Meeting of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee
to be held from 2pm on Wednesday 21 November 2012
in the Lorimer Room, Old College

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2. Matters arising
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3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS
   3.1 Convenor’s Update
4. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND ENHANCEMENTS
   4.1 Enhancing Student Support Project
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   5.2 Updates from Deans of Learning and Teaching (or equivalent)
   5.3 Update from EUSA
   5.4 Equality Act: Adjustments
6. EXTERNAL HORIZON SCANNING
   6.1 Enhancement Themes
   6.2 External Developments
   6.3 Scottish Funding Council Outcome Agreement
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8. Date of Next Meeting

N Kett
November 2012
Minutes of the Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
held at 2pm on Wednesday 26 September 2012
in Room 1.07, Main Library

Present:
Dr Nicholas Adams Senior Lecturer, School of Divinity (Co-opted Member)
Mr Mateusz Adamski EUSA
Professor Jeremy Bradshaw Dean of Postgraduate Taught and International, CMVM
Mr Andrew Burnie EUSA VPAA
Dr Sarah Cooper Undergraduate Director, Business School, CHSS
Ms Shelagh Green Director, Careers Service (Co-opted Member)
Ms Karen Harris Academic Policy Manager, Academic Services(for Mrs Irene Bruce)
Ms Erin Jackson Distance Learning Manager, School of Law (Co-opted Member)
Ms Nichola Kett (Secretary) Academic Policy Officer, Academic Services
Dr Tina Harrison (Vice Convenor) Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Mr John Lowrey Dean of Undergraduate Studies, CHSS
Dr Velda McCune Deputy Director, Institute for Academic Development (Director’s Nominee, ex officio)
Dr Antony Maciocia Senior Lecturer, School of Mathematics (Co-opted Member)
Professor Ian Pirie Assistant Principal Learning Developments (ex officio)
Professor Colin Pulham Teaching Organisation Director, School of Chemistry, CSE
Professor Graeme Reid Dean of Learning and Teaching, CSE
Dr Sue Rigby (Convenor) Vice Principal Learning and Teaching
Professor Neil Turner Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning, CMVM
Dr Caroline Watt Senior Lecturer, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences (Co-opted Member)

In Attendance:
Ms Deborah Cook Strategic Planner, Governance and Strategic Planning (item 3.2)
Mr Andrew Quickfall Strategic Planner, Governance and Strategic Planning (item 3.2)
Dr Jon Turner Director, Institute for Academic Development
Ms Sheila Williams Director, Student Disability Service (item 5.2)

Apologies:
Mrs Irene Bruce Head of Academic Services (University Secretary’s Nominee)

1. Minutes of the previous meeting
The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2012 were approved.

2. Matters arising

2.1 ELIR Action Plan
LTC formally noted the content of the ELIR Action Plan and the importance that the actions are addressed.

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Remit and Membership 2012/13
The remit and updated membership for 2012/13 was noted.

The Convenor formally welcomed new members to the Committee and Dr Harrison to her role as Vice-Convenor. The Convenor sought agreement from members on the approach that would be taken to managing committee business. The focus of the meetings will remain strategic and groups of members will take forward supporting activities outwith the
meetings and return for ratification of the outputs. Members agreed to this approach and will advise the Secretary of their areas of interest.

3.2 National Student Survey and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey

Deborah Cook and Andrew Quickfall from Governance and Strategic Planning provided the Committee with a brief presentation outlining the headline results from the National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and giving information on how to access the results.

In terms of results, generally overall satisfaction is good and our areas of strength are teaching on the course and learning resources. However, in terms of performance within the Russell Group of universities, the University tends to perform lower, especially within assessment and feedback. Further analysis shows that there are areas of good practice in assessment and feedback within the University and these will be explored with a view to sharing good practice where possible.

Members noted that the analysis of the information from the survey results required careful consideration, interpretation and communication. This process had already begun within Colleges.

