

X THE PLACE OF USEFUL LEARNING

# THE UNIVERSITY OF STRATHCLYDE

[www.strath.ac.uk](http://www.strath.ac.uk)



## **BNG2022 “Insight to Action”**

### ***Enhancing and Supporting the Student Experience: A Scottish Perspective***

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University of  
**Strathclyde**  
Glasgow



# OVERVIEW

## 1. Background and Context:

Glasgow

University of Strathclyde

Scottish Sector

## 2. Scottish Higher Education

Academic Quality & Enhancement

Characteristics and Current Practice

Future Plans

## 3. Student Voice –

Scottish perspective

Strathclyde perspective

## 4. Next Steps and Integrated Insights





# Glasgow

- **Scotland's largest and most cosmopolitan city**
- **Host to COP 26**
- **"World's friendliest City" (Rough Guide Readers)**
- **World class shopping and nightlife**
- **UNESCO City of Music**
- **A city of sport: Commonwealth Games 2014, European Championships 2018, Soccer Euros 2021**
- **Universities (3) in the heart of the city**
- **Easy national and international transport links**



# University of Strathclyde

- Scotland's 3rd largest University
- Top 30 research-intensive universities in the UK (REF 2021)
- Times Higher Education UK University of the Year (2019 & 2012)
- Scottish University of the Year 2020 (The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2020)
- Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education (2019 & 2021)
- Scotland's Best Large Employer (200 employees or more) at the S1 Jobs Recruitment Awards (2022)
- **4 Faculties:**
  - **Engineering**
  - **Humanities and Social Sciences**
  - **Science**
  - **Strathclyde Business School**

# Strathclyde: Working in Partnership



**Education Enhancement**



**Student Experience**



**Information Services**



**Organisational and Staff Development Unit**



**Strath Union**

# Scotland's Universities

## UHI campuses:

- Argyll College
- Highland Theological College
- Inverness College
- Lews Castle College
- Moray College
- NAFC Marine Centre
- North Highland College
- Orkney College
- Perth College
- Sabhal Mór Ostaig
- SAMS UHI
- Shetland College
- West Highland College



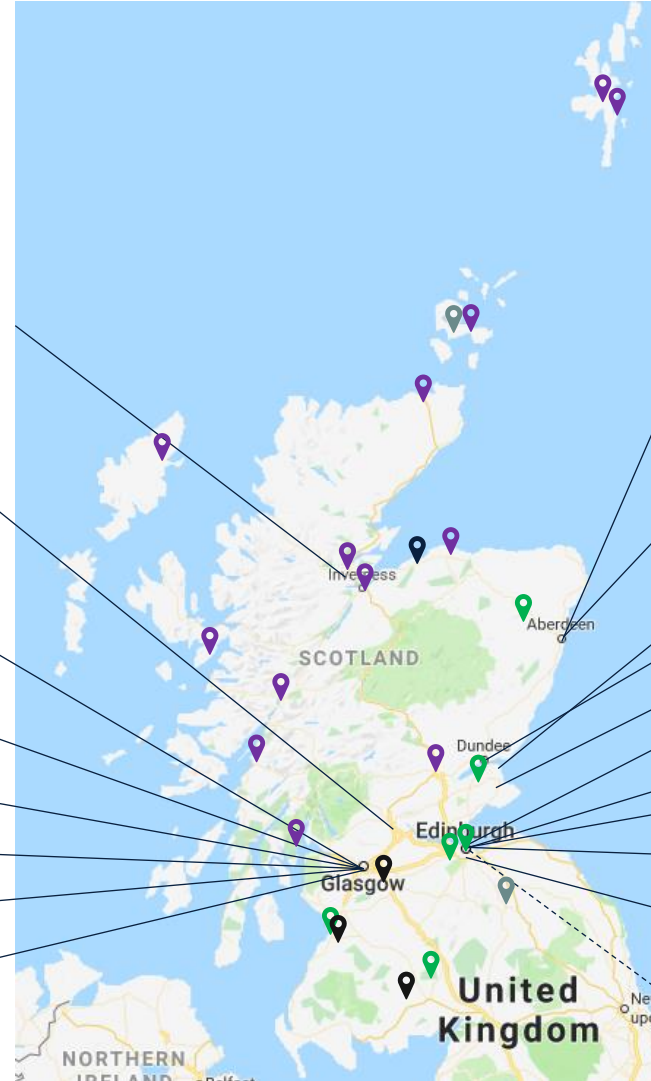
## Glasgow School of Art campuses:

