



**SEVEN Cs FOR EMBEDDING
STUDENT SUCCESS:
A TOOLKIT FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

**Seven Cs for Embedding Student Success:
A Toolkit for Higher Education Institutions**

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Introduction

Student success is a simple concept. At its core is a belief in the capability of higher education (HE) to give each student the support they need to recognise and fulfil their potential. Aligning and optimising the broad range of factors that are required to achieve this, however, is a significant task, particularly in a world of limited time, finite resources and conflicting priorities. (National Forum, 2019, p. 28)

The **Seven Cs for Embedding Student Success: A Toolkit for Higher Education Institutions** (Seven Cs Toolkit) has been developed as a resource for higher education institutions (HEIs). It outlines a systematic process for embedding the continuous enhancement of student success. It includes resources to enable institutions to take stock of how student success is currently embedded in their institution, and to identify what currently works well and what needs to be developed further. It challenges institutions to consider the impact of all potential policies, practices and actions on all staff and students. It encourages conversations, debates and planning about how best to embed student success in a sustainable way across all functional areas of the institution.

The toolkit identifies a process for embedding student success revolving around Seven Cs: Commit, Collaborate, Community, Consensus, Communicate, Connect and Continuing.

This Seven Cs Toolkit will assist local higher education communities as they reflect on student success. It can be used to prompt meaningful conversations across institutions that will focus on what student success means within the context of their institution. It can help communities to collaboratively agree approaches that support the continual enhancement of student success into the future. In this way, all students are provided with the opportunity to fulfil their potential and become creators of new knowledge who are professionally competent, community engaged, ethically conscious and equipped to flourish in a globally-connected world.

Student Success: The story so far

Since 2013, partnership between the National Forum and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in the area of student success has supported the realisation of related actions in the National Access Plan and Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-20, and complemented ongoing work in the National Student Engagement Programme and StudentSurvey.ie. In addition, the €5m 2020 Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning (SATLE) Fund has supported the establishment of 74 enhancement initiatives across the sector, each with a strategic focus on transforming teaching and learning for student success. The report [Understanding and Enabling Student Success in Irish Higher Education](#), published in 2019 (National Forum, 2019) considered student success through three lenses. Firstly, it explored the concept of student success from the key perspectives of national policy and students, from the explicit strategic missions of Irish higher education institutions and from the international literature. It then examined a range of themes that have been pivotal to our understanding of student success and how it can be supported. Finally, it looked at the development of an Irish national understanding of student success.

National Understanding of Student Success

“Student success optimises the learning and development opportunities for each student to recognise and fulfil their potential to contribute to, and flourish in, society.

To be achieved, this requires a culture in Irish higher education that values inclusivity, equity and meaningful engagement between students, staff, their institutions and the wider community.”

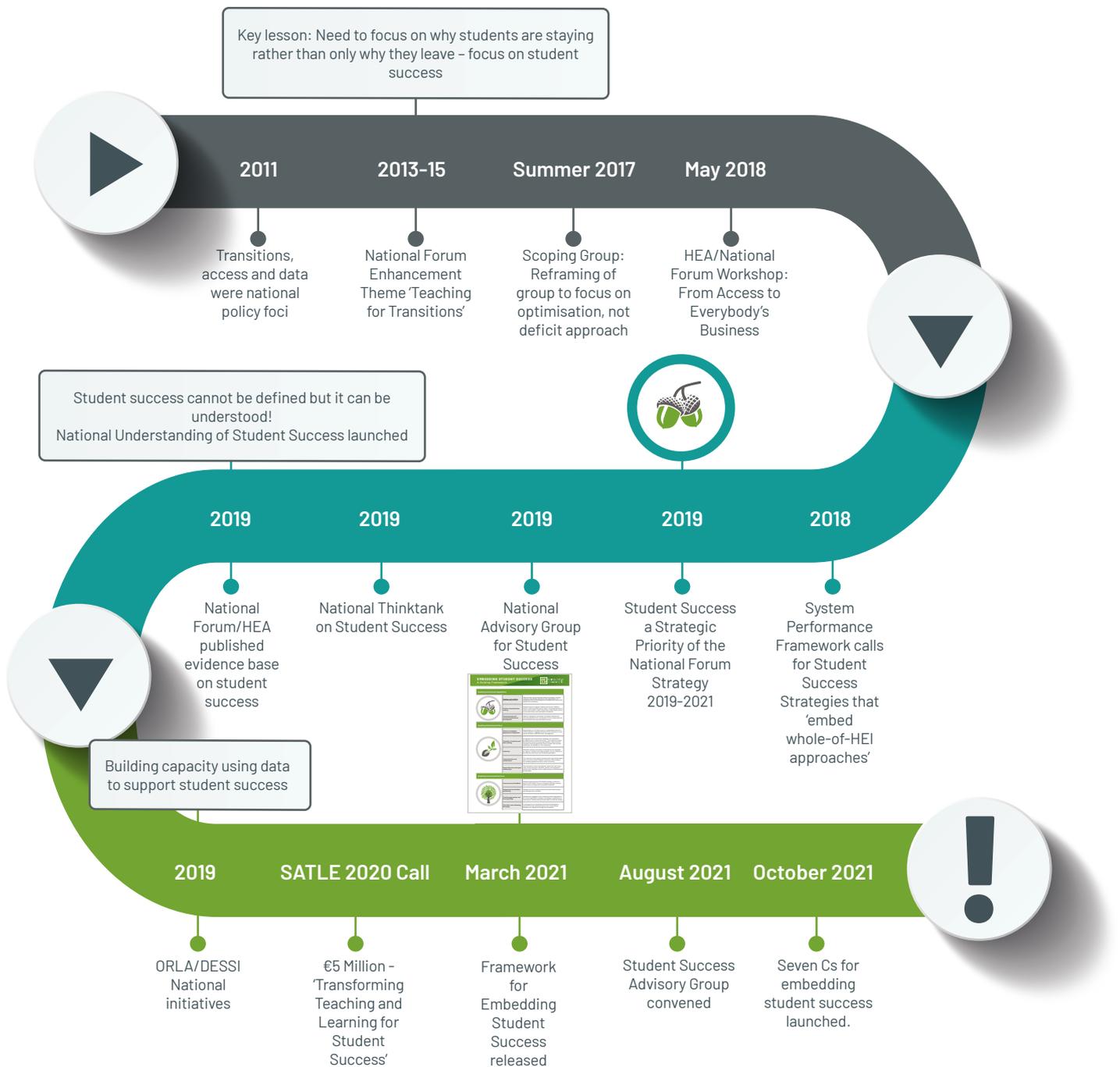


Figure 1 Timeline of National Development of Student Success in Irish Higher Education

Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework

Building from the national understanding of student success and the enablers of student success, Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework was published in 2021 (Figure 2). The framework identifies three key pillars for student success: enabling institutional capabilities, enabling institutional culture, and enabling institutional practices. Each pillar is described using key enablers. The Seven Cs Toolkit builds on this framework by providing additional detail on how each enabler could be interpreted (**statements**). It provides a process for institutions to ensure that the range of perspectives across the staff and student population are considered (**lenses**). It includes resources for identifying agreed starting points for development (**rubrics**).

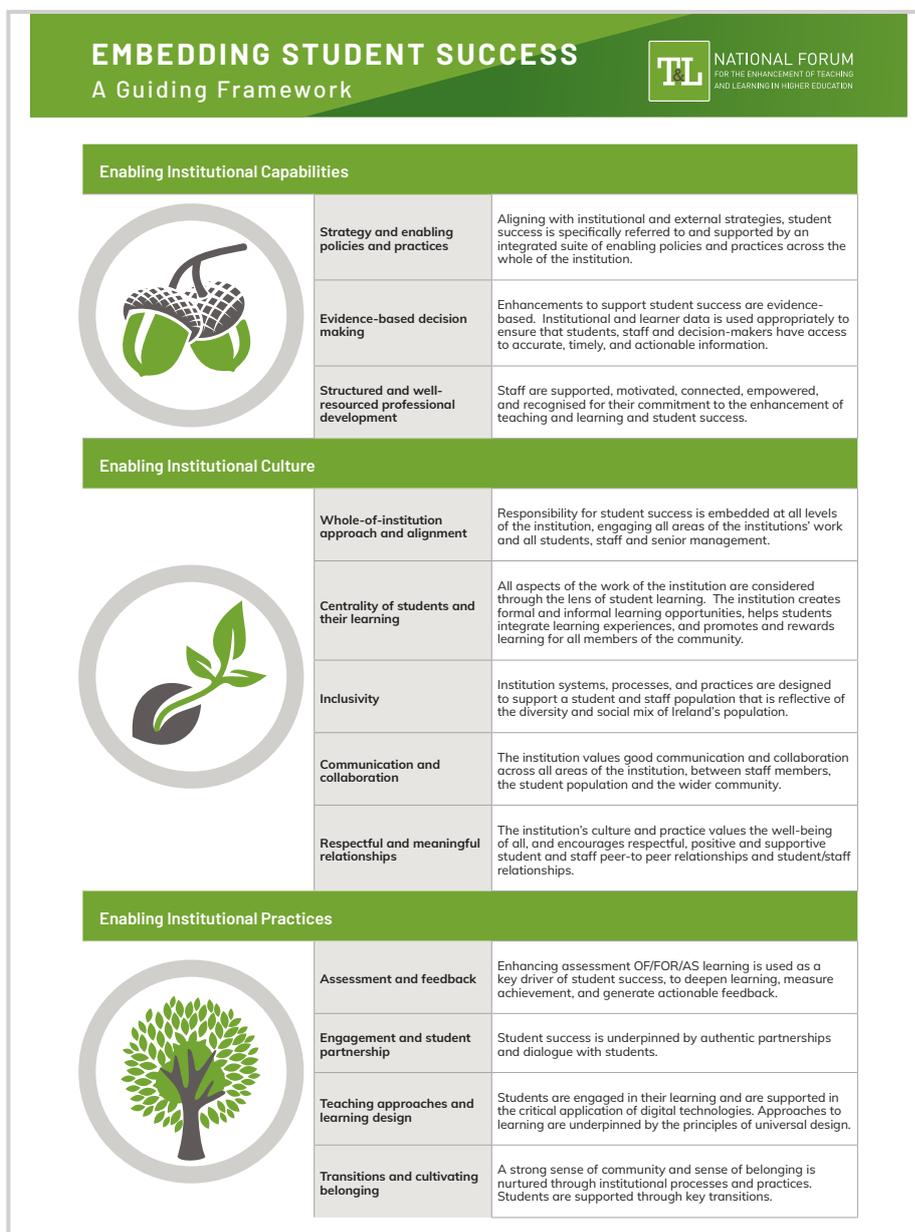


Figure 2 Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework

The Aim of this Toolkit

The aim of this toolkit is to support higher education institutions to take a whole-of-institution approach to embedding a process for the continuous enhancement of student success.