3.3 Convenor’s Update

- Overview for Learning and Teaching Committee

The Convenor outlined the paper which detailed the context within which the Committee will have to make strategic decisions over the next 12 months. It was noted that there are a number of significant external drivers coming from statutory bodies that will shape the work of the Committee. Members were advised that a document library was being created on the Committee’s wiki site which would house all relevant documentation and that members would be made aware of the posting of important documents. The wiki site may also be used as a repository for working documents as required.

Enhanced Student Support

It was noted that the enhanced student support work, including the work to strengthen central support student, would formally report to the Committee.

Employability

The Convenor advised that the Employability Strategy Group would continue to report to the Committee.

Flexible Pathways

Members noted that this strand of activity was complex, with input required from many areas including Student Recruitment and Admissions. Members advised that there were already flexible pathway activities taking place and suggested that an audit on current practice should inform future developments. It was recognised that the assessment regulations support flexible pathways but that more could be done to facilitate the processes. The recent and anticipated changes in student demand and the potential impact on flexible pathways was noted.

**Action:** For a working group of members to produce a brief and report back to a future meeting of the committee. The brief should consider: what is happening externally; current University activity; potential challenges; a timeline for implementation; and consideration of the overlap with other committee’s work. Student Recruitment and Admissions should be represented on the group and the University Secretary should also be involved as appropriate.
**Work on National Student Survey (NSS) Returns and Feedback**
The Convenor outlined proposals that had been made to Court in relation to action to be taken to improve the assessment and feedback scores received in the NSS. The main message was that the University needs to take time to carefully consider the problem and to identify and implement solutions. In the meantime, obvious local solutions will continue to be implemented.

Mr Burnie advised that EUSA were taking forward an initiative with their student representatives to identify ‘on the ground’ issues with feedback provided to students. Members recognised the need for issues to be heard but made a plea to EUSA to deal with matters sensitively and to work within the current structures to progress such matters.

**Action:** Mr Burnie and the Convenor to meet to discuss the matter further.

**Action:** A working group of members should be established to produce a template for the school Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies. The group should report back to the November meeting of the Committee and thereafter Colleges would have devolved responsibility to ensure that schools develop their strategies within the academic year.

Members noted the importance of an assessment and feedback communications strategy which should involve all staff and of managing expectations in relation to assessment and feedback.

**Continuing Professional Development for Learning and Teaching**
The Convenor advised that the Committee would be asked to make decisions on the continuing professional development requirements of those staff who teach students.

**Action:** The Committee requested that the Institute for Academic Development develop a brief on the options for continuing professional development requirements for those staff who teach students which should include resource implications. This will be considered at the November or January meeting of the Committee.

**Student Engagement**
It was concluded that this strand of activity was substantial and multifaceted, covering how students engage formally and informally both inside and outside the curriculum. The Convenor advised that the Committee would be asked to consider how the University could support and resource this. It was noted that the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice on Student Engagement would serve as a reference document for this activity, however, it is anticipated that the University would have more aspiration visions on student engagement. It was agreed that no group be set up to work on this activity at this stage.

**Data Provision**
It was confirmed that the Curriculum and Student Progression Committee is responsible for monitoring the provision of data, however, members’ attention was drawn to the growing requirements for the provision of externally published data. As a result of this, the University has available to it an extremely large set of management information and the need to use this information in a structured and considered way is evident. Members noted the importance of explaining to staff what data is being used for and why, and the opportunities for actively engaging with the data to develop our own messages and key performance indicators.

**Resits**
The Convenor advised members that there is an internal aspiration to reduce the number of resits. In terms of operation detail, it was not proposed to remove the facility for
students to remedy failure over the summer vacation, but instead to move away from examinations as a method of resit. Educationally, students should be given an opportunity to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of a course, which needn’t be assessed in the same way as the first attempt. For example, where students fail practical assessments and they do not have the opportunity to repeat that form of assessment, they are assessed using a different method.