- Glasgow
- The Creative Campus, Highlands and Islands



## UWS campuses:

- Ayr
- Dumfries
- Hamilton



## Heriot Watt campuses:

- Edinburgh
- Scottish Borders
- Orkney



## SRUC Campuses:

- Aberdeen
- Ayr
- Barony
- Edinburgh
- Elmwood
- Oatridge

# Scotland's Students



282,875 students



Including 81,915 postgraduates



68,180 students outside the UK

Source: HESA (2020-21)

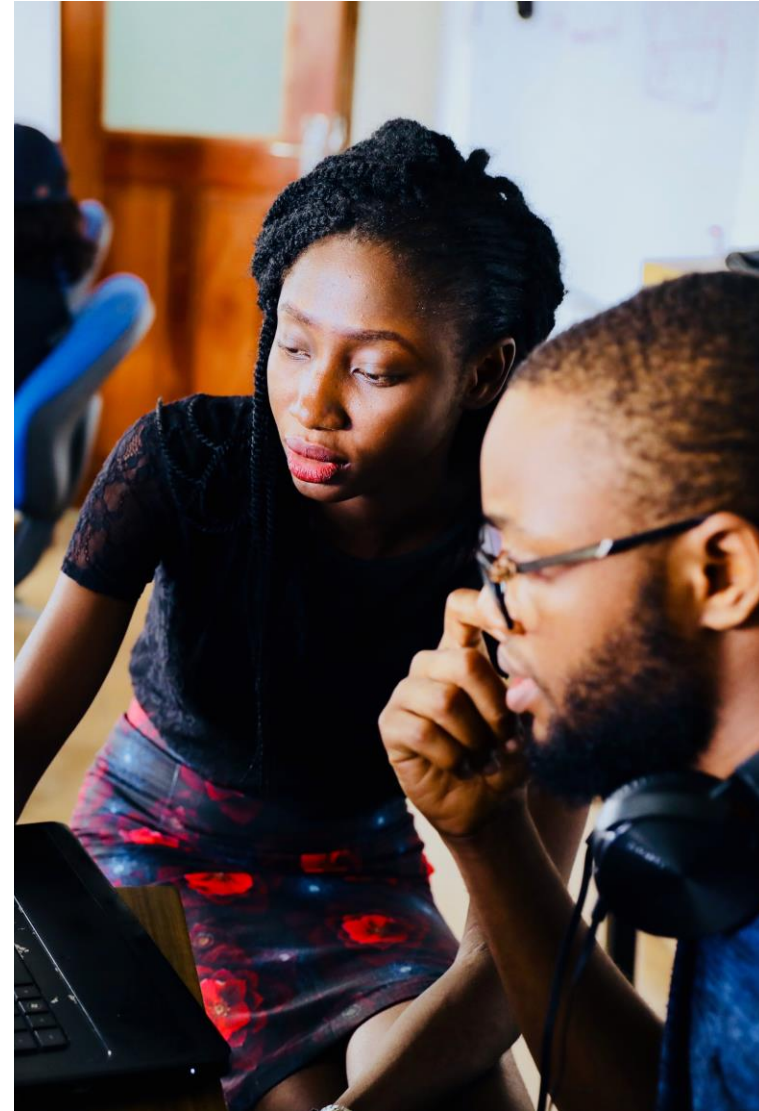




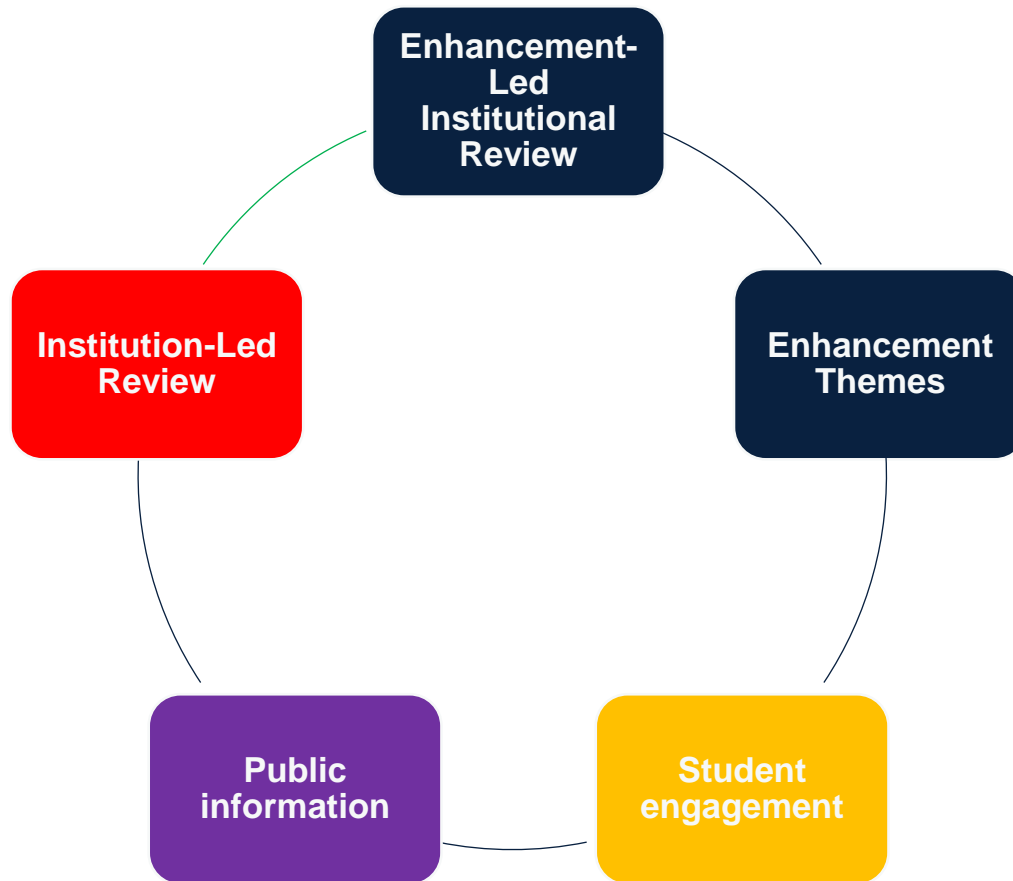
## Academic Quality and **Enhancement** in Scotland's Universities.

*Deliberate and embedded steps to bring about improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experiences of students*

- Aims to enhance the student learning experience and encourage student engagement and participation in learning and in quality processes
- Emphasis is the quality of the student experience of learning rather than on Quality Assurance systems and processes.



# Scotland's Quality Enhancement Framework



Evaluating the quality of learning & teaching through an enhancement-led approach since 2003

