That's Quality! Residential

Monday 7th and Tuesday 8th August
Queen Margaret University

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Welcome! Your sparqs team today

Eve Lewis – Director

Simon Varwell – Senior Development Consultant

Justin Walker – Development Consultant

Megan Brown – Development Consultant

Gloria Laurini – Development Consultant

Nicola Cameron, Sarah Davidson and Ali McDade – Central Support Team

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Our tutoring team

Eve Lewis
Director

Simon Varwell
Senior Development Consultant

Justin Walker
Development Consultant

Megan Brown
Development Consultant

Gloria Laurini
Development Consultant

Claire Lumsden, Student Rep & Training Coordinator, UWS

Amy Monks, SA Team Leader, Dundee & Angus College

Chase Greenfield, Academic Rep Coordinator, St Andrews

Kirsten Koss, sparqs Associate Trainer

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Welcome, housekeeping and getting started

- Toilets
- Fire alarm
- Accommodation & food

Safeguarding

- Who to speak to if you need help or support
- What to do in an emergency
- Safeguarder details:
  - Simon: 07815 938966
  - Gloria: 07513 712586

Objectives for That's Quality

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To give officers and SA staff the opportunity to make connections from across the sector.

To think about the diversity of the student body and how to aim for a good quality experience for all.

To explore the quality landscape in Scotland and the quality arrangements in place for 2023 and beyond.

To introduce key sector projects and developments in learning, teaching and quality.

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AGENDA – DAY 1

- 10.30 – 10.45 **Introduction to the day**

- 10.45 – 11.45 **Quality & the Student Learning Experience**

- 11.45 – 12.00 **Break**

- 12.00 – 13.00 **Tertiary Approach to Quality: key principles**

- 13.00 – 14.00 **Lunch**

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Agenda – Day 1

- 14.00 – 15.15 **The importance of understanding and using data and evidence**

- 15.15 – 15.30 **Break**

- 15.30 – 16.45 **The policy context in Scotland**

- 16.45 – 17.00 **Conclusions and introduction to Day 2**

- 17.00 **Check into accommodation**

- 19.00 **Dinner**

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Tutor Groups

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Simon	Justin
Chase & Amy	**Claire & Kirsten**
Eve	**Meg**
Gloria	**Check the colour of the sticker on your name badge!**

Quality & the Student Learning Experience

10.45-11.45

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What will we cover this morning?

