



TLG Bulletin, March 2021

Welcome to the TLG Bulletin - your quick guide to the activity of the Theme Leaders' Group. Please feel free to share this with any colleagues who might find it valuable.

At the end of March 2021, our Deputy Theme Leader, Professor Ruth Taylor, welcomed everyone to our second TLG session of the year. We had great attendance from staff and students and the energy and commitment of colleagues were evident in the progress being made across all elements of Theme work.

In our 'Air and Share' activity, colleagues shared their experiences of their varied Theme projects and aspects that were working well and particular challenges. The format of the TLG sessions was welcomed combining a mixture of open discussion, small breakout group work and presentations.



Professor Stella Jones-Devitt and Dr Liz Austen, our Theme evaluation consultants, delivered a workshop to support colleagues with their evaluation work. 'Easy does it: a no-tears approach to gathering evaluation evidence' provided a great start to our evaluation journey by:

- starting to build confidence in using basic evaluation techniques
- familiarising colleagues with the 10-point evaluation framework and its application
- demystifying evaluation to enable capture of meaningful evidence
- developing skills and confidence
- sharing ideas in a supportive environment
- helping Stella and Liz understand more about colleagues' Theme work.

We look forward to continuing the evaluation work with you. We will be uploading evaluation resources to the Theme web pages as we continue with this work so please review Theme pages regularly.

Colleagues enjoyed informative and engaging presentations from three of our cluster leaders.

Resilient academic leadership – an exploration within the Principal Fellows Network Scotland – Alison Nimmo took us on the cluster's quest to find the meaning of resilience, highlighting the importance of a shared sector understanding of the term. The cluster's work drew on the Evidence for Enhancement Intangibles cluster approach. An early cluster activity was building a visual framework to help understand how resilience was perceived by different people and using that to explore the features of resilience. Colleagues were invited to share their ideas on, and metaphors for, resilience through a Padlet activity.

Re-imagining resilience for taught postgraduate students - Donna Murray outlined the work being taken forward by the four cluster participating institutions. A series of four meetings were being hosted; one by each of the institutions. The first of these was a session that explored the question, what is resilience? Through a mix of plenary and breakout groups, and drawing on expert contributions, a number of themes emerged. These will be fed into the second meeting, which is examining ideas around resilient people, bringing the human element to the fore and examining what hinders, and what is helpful, to student and staff resilience. The third meeting will focus on resilient systems, cultures and practices. The final output from the cluster work will be a set of guidelines for developing resilient communities of practise.

Exploring the potential of micro-credentials and digital badging – Cluster leader, Anne Tierney gave examples of different organisations using these approaches, for example, the Scottish Social Services Council and Parkinson's UK. A closer look at micro-credentials and digital badging was very timely as the Covid-19 pandemic had highlighted the need for upskilling and re-training. A series of stakeholder scoping events formed a key part of the cluster work. The head of the Open University's OpenLearn resource had contributed to a scoping event in March along with colleagues, Dr Joy Perkins and Dr Mary Pryor, from the University of Aberdeen. The early topics that were arising from the cluster activity were around issues such as credit rating and level, stackability and a focus on portfolio versus individual badges. The student perspective was seen as particularly interesting in terms of how they might perceive micro-credentials as a pathway to higher education study.

Looking ahead to our final TLG session at the end of June we anticipate having a more extended session inviting members of wider institutional teams and starting conversation about year 2 of the Theme. What will that look like; for institutions, for the spread and number of collaborative clusters and for sector level projects?

TLG is a group central to delivering the Resilient Learning Communities Theme. The group leads, supports and evaluates the work undertaken for the Theme. Please get in touch with your TLG [institutional staff and student representatives](#), [Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee](#) representative or [QAA Scotland](#) if you want to know more and get involved in Enhancement Theme activity.