**Action:** That a working group of members be established to explore the dimensions of this strand. Matters to be considered include: flexibility of assessment; resits as pass/fail; the time needed to advise on the benefits of reducing resits; the needs of accrediting bodies; the feasibility of piloting the approach in this academic year with a small cohort of students; the likelihood of strategic failure tactics in exam-averse students; and the University’s regulatory framework. The group should include EUSA Advice Place staff. The group will report to CSPC for consideration of the information, who would then make final recommendations to the Committee by the end of the academic year.

4. **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND ENHANCEMENTS**

4.1 **Enhancing Student Support Project**

Professor Pirie confirmed that the identified project deliverables for Phase 1 had been met within the tight timeframe available, acknowledging the effort and excellent work that had been carried out by colleagues across the University to implement the Personal Tutor system. The issues experienced with EUCLID during fresher’s week were discussed and it was confirmed that these were not due to the Personal Tutor IT tools. The Committee noted the severe impact that the issues experienced with EUCLID caused and Professor Pirie confirmed that a review into the matter would take place.

Professor Pirie outlined the Phase 2 project priorities: IT Tools development and enhanced support for taught postgraduate, distance learning and international students.

Members provided useful feedback on the careful consideration of timescales and contingency planning. Mr Burnie reported that the Personal Tutor system had generally been well received by students.

5. **LEARNING AND TEACHING FRAMEWORK**

5.1 **Updates from Deans of Learning and Teaching (or equivalent)**

**College of Science and Engineering**
Professor Reid confirmed that the main priorities are to review the nature and volume of assessment in the College. The College will also focus on bedding in aspects of the Enhancing Student Support project. The importance of allowing academic staff a reprieve from initiatives was noted.

**College of Humanities and Social Science**
Mr Lowrey advised that the focus for the College in the forthcoming academic year will be on consolidation of activities, with the priority on assessment. However, there will be some new activity in relations to study abroad, placements and flexible pathways (breadth of what is offered). The implementation of the Personal Tutor system will be progressed and monitored.

**College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine**
Professor Turner advised that the implementation of the Personal Tutoring system had gone well and that the focus for future developments would be assessment and feedback...
which will involve working with the General Medical Council. In relation to adjustments for disabled students, the College is developing a robust way of working with students to implement these. The College is also considering new ways of teaching online taught postgraduate students, with thought being given to future developments.

- **Future Reporting Structure**
  The Convenor highlighted the importance of effective articulation between University and college level learning and teaching matters and the significance of the Deans of Learning and Teaching (or equivalent) as an identified pathway in devolving Committee matters. It was recognised that the college structures are more rapid in progressing and implementing learning and teaching matters and therefore the reporting structure should focus on ensuring avoiding duplication and also identifying where common practice could be beneficial. Good practice and forward looking matters were identified as possible matters for colleges to report to the Committee.

In terms of EUSA involvement, Mr Burnie confirmed that there is well structured interaction at both school and college level.

**Action:** Secretary to circulate Mr Burnie’s manifesto to members and to ask Mr Burnie for matters to report in advance of each meeting.

### 5.2 Equality Act: Important Adjustments for the December Diet

Ms Williams outlined a paper which provided the Committee with statistical data on the volume of recommended adjustments for coursework and examinations, as was requested at the previous meeting of the Committee. The importance of focussing on meeting legislative and strategic priorities was identified as a driver for positive change.

Dr Harrison confirmed that she is convening the Accessible Learning Implementation Group and advised that the Group is working to establish the University’s requirements for learning and teaching in terms of how adjustments are addressed and delivered as part of the mainstream provision.

It was anticipated that the most common requested adjustments could be implemented within mainstream provision and anticipated that this would enhance the experience for all students as a result, particularly international students.

Members discussed the adjustment ‘give permission to record lectures’, and it was confirmed that this is already routinely taking place within two schools in the College of Science and Engineering, with a formal process for gaining permission fully implemented.

The Committee were supportive of the move to mainstream adjustments. In terms of the statistics provided, the Committee noted that the numbers of disabled students and adjustments was steadily increasing.

**Action:** The Committee requested that Ms Williams advise on what the reduction in the number of Learning Profiles issued would be should the most common three adjustments requested be mainstreamed.