- What do we mean by the student learning experience?
- How can you make changes to the student learning experience in your roles?
- How can the quality processes and new developments in the SLE model support you to make change?
- What can you expect from the move to a new tertiary quality system?
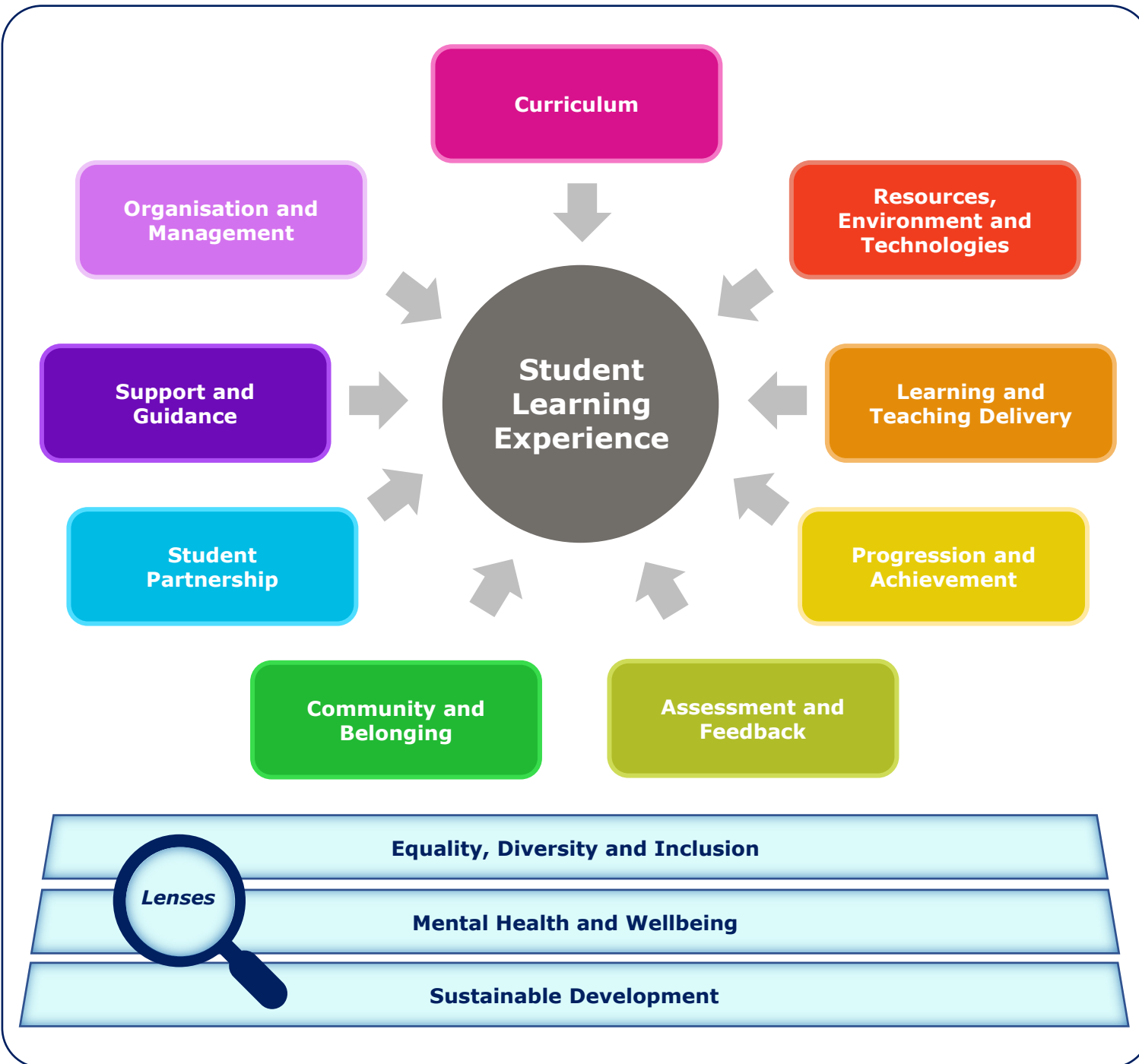- How can you get involved in the Tertiary Quality Project and in designing the new review method?

What is the student learning experience?

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Student Learning Experience model

Activity: Part 1

- Add your **manifesto points/aims for the year** to post-it notes (1 point per post-it).
- Include your **institution name** in the corner of each post-it note.
- Add each post-it note to the **building block** of the SLE it belongs to.
- We will leave these posters up throughout today and tomorrow so you can see who is working on similar areas of work to you.

Activity: Part 2

- Take a look at any building blocks where you've not added any manifesto points. Can you add any other areas of work to these?

- Are there particular student groups who are impacted by issues under each of these building blocks?

How can I get involved in the development of the SLE model?

- This SLE model will be a **sector benchmark** in the new tertiary approach to quality.
- This year, we will be considering how the SLE model can be **embedded** into the new quality processes and approaches.
- Under each building block, we've developed a set of **discussion questions** for students and staff.
- We want to develop some **example practices** to sit under the questions.

Example questions:

- **Curriculum:** Does the **course design** involve **student input** and do students have the opportunity to work in partnership with staff to amend and enhance the curriculum?
- **Resources:** Are course materials **accessible** to all and provided in a **variety of formats** appropriate to the mode of study? Are **costs** associated with the course and wider student life communicated in advance to prospective students, such as the cost of field trips, materials, placements, and textbooks?
- **L&T Delivery:** Do students have sufficient **contact time** with staff to support effective learning? Do staff consider suitable methods of teaching to make the most productive use of contact time?
- **Progression:** Is a comprehensive and supportive **induction** to the institution and the course is provided to all students, including students joining the institution at a later stage in the course?
- **Assessment:** Is feedback given in a **timely** manner and provided in sufficient time for it to be used on the next assessment?
- **Student Partnership:** Can students identify **actions** that have been taken as a result of their feedback? Are they confident that their views are taken seriously and result in change at a local and strategic level?
- **Support:** Are **support services**, including disability services and services to support students' mental health and wellbeing, **available**, **visible**, and **joined up**?