Partnership of agencies



QAA  
Scotland



Scottish Funding Council  
Promoting further and higher education



The Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba



Universities  
Scotland

nus  
scotland  
national union of students

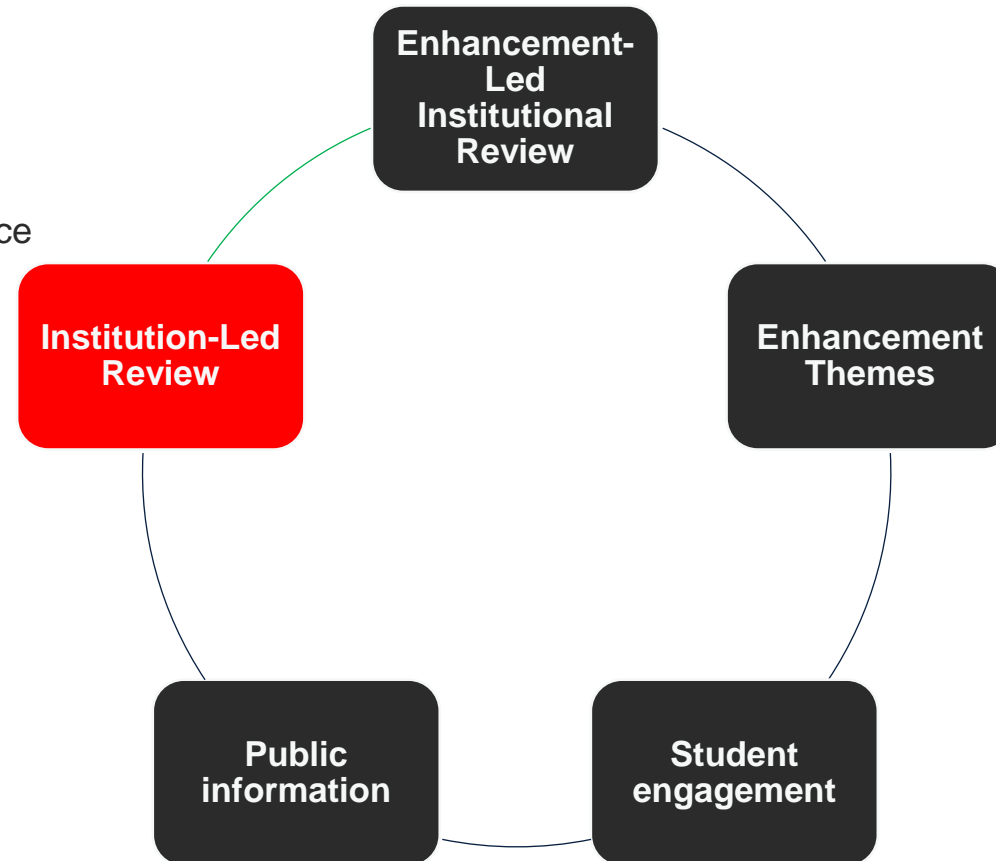


sparqs  
student partnerships in quality Scotland

# Quality Enhancement Framework

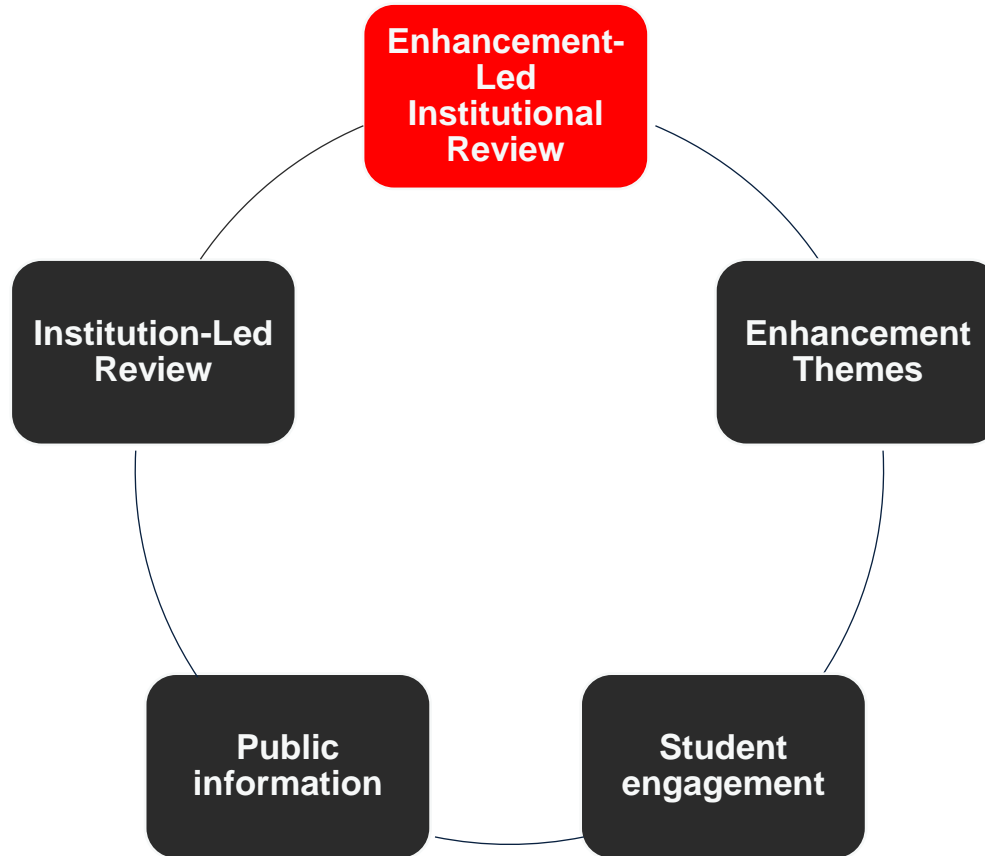
## Institution-led review

- Scottish Funding Council (SFC) guidance & UK Quality Code
- All subject areas reviewed within maximum six year cycle
- External involvement
- Student engagement
- Involvement of professional support services