Who Should be Involved?

To be sustainable, a whole-of-institution approach should be taken to embedding student success. All staff and students, across all areas, should be supported and engaged in identifying what is currently working and why, and in clarifying areas that need further development. Those involved may include:

- Senior management with decision making responsibilities
- Staff from different contexts, across all functional areas, at different career stages and employed through a variety of contractual arrangements
- Students from different backgrounds at all stages of the student journey including prospective students and alumni
- External and community partners as appropriate.

Each institution should identify a **Student Success Lead** for the institution whose role is to facilitate the whole-of-institution approach to embedding student success. The Student Success Lead chairs a whole-of-institution steering group that works with partners from each functional area to take stock of how student success is currently embedded across the institution, that builds consensus on institutional enhancement targets and that develops and communicates an implementation plan for embedding student success. Further, the Student Success Lead reviews and evaluates how student success is being embedded and ensures institutional targets identified are achieved.

Each functional area across the institution should identify a **Student Success Partner** who works with the Student Success Lead and other partners to embed student success. Each Student Success Partner is responsible for identifying aspects of student success that are working well and those that need to be further developed within their functional area. This requires that each Student Success Partner works with their staff and students to take stock of how student success is currently embedded within their functional area, to contribute to the whole-of-institution steering group in developing the institutional enhancement targets and implementation plan and to translate institutional targets to key actions within their functional area.

Using the Seven Cs Toolkit

The Seven Cs Toolkit for embedding student success provides a systematic approach for institutions to capture what they already do well to support student success, to identify and prioritise areas for development and to develop an implementation plan for the continuous improvement of student success over an identified enhancement period.

Institutions should work through the Seven Cs process using the resources provided in the toolkit (see Figure 3). All those involved need to become familiar with the national understanding of student success and the enablers of student success that have been identified.

Getting to grips with the national understanding and the enablers of student success.

An agreed sectoral understanding of student success, developed through national conversations and the reviewed literature, was published in *Understanding and Enabling Student Success in Irish Higher Education* (National Forum, 2019).

‘Student success optimises the learning and development opportunities for each student to recognise and fulfil their potential to contribute to, and flourish in, society. To be achieved, this requires a culture in Irish higher education that values inclusivity, equity and meaningful engagement between students, staff, their institutions and the wider community.’

The national understanding is founded on the following core tenets:

- Success can only be facilitated through meaningful partnership and engagement between students and staff and between all levels of the HE sector
- Success means empowering students to recognise and achieve their own potential
- It is the responsibility of those working across the HE sector to identify and remove any obstacles that may hinder students from achieving their own benchmark of success
- Success is not binary and cannot be fully encapsulated in metrics such as retention and progression rates. It reframes the perspective from product to process, from an approach driven by output metrics to one that is enabled by ongoing quality enhancement
- Success is too highly nuanced and individualised to be concisely defined. It can, nonetheless, be understood and facilitated
- Success requires whole-of-institution approaches.’

(National Forum, 2019, p.28)

In order to embed student success within an institution the institution needs to consider how the national understanding of student success is to be interpreted in their own context. In addition, all those involved in planning the continuous enhancement of student success need to be familiar with the key enablers of student success as outlined in *Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework*.

A shared vision for student success needs to be agreed. Institutions need to be able to identify their starting point, identifying good practice and areas for further development. The Seven Cs Toolkit comprises four components all of which help to guide communities in higher education institutions towards the embedding of student success in a manner which reflects the institutional culture and context:

- The Statements extend each of the enablers outlined in *Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework* and can be used to initiate discussions, disrupt and challenge context bound thinking and promote positive enhancement.
- Questions for reflection provide an opportunity for institutions to think about each enabler more deeply and to consider key actions such as communications, leadership, impact and evaluation.
- The Lenses ensure that the diversity of all staff and students is considered at every stage of the process of enhancement. This requires that planned policies, processes and activities be 'road tested' for their impact across the diversity of the whole staff and student population.
- The Rubrics and associated Digital Tool facilitates each institution in a process of 'taking stock' to identify their starting point for planning enhancement and to gather actionable feedback. In addition, they help to capture what different staff and students think currently supports student success and what areas require further development.

The process for embedding student success in a sustainable way within an institution is described in the Seven Cs process outlined in Figure 3.

The Seven Cs Process for Embedding Student Success

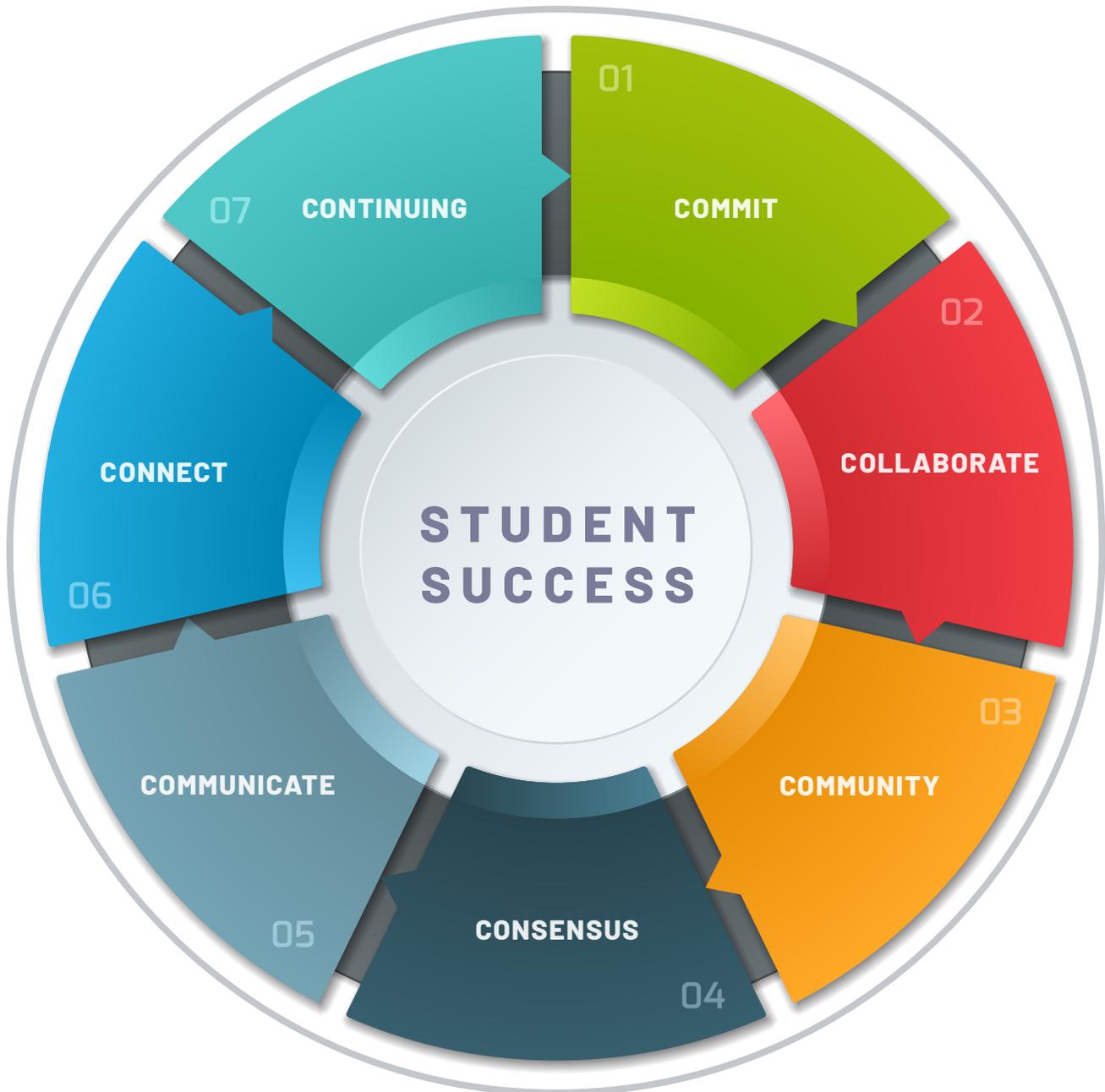


Figure 3 The Seven Cs Process for Embedding Student Success



Commit

The institution commits to the student success process by appointing an Institutional Student Success Lead and identifying Student Success Partners across all institutional functional areas.



Collaborate

A whole-of-institution steering group, which includes both staff and students, is set up and facilitated by the Institutional Student Success Lead. This group works collaboratively to consider the National Understanding of Student Success and Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework and to create a clear vision of student success from an institutional perspective.



Community

Facilitated by the Institutional Student Success Partners, the entire institutional community contributes to the 'taking stock' process, identifying the ways they are supporting student success and the areas that need to be enhanced.



Consensus

The results of the 'taking stock' process are synthesised for each functional area, compiled and are considered by the whole-of-institution steering group. Guided by the statements for each enabler, the group comes to a consensus and prioritises high level enhancement targets. An implementation plan for achieving these targets for student success over an identified enhancement period is developed.



Communicate

The steering group communicates the implementation plan, which is enabling, clear, and well-resourced, to all staff, students and other stakeholders.



Connect

The Student Success Partners within each functional area, in collaboration with their staff and students, connect how the institutional priorities and implementation plan can be interpreted locally and identify local enhancement targets and actions.