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SLE model in practice

- Sparqs is at the early stages of exploring what role the SLE model could play in the tertiary approach to quality:

  o As a basis for **conversations** between students and staff on the student learning experience.

  o For use in institutional **self-evaluation** activity and **enhancement** planning.

How can I use the SLE model in my own role?

- The new SLE model will officially launch in October.

- **How can you use the model and discussion questions in your own activities to develop an understanding of the student experience across your institution?**

The move to tertiary

The move to tertiary

- Currently, colleges & universities in Scotland have **different** quality arrangements.

- From academic year 2024/25, this will change and Scotland will move to a **tertiary approach to quality**.

- This year, the sector will develop this new tertiary approach. **Student officers** and **students' associations** will play a **key role** in this development activity.

Why are we moving to a tertiary approach?

- Some of the key drivers in the move to a tertiary approach include aims of:
  - **parity of esteem** across types of provision.
  - smoother **learner journeys** for moving **between college and university**.
  - seamless pathways **into and back from work**.
  - more **effective collaboration** between colleges and universities to encourage innovation.

Tertiary Quality Project

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Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

Shaping the common approach - management of co-creation and integration of workstreams

Using data and evidence to understand, evaluate and improve student outcomes

Strengthening institutional monitoring, self-evaluation and reporting on quality

Evaluating and enhancing the student learning experience and student partnership

Tertiary sector enhancement activity

SFC has set up a series of 5 workstreams to help shape different parts of the tertiary approach.

New Review Method

- In addition, QAA Scotland have been commissioned to develop the new external review method for the tertiary sector.

- This review method will be in use from academic year 2024/25 onwards.

- This will be a **multi-year quality cycle** involving **peer-led external review** of colleges and universities, working closely with Education Scotland.

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What is my role in all of this?

- This year, you have an exciting opportunity to **shape Scotland's next approach to quality**.

- It is crucial that students are at the centre of this development work, emphasising **what matters most to students** as they study at college or university.

- The questions we need to answer this year: **'What makes a quality student experience? How can we measure and capture it? How can we enhance it?'**

Tutor group session

- After the break, we will dig into some of the **key principles** underpinning the tertiary approach to quality.

- The tutor group session is designed to be a place for conversation, not to 'tell you the answers'.

- This session is designed to support you to take part in sector discussions this year.

Break

11.45-12.00

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Principles of the Common Approach

Students at the heart
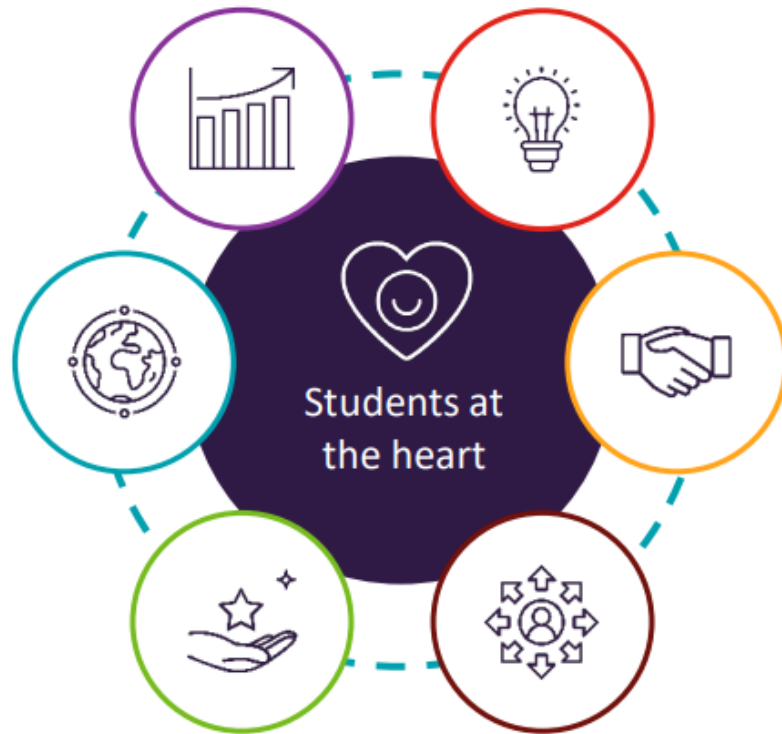
Data and evidence

- Student outcomes
- Common dataset for reporting
- Institutional PIs/QIs
- Institution-led self-evaluation and action planning
- Use of student and staff feedback
- Outcomes of review activity