# Quality Enhancement Framework

## Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)



- **Peer review** of all Scottish HEIs on a 4 / 5 -year cycle
- **Student reviewers since 2003**
- International reviewers since 2008
- **ELIR 4: 2017-2022**
- Threshold (Quality) judgement plus commendations & recommendations (Enhancement)
- Next Steps - Scottish Tertiary Quality Framework

# ELIR - Focus On projects

*Focus On projects cover topics & themes that occur frequently in ELIR outcomes as recommendations or commendations*

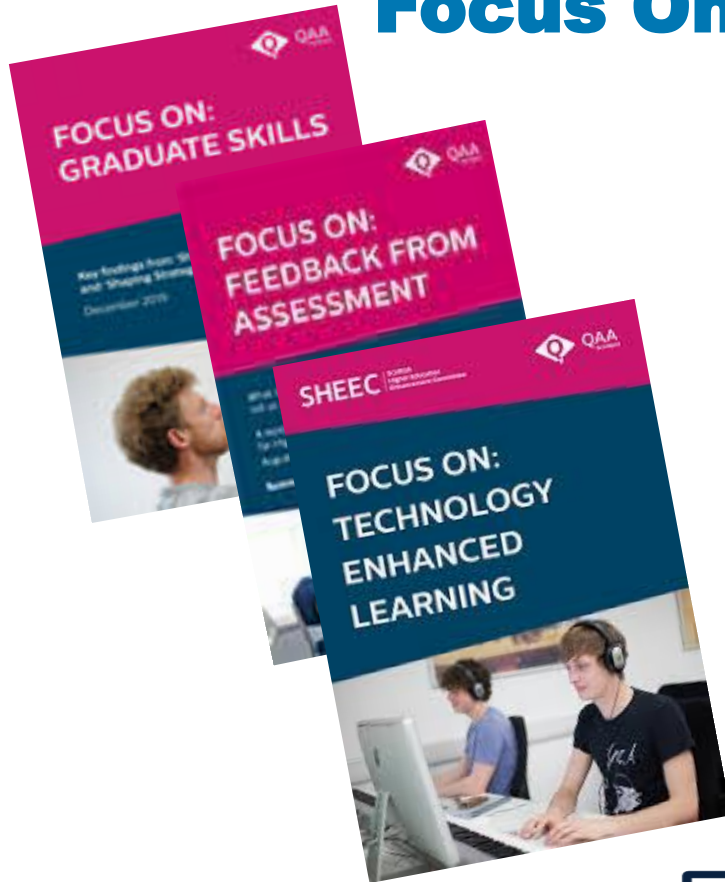


- All institutions work collectively to promote policy and practice on the topic
- One topic is chosen each academic year
- Staff and students identify priority areas and a programme of activity is designed to ensure a positive impact on practice in the sector



Resources from all projects are available on the QAA Scotland website - [www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland)