Continuing

Progress against the Student Success implementation plan is constantly reviewed both within each functional area and by the whole-of-institution steering group, so the continual enhancement of student success is on-going and based on feedback and data gathered.

Using the Statements

A range of statements for each enabler have been developed and are included as Appendix 1. These statements extend how the enabler might be actioned in practice. For each statement, key lenses and specific questions for reflection have been identified (see figure 4). The statements along with the specific lenses and reflective questions can be used to initiate discussions, disrupt and challenge context bound thinking and promote a focus on continual enhancement. Additional reflective questions for consideration are included in Appendix 6.

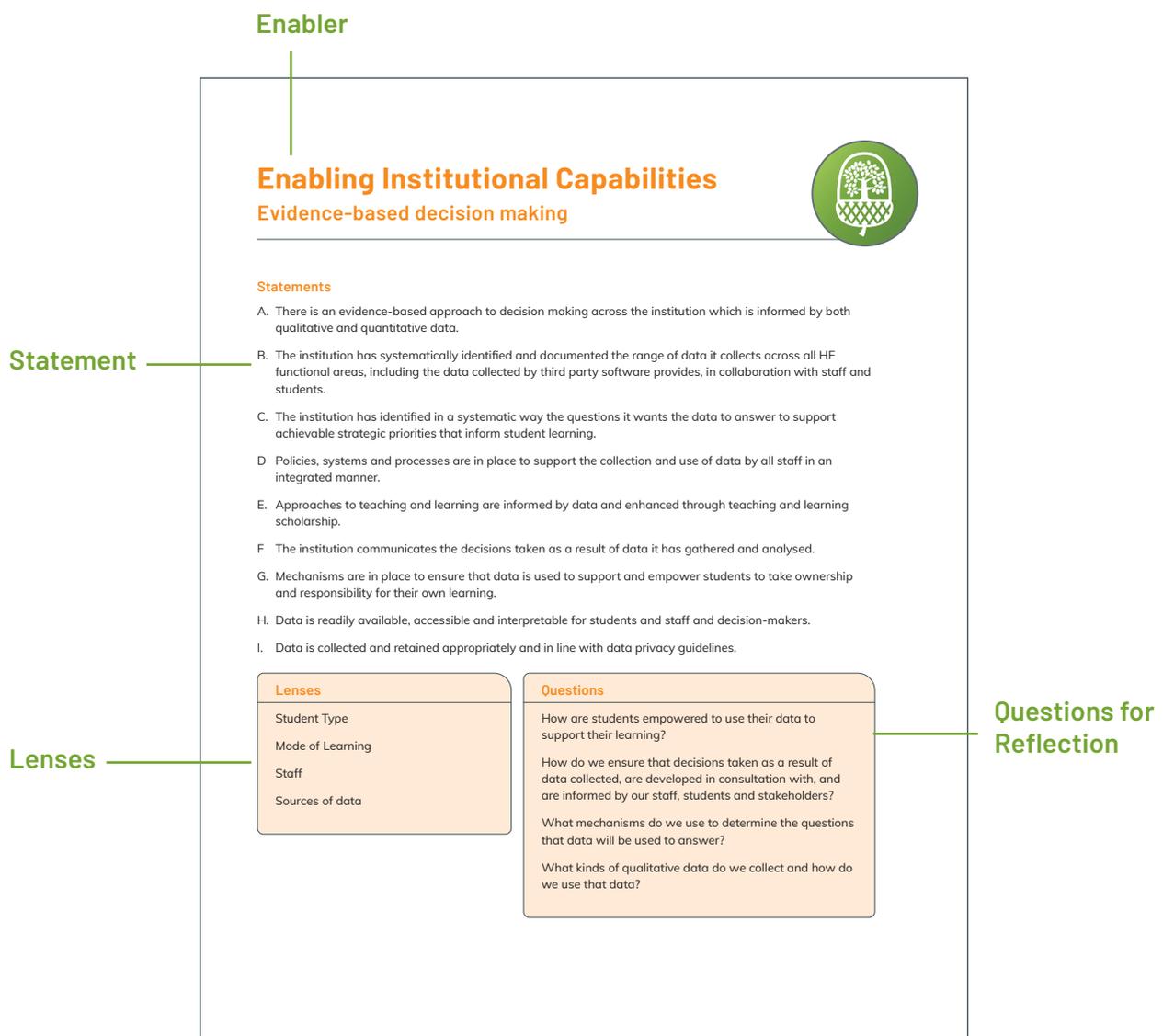


Figure 4 Statements for each enabler with identified lenses and reflective questions.

Using the Lenses

The staff and students of our higher education institutions are not homogenous. To ensure that the process of embedding student success within institutions remains inclusive and respectful of the diversity of both students and staff, a series of lenses through which to consider the statements for each enabler are included in this resource (see Appendix 2). The use of these lenses will support institutions to consider the impact of student success policies, practices and actions on all staff and students. Further, these lenses will encourage open and sometimes challenging conversations to ensure that student success is embedded for all students across all functional areas of the institution. Many students and staff have a number of different characteristics across many of the lenses, therefore the lenses should be used in combinations to create staff or student personae.

The list of lenses is not exhaustive and Student Success Leads and Partners are encouraged to develop additional lenses that reflect their own particular context.

Example of a student and staff persona using a combination of lenses

Student A is:	Staff member A is:
a taught Masters student	a lecturer
who entered college via advanced entry	who is on an hourly paid contract
who commutes a long distance to college	who is in the early stage of their research career
who is an Access student	who has a disability
who is studying for a full award requirement, full-time	teaching a single module
where the majority of learning takes place in the workplace	where the majority of teaching takes place on main campus during daytime hours

Persona Generators

Two persona generator resources have been developed to support discussions during face-to-face workshops/meetings. One book focuses on staff and one on students. These resources can be used to consider the multifaceted lived experiences of students and staff and to ensure that the impact of any planned policy, practice or action is considered across the diversity of the student and staff community/population. An online version of these persona generators are available [here](#).

Using Rubrics for 'Taking Stock'

To support institutions in 'taking stock' of how student success is currently embedded in their institution, rubrics have been developed for each enabler of student success (Appendix 3). Using the rubrics involves mapping which aspects of the enhancement of student success have been embedded across all functional areas in the institution.

Each rubric consists of three levels. Each level in the rubric builds on the previous one so that there is a cumulative effect as you move from **Developing** to **Consolidating** to **Leading** (see Figure 5). It should be noted that the rubrics include indicators of what practice could look like at each level, for each enabler. The indicators are not presented as an exhaustive or exclusive list. Participants in the 'taking stock' process are asked to review the statements for each enabler and identify the level to which student success is currently embedded in their context on a scale of 1-9. In addition, they are asked to capture which aspects of embedding student success currently in place work well and to what areas require further development (Appendix 4).

Rubric Enabling Institutional Capabilities Evidence-Based Decision Making 		
<small>Framework: Enhancements to support student success are evidence-based. Institutional and learner data is used appropriately to ensure that students, staff and decision-makers have access to accurate, timely, and actionable information.</small>		
Developing	Consolidating	Leading
My institution gathers and analyses some data relevant to student success, in line with data privacy regulations.	My institution gathers and analyses data relevant to student success, in line with data privacy regulations, and uses it to enhance student success.	My institution has a systematic approach to data collection and analysis, in line with data privacy regulations, to measure and underpin student success. Insights from data analysis are made widely available and are easily accessible across the institution.
My institution is seeking to use learner data to further improve the decision-making around student success (learning analytics).	My institution uses learner data to improve decision making, and has made some data (learning analytics) available to students to empower them to improve their learning.	In my institution, institutional data, for example from student survey, is, and learning analytics are used in a systematic manner to enhance student success.
Staff in my institution are aware of the scholarship around student success.	Staff within my institution are engaged in the scholarship of student success through departmental and institutional T&E initiatives e.g. Fellowships, National Forum funded initiatives.	Staff in my institution are engaged in, support and recognise research into the practice and the scholarship of student success through departmental and institutional T&E initiatives e.g. Fellowships, National Forum funded initiatives.
Students and staff in my institution are consulted regularly on student success initiatives; their feedback is captured and used in our evidence-based decision making.	In my institution students and staff are informed of decisions taken as a result of consultation on student success initiatives.	Students and staff work together to co-create solutions to enhance student success. Lessons learned are disseminated nationally to deepen the knowledge base in the area of student success.
Recording what we do well		Identifying areas for development

Figure 5 Rubric with three levels (Developing, Consolidating and Leading)

Coordinated by the Student Success Partner, the 'taking stock' process should be completed within each functional area within the institution in partnership with the staff and students. This process can be completed in a face-to-face session using the rubrics and scoring templates provided in Appendix 4, or by using the unique digital tool designed to support this process. The digital tool can be accessed [here](#).

Please note the digital tool enables collection of responses from particular cohorts of staff and students, provides an individual report to each participant and enables responses to be collated both within and across all functional areas and across multiple cohorts to provide a complete institutional summary. Based on the response/s for each enabler, the report positions the development stage for each enabler, both in text (see Appendix 7) and visually (Appendix 8).

All staff and students should be provided with the opportunity to contribute to the 'taking stock' process. To encourage people to engage with the process, communications can be tailored for each functional area. Communications might include information on how the feedback will be used to enhance student success in the institution, how the feedback loop will be closed, and how staff and students will work in partnership to identify and deliver planned enhancements.

By completing this 'taking stock' process, using the individual rubrics for each enabler, functional areas and the institution can identify what aspects of student success are currently done well and also those areas that require further development.

The output of the 'taking stock' process from each functional area should be synthesised, combined and considered by the whole-of-institution steering group to provide the starting point from which to identify high level targets for embedding student success for the institution and for developing an associated implementation plan.

Agreeing High Level Targets and Actions

Using the findings and evidence identified from the 'taking stock' process, the whole-of-institution steering group should then consider where they want to go next. There are two stages in this process: 'Looking to the future: Where do you want to be?' and 'Planning for the future: How will you get there?'