Externality

- External institutional peer review
- Sector reference points/requirements
- External specialists/experts
- Public information and assurance

Excellence in learning, teaching & assessment

- Academic standards and awarding
- Strategic leadership of learning and teaching
- Curriculum planning, design and delivery
- Learning environment, resources and technologies
- Professional development
- Currency of learning and teaching
- Peer review and evaluation of learning, teaching and assessment
- Innovation in learning, teaching & assessment

Enhancement & Quality Culture

- Institution wide culture of assurance, improvement and enhancement
- Institution-led review/activity and action planning
- External institutional peer review
- Sector enhancement activity
- Impact of collaboration
- External outlook – globally responsive

Student engagement & partnership

- Engaging students as partners in their learning experience
- Students at core of review and enhancement activity
- Student voice – every place, every level
- Effective support for student representation
- Responsiveness to student feedback

Supporting student success

- Enabling student success – wellbeing, inclusion, equality, student support
- Context and community - meeting the needs of students
- Effective and successful transitions
- Support for employability, skills development and lifelong learning
- Achieving positive outcomes for every learner
- Responsiveness to concerns

Tutor group activity

- In groups of 2-3, take a closer look at one of these areas.

- Questions:
  - What current practice takes place in your institution in this area?
  - What is important to students under this heading?
  - Are there any terms you don't understand or don't agree with? Any that you particularly find helpful?

Tertiary Quality Student Expert Group

- sparqs is setting up a group that will operate this year and play a key role in developing the tertiary approach to quality. This will include
  - Engaging in the Tertiary Quality Project workstreams.
  - Supporting development of the principles of the common approach and what these look like in practice.
  - Engaging in design of the new review method.

Tertiary Quality Student Expert Group

- The group will meet monthly online.
- We're looking for student officers, as well as other students who may be interested in taking part in national activity.
- SA staff are eligible but the group needs to be comprised of majority students.
- If you're interested, tell your tutor and we'll be in touch. We'll also send a call round after the event.

Lunch

13.00-14.00

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Activity 1. True or False? Statements about information

More information has been published in the last twenty years than in the rest of history.

True or False?
Statements about information

Typing in capital letters DOES NOT MAKE INFORMATION MORE MEMORABLE. In general, it just annoys the reader.

True or False?
Statements about information

People only remember the first three items in a list, and sometimes the final item. If you want someone not to notice a piece of information, place it fifth or sixth in the list.

True or False?
Statements about information

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More than half of the so-called 'scientific' information available on the internet is actually opinion or product-marketing rather than demonstrable fact. Less than 2% is backed by peer-reviewed published research. At least 40% of this information is either deliberately misleading or simply untrue.

Data and Evidence. Session objectives.

1. To introduce **the importance of using data and evidence** to inform discussion and action.

2. To **practice using evidence** in examples of students' association work.

3. To consider the **various sources of evidence** available to students' associations.

4. To encounter one or more **published reports** relating to your institution.

True or False? Statements about information

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How does this apply to our roles as elected students or SA staff?

One of our roles is to contribute to conversations about **QUALITY**.

Example quality conversations

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1. Are studen[t] [...] quality of teaching?

[...] methods are fair
[...] methods do
[...] prefer?

2. Should classes be co[...] online or in-person: which of th[...]

ii. Do students make good use of the [...]

Invent something

Anecdotes

Preparation and research

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Example quality conversations

1. Are students content with the quality of teaching?

Example quality conversations

1. Are **students** content with the quality of teaching?

Example quality conversations

1. Are students **content** with the **quality** of teaching?

Example quality conversations

1. Are students content with the quality of **teaching**?

Activity 2. Dissecting a statement

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In the same way, break down one of these other questions into smaller component parts.

