careers and employability pathway resources	To promote 'pathway' resources which are self-study resources for students to develop their employability skills	To give students transferable skills and confidence in approaching the workplace	Academic staff will embed the resources within their programmes, and students will access them	Number of programmes embedding the resources, number of students accessing the resources, positive staff and student feedback on their effectiveness
Mental health modules	Devise and make available mental health modules to all students, including module specifically designed for PGR students	To give students the skills to manage their own mental health	Students will complete the modules; the modules will be effective at giving students necessary skills and knowledge	Number of students completing the modules, positive staff and student feedback on their effectiveness
HISA- employability and mental health events	In tandem with HISA, run employability and mental health events	To raise student awareness of the support available for mental health, and ways in which they can develop skills relating to employability	Students attend the events, and awareness is raised. Longer-term it is hoped that students' mental health is impacted positively	Number of students attending the events, positive student feedback
Diagnostic testing	As part of engagement with PARC Collaborative Cluster,	To gauge the effectiveness of a more personalised	Appropriate 'diagnostic testing' is used in a number of programmes to	Number of programmes engaging, number of students undertaking

	pilot the use of 'diagnostic testing' in a small number of programmes in order to more adequately support students' transition into study	approach to student support	provide staff data on areas of student strength and weakness. This informs a targeted approach to student support	the testing; changes in student support that are implemented in response to the data generated by the testing
Staff Training Framework and resources	Create a Staff Training Framework and accompanying resources for staff about student mental health	To give staff the skills to support their students' mental health needs	Staff training is tailored to the needs of their role; staff only attend relevant training and time is saved; training is effective at equipping staff with the appropriate level of knowledge	Positive staff feedback on the training framework and resources

Strand 2: Facilitating Resilient Staff

Title of project/activity	What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)	Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)	What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)	How will we know? (How the change is measured)
Assessment and Feedback Symposium	Hold a two-day Assessment and Feedback Symposium relating to the topic of 'sustainable assessment'	To encourage other staff to innovate in their practice	Staff will attend the event, and start to take on new ideas, with the longer-term outcome of changing their practice and having a positive impact on their confidence and use of new approaches	Number of staff attending; positive staff feedback on the value of the event
Development of new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy	Devise the University's new Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, embedding the concepts and values of resilience and resilient learning communities in the content of the strategy.	To ensure that long-term strategies are formulated to encourage student, staff and institutional resilience.	Teaching, student support, curriculum and staff development is able to withstand changing landscapes (education, economy, culture)	New strategy aligns with notions of staff, student and institutional resilience Longer term evaluation of the LTES reveals that it has helped the University adapt quickly to change
Webinars and writing workshops relating to reflective practice	Running a series of webinars and writing workshops to introduce staff to reflective practice, reflective writing, and to allow them to apply these techniques	To encourage staff to become reflective practitioners	That staff become more reflective and embed reflection and change in their approach to teaching which is responsive to students' wants and needs.	Number of staff attending; positive staff feedback on the value of the events
Practitioner groups for innovative use	Creation and support of practitioner groups who can work together	To remove the barriers to innovation in	Staff communicate and support each	Number of staff engaging in these groups, level of group

of the VLE ('Bright Sparks')	to focus on different tools within the VLE which may enhance the student experience	practice (such as time, confidence, motivation)	other in developing new skills Staff implement these skills in making positive changes to the student experience	activity; extent to which outcomes are applied in practice (this data to be gathered via participants' reflective journals)

Strand 3: Creating a Resilient Institution

Title of project/activity	What change is being made? (Brief description(s) of overall activity/intervention)	Why are we making it? (Rationale for the change)	What difference will hopefully occur as a result? (Tangible change envisaged)	How will we know? (How the change is measured)
Micro-credential in social sciences	Develop a micro-credential relating to the curriculum area of social sciences	To test out a new type of teaching model within UHI. When delivered, this will assist with the transition and retention of students into HN programmes within the social sciences	Useful institutional learning regarding the processes of writing, developing and delivering a micro-credential.	Development and implementation will be documented including identifying time commitments, any barriers to change etc.
Continued working with Curriculum Review Group	Continue working with the Curriculum Review Group to foreground the notion of resilience in the University's approach to curriculum content and design	To ensure that long-term strategies are formulated to encourage institutional resilience.	Curriculum is able to withstand changing landscapes (education, economy, culture)	New policies and processes align with notion of institutional resilience. Longer term evaluation reveals that the University has been quick to adapt to change.
Resources to support resilient practices in graduates of our programmes for educators (TQFE, PGCert Tertiary and HE)	Creating rubrics and reflection questions to assist graduates of our programmes for educators in developing resilient curricula and employing resilient practices within their own programmes	Most of our graduates are also teaching staff within UHI. By highlighting and role-modelling resilient practices in the TQFE/PGCert Tertiary and HEHE we can help to ensure that UHI programmes	Graduates will use the resources in the development of their own programmes; longer-term outcome of a body of academic staff with the skills and confidence to adapt to changing landscapes	Number of graduates accessing the resources Positive feedback on the value of the resources

		will similarly embed these practices.	(education, economy, culture)	

Dissemination of work
How will you promote and communicate your work internally and externally?
The Enhancement Themes Consultation Group (comprising representatives from academic staff, HISA, learning and teaching enhancement and academic quality) will continue to report on progress to our Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee which is a key channel for communicating to senior staff from across the University partnership. The university's Learning and Teaching Academy will remain a key mechanism for staff engagement as it was during last year. Events and resources will be advertised via the LTA's established communication channels. Where possible, events will be open to colleagues within the Scottish sector. Our students' association, HISA, is running a series of events under the Theme this year (mental health and employability) which should help the communication of the work of the Theme with the wider student body.

Supporting staff and student engagement
How will you support your community to engage with planned activities?
Support to deliver activities will come through the Enhancement Themes Consultation Group. Relevant members of the group will lead on activities within the Theme, with additional colleagues joining the Consultation Group where they are undertaking work relevant to the Theme. The University's Learning and Teaching Academy will lead on the dissemination of work under the Theme using established channels of engagement such as the LTA Connect webinars and LTA blog. Key to engaging students will be the students' association who are fully invested in the work of the Theme.

Plan author:	Dr Heather Fotheringham
Date:	12.09.2021

Return to: ARCadmin@qaa.ac.uk

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Financial Annex Year 2

Please provide information on how the funding given through the Enhancement Theme institutional contract will be used to support work within the HEI in relation to the Theme. This should be high level, not detailed.

At the time of the end-of-year report, you will be asked to comment on expenditure against financial plan information.

Please note that this information remains confidential and will not be made available on the web.

Our Enhancement Theme Consultation Group has agreed that Year 2 funding will be utilised as it was for Year 1, which is as follows:

Our 6K allocation for Year 2 will continue to be used to part-fund an additional 0.2 per week for Dr Heather Fotheringham to fulfil the role of Enhancement Themes Institutional Lead and TLG Staff Representative. The additional 3K per annum that is required for Dr Fotheringham's 0.2 time allocation is being met by the university.

Costs for internal professional development activities related to the work for the theme, and any T&S for Year 2, will be covered through our Learning and Teaching Academy. The Learning and Teaching Academy are also providing a time contribution from our Information and Communications Assistant to provide administrative support for our Enhancement Themes work.

Commented [KS4]: Have updated the text here to be consistent with what we said for Year 1.

Author:	Dr Heather Fotheringham
Date:	12.09.2021

Return to: ARCadmin@qaa.ac.uk