Looking to the future: Where do you want to be? Using the findings and evidence identified from the 'taking stock' process, combined with consideration of the statements for each enabler, teams should identify high level enhancement institutional targets for a defined period of time. This should be sufficient to achieve meaningful change, but short enough to have an impact for most students (2 to 5 years). At this stage, the group declares key enhancement targets under each/some of the 12 enablers in the Student Success Framework. The enhancement priorities should be context sensitive, authentic and achievable.

Planning for the future: How will you get there? Once the whole-of-institution steering group have identified the enhancement priorities that they will consider for the enhancement period, they should develop an action-based implementation plan (using the template provided in Appendix 5) which they will use in the achievement of identified future enhancement of student success enablers. The steering group should build a considered, well-resourced plan which shares responsibility across the institution, incorporates and prioritises specific components of the Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework and which includes how their identified targets and priorities will be evaluated, with key

indicators of success. The plan should include milestones and review points to assist the steering group in managing and fulfilling the enhancement goals; milestones should be noted in quarters as opposed to monthly.

As a reality check, these goals can then be considered using the staff and student lenses, to ensure that the targets are inclusive.

The action-based implementation plan should be enabling, clear and well-resourced.

Implementing Your Plan

The steering group should communicate the agreed action-based implementation plan to all staff, students and other stakeholders. This is an important part of closing the feedback loop, and will also inform staff and students of the planned enhancements. In addition, it will present the opportunities that will be provided to work in partnership to develop shared solutions and to ensure the identified high level institutional enhancement targets are achieved in the agreed timeframe.

The Student Success Partners within each functional area, in collaboration with their staff and students, must consider and connect how the institutional priorities and implementation plan will be interpreted locally and identify local enhancement targets and actions. Again, these targets should be specific, realistic and resourced, and should be monitored locally to ensure progress is made. The Student Success Partner should report back to the whole-of-institution steering group on the progress made.

Regular reporting on progress from each functional area to the institutional steering group is essential to ensure continued progress against the Student Success implementation plan and that high level targets are achieved.

Embedding the process of continual enhancement

Embedding student success in a sustainable way requires that during the enhancement period, feedback received is used to refine and adjust the action-based implementation plan in order to achieve the identified high level targets for student success. The institutional Student Success Lead should continually review progress, and liaise with the Student Success Partners to identify and mitigate any unforeseen obstacles. At the end of the enhancement period, the whole-of-institution steering group should review the progress made, and mark and celebrate the progress towards embedding student success. The process of enhancement then continues, as the whole-of-institution steering group uses the Seven Cs Process to identify new enhancement targets to further embed student success across the institution during the next enhancement period.

All resources are available to download [here](#).

Acknowledgements

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This resource has been developed by Brian Gormley, Caitríona McGrattan and Rhiannon Kavanagh with the support of the National Forum Team.

Share how you are embedding student success.

If you are using the Seven Cs Toolkit please share your experience of engaging with it:

@ForumTL (Twitter and Instagram)



#NFStudentSuccess

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List of Useful Resources

A Co-creation of Learning and Teaching Typology

Bovill, C. (2019). A co-creation of learning and teaching typology: What kind of co-creation are you planning or doing?, *International Journal for Students as Partners*, 3(2). <https://doi.org/10.15173/ijasp.v3i2.3953>

AHEAD Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning

www.ahead.ie/userfiles/files/documents/Charter_4_Inclusive_Teaching_&_Learning_Online_Version.pdf

Campus Engage Service/Community based learning process

<https://www.campusengage.ie/what-we-do/publications/?cat-type=framework>

National Forum Principles of Assessment OF/FOR/AS Learning

<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/our-priorities/student-success/assessment-of-for-as-learning/#!/Principles>

National Professional Development Framework for all Staff Who Teach in Higher Education

<https://hub.teachingandlearning.ie/resource/national-professional-development-framework-for-all-staff-who-teach-in-higher-education/>

National Understanding of Student Success

<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/our-priorities/student-success/national-understanding-of-student-success/>

NStEP Steps to Partnership: A Framework for Authentic Student Engagement in Decision-Making

<https://studentengagement.ie/framework/>

Open Courses: Recognising Professional Development

<https://opencourses.ie/>

ORLA: Online Resource for Learning Analytics

www.teachingandlearning.ie/our-priorities/student-success/online-resource-for-learning-analytics-ork/

Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) 2020 *Transforming Teaching and Learning for Student Success* funded initiatives

https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/funding/funded-projects/initiatives-search/?fwp_project_theme=enabling-student-success

Student Success Toolbox (a National Forum funded initiative) plus Github page where a number of the tool codes can be obtained:

<http://studentsuccess.ie/the-toolbox/>

<https://github.com/studentsuccesstoolbox/StudentSuccessToolbox>

StudentSurvey.ie: Irish survey of student engagement

<https://studentsurvey.ie/>

Teaching for transitions:

<https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/our-priorities/student-success/teaching-for-transitions/>

The Power of Partnership: Students, Staff and Faculty Revolutionizing Higher Education (Open Access Book)

<https://www.centerforengagedlearning.org/books/power-of-partnership/>

Toolkit for Inclusive Higher Education Institutions (UCD Access & Lifelong Learning)

https://www.ucd.ie/all/t4media/0274_UCD_TOOLKIT_1118_ONLINE_LR.pdf

Universal Design of Learning

<https://www.ahead.ie/udl>

3Set WP3 peer-led transition resources:

https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/3set/wp3/



Enabling Institutional Capabilities

Strategy and Enabling Policies and Practices

Statements

- A. The institution has an enabling strategy (a student success strategy or a dedicated section within the institution's strategy) that is informed by appropriate national and international policy, reflective of local priorities for student success and is future looking.
- B. Strategies for HE functional areas clearly reflect institutional priorities in an open and transparent way.
- C. The institution has enabling policies for student success in place which are informed by a universal design approach.
- D. Enabling policies and processes across HE functional areas are quality-assured and aligned to optimise student success.
- E. All HE functional areas are provided with opportunities to co-develop and collaborate to align, evaluate and plan for the continued enhancement of student success.
- F. Students and staff are empowered and supported to participate proactively in the development of institutional policies and practices for the enhancement of student success.
- G. Staff and students are regularly informed of, and familiar with institutional policies and they are aware of their resulting responsibilities in supporting student success.
- H. The process for the enhancement of student success is clearly articulated in the compact and is captured during institutional dialogue, where relevant.
- I. Staff and students are aware of the institutional commitment to the enhancement of student success as articulated at a strategic level in the institutional compact and institutional dialogue, where relevant.
- J. The institution considers and identifies the evidence to be collected, showcased and celebrated to capture the impact of the student success strategy.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Policies that support student success
Future themes for HE e.g. education for sustainable development

Questions

How do we ensure that our strategy is reflective of current national policy landscapes?

How do we ensure that our local priorities are developed in consultation with, and are informed by our staff, students and stakeholders?

What mechanisms do we use to ensure alignment across department policies, and how do we know they are effective?

How do we ensure that our strategy and policy take account of future possible developments in HE?

Does your institution have a strategic commitment to the universal design of programmes and support services?



Enabling Institutional Capabilities

Evidence-based decision making

Statements

- A. There is an evidence-based approach to decision making across the institution which is informed by both qualitative and quantitative data.
- B. The institution has systematically identified and documented the range of data it collects across all HE functional areas, including the data collected by third party software providers, in collaboration with staff and students.
- C. The institution has identified in a systematic way the questions it wants the data to answer to support achievable strategic priorities that inform student learning.
- D. Policies, systems and processes are in place to support the collection and use of data by all staff in an integrated manner.
- E. Approaches to teaching and learning are informed by data and enhanced through teaching and learning scholarship.
- F. The institution communicates the decisions taken as a result of data it has gathered and analysed.
- G. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that data is used to support and empower students to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning.
- H. Data is readily available, accessible and interpretable for students and staff and decision-makers.
- I. Data is collected and retained appropriately and in line with data privacy guidelines.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Sources of data

Questions

How are students empowered to use their data to support their learning?

How do we ensure that decisions taken as a result of data collected are developed in consultation with, and are informed by our staff, students and stakeholders?

What mechanisms do we use to determine the questions that data will be used to answer?

What kinds of qualitative data do we collect and how do we use that data?



Enabling Institutional Capabilities

Structured and well-resourced professional development

Statements

- A. There is a clear statement of the institutional commitment to the professional development (PD) of all staff, that is well resourced.
- B. Institutional workload models recognise and support continuous professional development for all staff and provide sufficient time for staff to engage.
- C. A performance management development system (PMDS) or alternative is in place to enable staff and their line manager to agree professional development goals that are actioned, recorded, and resourced.
- D. Pathways of progression for staff are clear, open and transparent, and widely communicated and recognise staff commitment to the enhancement of student success.
- E. The institution facilitates communities of practice (COPs) to provide peer support and encourage sharing of good practice.
- F. Accredited and non-accredited professional development is aligned to national professional development framework and institutional priorities.
- G. The institution has in place a process for recognising and valuing the individual / team commitment to professional development.
- H. Professional development opportunities provided make explicit their link to supporting the enhancement of student success.
- I. Professional development opportunities are responsive to emerging themes within the wider HE landscape.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Policies for staff development

Questions

What processes / structures are in place to support COPs to provide peer support and sharing of good practice?

Is the institutional commitment to PD implemented across all units across the institution?

What mechanisms do we use to capture the PD needs of staff (at all levels)?

How does the professional development of staff support diversity, inclusion and the universal design of programmes and services?



Enabling Institutional Culture

Whole-of-institutional approach and alignment

Statements

- A. All students and staff are aware of the shared vision for valuing and embedding student success and their role in supporting student success.
- B. Communication pathways exist for senior management to engage with, listen to and partner with staff and students to support student success.
- C. Institutional structures and processes are in place to ensure strategic alignment across all HE functional areas.
- D. There is a shared responsibility for student success within each HE functional area and a coordinated approach to collaboration across units.
- E. Major student processes are relatively smooth and seamless, and aligned. Handoffs between key stakeholders in critical process areas are effective.
- F. Students are fully supported to navigate across different HE functional areas to resolve problems/issues.
- G. Collaboration with external stakeholders and communities ensures the institutional commitment to student success encompasses the entire student experience.
- H. There is a strong and constantly evolving communications strategy that promotes and shares the institutional commitment to student success.
- I. The institution celebrates, rewards and shares approaches to the enhancement of student success.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
HE functional areas

Questions

What PD opportunities are provided to support the whole-of-institution approach and alignment?