2. Should classes be conducted online or in-person; which of these is more effective?

3. Which assessment methods are fair to students; which methods do students prefer?

4. Do students make good use of the guidance and support services offered by this college?

Activity 3
Closing the crèche.

Your college runs a small crèche for the children of staff and students. The vice-principal has proposed that the creche should be closed, for these reasons:

- Numbers of children attending the crèche have declined.

- The wages for the crèche staff have put a strain on the available funds, and managers wish to employ another person in student guidance instead.

- There is a shortage of available rooms at the college. If the crèche is closed, the room can be given to the students' association for use as a social space and coffee bar.

Exercise 3
Closing the crèche.

You are due to attend a meeting at which the closure of the crèche will be discussed, and you will be asked to represent the views of students.

1. Which kinds of data and evidence could you bring to the meeting to illustrate student opinion in relation to this matter?

2. The vice-principal believes that opening a social space and coffee bar could have positive impact on the students' association. Which kinds of data and evidence could you collect to help measure this positive impact?

3. Are there any risks with this plan of action – could there be a negative impact on anyone or unintended consequences? Which kinds of data and evidence could the vice-principal collect to help understand any negative consequences?

Exercise 3. Closing the crèche.
A few issues to mention.

1. Data means... **information**. **All kinds of evidence**.

2. **Work with others** to source all that data that will be helpful.

3. Use **quantitative** and **qualitative** data.

4. **What does the data tell us?**
   Which parts of the story are not told by this data?

5. Which **new questions** do we have?

How do we approach data?

1. Be **open to** what **the evidence** says. (Avoid preconceptions).
2. Don't be afraid **if the data disagrees** with your point of view.
3. Use the data, but don't forget that **this is a human story**.

Activity 4. Brainstorm.
Sources of data and evidence.

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List all the sources of data and evidence that are available to you as a SA, if you want to know how things are for students in your college or university.

Data and evidence available to students' associations.

Quality reports
- HE: QESR and ILM
- FE: AEV and PV
- Internal reports

Student surveys
- Institution surveys
- SA/SU surveys
- National surveys

Data collected internally

Course rep feedback

Focus groups

National databases

Monitoring diversity

Published research

Add a symbol in the margin:

Which of these will help you **know** and **understand** your student population?

Data and evidence available to students' associations.

Quality reports

- ILM – Institution Liaison Meeting
  QESR – Quality Enhancement and Standards Review
  www.qaa.ac.uk

- AEV – Annual Engagement Visit
  PV – Progress Visit
  www.education.gov.scot

Data and evidence available to students' associations.

National student surveys

- NSS (OfS) **www.officeforstudents.org.uk**

- SSES (SFC) **www.sfc.ac.uk**

- PTES and PRES
  (Advance HE) **www.advance-he.ac.uk**

Data and evidence available to students' associations.

Course rep feedback

1. Do we have course reps for all our courses?

2. Are all our reps trained?

3. Are our reps supported through the year?

4. Are our reps asking the right questions?

5. What do reps do with the student feedback?

Activity 5. Your own work.

Think of an issue that you plan to work on during the year ahead.

Make brief notes on:

a. **How do you know this work is needed?** If were challenged to make a case that this work is required, which kinds of data and evidence would you need?

b. **How could you measure the impact of your project or initiative?**
If you need to report on the impact of your work, which kinds of data and evidence would you need?

c. For both these questions, **where can you find this data and evidence?**
How would you source or collect the data and evidence?

Share your notes briefly with another person (45 seconds each).

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Activity 6. Your key points.

1. Individual task.
    Make a note of **one or two key points** that you have found useful from this session. (1 min).

2. Group task.
    Share your key points in a small group at your table (2 mins).

Activity 7. Published reports.

Download **a published report for your institution**. It could be a quality report or a national survey.

Note **two or three points of interest** for the students association or the student body, or actions you could work on in partnership with your institution, or discussions points you could ask about with someone at the SA or institution.

Extension activity. Work on this activity after the training event.

