# Teaching, Learning & Student Experience Enhancement Projects

# Application 2022-2023

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| **Project Title** | 'Mattering' and retention and progression. | |
| **Which type of project are you applying for?** (you may apply for both types) | **Project Type 1, Teaching, Learning & Student Experience Enhancement Project (Enhancement Project - EP)**  Teaching & Learning Enhancement Project (Staff-led, Student researcher)  This funding (up to £1,800) is intended to support individuals and teams in conducting educational research to inform and improve teaching practice and the quality of the student learning experience. Check **Appendix 1** for further details. | Yes |
| **Project Type 2, Teaching, Learning & Student Experience Quick Impact Project (Quick Impact Project - QIP)**  Student Experience Enhancement Project (Staff-mentor, Student-led)  This funding (up to £1,800) is intended to support Departments in conducting intervention-based enhancements in student experience and evaluating the impact of these changes. Check **Appendix 2** for further details. | No |

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| **Department / Area:** | |
| **Supporting statements** from your HoD and Line Manager (very brief, but required before funding is considered): | XXXXX have a clear focus on supporting our students from the beginning to the end of their learning journey. This project will deepen our understanding of the barriers some students experience and help to ensure they are successfully integrated into their programme of study. I am more than happy to support. XXXXX  I am happy to support this project as student experience and engagement is a key focus in the subject group and it fits in the objectives set for SE Lead in the current academic year. XXXX |
| **Name of (Acting) HoD: XXXXX** | **Name of Line Manager: XXXXX** |

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| **Ethical Approval** | I confirm ethical approval will be sought through the [Sheffield Hallam ethics review procedure](https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice/research-ethics-approval-procedures).  Please note that as part of the formal review points of your project, you will be asked to confirm that Ethics Approval is in place for your project **by the first milestone**. Conducting the project without ethics approval in place constitutes research misconduct.  It is assumed that applicants will follow the [Sheffield Hallam Ethics Guidance](https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/quality/ethics-and-integrity/guidance-and-legislation), however if you are proposing to follow other ethical guidelines for this project please provide a link to the guidelines being used. | Yes |
| **Risk Assessment** | I confirm that an appropriate risk assessment will be carried out for this project **only if additional assessment** is needed outside the Ethics approval process.  All projects need to be run in a safe manner. See risk assessment guidance at [Health and Safety](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/3069/SitePages/COVID-19.aspx). | Yes |

NOTE: This application should be returned electronically to Lisa Burbeary ([l.burbeary@shu.ac.uk](mailto:l.burbeary@shu.ac.uk))

The submission deadline is **Monday, 18th July 2022**. Please name the application file after the Project Lead.