How is the shared vision for student success communicated?

How do you know that the handoffs between key stakeholders are effective?



Enabling Institutional Culture

Centrality of students and their learning

Statements

- A. The institutional processes ensure integration of the student learning experience across disciplines and programmes.
- B. The institution values and supports multi-disciplinary, challenge and theme-based modules, which enable students from different disciplines to work together to learn from each other and contribute creatively to their learning.
- C. The student experience optimises the holistic development of each student to contribute to and flourish in society.
- D. Students are active partners in decision-making and co-creation.
- E. Students are provided with opportunities to reflect on and articulate what constitutes success for them as they progress through and beyond higher education.
- F. Mechanisms are in place for recognising and rewarding formal and informal learning.
- G. Student curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities are well resourced and inclusive.
- H. The institution has articulated clearly how they balance high expectations for learning for all staff and students with flexibility and pedagogies of care. High challenge / high support.
- I. Staff are enabled and empowered.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Co-curricular opportunities

Questions

How are students and staff supported to work together for decision-making and co-creation?

How do you know that curricular and co-curricular opportunities are inclusive?

What mechanisms are in place to support the holistic development of students?



Enabling Institutional Culture

Inclusivity

Statements

- A. The institution values the variability in all students and staff and celebrates inclusivity.
- B. The institution has clearly articulated its commitment to providing an inclusive working and learning environment for all staff and students (current and prospective).
- C. The institution has processes in place to ensure a diverse staff and student population and has mechanisms in place to address any gaps identified.
- D. The institutional processes and culture supports and champions diversity in decision-making and staff have knowledge.
- E. Institutional web-platforms, VLE, IT systems and communication interfaces meet accessibility requirements and skills to make their materials accessible.
- G. Opportunities are provided for cultivating positive working and social relationships amongst different student groups, staff groups, and student/staff interactions.
- H. Institutional policies, systems and processes are aligned with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- I. Opportunities are provided for staff and students to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes an inclusive and universally designed environment in the institutional context and good practice is recognised.
- J. The design and delivery of the curriculum acknowledges and reflects the diversity of the staff and student population.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Communication interface

Questions

What processes are in place for sharing good practice around inclusivity?

How do we know that curricular and co-curricular opportunities are inclusive?

What PD opportunities are in place to support staff in incorporating universal design principles into their programme / service?

How do we ensure our staff have the role-based training they need to ensure the institution is meeting accessibility requirements.



Enabling Institutional Culture

Communication and collaboration

Statements

- A. The institution has a clearly articulated commitment to ongoing dialogue and relationship-building across the institution.
- B. Processes are in place and opportunities are provided to support the development of open and transparent partnerships within and across disciplines and HE functional areas, between staff/students, with other institutions and the wider community.
- C. The development of the institutional compact and enabling policies are informed by staff and student contributions in a meaningful way.
- D. Accessible resources are provided to ensure the staff and students are fully informed of and have the opportunity to engage with the policies that impact on their practice/learning.
- E. The language, choice and approach to communications is accessible to the target audience and accessibility standards have been applied.
- F. Communications and media are developed and informed by the relevant stakeholders.
- G. Mechanisms are in place that support, recognise and reward intra- and inter-institutional collaboration.
- H. Processes are in place to ensure that communication is multi-directional; that clear communication pathways exist and that connections between pathways are appropriate to ensure all stakeholders are informed.
- I. The feedback culture within the institution fosters and encourages mutual respect and dialogue between staff, students and external stakeholders.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Audiences for communication

Questions

What mechanisms are in place to recognise and reward partnerships within and across disciplines?
How does the institution measure the effectiveness of communications?
What development opportunities are in place to support staff and students in ensuring they can communicate their message effectively?



Enabling Institutional Culture

Respectful and meaningful relationships

Statements

- A. The institution has a clearly articulated commitment to providing a respectful learning and working environment that encourages and supports the development of meaningful relationships among and between students and staff.
- B. The institution has a clearly evidenced approach to student partnership.
- C. The institution has processes in place to monitor the degree to which a culture of respect and meaningful relationship building exists across the institution.
- D. The institution provides explicit opportunities to develop meaningful relationships based on mutual respect, between and among student and staff groups, and external stakeholders.
- E. The value of and requirement for positive interactions/relationships are clearly communicated at all levels of the institution.
- F. The institution has appropriate, well-resourced supports in place for optimising and maintaining staff and student wellbeing.
- G. The institution clearly articulates how it enacts its commitment to respectful, positive and supportive relationships.
- H. There are clearly communicated processes for intervention where difficulties have emerged with respect to maintaining positive and supportive relationships.
- I. The shared values of respect and positive working relationships are visible both within and between all HE functional areas and departments.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
HE functional areas

Questions

How does the institution support and encourage constructive feedback between colleagues and staff/students?

What measures are in place to address areas where the culture of respect needs to be further enhanced?

How do we address staff/student wellbeing via the curriculum?



Enabling Institutional Practices

Assessment and feedback

Statements

- A. The institutional processes embed a programme-based approach to assessment and feedback, including assessment of/for/as learning.
- B. The institution is explicit in its intention to use assessment of/for/as learning as a key driver for student success.
- C. Students are provided with opportunities to experience a diverse range of assessment methods including, where relevant, authentic work-based assessment, self and peer assessment.
- D. Choice in assessment is provided, underpinned by the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- E. Students are supported to develop their assessment literacy.
- F. Assessment and feedback are supported by enabling policies and practices.
- G. Approaches to assessment and feedback foster partnership between staff and students and encourage co-creation.
- H. Assessment practices empower students to become self-regulated learners.
- I. Opportunities are provided for staff to build their capacity for assessment design and in providing actionable feedback for students.
- J. Data gathered by the institution through the assessment process is used to inform and enhance future approaches to assessment and student learning.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Assessment methods

Questions

How are programme teams supported in their implementation of assessment and feedback?
What data is collected around assessment methods and feedback?
Where is student partnership in assessment most evident?
What opportunities are there for sharing practice in assessment and feedback?



Enabling Institutional Practices

Engagement and Student Partnership

Statements

- A. Institutional approaches to student engagement and partnership are informed by current national policy, frameworks and guidelines and institutional data.
- B. The institution has an explicit commitment to authentic dialogue and partnership with students.
- C. There is evidence of authentic partnership with students across the work of all HE functional areas of the institution, including but not limited to, diverse student representation on institutional committees and councils.
- D. Opportunities are available for staff and students to build their capacity to operate as effective partners.
- E. There is clear evidence that the student voice is valued with equal partnership in the process/practices being recognised by all stakeholders.
- F. Institutional policies and processes support and encourage student engagement and partnership.
- G. Students from all backgrounds and lived experiences are actively empowered and supported to engage in partnership activities.
- H. Equity, diversity and inclusion are embedded into staff/student partnership.
- I. Student engagement data and dialogue are used to inform institutional policies, processes and practices.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Partnership opportunities

Questions

How does the institution actively respond to data around student engagement?

What national frameworks and guidelines are used to enhance student partnerships?

What data is collected to assess the scale and nature of student partnership?

How, and by whom, are partnerships most often initiated?



Enabling Institutional Practices

Teaching approaches and learning design

Statements

- A. The institution values, recognises, and rewards the commitment to the enhancement of teaching and learning.
- B. The institution has a dedicated teaching and learning strategy that is informed by current national policy, frameworks, guidelines and institutional data.
- C. The institution recognises and clearly articulates that teaching and learning and research are interconnected and mutually enriching.
- D. The institution engages students as partners in, for example, the co-creation and design of curricula and teaching, learning and assessment approaches.
- E. Teaching and learning spaces support reflective and experiential learning.
- F. Students and staff are supported in developing their teaching approaches and learning design, and in the critical application and use of digital technologies.
- G. Teaching and learning design are underpinned by the principles of UDL and accessibility and are reflective and inclusive of an increasingly diverse student community.
- H. The teaching and learning culture enables students to develop as lifelong learners that can contribute to wider society as socially active global citizens, by addressing ubiquitous global issues.
- I. Agile approaches to programme structure and delivery, teaching practice and learning design support flexibility for students and staff.
- J. Learning opportunities engage students and support both their personal and professional development.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Teaching and learning approaches

Questions

How are learning spaces being reviewed to support experiential learning?

How are global issues such as sustainability and wellbeing infused through the curriculum?

What data is collected to assess student engagement in learning?

What forums are available to facilitate discussion between research and teaching staff?

In what way are internationally recognised, evidence based, pedagogical frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL) embedded in teaching approaches and learning design?



Enabling Institutional Practices

Transitions and cultivating belonging

Statements

- A. Institutional approaches to student transition are informed by current national policy, frameworks and guidelines and institutional data.
- B. Supports are in place to support student transitions into, through and beyond higher education.
- C. Supports are available equitably to all students in the institution.
- D. The range of supports available and how to access them are effectively communicated to students and staff.
- E. Programme structure and delivery, and co- and extra-curricular activities prepare students for future employment, active citizenship and as lifelong learners.
- F. Peer mentoring is a key component of orientation/induction and career preparation programmes.
- G. Peer-led transition approaches focus on the emotional, social and academic needs of students.
- H. The development and implementation of orientation/induction and other student support programmes are completed in partnership with students.
- I. The institution nurtures a sense of belonging and positive wellbeing for all students as they enter and progress through their programme of study.

Lenses

Student Type
Mode of Learning
Staff
Transitions into, through and beyond HE

Questions

What data is collected to ensure the effectiveness of transitions?
How are students prepared for future employment and active citizenship?
What models or frameworks are used to develop transition programmes?
What forums are available to share good practice and information, for those involved in transition programmes?
How do we support students with different lived experiences?



