Enhancement Theme 2020-2023
University of the Highlands and Islands: Institutional approach

1   What is the Enhancement Theme?

The new sector-wide QAA Enhancement Theme for 2020-2023 is **Resilient Learning Communities**. As with previous Enhancement Themes, activity is divided into three areas:

1.   **Institutional work: Projects and initiatives within individual HEIs**.

Plans detailing the University's work for each year of the Theme are submitted to QAA Scotland. Theme activity is overseen by the Enhancement Themes Consultation Group which reports to QAEC.

2.   **Sector-wide projects: More substantial pieces of work led by QAA Scotland in conjunction with HEIs and other relevant agencies.**

Projects to take place over the three years of the Theme are:

➢   Stories of Resilience
➢   Addressing the Digital Divide
➢   Anti-Racist Curriculum (with AdvanceHE)
➢   HE: More than a degree (with sparqs)
➢   Sector learning from COVID
➢   Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
➢   Evaluation of Theme and QAA resource review

3.   **Collaborative Clusters: Groups of institutions working together on topics of interest.**

There are seven clusters for year 1 of the Theme (with the University being involved in the first three)

➢   Student mental wellbeing in BAME and LGBTQ+ learner communities
➢   Exploring the potential of micro-credentials and digital badging
➢   Programme leadership
➢   Personalised approaches to resilience and community
➢   Decolonising the curriculum in the time of pandemic
➢   Reimagining resilience for Postgraduate taught students
➢   Resilient Academic Leadership

2   Institutional activity: Overview

The University's approach is divided into three strands relating to staff, students, and structures and processes, with the following aims:

- **Facilitating Resilient Students**: To develop a student body of resilient learners and resilient graduates, able to adapt to a changing world of education and employment.

- **Facilitating Resilient Staff**: To develop a staff body of resilient educators able to adapt to a changing world of education and employment.
- **Creating a Resilient Institution**: To examine the policies, processes and structures within the University to ensure that they are fit to serve the changing needs of the staff and student body.

For each year of the Theme, institutional activity and engagement with Collaborative Clusters will be linked to one of these three strands.
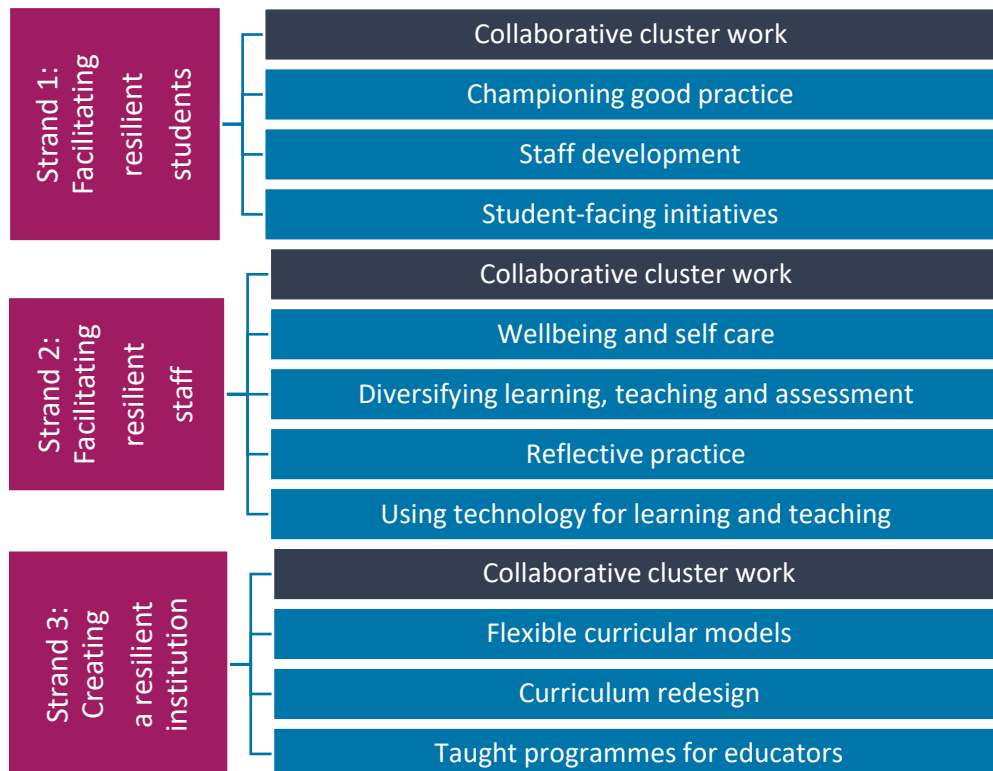
Strand 1: Facilitating resilient students	
	Collaborative cluster work
	Championing good practice
	Staff development
	Student-facing initiatives

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

Figure 1: Overview of the University's engagement with the Enhancement Theme
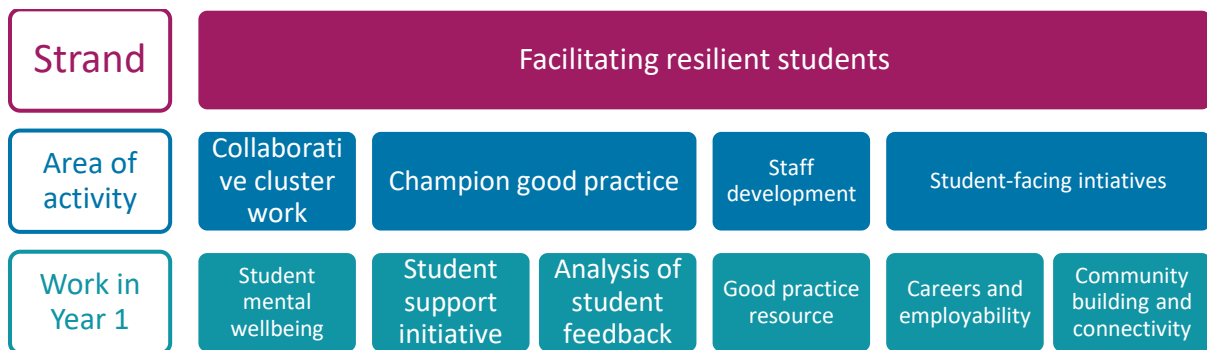
2.1   Strand 1: Facilitating resilient students