Ms Williams confirmed that the decision had been made to cease the use of coursework stickers as they are deemed to cause confusion, with a view to this being implemented from next academic year. It was noted that this is subject to impact assessment.
**Action:** The Committee requested that the Accessible Learning Implementation Group consider the paper and return with proposals on how to reduce the overall number of adjustments that need to be implemented.

There was some discussion around the adjustment of ‘providing either outline OR PowerPoint presentation for lecture/seminar at least 24 hours in advance’ as it was felt that within some programmes this may be part of the required learning experience for students. Ms Williams confirmed that there is a mechanism within the system for protection of academic standards in terms of required competencies.

**Action:** Members requested that this matter be considered by the Accessible Learning Implementation Group.

5.3 Learning from Internal Review 2011/12

Dr Harrison talked to the paper and advised members that items had been referred to the relevant committee convenor for action. Members were advised that the Quality Assurance Committee would be looking to receive a report later in the year on matters remitted to the Committee. The importance of ensuring that the identified areas for further development were progressed was noted.

**Action:** The Convenor and Secretary to review the document, bring items into congruence with the identified Committee priorities and identify any gaps.

6. EXTERNAL HORIZON SCANNING

6.1 External Developments
- **Universities Scotland: Curriculum for Excellence paper**
  The Convenor confirmed that this document will form the basis for reflection when the Committee begins to engage with the matter.

7. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

7.1 Employability Strategy Group
- **Annual Report 2011/12**
  The Committee received the report and were pleased to note the how active the Group had been.

  - **Changes in Membership (Approved by Chair’s Action)**
    The Committee noted that the addition of the College Deans of Students to the membership had been approved by Chair’s Action.

8. Any Other Business

None.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 21 November 2012 in the Lorimer Room, Old College.

Academic Services
1 October 2012
The University of Edinburgh
Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee
21 November 2012

Enhancing Student Support Project: Update

Brief description of the paper, including a statement of relevance to the University's strategic plans and priorities
The paper presents an update on the Enhancing Student Support project.

The paper relates to the University's Strategic Goal of 'Excellence in Education' and the Strategic Theme of 'Outstanding Student Experience'.

Action requested
The Committee is asked to note the contents of the paper.

Resource implications
Does the paper have resource implications? Yes (being managed through the Project).

Risk Assessment
Does the paper include a risk analysis? No.

Equality and Diversity
Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? No.

Originator of the paper
Professor Ian Pirie, Assistant Principal Learning Developments.

Freedom of information
Can this paper be included in open business? Yes (apart from appendices).

Keywords
Enhancing Student Support, ESS, student support, Personal Tutors, IT Tools.
Enhancing Student Support (ESS)

Summary report on the progress of Phase Two

The second phase of the Enhancing Student Support (ESS) project has now significantly expanded to include the strands of work identified from the review of centrally provided student services as indicated in the organisational and governance diagram attached. The working groups are now all established and several new staff have been appointed to lead and/or support the developments in these key strands.

Online Resources

Consistently highlighted in the various working groups across the project is the desire to develop online resources to address a number of issues and provide solutions to complement and enhance existing approaches. Key in this development is to ensure an integrated and coherent approach to the development of these; the need for a single point of access to key communications and resources is consistently highlighted by our students. A work package is now being prepared to provide the time and resources to conceptually develop the type of ‘portal’ / ‘student dashboard’ that would be ideally required prior to further major developments in this area.

Personal Tutors

The development of Personal Tutors (PTs) in phase two will now focus on the roll-out to taught post-graduate students and the needs of identified student groups (e.g. studying online, working off-campus on placement, while on exchange, study-abroad, etc.) and international students. Working groups have been established for each of the key work-strands to enable more colleagues with particular expertise and experience to contribute to these developments. In addition to the work strands that will meet throughout the year is a number of very ‘short-life’ focus groups who will meet to generate and capture the issues that need to be considered around the various topics/categories.