Lenses

Shared student and staff demographics
Person with a disability ¹
With family/parental responsibilities
With caring responsibilities
Technologically disadvantaged
Member of the LGBTQIA+ community
For whom English is not their first language
From an ethnic minority
From an intercultural background
With other work commitments
From an under-represented group in higher education
Commutes a long distance to work/college
Socio-economically disadvantaged

Student Types			
Mature student	CAO student	Traveller/Roma student	Apprentice
HEAR student	Postgraduate Application Centre (PAC) student	Student estranged from their family	Life-long learner
DARE student	International (Non-EU) student	Minority in their class group	Erasmus+ student (incoming & outgoing)
Scholarship / Grant recipient	International (EU) student	Refugee / Asylum Seeker	Study abroad student (incoming & outgoing)
Fee-paying student	Advanced entry student	First generation college student	Prospective student
Student aged 20-22 at registration	Entered from further education	Ex-prisoners	Alumni

¹ Person with a recognised disability such as a physical, sensory, neurological or mental health condition, a specific learning difficulty or significant ongoing illness, who may who experience barriers to learning/teaching due to non-inclusive design of learning environments or inadequate support services. Students with disabilities may enter through DARE and avail of Disability Support Services, while others may remain undisclosed in higher education.

Lenses



Staff types
Lecturer
Education Developer/Technologist
Librarian
Technical Officer
Lab Technician/Attendant
Tutor
Graduate Teaching Assistant
Researcher
Industry Liaison
Industry Expert/Consultant
External Examiner
Student Affairs Professional
Administrator
IT Technician
Clinical Tutor
Placement/Internship supervisor
Placement Officer/Co-ordinator
Practice Tutor
Senior Manager

Staff Contract Type
Tenured
Permanent
Part-time
Multiannual
Fixed-term contract
Seasonal
Hourly paid staff
Consultant
Guest Lecturer
Associate Faculty
Temporary
Specified purpose
Visiting scholar
Seconded
Postdoctoral
Funded PhD studentship
Teaching Fellow
Research Fellow
Pro-rata
Graduate Teaching Assistant
Early/mid/late career with research/technical/teaching/professional services focus

Lenses



Teaching approach	Description
Face to Face	Face-to-face learning where teachers and learners are physically and temporally co-present.
Distance education	Education that is remote and technologically mediated in some way so as to span geographic and/or temporal distances between learners, teachers and institutions.
Online learning	Describes any form of learning conducted partly or wholly over the internet, although it is more specifically used to describe a form of distance education intentionally designed in advance to be delivered fully online.
Blended	A combination of online and face-to-face teaching and learning, or more specifically, the “thoughtful integration” of these two modes.
Hybrid	The integration of face-to-face and online learning across a programme.
Hyflex	The integration of face-to-face and online learning across a programme, offering learners ongoing choice in how to engage and participate, in a way that works best for them.
Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT)	A temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances. It involves the use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses.

Student Types
Majority of teaching/learning takes place on a primary campus during daytime hours
Majority of teaching/learning takes place on campus during twilight/evening/weekend hours
Limited teaching/learning on campus for duration of study
No teaching/learning on campus for the duration of study
Majority of teaching/ learning takes place in a satellite campus
Majority of teaching/learning takes place in the workplace
Majority of teaching/learning takes place online
Majority of teaching/learning takes place through block release

Lenses



Quantity of study	Description
Full-time	Full-time students are students who are attending day programmes, extending over at least a full academic year and devoting their whole working time to their academic studies as far as is known.
Part-time	Part-time students include all students - other than full-time - who are attending programmes of university standard extending over at least a full academic year.
Modular	Choosing individual modules to study, not necessarily leading to an accredited award.
Micro-credential	A qualification evidencing learning outcomes acquired through a short, transparently-assessed course or module. Micro-credentials may be completed on-site, online or in a blended format. Includes minor/special purpose or supplemental award.
Custom provision (in industry and/or in HEI)	Work-based learning delivered in partnership with industry.
MOOC	Massive Open Online Courses: large numbers of online learners collaborate, create and share content, and engage in discussion using open platforms such as forums, blogs and social networks.

NFQ Level
Undergraduate Level 5 Foundation /Access Programmes
Undergraduate Level 6
Undergraduate Level 7
Undergraduate Level 8
Research Level 9
Taught Level 9
Level 10

Lenses



HE Functional Area Category	
Academic Departments	Health & Safety
Academic supports	Health care
Access Office	Human Resources
Accommodation / Residence	International Office
Administration	Institutional Research and Data Analytics
Admissions	IT services
Alumni Office	Marketing
Bursar's Office / Finance	Pastoral Care / Chaplaincy
Careers & Employability	President's Office
Catering	Procurement
Civic Engagement	Quality Assurance Office
Cleaning	Registrar's Office
Clubs and Societies	Research Centres
Communications	Security
Conferring	Sports
Disability Office	Student Engagement
Enterprise and Innovation	Student Finance
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Student Records
Estates and Facilities	Student Registration
Examinations	Student Services
Governance	Teaching and Learning
Graduate Studies	Student Success



Lenses

Transitions and Belonging enabler specific lens: Transitions into, through and beyond higher education.

Are there supports in place to support student transitions?
Before they enter
As they enter
From FE to HE
From work to HE
During the programme of study
Between academic stages
Prior to and returning from Erasmus+/Study Abroad
Prior to entering placement/work-based learning (WBL)
Returning from placement/work-based learning (WBL)
As they move from UG/PG
Transition to a Post Doc
As they transfer from level 9 to level 10
As they exit to employment
As they exit early
At advanced entry
Students returning from a break in their studies
Students transitioning from an education system within the EU
Students transitioning from an education system outside the EU

Appendix 3: Rubrics

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Capabilities

Strategy and Enabling Policies and Practices

Framework: Aligning with institutional and external strategies, student success is specifically referred to and supported by an integrated suite of enabling policies and practices across the whole of the institution.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
My institution is developing a student success strategy.	My institution has developed a student success strategy with students and is planning its implementation (including associated resourcing).	My institution is implementing the student success strategy which has clear targets, is well resourced and supported by enabling policies.
Staff in my institution are aware of relevant student success policies and research that can support our student success strategy.	In my institution, the student success strategies are informed and supported by relevant policies and research.	My institution implements, integrates, influences and contributes to the student success policies and strategies that are important for us (international, national, sectoral).
Staff in my institution are aware that several policies may impact on student success, e.g. accessibility requirements, policies around data collection and usage, professional development, institutional approaches to teaching and learning enhancement (T&LE).	In my institution, policies which impact on student success are being reviewed to ensure they support a shared institutional vision for student success.	In my institution, all policies and strategies are reviewed regularly and updated to ensure they support our shared institutional vision for student success.
There are forums in my institution where staff and students can discuss policies and practices which can affect student success.	In my institution, staff and students work in partnership to enhance policies and practices which can affect student success.	In my institution, students and staff work together to co-create policies and practices to ensure student success is continually reviewed, aligned and enhanced.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Capabilities

Evidence-Based Decision Making

Framework: Enhancements to support student success are evidence-based. Institutional and learner data is used appropriately to ensure that students, staff and decision-makers have access to accurate, timely, and actionable information.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
My institution gathers and analyses some data relevant to student success, in line with data privacy regulations.	My institution gathers and analyses data relevant to student success, in line with data privacy regulations, and uses it to enhance student success.	My institution has a systematic approach to data collection and analysis, in line with data privacy regulations, to measure and underpin student success. Insights from data analysis are made widely available and are easily accessible across the institution.
My institution is seeking to use learner data to further improve the decision-making around student success (learning analytics).	My institution uses learner data to improve decision making, and has made some data (learning analytics) available to students to empower them to improve their learning.	In my institution, institutional data, for example from studentsurvey.ie, and learning analytics are used in a systematic manner to enhance student success.
Staff in my institution are aware of the scholarship around student success.	Staff within my institution are engaged in the scholarship of student success through departmental and institutional T&LE initiatives e.g. Fellowships, National Forum funded initiatives.	Staff in my institution are engaged in, support and recognise research into the practice and the scholarship of student success through departmental and institutional T&LE initiatives e.g. Fellowships, National Forum funded initiatives.
Students and staff in my institution are consulted regularly on student success initiatives; their feedback is captured and used in our evidence-based decision making.	In my institution, students and staff are informed of decisions taken as a result of consultation on student success initiatives.	Students and staff work together to co-create solutions to enhance student success. Lessons learned are disseminated nationally to deepen the knowledge base in the area of student success.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Capabilities

Structured and Well-Resourced Professional Development

Framework: Staff are supported, motivated, connected, empowered, and recognised for their commitment to the enhancement of teaching and learning.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
Staff	Staff	Staff
In my institution, staff are aware of professional development (PD) opportunities which are available institutionally, inter institutionally, nationally and internationally.	Staff have a sense of their individual professional development needs in my institution. In my institution, staff plan their individual professional development to address current needs and areas of interest.	In my institution staff have completed an audit about their professional development needs. In my institution staff have individual and HE functional area professional development plans which are designed around the national PD Framework.
As individuals, staff engage in professional development regarding student success in my institution.	Staff engage in professional development opportunities which reflect their current needs and areas of interest, and which are available institutionally, inter-institutionally, nationally and internationally.	Staff identify and engage in professional development opportunities which align with their plans, are appropriate for their career stage, are beneficial individually and for their HE functional area, support student success and are available institutionally, inter-institutionally, nationally and internationally.
In my institution, staff are aware of the national PD Framework and they refer to it when planning professional development.	Staff in my institution use the national PD Framework to guide their professional development choices and they map their professional development against the Framework. They informally share their teaching and learning professional development with colleagues in my institution through professional conversations.	In my institution staff capture/ record their individual professional development in a portfolio (or equivalent).
		Staff share their professional development with colleagues through professional conversations and in more formal settings e.g. staff meetings, team development days, expertise sharing workshops and seminars, etc.
		Staff are involved in and contribute to institutional and national/international professional development. Their HE functional area supports engagement in professional development in terms of time and resources in my institution.
Student	Student	Student
I am aware that professional development opportunities are offered to staff in my institution.	I am aware that staff have engaged in a range of professional development opportunities in my institution and can identify the ways these have enhanced the success of their students.	In my institution students work in partnership with staff and discuss how approaches to student success can be enhanced and areas for further development can be identified.
		We, the students, inform the professional development opportunities that are offered to staff.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Culture