| **Area** | **Your content (Max. 150 words please!)** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Overview of the challenge, problem or issue that are been explored or addressed through the project**   What is the underlying issue the project is addressing? What is the context of the project? Who will benefit from this project? What type of change will the project lead to (increased knowledge, behavioural, cultural, organisational, etc.) At what level will change happen (individual, organisational, societal)? What is the link to SHU strategy? | Retention and progression rates are of concern in the post-pandemic university. If we are not flagging students who are at risk of attrition early enough, formal intervention is harder and success less likely. The project aims to evaluate the impact of a simple early intervention on retention.  Students will be assisted with the transition to H.E. academically and personally whether identified as part of the target group of ‘at risk’ students or not; early assessment correlates with good outcomes (see below).  Academic staff, and especially academic advisors, will be assisted in the early identification of students in need of support.  The transforming lives strategy focuses on the need to ensure that students are resilient, and well-supported on their academic journey. The project links to this objective by enabling early signposting to support. In addition the intervention will help foster a sense of community (see below for an explanation of ‘mattering’). |
| 1. **Overview of existing evidence or assumptions you are making in the absence of evidence**   What research/data already exists in the sector and how will it be used in the project? What work has already been undertaken at SHU related to the project? What groups or individuals at SHU will be able to help inform the project? What are the underlining beliefs about how the project will work? If the absence of data and evidence, what assumptions are you making in the project? | Strong evidence suggests that early [formative assessments](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/personal/dsji2_hallam_shu_ac_uk/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BED7DE17E-9031-4A2C-86BA-D94653565A15%7D&file=MCQ%20Crim%20and%20Law%20project.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true) (in the first 4-6 weeks) is linked to better outcomes in engagement, retention and progression (see *inter alia* Thomes et al, 2019, Nicol, 2009).  A t[elephone call intervention](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/personal/dsji2_hallam_shu_ac_uk/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B4784B736-85CB-48D4-BE19-1A49BAEEF5DF%7D&file=Telephone%20call%20intervention.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true) operationalises the concept of ‘mattering’ highlighted by Austen et al (2021) and further by Flett (2018). We define the concept of ‘mattering’ as a means of communicating to new students that academics are interested in both their personal and academic development. Our assumption is this will assist with the transition into H.E.  The project will assist in understanding similarities, differences and of our respective student cohorts to inform the departmental approach to changing curriculum structures, centring the needs of students at the heart of course and module design.  Based on current retention data our assumption is that Foundation Year (FY) students need to be monitored and supported more effectively to ensure their success at level 4. |
| 1. **Long term impact of the project on students, a course, a department, a college, or the university (this should be connected to the problem been explored above)**   When the project has finished what should have changed as result (increased knowledge to inform future work, changes in individuals or practice)? What mechanism will you use to measure the impact of your project? How does this connect to course, department, university strategy or initiatives? | We conceptualise and measure the key outcome of retention, using the four following points.  We will measure retention by looking at;  1. Semester 2 submissions  2. learner analytics flagging  3. progression to level 5  4. Within study group comparisons (XXXXX); I.e L4 core module students in the project  5. previous cohort data.  This project connects to the departmental objective of promoting inclusion and fostering a sense of community within the department, and to the university’s commitment to ensuring that students feel supported as part of the transforming lives strategy. |
| 1. **Immediate and intermediate outcomes of the project on students, a course, a department, a college, or the university (these should enable and be connected to the long-term impact)**   What anticipated immediate changes (things like skills, attitude, knowledge, awareness, or motivation) will result from the project? | It is anticipated that early intervention through a low-stakes formative assessment will assist students making the transition into higher education in several ways.  First, the use of early assessment promotes student engagement across the whole cohort and offers students the opportunity to recognise their own skills and/or weaknesses potentially leading to increased motivation and self-awareness.  Second, it is anticipated that students identified as being ‘at risk’ and selected for intervention will benefit not only in terms of skills and awareness, but also in terms of integration with the learning community, and the opportunity to build a rapport with their AA. It is hoped this will further foster feelings of belonging and being of ‘matter’ to us (SHU). |
| 1. **What are the outputs and deliverables of the project?**   What are the anticipated tangibles resulting from the project (e.g. report, presentation, publication, etc.)? | **Milestone 1** = intro lectures 19th September to introduce students to the activity  **Milestone 2** = delivery of MCQ in week 13  **Milestone 3** = telephone intervention in week 14, we will endeavour to contact the student twice via phone and then finally via email, following Linden’s (2022) approach.  **Milestone 4** = List of students contacted in Activity 2 shared with AA- cross checked for engagement.  **Milestone 5**= Data analysis and writing up preliminary findings in a report  **Milestone 6** = presentation of analysis at 2023 LTA conference  **Milestone 7** = publication of findings |
| 1. **Activities that will be carried out in your project**   What are the research / evaluation methods? What is the approach to data analysis? What activities will be run? What will different members of the project team do? | Anticipated total cohort- 300 XXXXX and 240 XXXXX = 540. All students will be asked to read and submit consent after reading participant information.  **Activity 1** **(A1)** – students to complete MCQ test embedded in a core module at L4 for students on undergraduate programmes in XXXX, and XXXX. The MCQ will be 10 questions long; 6 will be subject specific and aimed at ensuring foundational knowledge. 4 will be generic and focused on study skills. Students will have 24 hours to attempt the test as many times as they like. The activity is formative, but the ‘pass’ mark will be 80%.  Students who either did not make any attempt, or did not reach the pass threshold, will be identified as the ‘at risk’ group targeted for intervention.  **Activity 2 (A2)** – targeted [intervention = phone call](https://sheffieldhallam-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/dsji2_hallam_shu_ac_uk/ETa3hEfLhdRIvhkaSbru9d8BKy3GRdAw22icL5MkPEEyMA?e=czbHdm) from XXXX and XXX, signposting to their AA for support- approach, rationale and theoretical underpinnings explained in the link.  **Research/evaluation methods**  Activity **1** screen students into the intervention, Activity **2.** Activity **1** will generate data revealing student short comings in subject specific areas of knowledge and also generic learning/study skills.  Following participation in A**2** a list of students that have received the intervention will allow student progress to be evaluated in the following ways; tracking the success of **A2** cohort and comparing retention rates as described in section **3.** will evaluate any appreciable effect the intervention has had on the cohort; better ‘retention’.  Analysis will be comparative, primarily between **A1** pass v’s **A1** fail (therefore screened into **A2**), and this will take place after Sem 2 marks. It is assumed there will be enough students in the **A2** cohort to be able to generate meaningful quantitative data analysis and basic hypothesis testing. By comparing the whole cohort, we can decipher if **A2** students fared any better than **A1** pass students and **A2** unsuccessful contact students.  Similarly- the general pass rate in each specific module can be compared to previous year’s pass rate to assess the effectiveness of the **A1**  Project member activities/roles outlined below **in 9**. |
| 1. **Inputs that will be needed to deliver the project, including funds (Specify the funding amount requested, up to £1,800)**   The resources that go into the project that a team or organisation needs to be able to carry out its activities and deliver the outcomes. How many hours of student researcher time is needed? Are gift vouchers needed? Are there conference or travel costs? Discuss specification requirement for the student researchers, to support their recruitment. | A student researcher would be needed for at least 80 hours to a maximum cost of £1200  The following is a non-exhaustive list of inputs required from student researcher who should have experience in use of SPSS and research methods  1. To downloaded onto an excel file data from the A1 activity- pass and fail students  2. Collate the contact details of those students identified as A1 fails  3. Prepare data base for Researchers JI and VT – **A2**  4. Export excel into SPSS and perform data cleaning  5. Descriptive analysis and preliminary findings written up into report structure.  6. Identify and recruit participants for Post Analysis focus group.  Love to Shop £10 vouchers needed to run post analysis focus group **(PA1).** It is anticipated we would want 20 vouchers, ten from each subject group a total of £200  Transcription fees for two focus groups estimated at £400 maximum. |
| 1. **Collaboration and engagement**   How will collaboration with other staff in the university be ensured? What approach to engagement from students in the project either as participants or as project team members are you taking? | The team will seek to collaborate with Hallam Help to obtain learner analytics data identifying ‘at risk’ students at the end of semester one.  We will be asking the MLs to allow the researchers (XXX and XXX) to attend the first introductory lecture to briefly outline to the students the purpose and importance of the project.  As explained above- we hope to employ a Masters level.  It is hoped that this project will be nested in the wider university approach to understanding student retention under work being carried out in relation to academic advising, led primarily, by XXXX’s team. Additionally, post analysis **(PA1)**, the research team will seek to organise a focus group with the participants from the **A2** cohort, to assess where the students feels this has had an impact. The focus group will give valuable feedback to the researchers and help shape future work (**possible PA2&3**). |
| 1. **Project Team**   Who is involved in the project? What will be their roles in the project? How will project team be managed? | Principal investigator- XXXXX, XXXXX plus one research assistant (RA) provided by XXXX’s team. The project will primarily be managed digitally using a variety of sharing packages- e.g OneDrive for non-sensitive information etc.  Some specific tasks are outlined below   1. XXXX, XXXX will oversee the work carried out by the RA 2. XXX and XXX deliver A2 3. XXX and XXX to communicate with MLs and AAs. 4. XXX and XXX to oversee RA’s work 5. XXX and XXX to oversee analysis, report writing 6. RA to contact and organise focus group **A2** cohort (**PA1**). 7. XXX and XXX run **PA1** |