Data and Evidence.
Session objectives.

1. To introduce **the importance of using data and evidence** to inform discussion and action.

2. To **practice using evidence** in examples of students' association work.

3. To consider the **various sources of evidence** available to students' associations.

4. To encounter one or more **published reports** relating to your institution.

Using data and evidence to make an impact in your role

Justin Walker

Break

3.15-3.30

The policy context in Scotland: key initiatives & topics in 2023

3.30 – 4.45

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What will this session cover?

- An overview of the major national reviews and projects in FE and HE.

- An introduction to key topics in the tertiary sector.

- A chance for you to try out some project scoping using Problem Tree Analysis.

Further and Higher Education in Scotland

- In the Scotland Act 1998, education was **devolved** to Scotland.
- Policy and funding decisions on further and higher education are mostly taken by the **Scottish Government**, **Scottish Parliament** & **Scottish Funding Council**.
- Although education is a devolved matter, there are key policy areas that are not devolved to Scotland and have a significant impact on FE & HE, such as **equal opportunities**, **immigration**, and **research & development**.

Major national reviews and projects in FE and HE

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National Reviews

- There are several **key national reviews** relevant to colleges & universities that have recently taken place, or are currently taking place, in Scotland.

- These include:
  - SQA and Education Scotland Review ("Muir review").
  - Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape ("Withers review").
  - Review of Qualifications and Assessment ("Hayward review").

Commission on Widening Access

- The Scottish Government set out the ambition that a child born in one of Scotland's most deprived communities should, by the time of leaving school, have the same chance of going to university as one born in one of the country's least deprived areas.

- The Commission on Widening Access was established to advise Ministers on how to meet this ambition.

- In January 2023, **John McKendrick** was appointed the new Commissioner for Fair Access.

Commission on Widening Access

- The main responsibility of the Commissioner is to write an annual report to the government on progress towards **meeting targets for fair access**.

- The Commissioner is also responsible for overseeing the work of the **Scottish Framework for Fair Access**.

- Key aim: **by 2030, 20% of entrants to HE should come from the 20% most deprived communities in Scotland**.

National Equality Outcomes (NEOs)

- In 2019, the **Scottish Funding Council** (SFC) and the **Equality and Human Rights Commission** (EHRC) entered into a partnership and developed an action plan on how to work together.

- A key priority in this action plan was to agree the most pressing **student inequalities** that the sector should be acting on and to set National Equality Outcomes.

National Equality Outcomes (NEOs)

- NEOs are focused on **student inequalities** which are evidenced to be **persistent at a national scale**.

- To address these issues, institutions are asked to work with and for students to **contribute towards a set outcome** to make the tertiary system **fairer and equitable**.

- The focus of this work is **student** inequality, but consideration will be given to **staff** inequality as it directly impacts on students in relation to their experience.

Tertiary Enhancement Topic

- Ran during last academic year and this academic year (2022-23 and 2023-24).

- Facilitated by the national quality agencies.

- The Tertiary Enhancement Topic is: **"The future of learning and teaching: defining and delivering an effective and inclusive digital/blended offering."**

- This project encourages the sector to consider **what our future approach to online and hybrid learning and teaching should be going forward**, building on the lessons we have learned over the past few years.

Key topics in the sector

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Learning with the lights off: students and the cost of living crisis

Cost of living crisis forcing students to take on more hours of paid work

Lecturers urged to review assessments in UK amid concerns over new AI tool

International students want to keep some lectures online – survey

Flexibility for older workers could help with skills shortage, firm says

Scottish students blackmailed after buying essays

Scottish students waiting months for counselling amid mental health 'crisis'

College finances to deteriorate, says Audit Scotland

Scotland's colleges and universities are sustainability "lighthouses"

The students at the heart of the green jobs boom

Students win £3.21 million in mental health funding

Chatbot creates university essay 'that would pass' in two minutes as cheating epidemic exposed

We are living through Earth's hottest month on record, scientists say

UK students skipping meals because of cost of living crisis

Why close collaboration between academia and industry is essential to address the skills shortage

'University students are paying for a glorified streaming service': Furious students feel like they are 'watching YouTube videos' as it emerges nearly a third of courses are still teaching online

New rules strengthen freedom of speech obligations for English universities

AI could mark pupils' work and act as a 'personal tutor', says education minister

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Problem Tree Analysis

- A methodology used in the initial stages of project scoping and planning.
- Breaks a problem down into **manageable chunks**.
- Identifies the **causes** behind a problem – helps answer the *why*.
- Helps develop a **shared understanding** of an issues, its causes and its effects.
- Gives a **direction of travel** (but it's not the end of the road!).