The Student Support Implementation Group (SSIG) has already discussed and is recommending that for small post-graduate programmes the Programme Director would also undertake the role of Personal Tutor. This has now been presented to and discussed with the TPG Programme Directors network who are directly involved in the development of PTs for TPG and will assist in identifying and working through any issues identified with this proposed approach.

A key strand of work throughout phase two is the development of the Personal Tutor role itself. A number of colleagues new to the project are keen to explore how PTs can ensure that all students maximise their potential and time at the University through raising aspiration and ambition and that the PT role is not always focused on addressing issues and problems. Central to this work strand is to explore the potential of the Personal Tutor system to embed and support the development of the types of academic, professional and personal skills, attributes and characteristics that will give our graduates the edge in gaining employment and in developing their
careers. ‘The Edinburgh Edge’ work strand of the ESS project will directly inform and support the development of this aspect of the Personal Tutor role

**IT Tools**

Phase one of the IT Tools development is now formally drawing to a close and all of the functions for this stage are now live. It has been agreed that further small-scale developments will continue throughout the year and where this does not represent a major change to the usability of the software, these new features will be introduced and ‘go live’ incrementally. The Senior Tutors Network are now fully involved in this process and have been identifying the priority order for these on-going small-scale enhancements.

Focus groups are also now working on identifying any specific functions and/or developments needed in the software to support taught post-graduate students and a separate work-package is being planned for the development of software and online resources to facilitate and support the management and supervision of PhD students.

A ‘synectics’ style structured brain-storming event was held with our students on the 26th October in the Playfair Library and a second event is being planned with EUSA for the early part of 2013. This was deemed highly successful by those students who attended and a number of innovative ideas were developed by them around the headline topic of ‘Online Networks and Digital Toolkits’. In a number of cases they also confirmed our own thinking regarding the types of resources our students would find helpful to them. Although successful, not all of the pre-registered students attended on the day and the challenge remains of ensuring that we achieve high numbers of student participants to maximise the outputs and impact of this type of event. The students’ ideas and priorities will now inform the various discussions in the task groups on the development of online resources.

**Briefing, Training and Resources**

A comprehensive plan has been developed by IAD for phase two in support of staff as the Personal Tutor system develops, and the Senior Tutors Network and Student Support Teams Network have been central to informing the types of support and resources that should be provided and developed. The discussions around key issues such as the recording, maintenance and access to confidential data has highlighted the need for clear protocols and guidance that are consistent across the University and also the need to provide development opportunities and support to staff in handling confidential and/or difficult conversations with their tutees. The development of resources throughout phase two will continue to be both pro-active and responsive to specific needs as they are identified.

**Communications**

The project communications wiki continues to be an important and current resource for colleagues ensuring regular updates on ESS developments. During phase two the next development of work will begin to focus on promoting key messages to our
academic communities (students and staff) on the intended and actual benefits of the changes that are being introduced. This will also accelerate as soon as we are in a position to capture evidence of progress against the key performance indicators against which ESS is being measured. The first major opportunity for this will be in response to the results of our new internal online survey of our undergraduate students that will be conducted in the New Year. The outputs of the end of academic year evaluation for each School should also provide key indicators of progress and an opportunity to promote positive results and messages back to our students.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit

A template has been created to develop a more comprehensive report on the implementation of the phase one of ESS and will take the form of a self-critical analysis with evidenced success and ‘lessons to be learned’ for each of the key strands of work. This will inform subsequent approaches and developments throughout the current and future phases of the project.

As a major strategic initiative for the University ESS is also subject to internal audit and this is currently being conducted. The outcome of this process will also assist and inform future approaches to the management of the ESS project.