Whole-of-Institution Approach and Alignment

Framework: Responsibility for student success is embedded at all levels of the institution, engaging all areas of the institutions' work and all students, staff and senior management.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
Staff in my institution recognise the value of enhancing student success.	Supporting student success is valued across my institution, and there are several services designated to support student success.	There is a common understanding and accessible vision around student success that is shared and enacted by all across the organisation. Student success is recognised as being 'everybody's business'.
Staff in my institution are supportive of student success as it relates to the specific work or function of their department.	Many processes within my institution work very well to support student success, but sometimes students can 'fall between the cracks'.	There is strong and seamless communication between functional areas to ensure student success is supported in a smooth and timely manner.
It is clear from communications within my institution that student success is very important.	The importance of student success is communicated and supported by actions within my institution, and staff and students are aware of student success initiatives underway.	Student success is visibly supported by staff at all levels and functional areas, and systematic actions and programmes are put in place to support it.
Staff work hard to ensure student success.	Staff within my institution work hard and communicate with students on major actions to support student success.	Staff and students work in partnership to support a coherent, well-resourced student success plan which is aligned with other institutional strategies.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Culture

Centrality of Students and Their Learning

Framework: All aspects of the work of the institution are considered through the lens of student learning. The institution creates formal and informal learning opportunities, helps students integrate learning experiences, and promotes and rewards learning for all members of the community.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
Students are encouraged to reflect, build upon, and integrate their learning.	Students are encouraged - and given opportunities - to reflect, build upon, and integrate their learning.	Students are encouraged, given opportunities and recognised for reflecting, building upon, and integrating their learning.
In my institution, information is provided to help students navigate the curriculum.	In my institution, information and services are provided to help students navigate the curriculum, including co- and extra-curricular activities.	My institution partners with students to communicate and provide our curriculum and co- and extra-curricular activities and to support students in their choices and engagement.
In my institution, some students have access to additional (formal) learning opportunities, such as work placement or study abroad. Some students have access to additional (informal) learning opportunities, such as participation in clubs and societies.	In my institution, many students have access to additional (formal) learning opportunities, such as work placement or study abroad. Many students have access to additional (informal) learning opportunities, such as participation in clubs and societies.	In my institution, all students have equitable access to a wide range of formal learning opportunities, including work placement, study abroad, field trips, as well as informal learning, including volunteering, peer mentoring, working on campus, and participation in clubs and societies.
Staff in my institution are mindful of broader higher education and institutional goals e.g. graduate attributes, societal and institutional needs, in the planning of curriculum and co/extra-curricular activities.	Staff in my institution reflect broader higher education and institutional goals e.g. graduate attributes, societal and institutional needs, in the planning of curriculum and co- and extra-curricular activities.	Staff in my institution partner with stakeholders, including students, colleagues and industry/ community, in order to include broader institutional, higher education and societal goals in the planning of curriculum and co/ extra-curricular activities.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Culture

Inclusivity

Framework: Institution systems, processes, and practices are designed to support a student and staff population that is reflective of the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
In my institution, there is an articulated commitment to diversity and inclusion, e.g. in the institution's strategic plan or teaching and learning strategy.	As well as an institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion, my institution is building a picture of the diversity of the student and staff population through data gathering and engagement.	My institution has a clear and accurate picture of the diversity of the student and staff population and pays particular attention to the recruitment and success of those most at risk of disadvantage or exclusion.
In my institution, there is an awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusion.	Resources and events to promote an institution-wide understanding of diversity and inclusion are available to all students and staff.	Diversity is celebrated across my institution. The design and delivery of the curriculum acknowledges and reflects the diversity of the staff and student population.
My institution adheres to the requirements for learning platforms, materials, teaching & learning and assessment approaches to be accessible to all students.	Teaching & learning and assessment approaches are used that are accessible to all students and that provide all students with the opportunity to fully demonstrate their learning. Learning platforms and VLEs meet accessibility requirements, and appropriate supports are provided.	My institution works with students to devise teaching and learning and assessment approaches that are accessible to all students that provide students with flexibility and the opportunity to fully demonstrate their learning. Learning platforms and VLEs meet accessibility requirements, and appropriate support services and accommodations are provided.
We consider inclusion in the design of our curriculum and co- and extra-curricular activities.	We recommend and support Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in the design of our curriculum and co- and extra-curricular activities.	We have embedded UDL principles into all our curriculum and co- and extra-curricular activities and our curriculum planning tools.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Culture

Communication and Collaboration

Framework: The institution values good communication and collaboration across all areas of the institution, between staff members, the student population and the wider community.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
Communication and collaboration between and within diverse functions and groups across the institution and with the wider community are identified as valuable within my institution.	Opportunities, incentives and guidelines for communication and collaboration are clearly articulated within my institution.	Collaborative initiatives including dialogue, discussion and partnership between and within all stakeholders (internal and external) are encouraged, supported, recognised and rewarded.
My institution keeps staff and students informed of developments through a range of communication channels.	My institution has a well-structured approach for communication, which includes opportunities for dialogue where the community can discuss developments and give feedback.	The multi-directional communication strategy in my institution offers opportunities and support for the entire community to have dialogue on developments and co-create solutions for the future.
My institution has a variety of connections with the local and regional community, some of which are used to support student learning.	My institution has structured and well-resourced collaborations with the wider community, which provide real-world learning opportunities for our students and contribute to the community.	Communication and collaboration with the wider community is a core value at my institution and it is reflected in our strategic plan and its enactment; it provides real-world learning and research and contribution opportunities for our students.
My institution engages actively with students from the time they enter the institution until they graduate.	My institution has a well-structured plan for communicating with our students for their higher education journey, including pre-entry and as alumni.	My institution uses a partnership approach to ensure students can participate actively in discussions about student learning, before, during and after their programme.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Culture

Respectful and Meaningful Relationships

Framework: The institution’s culture and practice values the wellbeing of all, and encourages respectful, positive and supportive student and staff peer-to-peer relationships and student/staff relationships.



Developing	Consolidating	Leading
Respect is recognised as a core value of my institution.	There are efforts to promote, action, and measure the core value of respect, e.g. through the development of a respect charter or through staff and student surveys.	Respectful relationships are the norm at all levels of my institution, are clearly visible in all interactions throughout the institution, and are supported by enabling policies and processes.
Wellbeing is viewed as a crucial component of student success in my institution.	Visible efforts are made to promote, support, and measure the wellbeing of students and staff.	Wellbeing is clearly defined, valued, and monitored, and there is a suite of supports and resources available to students and staff maintain positive wellbeing.
In my institution, wellbeing is addressed primarily through the provision of support services.	Staff and student wellbeing is supported through the provision of programmes to pro-actively promote positive wellbeing.	Wellbeing is embedded within the curriculum, and the culture of the institution enables staff and students to address areas which are affecting wellbeing.
The staff and student community work well together in my institution.	In my institution, there is a positive atmosphere, which supports and encourages peer-to-peer relationships and student/staff relationships.	In my institution, the culture and practices support and encourage positive and supportive student and staff peer-to-peer relationships and student/staff relationships. Staff and students from minority groups feel that their culture is respected.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Practices



Assessment and Feedback

Framework: Enhancing assessment OF/FOR/AS learning is used as a key driver of student success, to deepen learning, measure achievement, and generate actionable feedback.

Developing	Consolidating	Leading
In my institution, assessment approaches are clearly explained in our module and programme documentation.	Assessment criteria and rubrics are shared with students, and the assessment approaches and how work is graded are clearly explained in our module and programme documentation.	In my institution, assessment criteria and rubrics are shared with students, and where appropriate, students co-create assessment criteria with staff.
In my institution, the importance of feedback is recognised.	In my institution, the feedback provided assists in the learning process and supports the enhancement of learning.	My institution has a programme-based approach to assessment of/for/as learning that ensures assessment load, bunching and alignment across modules is considered. Quality feedback is provided that is timely and actionable.
In my institution, there is a recognition of the importance of students becoming independent learners.	In my institution, the programme documentation clearly sets out how the development of independent learning is supported, and encourages peer-based learning.	In my institution, staff and students work in partnership to ensure the aim to develop independent learners is working effectively, and collaborative and peer-based approaches to learning are utilised.
In my institution, assessment methods are clearly described. If the assessment method is not suitable for students, they can raise the issue with the staff.	In my institution, care is taken to ensure assessment methods will not disadvantage students with disabilities.	In my institution, a diverse range of assessments are universally designed and offered to maximise accessibility and choice, and ensure every student has the opportunity to learn and demonstrate their learning.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Practices

Engagement and Student Partnership



Framework: Student success is underpinned by authentic partnerships and dialogue with students.

Developing	Consolidating	Leading
Definitions and examples of student engagement and student partnership are agreed upon at institutional level.	All students and staff are aware of the institutional understanding of student engagement and partnership. All are encouraged to reflect on the enablers of, and barriers to, student engagement and partnership, and what they can do to support either or both.	All students and staff engage in a consistent approach across my institution in promoting, supporting and measuring partnership. All students are viewed, treated and supported to be partners in the teaching, learning and assessment environment.
My institution is aware of national initiatives around student engagement and student success including the work of the National Forum through their strategic priority around student success, and NStEP.	My institution is involved in national initiatives around student engagement and student success through our engagement in the work of the National Forum in this area and by connecting with the work of NStEP locally and nationally.	We partner with students in national initiatives around student engagement and student success through our engagement in the work of the National Forum on student success and in the work of NStEP locally and nationally.
My institution is aware of the value of staff-student partnership for student success.	My institution has a stated commitment to active student partnership as part of student success.	My institution has a shared student-staff plan for how we enact our commitment to active student partnership as part of student success and how we evidence that enactment.
My institution recognises the value of seeking student feedback on initiatives.	My institution regularly seeks student feedback and uses the feedback to inform approaches to student success and decision-making.	My institution partners with students on student feedback which we see as an ongoing dialogue. We use the dialogue, and related processes, in shared staff-student decision-making about student success.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Practices

Teaching Approaches and Learning Design



Framework: Students are engaged in their learning and are supported in the critical application of digital technologies. Approaches to learning are underpinned by the principles of universal design.