Effects

Problem

Causes
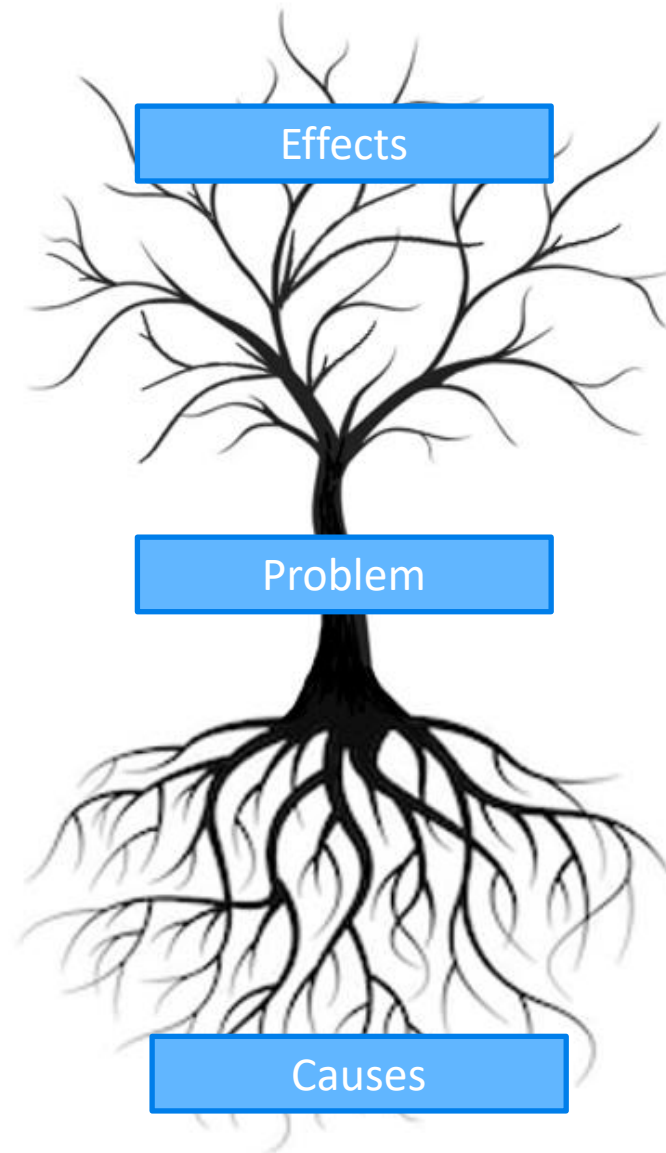
Problems

- Artificial intelligence is being used by some students to cheat in assessments.
- Significant and increasing numbers of students in colleges and universities are reporting poor mental health.
- The cost of living crisis is having a negative impact on students studying in colleges and universities.
- Some students are unhappy with the balance of in-person and online teaching at their institution.
- The effects of the environmental crisis will have a significant impact on the future lives of Scotland's college and university students.
- The student body is becoming increasingly diverse, but curriculum & the learning environment isn't adapting quickly enough.

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Step 1: Develop the problem tree

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- In groups of 2-3, choose a problem to work on. Write this in the box on the trunk of your tree.
- Identify the causes of the problem – write each cause on a separate post-it note and place it on the roots.
  - For each cause, ask 'why' or 'what causes that' to identify the root cause. Add these post-it notes underneath.
- Identify the effects of the problem – write each effect on a separate post-it note and place it on the branches/leaves.
  - For each effect, ask 'what happens next' or 'what does that lead to' to identify final impacts. Add these post-it notes above.