## Focus On - Examples



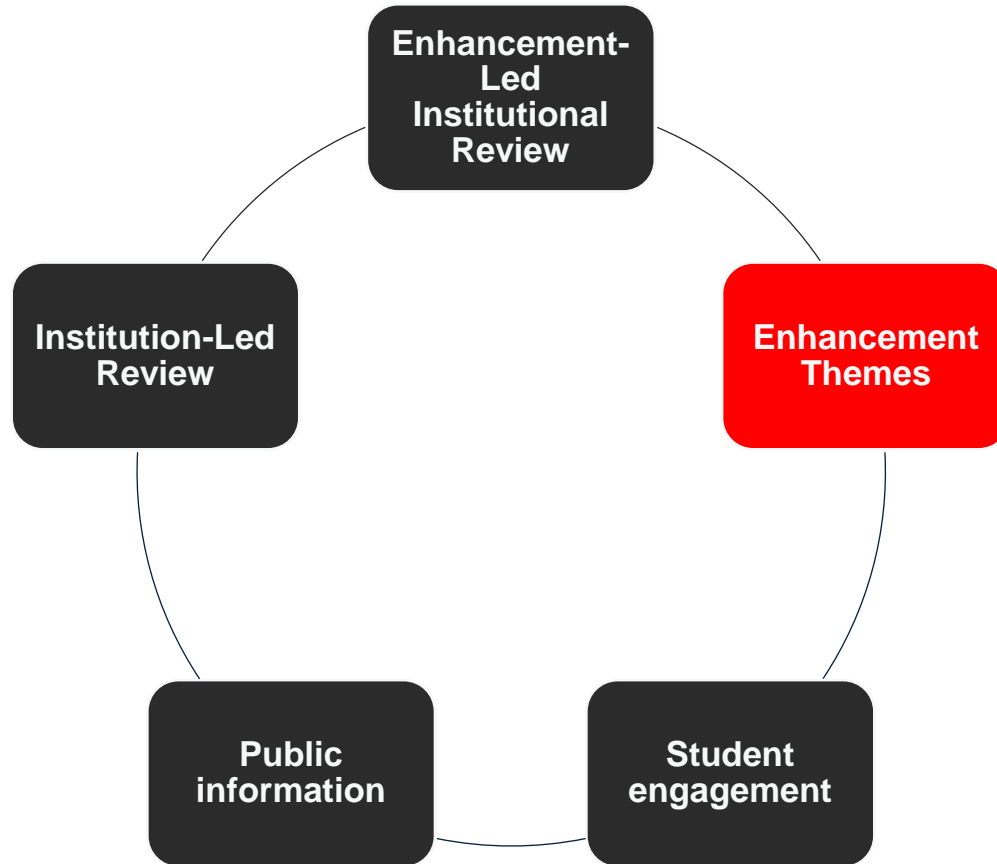
- **Professional Services Partnership (2021-22)**
- Technology Enhancement Learning (2019-20)
- Graduate Skills (2018-19)
- Feedback from Assessment (2017-18)
- Postgraduate Student Experience (2016-17)
- Institution-Led Review (2016-17)
- Collaborative Activity (2015-16)
- Assessment & Feedback (2015-16)



Resources from all projects are available on the QAA Scotland website

# Quality Enhancement Framework

## The Enhancement Themes



- Key element of the QEF
- Distinctive aspect of Scottish HE
- Theme chosen and delivered by sector in collaboration with QAA Scotland
- Fosters partnership and collegiality
- Allows us to achieve things collectively that we might not be able to do individually
- Focus on developing strategies, shaping policies and innovative practice



# The Enhancement Themes

## 19 Years of Enhancement Themes



- Assessment and Integrative assessment (2003-04)
- Responding to student needs (2003-04)
- Employability (2004-06)
- Flexible delivery (2004-06)
- First year: engagement & empowerment (2005-08)
- Research-teaching linkages: enhancing graduate attributes (2006-08)
- Graduates for the 21st century (2008-11)
- Developing and supporting the curriculum (2011-14)
- Student Transitions (2014-17)
- Evidence for Enhancement: Improving the Student Experience (2017-20)



- **Resilient Learning Communities (2020-23)**



## What makes a good Theme?

- Relevance to students and staff at all levels
- Inspires people to make a real difference
- Timely response to major issues in HE
- Resonates across the UK and beyond



## How does it work?

- Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee – VPs (Learning and Teaching)
- Theme Leaders' Group – staff and students
- Institutional teams