The following provides links to some of the above;
ESS Home: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/PESS/Home
Senior Tutor Network: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/PESS/Senior+Tutor+Network
Communications: https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/PESS/Communication
IT Tools: http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/staff/User_Guides/Personal_Tutors/
IAD Staff Resources: http://tinyurl.com/cywrobu

Professor Ian Pirie
Assistant Principal, Learning Developments
14 November 2012

Appendix 1 – Enhancing Student Support Governance Structure
Appendix 2 – Student Support Implementation Group Work Packages
Appendix 3 – Student Support Steering Group Task Groups (to follow)
Learning Teaching and Enhancement Strategies

Brief description of the paper, including a statement of relevance to the University's strategic plans and priorities

This paper presents a number of recommendations in relation to the School, College and, University Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies.

The paper relates to the University's Strategic Goal of ‘Excellence in Education’.

Action requested

The Committee are asked to discuss and agree the recommendations relating to School, College, and University Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies (detailed below).

Resource implications

Yes. Directly: staff time for updating documents.

Risk Assessment

No.

Equality and Diversity

No.

Originator of the paper

Professor Ian Pirie, Assistant Principal Learning Developments

Freedom of information

Yes.

Keywords

Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy.
**School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies**

The following recommendation was made in the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELIR Recommendation</th>
<th>Actions 2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>117: There would be considerable benefit in the University clarifying the status and function of school-level strategies within the process of managing enhancement.</td>
<td>LTC to consider status of School-level strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the last Learning and Teaching Committee on 26 September 2012, the following action was agreed:

A working group of members should be established to produce a template for the school Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies. The group should report back to the November meeting of the Committee and thereafter Colleges would have devolved responsibility to ensure that schools develop their strategies within the academic year.

The working group have discussed and identified key issues and recommended an approach for developing the guidance and template for School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies. The Committee are asked to **discuss and agree** the approach.

**College Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies**

The following recommendation was made in the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELIR Recommendation</th>
<th>Actions 2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>116: College Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies: The college strategies were developed at different times and, consequently, each has a different review cycle. There is also a variation in the priorities identified in each of the college strategies which may partly be indicative of local requirements, but also reflects the difference in the review cycles. It is likely that harmonisation of the review cycles would assist with the implementation of enhancement priorities across the University.</td>
<td>Harmonise the review cycles. Agenda item for approval at LTC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Committee are asked to **agree** an approach for reviewing the College strategies.

**University Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy**

The following recommendation was made in the Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR) report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELIR Recommendation</th>
<th>Actions 2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38: The University Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy does not refer explicitly to research-teaching linkages</td>
<td>Modify the Strategy to make reference to RTL. Agenda item for LTC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Committee are asked to **discuss** the current strategy and **agree** an approach for updating the document.
Schools Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies (L&TESs) Template

Action from Learning and Teaching Committee (L&TC):

‘A working group of members should be established to produce a template for the School Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies. The group should report back to the November meeting of the Committee and thereafter Colleges would have devolved responsibility to ensure that Schools develop their strategies within the academic year’.

Overview

The short-life workgroup has met twice to date and has also collaborated online to develop the recommendations for L&TC. The following topics were explored and will inform the approach and development of the template subject to approval by L&TC.

What is the purpose of this document: ‘L&T Enhancement Strategies Template’?

To enable Schools to explicitly articulate their strategies for the continual enhancement of learning and teaching with the aim of improving upon the overall academic experience of their students.

It should demonstrate the following characteristics:

- how learning and teaching is developed across all programmes and courses;
- how the student learning experience is reviewed and enhanced;
- how progress and impact is measured;
- who is responsible for developing and implementing the objective(s);
- how it aligns to the University and College Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies;
- how it will assist the University achieve its strategic goals; and
- it should be clearly written and accessible to all students and staff.

What are we aiming to achieve?

To produce a template with supporting guidance that will assist Schools to develop and successfully implement strategies for the continual enhancement of learning and teaching.

Who is it written for?

Staff in different categories, but primarily directors of teaching and other managers of learning and teaching, course organisers, all teaching staff and students.

Where should it be held / promoted?

The School L&TESs should be contained within, or linked to, programme handbooks and other relevant online resources. It should be easy to access and each School L&TES should be shared and accessible to all other Schools and Departments.
What evidence and/or information should the School draw upon to inform the development of their LTES?