Developing	Consolidating	Leading
In my institution, the learning environment, both physical and digital, is being developed to support all staff and students.	In my institution, the learning environment, both physical and digital, is well developed.	In my institution, the learning environment, both physical and digital, is well developed through a consultative process, regularly audited and is used effectively by all students and staff to support student learning.
In my institution, there are different connections and collaborations that support student learning.	In my institution, staff, students and other stakeholders understand and effectively work with the institutional connections and collaborations that support student learning.	In my institution, staff, students and alumni work in partnership to nurture our current connections and collaborations and to systematically and strategically seek out new connections and collaborations that support student learning.
In my institution, there is an awareness of the value of digital and assistive technologies.	In my institution, students and staff have opportunities and are supported in accessing digital and assistive technologies.	My institution prioritises digital access and support for all students and staff and advocates for digital access across campus, within the sector, and nationally. Digital skills and competences are valued and supported.
In my institution, staff do their best to support students who may have difficulty engaging with the learning or assessment activities due to differing abilities.	Accessibility and inclusive learning is supported by policies which are being implemented across my institution.	In my institution, the principles of universal design, underpin teaching, learning and assessment, curriculum review and development, and accessibility across the institution.
In my institution, we are aware of good practice in terms of blended/online learning.	In my institution, we support students to engage with blended/online learning in the context of their course work and more broadly in terms of the development of their digital capabilities and digital skills.	In my institution, blended/online learning is offered using innovative and engaging teaching and learning practices. Staff and students contribute to institutional approaches centered on evaluating teaching and learning and share models of good practice.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Rubric

Enabling Institutional Practices

Transitions and Cultivating Belonging



Framework: A strong sense of community and sense of belonging is nurtured through institutional processes and practices. Students are supported through key transitions

Developing	Consolidating	Leading
The transition into first year from secondary school is a key focus. A variety of programmes are in place to support students' transition into higher education via multiple entry routes.	Staff are aware of the variety of transitions that students make through higher education. Students are supported on their transition into higher education via multiple entry routes in a coordinated manner.	Key transitions in each student's journey are identified in advance, and coherent and accessible supports are put in place to ease those transitions, using good practice as informed by national and international research and guidelines. A coherent programme is in place to support students' transition into higher education via multiple entry routes.
Student clubs, societies and the students' union are facilitated to operate effectively.	A wide array of student organisations and other opportunities for belonging are actively supported, promoted and recognised.	There are many and varied opportunities for students to develop a sense of belonging - e.g. to their class group, discipline or institution. Adequate time and spaces are available to support connection and belonging.
On-campus supports are available around student transitions and staff may refer students to these supports.	Academic departments liaise with on-campus supports and initiatives that are available to student transitions e.g. student peer support, mentoring programmes.	Academic departments partner with colleagues facilitating on-campus supports and initiatives that are available to student transitions e.g. student peer support, mentoring programmes, specialised learning support (maths support, writing centre).
We endeavour to maintain contact with our graduates.	We have agreed processes which we use to request inputs from current and recently graduated students to guide our approaches to student success that underpin this work.	We partner with students and other stakeholders about work-readiness and we co-create the curriculum with them to reflect 'real world' requirements and to try to anticipate future needs and applications.

Recording what we do well	Identifying areas for development

Appendix 4 Rubric Scoring Template

Rubric Scoring Sheet

Enabler Title

Things I think are done well to support student success

Things I think need to developed further

Please refer to the description of stages of development (Appendix 7 of the User Guide) to see what your score means

Having read the rubric for this enabler, please indicate where you would position the current stage of development in your functional area/institution.



Appendix 6: Additional Questions for Reflection

Are there systemic organisational barriers/enablers in our institution that inhibit/support the enhancement of student success?

How do we ensure shared responsibility for leadership of enhancement of student success at the institution?

What are the mechanisms in place to support this enabler, and how do we know they are effective?

What are the mechanisms we use to ensure that our students and staff are aware of this enabler, and how do we know they are effective?

How do we empower staff and students to support the enhancement of student success?

Appendix 7: Descriptions of Stages of Development

Score 1-2 **Developing**

In the early stages of **developing** staff and students will be learning about student success: frameworks, models, approaches, literature, the discourse. Staff and students will also be connecting and learning about student success in their own setting including reaching out across departments and functions to identify expertise and experience. In these early stages the work may be associated with meeting reasonable expectations and system/sector level requirements though there may also be pockets of significant engagement. Staff and students will be creating awareness of student success across the institution including with students and senior leaders. They may be starting to build collaborations and coalitions of staff and students who are either early adopters or keen to become involved in contributing to student success.

Score 3-4 **Developing to Consolidating**

As staff and students are moving from **developing to consolidating** there will be evidence of student success work including information and a shared understanding about student success, and the establishing of common ground. Staff and students will be exploring how student success can become a reality in context and mindful of existing processes and institutional ethos. There may be identified staff who are student success champions and/or who have an institutional role regarding student success. The institution may be including student success in their strategic plans and the beginning of the enactment of those plans may be occurring. There may be developing pockets of good practice through unit/team based initiatives supported by seed/ring-fenced funding. There may be senior leader support for the work.

Score 5-6 **Consolidating**

In the **consolidating** phase there will be evidence of the building of local experience and expertise which is research-informed and which draws on practice wisdom. The institution will have examples of planning, implementing and evaluating specific initiatives. The institution will be examining the results/impact of initiatives. There will be greater awareness and understanding of student success across the institutional community, and growing belief and enthusiasm about the work. The work will be becoming more embedded in the existing fabric of the institution and there will be pockets of burgeoning national expertise. The institutional community's engagement will have moved beyond compliance towards commitment. There will be recognition of the need for time, people, resources, funding and senior leader and institutional community support to sustain the work. The reach of consolidating may be at department and institutional level.

Score 7-8 **Consolidating to Leading**

As staff and students are moving from **consolidating to leading** there will be a shared understanding of, confidence in, and commitment to student success. Student success will be included in institutional planning with associated targets and supports. The development of student success will be reflective of the institutional culture. There may be examples of good practice at national level and staff and students may have partners nationally on student success initiatives. This work may have resulted in more sophisticated student success discourse and new knowledge which staff will be sharing across the institution and disseminating more widely. Staff and students may be sharing their practice and their

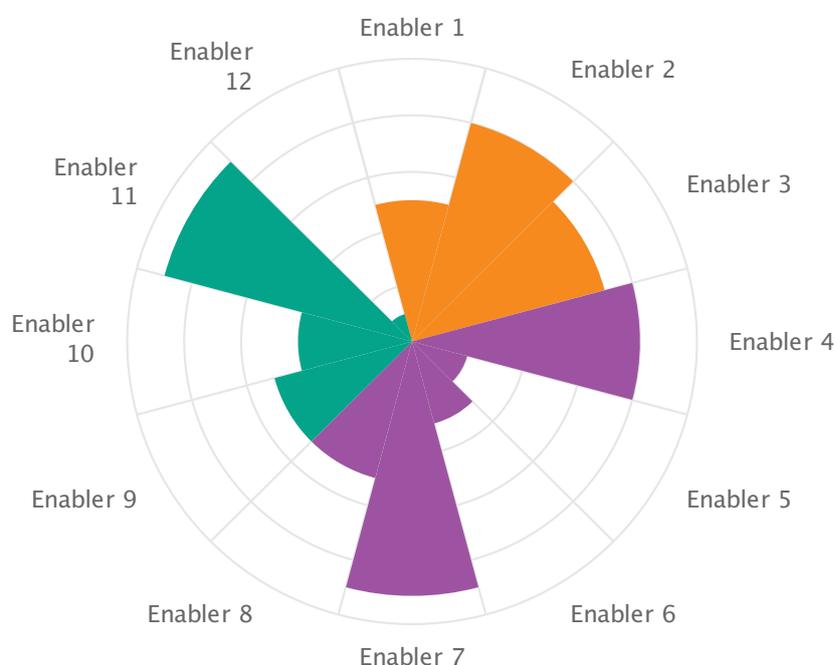
reflections in national and international arenas. There will be strong senior leader support for the work and recognition for staff and student commitment in this area.

Score 9 Leading

In the **leading** phase an understanding of student success permeates the whole institution community and there is evidence of a lived commitment to the work across campus. There are many examples of good practice at both national and international level including pioneering/ground-breaking work in certain areas. There will be ongoing co-enquiry, including researching and publishing, into the work. The work will have mainstreamed support, resources and people to sustain it. It will have full senior leader backing and participation. Student success work will be characterised in terms of commitment, championing and advocacy. There will be deep and seamless embedding of the work as evidenced in strategies, policies and day-to-day enactment. The work will be navigable across and between units and functions through aligned planning and synergistic practice. The reach of **leading** is at all levels, within and beyond the institution, national and international. The institution is influential in this space. It has pride in the work. It showcases it and celebrates it.

Appendix 8: Visual Reporting of Participant Responses

Development stage indentified for each enabler



Enabling Institutional Capabilities		
Enabler 1	Strategy and policies and practices	Consolidating
Enabler 2	Evidence-based decision making	Consolidating - Leading
Enabler 3	Structured and well-resourced professional development	Consolidating - Leading
Enabling Institutional Culture		
Enabler 4	Whole-of-institution approach and alignment	Consolidating - Leading
Enabler 5	Centrality of students and their learning	Developing - Consolidating
Enabler 6	Inclusivity	Developing - Consolidating
Enabler 7	Communication and collaboration	Leading
Enabler 8	Respectful and meaningful relationships	Consolidating
Enabling Institutional Practices		
Enabler 9	Assessment and feedback	Consolidating
Enabler 10	Engagement and student partnership	Developing - Consolidating
Enabler 11	Teaching approaches and learning design	Leading
Enabler 12	Transitions and cultivating belonging	Developing



NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION



HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland