End of Year 3 Report for: University of St Andrews

Guidance notes (for deletion upon submission)

The key purposes of this report are to:
- Provide means to evidence and reflect on activity across the three-year duration of the current Theme
- Consider the contribution evidence of shorter duration project/activities
- Help share evidence-informed information across the sector on successful and effective activity
- Reflect upon what has been challenging.

You should aim to write this report as a collective endeavour (particularly for institutional reporting where a number of projects may have been delivered) as triangulation of evidence and experiences will provide a more powerful and useful narrative.

Please consider evidenced activity across the duration of your activities:

- For institutions, this is evidence gathered over three years
- For collaborative clusters this could involve evidence gathered over two or three years
- For the Student-Led Project, please report evidence on the project delivered in Year 3 of the Theme
- For QAAS-managed projects this will be evidence across three years.

Please report under the headings below. The report should be succinct and well-evidenced throughout, using the reporting templates, questions and headings provided to shape your responses.

Table 1: Evidencing effectiveness and reporting impact						
Cumulative descriptor of institutional /cluster/Student-Led Project activity over RLC Theme period	Which overarching RLC Theme questions (1-5) were prioritised?	Evidence of effectiveness in addressing chosen RLC theme priorities	Suggested outcomes and impact measures used to assess effectiveness (refer to Theory of Change model Appendix 1)	Challenges	Made most difference?	Hindsight
Investigating the impact of online learning during the pandemic (longitudinal survey)

Questionnaires disseminated to all UG and PGT students asking them to reflect on their teaching and learning experiences in: 2020-21 (fully online learning); 2021-22 (hybrid learning); and 2022-23 (in-person learning). | Who are our current and future students and how will they want to learn?

How do we ensure we are able to support our diverse learning communities?

How should we anticipate, influence and respond to the changing external environment? | Participation rates were high, with over 1000 students participating in the survey, showing that the aims and objectives of this study were important to them.

Results of the survey have been shared with key stakeholders, and as a result key practices and policies have been changed at our institution. For example:

-It is now compulsory to record all lectures.

-In addition, feedback from these surveys has helped shape how the University manages timetabling (e.g., which classes should have in-person priority).

The findings of this project have been presented at multiple local and international conferences, e.g., the St Andrews CELPiE Showcase Event, the Enhancement Theme Conference, SERA (Scottish Educational Research | Highlight reports of this work have been shared across relevant groups in the University (e.g., Learning and Teaching Committee, Student Experience Strategic Management Group, Directors of Teaching meetings).

The findings of the survey have also been shared externally via conferences and internally at dissemination events.

Changes have been made to University policy regarding lecture capture.

Finally, a summary report for each survey has been distributed to all students in our institution. | Retaining sample size across years. Student participation rates/sample sizes have dropped as the study has progressed. | The employment of student interns to focus on this project allowed for more to be accomplished and provided insights that would not have been possible without the student voice in the survey preparation and analysis stages. | We would not have waited until Year 2 to hire student interns. |

		Association) Conference, the European First Year Experience (EFYE) Conference 2023, invited speaker at Charles University, Prague.				
Investigating the impact of online learning on students during the pandemic – creative storytelling project. Creative storytelling to help students express, through a different medium, what learning during the pandemic has been like for them in hybrid learning and in-person learning environments.	Who are our current and future students and how will they want to learn? How can we gain a clear understanding of their needs? What information do we need to enable us to best support their learning?	We had excellent student engagement, collecting over 100 detailed responses in a two-week period. The student responses were exceptionally candid. Because we have implemented this study over two academic years we will be able to see how students' feelings and experiences have changed over time, (e.g., negative experiences have decreased and positive experiences have increased). The findings have been presented: locally, nationally and internationally. For example, the 2022 Enhancement Theme Conference, two internal dissemination events (an Open Forum and a Showcase event), invited presentations at Charles University, Prague and at the EFYE conference 2023.	We are preparing a manuscript for submission to a peer reviewed journal. The University are currently investigating the option of adopting this method of student engagement for future surveys.	As this is a novel method of collecting data, deciding on analysis methods was challenging.	The employment of student interns made this project so successful. One of our interns came up with the idea for this project and took the lead on data collection, analysis and write-up.	The employment of interns would have taken place earlier. We would have thought more creatively about data collection methods earlier in the process.
Internal dissemination events: Open Forum 2022 (x2) and Showcase Event 2023	Who are our current and future students and how will they want to learn? How	The Forums and Showcase Events successfully increased the presence of the Enhancement Theme	Attendance rates at events. Number of funding applications received as a direct	While attendance was very good, it was challenging to find a time that would allow	The opportunity for staff and students to discuss ideas in small groups during a	Earlier advertising of the events.