Step 2: Develop an objectives tree

- Reverse the **core problem** to become a **goal**.
- Convert the **effects** to **benefits**.
- Convert the **causes** to **objectives**.
  - Don't jump ahead to how to achieve these objectives!

Example

Problem statement	Objective Statement
Public transport in the city is unreliable and unsafe. *(Problem)*	Public transport in the city is reliable and safe. *(Goal)*
Frequent delays *(Cause)*	Infrequent delays *(Objective)*
Buses are in poor condition *(Cause)*	Buses are in good condition *(Objective)*
Increased pollution *(Effect)*	Decreased pollution *(Benefit)*

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Step 3: Choosing a strategy (or strategies!) for change

- To select a strategy, consider the criteria from this list to rank your objectives against:
  - Costs
  - The probability of achieving the objective (likelihood of success)
  - The skills required to achieve the objective – have you got access to the right people and skill sets?
  - Time it would take to implement the objective.
- Select an objective or a couple of objectives you would focus on if you were implementing this project.

3 stages:

- Step 1: Analyse the problem ("Problem analysis")
- Step 2: Develop the objectives ("Objective analysis")
- Step 3: Select a strategy ("Analysis of strategy")

Final reflections

- Problem tree analysis helps you identify the foundations of an issue and begin to develop solutions. It's the beginning of the journey

- After this initial stage, there's other tools you can use to help you develop the project into a fully developed action plan and timeline.

Conclusions and Intro to Day 2

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Introduction to Day 2

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Welcome to Central Scotland University College!

- Tomorrow, each tutor group will become the Students' Association for the newest tertiary institution in Scotland.

- Throughout the day, you'll be working on activities, receiving visits from sector organisations, and experiencing a day in the life of quality!

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What do we know about Central Scotland University College (CSUC)?

- CSUC is a **tertiary institution**, offering courses across the full range of Scottish qualifications, including (but not limited to!) apprenticeships, NQs, HNDs & HNCs, undergraduate degrees and doctorates.

- The **curriculum is broad**, offering courses across a large range of subject areas.

- CSUC is **multi-campus** and has sites across Scotland.

- It's still fairly **new**, so there's a lot of development work going on and some processes and procedures may still be in development.

- The Students' Association is comprised of around 10 officers and staff members – you!

What's the purpose of this activity?

This simulation will give you the chance to:

- try out some of the learning you've gained over the course in practice in a safe space.
- develop problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, negotiation, teamwork and time management skills.
- learn from your fellow officers and staff members.
- meet sector agency staff you'll work with in your roles.

What will I need to do?

- In tutor groups, you'll become the students' association of CSUC.
- You won't be allocated specific roles e.g. President.
- You will receive communications into your in-tray throughout the day and make decisions as a group about how to handle them.
- You'll also be receiving two visits throughout the day – one from Education Scotland and QAA Scotland and the other from the Scottish Funding Council.

Time	Simon	Justin	Gloria	Eve	Chase & Amy	Meg	Claire & Kirsten
10.00	Introduction to day 2						
10.15							
11.00	TQAA visit			SFC visit			
11.20		TQAA visit			SFC visit		
11.45			TQAA visit			SFC visit	
12.05							TQAA visit
12.30	Lunch						
13.15		SFC visit			TQAA visit		
13.35	SFC visit			TQAA visit			
14.00						TQAA visit	SFC visit
14.20			SFC visit				
14.45	Complete your reflections						
15.15	Break						
15.30	Debrief and Meet the Agencies						
16.45	Conclusions						
17.00	Finish						

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Top Tips

- Just be yourself - you don't need to 'act' (unless you want to!)
- Be creative and use your imagination – but keep within the realms of real life!
- None of the tasks are designed to 'catch you out'. Having said that, read them carefully!
- If you need help, speak to your tutor group lead. We can't tell you what to do, but we can provide guidance and help you understand the tasks.

End of day 1

- Thank you for all of your hard work!
- After this closing session you can check-in to the accommodation.
- **Dinner is at 7pm**
- Check-out of accommodation tomorrow after breakfast.
- Be back here **between 9.30 and 10 tomorrow** to start day 2!

Thank you and see you at 7pm for dinner!