For the **overall duration of the Theme**, this strand will involve projects, initiatives, resources and events which:

- Champion good practice in teaching, learning and student support that can help to develop resilient learners.
- Help staff to develop the knowledge and skills to encourage resilience in their students through teaching, learning and support activities.
- Deliver initiatives directly to students to broaden their skillset and increase their confidence.

For **Year 1 of the Theme**, the focus of this work at institutional level will be:

- Running the Student Support Initiative Awards
- Creating a staff-facing good practice resource (and potentially accompanying event)

- Undertaking an analysis of student feedback to identify good practice during COVID
- Continuing student-facing initiatives to create career resilience
- Community building and student connectivity (led by HISA)

| Strand	Facilitating resilient students					
Area of activity	Collaborative cluster work	Champion good practice		Staff development	Student-facing intiatives	
Work in Year 1	Student mental wellbeing	Student support initiative	Analysis of student feedback	Good practice resource	Careers and employability	Community building and connectivity

2.2 Strand 2: Facilitating resilient staff

For the **overall duration of the Theme**, this strand will involve projects, initiatives, resources and events which develop staff knowledge and skills in the areas of:

- Using technology for learning and teaching
- Diversifying learning, teaching and assessment
- Reflective practice
- Wellbeing and self-care

For **Year 1 of the Theme**, the focus of this work at institutional level will be to benchmark current practice and current levels of staff confidence, ability and awareness in three of these areas:

- Diversifying learning, teaching and assessment: Using the evaluation of the LTES to benchmark staff awareness and use of strategy values
- Reflective practice: Using an LTA Scholarship project to benchmark the use of reflective diaries
- Using technology for learning and teaching: working with the University's BIOG (oversees the use of learning technology) to ascertain staff awareness and use of technologies for learning and teaching

Strand	Facilitating resilient staff			
Area of activity	Collaborative clusters	Diversifying learning, teaching and assessment	Reflective practice	Using technology for learning and teaching
Work in Year 1	Programme leadership	Evaluation of LTES	LTA Scholarship project	BIOG input re staff use of technology
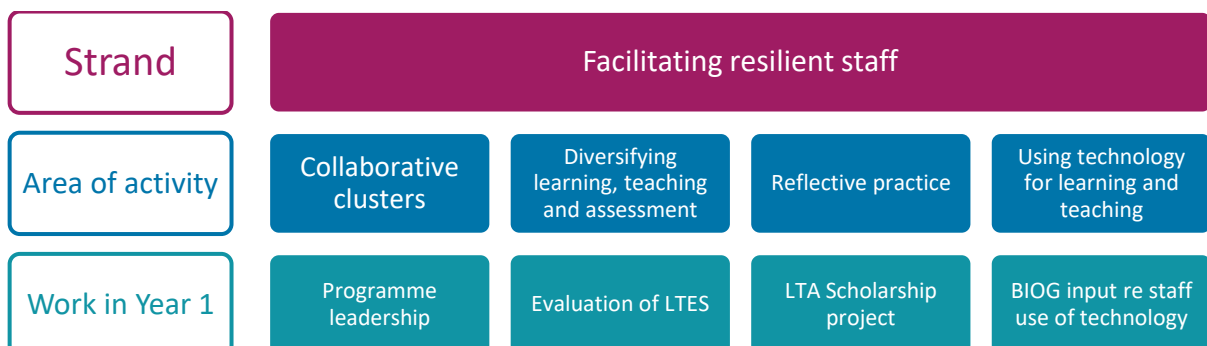
2.3 Strand 3: Creating a resilient institution

For the **overall duration of the Theme**, this strand will involve projects, initiatives, resources and events which focus on:

- Flexible curricular models including micro-credentials
- Curriculum redesign
- Taught programmes for educators (e.g. TQFE, PG Certs)

For **Year 1 of the Theme**, the focus of this work at institutional level will be to:

- Evaluating the evidence emerging from the current round of annual evaluation (including through our Quality Monitoring Dialogues with each of our Subject Networks) to identify emerging examples of good practice, and perspectives on issues and challenges related to resilience to be addressed going forward.
- Aligning the work of the new Enhancement Theme with the recently implemented Curriculum Review Group, to mutually support and inform institutional-wide curriculum review activities in relation to the flexibility, robustness and future proofing of curriculum design and delivery post-pandemic.
- Reviewing the extent to which our formal programmes for educators are engaging our lecturers in issues relating to resilience and resilient practices in learning and teaching.
- We will also review, forward plan, and begin to foreground issues of resilience in the delivery of continuing professional development opportunities through the activities of the Learning and Teaching Academy (including workshops, webinars and symposia, leadership development provision, and activities relating to the University Mentoring Scheme).

Strand	Creating a resilient institution			
Area of activity	Collaborative clusters	Flexible curricular models	Curriculum redesign	Taught programmes for educators
Work in Year 1	Micro-credentials	Working with Curriculum Review Group	Working with Curriculum Review Group	Review of resilience and resilient practices