## Enhancement Theme – A Range of Activity

### Sector Projects

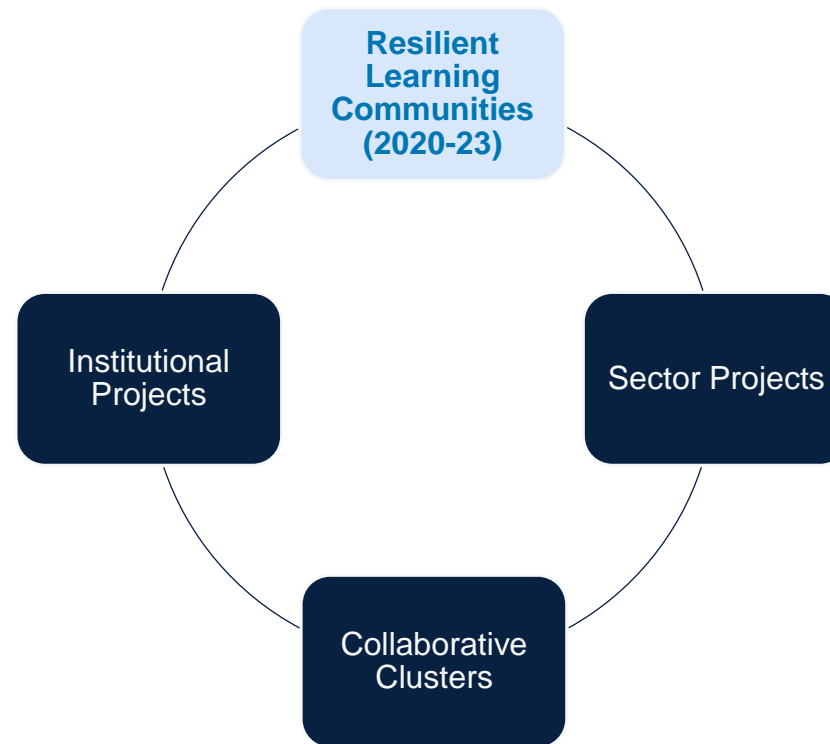
- Equality and diversity
- Flexible accessible learning
- Addressing the digital divide
- Community and belonging
- Supporting staff and student success

### Institutional Projects

- Determined locally (80 ongoing)
- Internship Opportunities
  - Academic integrity
  - Curriculum developments
  - Digital learning and teaching

### Collaborative Clusters

- Small Groups
- Internship Opportunities
  - Decolonising the curriculum
  - Resilient academic leadership
  - Programme leadership



# Next Steps for Quality Assurance and Enhancement in Scottish Tertiary Education - **Scottish Tertiary Quality Framework**

Scottish Government Review of Tertiary Education - Emerging Core Principles:

- Tertiary
- Enhancement-led.
- Partnership.
- Student outcomes.
- Institutional ownership.
- Peer review and externality.



# Student Engagement in QEF & Enhancement Themes

- Student representation and participation **throughout** and **across** management and delivery of the Theme.
- Specific student engagement strand with supported **student-led project**:
  - 2019-20 Digital Student Communities
  - 2020-21 Promoting the Equity of the Student Learning Experience



# Embedding Student Voice in Scotland

- Quality Enhancement Framework
- ELIR Student Reviewers
- Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee
- Enhancement Theme and Leaders Group
- Collaborative Clusters and Internship Opportunities
- Student Partnerships in Quality Scotland (sparqs)



## **sparqs Vision** is that:

Students are partners in shaping the quality of learning, making positive change to their own and others' experience, however and wherever they learn.



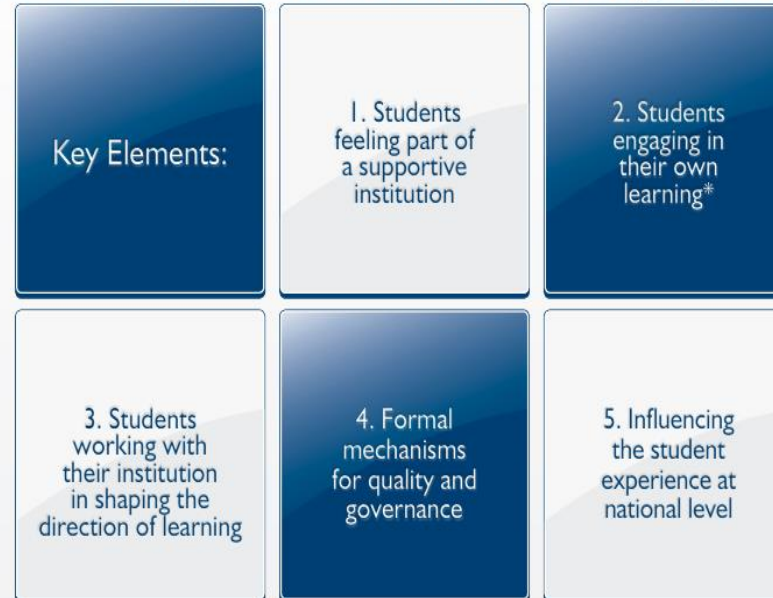
[@sparqs\\_scotland](https://twitter.com/sparqs_scotland)