## **Appendix 1 – further guidance for Project Type 1, Teaching, Learning & Student Experience Enhancement Project (Enhancement Project - EP)**

### **Types of application which may be considered**

In SSA, for 2022-23, we would particularly welcome projects that relate to the following themes:

* Learning community
* Student engagement
* Innovative assessments
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, in particular the Degree Awarding Gap
* Transition, Retention and Progression

Here is a broad set of examples of types projects to help you think about what you may do:

* Systematic investigation of issues, collecting data or reviewing literature
* Exploration of integration of research and teaching practice
* Adoption and evaluation of good practice from other areas and implementing in own module, course or subject area
* Metrics related (e.g. NSS, MEQ, Graduate Outcomes, etc.)
* Development and evaluation of innovative online or blended (online + face to face delivery) learning materials
* Development and evaluation of case studies for a module
* Adoption and evaluation of good practice from other areas and implementing in own module, course or subject area
* Exploration of current educational policy and its impact on practice within discipline/subject
* Creation of materials to support and evaluate learning (e.g. making videos for classroom use, creating a bank of recorded interviews or extracts for teaching and learning use)
* Targeted plans that address aspects of students as partners (e.g. student voice, co-creation, etc.)
* Funding for teaching team’s development activities with evaluation

If you wish to have more information or to discuss your bid further, please contact Emma Heron ([e.j.heron@shu.ac.uk](mailto:e.j.heron@shu.ac.uk)).

Consider linking your proposal to the Teaching and Learning (T&L) pillar of the [Academic Career Framework](https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/acf/).

Your proposal should be clear and well considered. It should be practical, focusing upon an output that informs the work of others, directly influencing approaches and practices that impact upon students and their learning.

### **Funding**

The awarded funding may be spent on any of the following below.

**Important: A minimum of 35% of funding must be used to cover the work of a student researcher (Min. 70 hrs).**

The amount of funding awarded will normally be **up to £1,800**. Funding over this amount will be awarded only exceptionally, to enhancement projects that address more than one major objective, aligned with SHU strategy.