We aimed to raise the profile of the Enhancement Theme within our University by holding two Open Forums and hosting an End-of-Theme Showcase Event at our institution.	can we gain a clear understanding of their needs? What information do we need to enable us to best support their learning? How can we capitalise as a sector on the attributes students bring?	work in the institution (e.g., in addition to returning participants, we had many new people joining us at each event). The Open Forums resulted in the development of new student and staff collaborative projects. Applications for project funding were received as a direct result of attendance at the Open Forums. Findings of these funded projects were presented and celebrated at our end of theme Showcase Event.	result of attending the events. Post-it-notes collected feedback at events. The number of successful projects that presented at the event (e.g., 8 talks and 15 posters at our Showcase Event).	the greatest cross-section of staff and students to attend.	dedicated brainstorming time.	
Toolkits for supporting disabled students to transition to and thrive at University. This project aimed to develop toolkits to support students with ADHD and Autism. 1) Development of a Self-Help toolkit aimed at students who have ADHD, reflecting the increasing recognition of and persistence of ADHD in adults. 2) Completion of an online	What will our learning communities look like by 2023? And what can we do now to prepare for them? How do we ensure we are able to support our diverse learning communities? What might this mean for our staff and our infrastructure?	These toolkits have resilience at their core. They relate to ensuring that students are informed about what to expect from St Andrews and starting university life (autism transition toolkit), and helping students develop the tools and strategies to cope with the stresses of university learning (ADHD module). We are not aware of any bespoke modules related to supporting the increased needs for students with ADHD. All initiatives have student collaboration at the core, ensuring that the resources	This project is aimed at providing additional and targeted support to students with ADHD and autism. There is a growing number of students declaring a disability which will shape how our learning communities will look in the future. This increase, coupled with the challenges of studying in a dual delivery model and transitioning to university life, means that there is greater need to ensure that we can better prepare	There have been delays in completion of these two resources due to service demands and staffing. The ADHD module is now live. The Autism toolkit will be live shortly and usage will be monitored by engagement statistics.	Involvement of students in the project to ensure that the tools developed will meet the needs of students.	The only unsuccessful element has been the ability to complete the projects within the intended timescales. The learning is that we need to provide more development time to staff, but this is a challenge due to high service demand.

autism transition toolkit aimed at providing information to support autistic students' transition to University.		that are created are relevant and appropriate for the needs of students they are designed to help.	and support this student cohort.			
Developing resources to support students as they transition back to in-person teaching. Resources were developed to help students return to in-person teaching and learning. This included posters and social media communications for students, and guidelines for staff. This project was led by students.	How do we ensure we are able to support our diverse learning communities?	Our student team was awarded a prize by the University for the work they did on this project recognising the value of the tools developed to help support the resilience of our students when returning to in-person teaching. The team presented their work at the CELPiE Showcase Event.	Number of hits on Instagram posts and number of students accessing the resources.	Dissemination of resources to the full student body.	Students drove this project.	Raise awareness of these resources with staff (e.g., presentations at teaching related meetings across the institutions).
Conflict resolution in the classroom. Embedding conflict resolution training into an existing first year module, before group work begins. Surveying students at the completion of the module, asking them to reflect on their experiences working in a group.	Who are our current and future students and how will they want to learn? How can we gain a clear understanding of their needs? What information do we need to enable us to best support their learning? How do we ensure we are able to support our diverse learning communities?	Project still underway. Update: Data has been collected from students during online teaching last year and in-person teaching this year. This data will serve as control data. In the next academic year we will implement the conflict resolution training intervention and then ask students to complete the survey. This will allow us to see if there has been a change in students thoughts and experiences of working in a group. This measure will allow us to determine the impact of this project on the student experience.	Change in student experience and views of group work post intervention (conflict resolution training).	The time necessary to establish appropriate control groups before the intervention can be implemented.	The opportunity to work with the Mediation Team at the University. It has been valuable to have collaboration between a professional services unit and an academic school.	To understand how ambitious this project was and the time necessary to develop an appropriate control condition before implementing the intervention.