# Scottish Student Engagement Framework

## Partnership:

- Students role in shaping their experience
- More than feedback, problem solving and membership of committees, to opportunities for real enhancement.
- E.g. QEF, ELIR, Student Partnership Agreements

## The Five Key Elements of Student Engagement



# Student Voice at Strathclyde

- Student Voice – An embedded culture
- Full and Active Participation - Creating platforms for consistent and open dialogue
- More than feedback from surveys (but really important)
- Staff / Student Liaison Committees
- Student Experience Committee (Student President Convenes)
- All Formal Committees and Working Groups
- Major Infrastructure Projects
- Students supporting students – “Hear to Listen”
- Investing in Student Representation: StrathReps





# Student Voice at Strathclyde: StrathReps:



## Challenge:

- Staff, student and StrathUnion feedback highlighted challenges for electing and registering reps were not fit for purpose:
  - Different methods and approaches.
  - Delays in registering reps with Strath Union creating representation
  - Delays in rep training and support.
  - Communication challenges, rep withdrawal, knowledge of reps.





# StrathReps:



## Our solution:

- StrathReps project used digital technologies to support student representatives, through the University's mobile App and VLE (MyPlace).
- Using core student platforms ensured we reached the greatest number of students.
- StrathUnion and our Student Experience Directorate provided a companion suite of services to our reps with an aim of being fully inclusive.
- StrathReps utilised 'anywhere, anytime, any device', development approaches
- Students involved in development and delivery process every step of the way: Sabbatical Officers, Faculty Reps.
- Student Reps from all 4 faculties joined our project board and we made decisions together.



# StrathReps - Successes

- We now have a 680+ Academic Rep community (in addition to sabbaticals)
- June 2022 - 688 total Reps
  - 678 programme ( or equivalent)
  - 10 Faculty Reps
- Greater levels of participation in student representation at all levels
- Reps more engaged and proactive and feeding into other initiatives and projects
- Impact of their collective voice is far-reaching and has sustained beyond the project.
- Strengthened communications between organisations and departments
- Enhanced Accessibility and inclusion

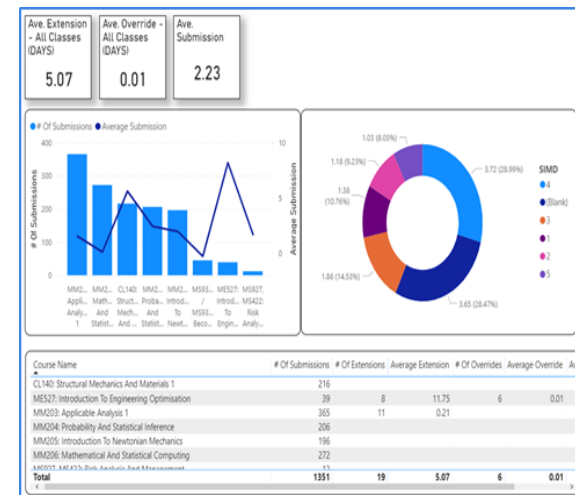
# Student Voice – Strathclyde Next Steps

- Embed and continue to evolve StrathReps
- Remain agile and responsive (flexible and blended delivery, greater cohort diversity)
- Share examples of good practice and link to staff development activity
- More systematic, thematic analysis and reporting
- Faculty Annual Reporting (QAA / ELIR Commendation)
- Module Evaluation
- Enhanced Communication



# Data Informed Enhancement – Next Steps

- Data-informed Education Enhancement - Integrated “Strathclyde Insights”
- Thematic reporting: Surveys, Module Evaluation, Departmental Data Sets, Annual Reporting
- Free text and analysis and summaries
- Enhanced Learning Analytics:
- High Level “pulse checks”
- Activity based “focused insights”
- Dashboard development



## Acknowledgements and Thanks:

- Strathclyde Colleagues: Surveys and Module Evaluation Team, OSDU, Faculties and StrathUnion
- sparqs
- QAA Scotland
- Explorance



# Questions?





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