**You must include a detailed estimated breakdown of how you intend to spend the funding within your application**.

If successful, it is vital that that you follow the correct university procedures which can be found via the links below:

[Travel (associated with conducting research or Conference attendance)](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/3003/FinanceSystemSupport/SitePages/go2book.aspx)

[Paying students, a gift voucher/book token to attend a Focus Group](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/3003/Purchasing/SitePages/Home.aspx)

[Appointing a student casual worker (e.g. Student Researcher)](https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/3005/astaff/casuals/SitePages/Casual-Worker-Gateway.aspx)

Refreshments for Student Focus Groups (contact Lisa Burbeary ([l.burbeary@shu.ac.uk](mailto:l.burbeary@shu.ac.uk)))

Please note that **Conferences should be paid for via your departmental staff development budget**.

**Recruiting students**  
It is expected that the Student Experience, Teaching and Learning (SETL) team will recruit a pool of student researchers that will then be matched to your project proposal. Previous experience shows that in the vast majority of cases it is not necessary to have a student from a specific SHU area in place in order to support an enhancement project. If you think that you need student researchers with particular expertise / specialisms, please make sure to state this in area 7 of the application table. For further information, please contact Jill Lebihan ([J.Lebihan@shu.ac.uk](mailto:J.Lebihan@shu.ac.uk)).

**IT Equipment**Although the funding cannot be used to purchase specialist IT equipment directly, we can support you in obtaining this from Digital Technology Services (DTS) on a long term loan basis (typically 12-18 months) for the duration of the programme and any subsequent consolidation/dissemination. Should the enhancement project prove successful, with a clear case for continuation, the loan can be made indefinite and additional equipment supplied for wider use, if appropriate.

**Deliverables**

At the end of the enhancement project you (or a member of your project team) will be expected to present your findings at the annual SHU T&L Conference/Festival or at a College LTA event in 2023.

It is expected that you will participate in a form of formal evaluation of the impact of your project, run by the Student Engagement, Evaluation and Research (STEER) team. This may take the form of a focus group for example. Further information is available from Liz Austen ([L.Austen@shu.ac.uk](mailto:L.Austen@shu.ac.uk)) and her team. Also check: <https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/steer/evaluation>.

Four formal Review Points will be set during the running of the project and progress will be tracked using this template:



At the end of the project you will also be asked to provide a summary of the enhancement project detailing the outcomes and outputs using this template:



### **Academic Work Plan (AWP) hours**

No AWP hours will be awarded to support the delivery of this project. It is expected that colleagues will use their RSA allocation to work on this project.

### **Criteria for award**

Applications will be considered by a review panel. This review panel will look for:

* Rationale identifying clear need for the enhancement project to take place
* Well considered and clearly structured aim and objectives
* A clear set of outcomes
* Activities and Methodology, including a proposed way to evaluate the impact / success of the enhancement project
* Focus upon informing and influencing the work of others through sharing the enhancement project outcomes

### **Timings**

* Applications submitted by **Monday, 18th July 2022** (late applications will not be considered)
* Confirmation of review outcomes by **Friday, 12th August 2022**
* Funds available to successful applicants to be spent between **01st September 2022 – 31st July 2023**

## **Appendix 2 – further guidance for Project Type 2, Teaching, Learning & Student Experience Quick Impact Project (Quick Impact Project - QIP)**

### **Types of application which may be considered**

In SSA, for 2022-23, we would particularly welcome projects that relate to the following themes:

* Learning community
* Student engagement
* Innovative assessments
* Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, in particular the Degree Awarding Gap
* Transition, Retention and Progression

Examples of intervention projects could include:

**Interventions** addressing:

* Learning community - so that students know they are part of a community of staff and students
* Sense of engagement - so that students want to engage on campus with curricula and extracurricular activity
* Assessment & feedback - so that students experience innovation in how they are assessed
* Equality, Diversity & Inclusion - so that our diverse student body see themselves reflected in the curriculum and our curriculum is experienced as inclusive and accessible
* Transition, retention and progression – so that students are empowered to progress through their university career

If you wish to have more information or to discuss your bid further, please contact Emma Heron ([e.j.heron@shu.ac.uk](mailto:e.j.heron@shu.ac.uk)).

Your proposal should be clear and well considered. It should be practical, focusing upon an **output that delivers immediate results**, directly influencing approaches and practices that impact upon student experience.

### **Funding**

The awarded funding may be spent on:

**Important: All of the funding must be used to cover the work of one or more student leads (Suggested 70 hrs of work / student lead).**

The amount of funding awarded will normally be **up to £1,800**. Funding over this amount will be awarded only exceptionally, to enhancement projects that address more than one major student experience related objective, aligned with SHU strategy.

**You must include a detailed estimated breakdown of how you intend to spend the funding within your application**.

If successful, it is vital that that you follow the correct university procedures which can be found via the links below:

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