When considering information provided in Table 1:

- What is the ONE most positive aspect to report over the 3 year period? (Evidence of effectiveness column and Suggested outcomes and impact column)

Collaboration with students, in particular the student interns. They provided unique insights and were extremely motivated. They accomplished a remarkable body of important work that has impacted practice and policy at our institution.

- What is the most challenging issue? (Challenges column)

Maintaining consistent levels of engagement from staff on our ET Team. We had a core team that was consistent throughout, but the participation of members from the wider team fluctuated across the 3 years. This was understandable and expected given the challenges of the past 3 years, but it did make it difficult at times to plan and execute projects.

- What has made the most difference and why? (Made most difference column)

Having a collaborative team from all areas of the University – students, professional services staff representing a wide range of units, and academics from a range of academic schools.

- What would you NOT do again, in hindsight and why? (Hindsight column)

Delaying student involvement – we should have had more students involved from the outset of the theme.

Theme process	Activities' description	Positive aspects/difference made	Challenges	Changes made during process	Hindsight - could be improved by:
	Table 2: Ways of working/engaging in the Resilient Learning Communities Themes work				
Supporting staff and students to engage with Theme activity	Introduction of the Enhancement Theme Open Forums to increase the visibility of the Enhancement Theme within the University and to advertise funding calls. Funding calls were also disseminated via student and staff newsletters and mailouts. We supported many projects over the 3 years. The Showcase Event was an opportunity for all involved in the 3 years of the events to celebrate their work and share with the wider St Andrews community.	We were very pleased with the attendance rates at our events and the presence of both staff and students at our events. Following the forums we received a good number of applications for funding, including from groups who were established during the forums.	There were challenges around the dates of our events (e.g., competing with an already busy academic calendar, school holidays, strike days, bad weather). These all had an unfortunate impact on attendance levels.	We didn't introduce these events at the start of the theme. They were introduced after the first funding call, when it became apparent that we needed to increase the visibility of the Enhancement Themes in our institution.	Allowing more time for the individual presentations on previously funded projects. We would also allow more time for networking, based on the feedback received from the events.
Effectiveness of organisational and management structures	For the current Theme, the Theme Lead position was appointed to a member of staff outside the Proctor's Office. The team was then created by inviting participation from members of staff across all sections of the University to join our Student's Association Director, and the Theme Lead. This was a new approach to how the team was constructed.	Our core team was larger than in previous themes, and had wider representation. In Year 2 we actively recruited more student representation in the core team.	Engagement of team members fluctuated throughout the theme due to other time-pressures (but we were pleased that a main core team remained active throughout the full period).	In Year 2 we increased our Student representation on the Team.	Recruiting students to the Team earlier as they were highly valued members of the team.
Evaluating activity and projects	Enhancement Theme Open Forums, our Showcase Event and end of project summary reports. Looking at the impact that ET related projects have had on practice and policy at	The effectiveness of these events was evaluated by attendance records, event evaluation questionnaires, feedback left on post it notes and the numbers of proposals	It was difficult to get all funding recipients to submit end of project reports.	We established the Open Forum as a way to showcase the work that was being done, to see how the community responded to this work,	We could have held our first Open Forum earlier in the theme as a way of gauging interest, engagement and activity with the themes sooner.

	the University.	submitted for funding post the open forums (of particular note is how many new collaborations were formed between attendees of the forums). Outcomes of specific projects were highlighted and evaluated in the end of project summary reports. Practice and policy did change based on work that was carried out under this ET theme.		and to inspire new projects and collaborations between students and staff. We saw this as a creative way to measure/gauge engagement.	
Disseminating outcomes and findings internally and externally	Internal: ET Open Forums, ET Showcase event, CELPiE Showcase event, reports submitted to internal groups such as Directors of Teaching and the SESMG. Invited speakers at ET meetings. Reports of relevant work sent to students. External: Presentations at conferences or as invited speakers. Manuscript in preparation.	Changes made to University practice and policy. Reached a wide audience and received positive feedback from committees and event attendees, both internally and externally. Producing work that is of a publishable standard.	Ensuring good attendance rates at local events.	Realising that we could publish work that we have been carrying out under this theme's banner.	Hold internal events earlier in the theme. Invite more colleagues to present (informally) at our ET meetings.
Collaborating with other institutions/other organisations	Collaboration with Charles University, Prague. Collaborative clusters.	Prague heard about the Enhancement Theme and liked our enhancement-led approach. This has led to a collaborative piece of work on resilience and wellbeing. Funding has just been secured on Prague's end for this continued collaboration. We have established connections with colleagues across the Scottish sector	Keeping tabs on which collaborative clusters we as an institution were involved in, as participation didn't always come via the ET team. (On a tangent: Finding funding to support the work with Prague going forward beyond the period of ET funding.)	Including more St Andrews colleagues in the collaborative clusters (beyond the ET Team).	Have stronger connections between those St Andrews colleagues who were involved in collaborative clusters but were not part of the main Et Team.

		through our involvement in collaborative clusters.			

- Which ONE process from each of those listed within the Theme processes column in Table 2 worked best? (Activities description and Positive aspects columns)

Supporting staff and students to engage with Theme activity.

- Why was it the best? (Positive aspects/difference made column)

Able to reach a wide range of students and staff from across the institution and foster and support collaborations between students and staff (who may not have ordinarily met).

- Which was most difficult and why? (Challenges column)

Fluctuation of engagement in the ET team over the three year period.

- Why did you make any changes? (Could be reported as Positive or via Challenges column)

Slimed down to a smaller core group on the final year and pulled in the wider group only when needed (we did this due to availability and fluctuating commitments).

- What would you NOT do again, in hindsight and why? (Hindsight column)

We were very ambitious in the first year and spent a lot of time planning large scale projects. In hindsight, we would be slightly less ambitious regarding how much we thought we could achieve in the time frame and that would have helped with better completion rates in the first year.

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Resilient Learning Communities

End of Year Report: Financial Annex Year 3 (for completion by institutions only in relation to the Year 3 Grant Agreement funding)

Year 3 spend: 2022/23			Year 3 income: 2022/23	
Open Forum catering (Nov 2022)	£77.00		Budget carried forward	£1,674.60
ET Festive lunch (Dec 2022)	£128.87		1st Instalment Yr3 grant from QAA (Sep 2022)	£4,500.00
Funded project: Physics & Astronomy garden (Nov 2022)	£545.00		2nd instalment Yr3 grant from QAA (Jul 2023)	£1,500.00
Funded project: Attitude to Failures and Mistakes (Nov 2022)	£757.20			
Funded project: I wish I had Known (Nov 2022)	£678.60		**Total**	**£7674.60**
Funded project: These are our stories (Nov 2022)	£800.00			
Funded project: We Are Resilient Together (Nov 2022)	£833.16			
Showcase Event accommodation (N Cizauskas)	£237.00			
Showcase Event rail travel (N Cizauskas)	£110.40			
Showcase Event music duet	£80.00			
Showcase Posters	£759.00			
Showcase catering	£498.45			
QAA conference travel	£278.10			
QAA conference accommodation	£873.93			
QAA conference - taxi (K Murphy)	£38.80			
QAA conference - taxi (P Miles)	£15.80			
QAA conference – meals (Murphy & Miles)	£36.90			
Intern payment - 15 weeks (Nicole Cizauskas)	£687.00			
Intern payment - 15 weeks (Nicole Cizauskas)	£687.00			
Total	**£8122.21**			

*£447.61 overspend covered by top up from Proctor's Office at St Andrews.

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