A range of internal and external reference points should be used to inform the development of School strategies.

As an example:
- University and College strategies
- ELIR Reports
- Local evidence and experience
- Student feedback via staff student liaison committees (SSLC), focus groups, National Student Survey (NSS) and other surveys
- Sector-wide enhancement resources - [http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/sheec](http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/sheec)
- Outcomes from programme reviews - both internal and accreditation PSRB reviews
- Subject benchmarking across the sector

What should be captured and made explicit in the strategy?

Each School should identify their strategic priorities, goals and aims as appropriate to the current context and needs of their subject(s) along with the strategies and actions required to achieve specific objectives.

How should the Schools’ strategies demonstrate their alignment to the University and College strategic priorities for enhancing learning and teaching?

In developing the L&TES template for Schools it is recognised that the University and Colleges currently have existing L&T strategies.

It is recommended therefore that the University’s Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy is now reviewed and developed to reflect the priorities and goals in the University’s strategic plan 2012–2016. Colleges should then ensure alignment of their strategies with this and Schools should be enabled to decide on the relative ordering or significance of their objectives and priorities, based on the current needs and context of each School.

The alignment of School and College strategies to the University’s strategic goals should be directly referenced within the L&TES template.

Over what cycle should the Schools strategies be reviewed and implemented?

A three-year cycle of review is recommended.
To support this it is proposed to create a two-part template; Part 1 to contain the strategy, goals and aims and Part 2 the specific objectives, actions, responsibilities and measurables.

Part 2 would be reviewed and updated annually. This would enable objectives to be identified that may require three (or more) years to achieve along with smaller scale objectives which, once achieved, would be replaced with new objectives annually.
The development of all School strategies would need to be synchronised and would be reviewed at the same time in the three yearly cycle. A three yearly review of School strategies will enable us to inform the development of the next University strategic plan which operates on a four yearly cycle, with consultation and planning occurring in the preceding year.

In subsequent years what evidence should be provided to indicate that progress is being made?

Each School strategy should clearly identify the intended enhancements, their perceived benefits and how these will be measured.

It is expected that the following would be routinely used to inform the impact of each School’s L&TES;

- Course feedback and student-staff meetings
- Programme and course performance and progression data
- NSS, PTES, PRES, ISB data and the new cross-University internal survey
- External examiner reports
- Course level surveys
- Student focus groups

QUALITY ASSURANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Who should be responsible/accountable for the development and implementation of the School strategies?

The Head of School should have responsibility for the successful development and implementation for the Schools L&TES. The L&TESs should address all aspects of the Schools academic portfolio and be a whole School strategy. It is expected that the Directors of Teaching (UG/PG) and Senior Tutors (and/or their equivalents), would be involved and responsible to the Head of School for developing, implementing and evaluating the impact of each School's L&TES.

Where should Schools submit/present their strategies for discussion, oversight and approval?

The detail of the L&TESs development process would be a matter for each School but should involve consultation and discussion with staff and students prior to approval within the relevant School committee. Subsequently the L&TESs should be submitted for approval to the relevant College L&T committee(s) and Deans.

How should the School enhancement strategies be quality assured?

The Schools L&TESs should be incorporated and monitored through the annual School QA report.
How do we ensure central oversight?

The annual review of the L&TESs should be submitted to the relevant College committee with the subsequent collation, analysis and summary overview being submitted to Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee.

Outcomes stemming from the summary overview may subsequently require actions via the Senatus’ Curriculum and Student Progression Committee and/or Quality Assurance Committee.

Annual review of the L&TESs

This should follow the existing timeline for the annual quality assurance report but wherever possible Schools should implement any actions and changes agreed locally as part of the annual review of their L&TESs for the forthcoming academic cycle, to avoid any time lag.

Additional considerations

The L&TESs template should follow as closely as is possible the terminology and approach of the University’s new strategic plan 2012-16 to enable ease of referencing and alignment.

The template should be consistent across all Schools and will need to be designed to accommodate any differences in both structure and terminology between the Colleges and Schools.

The incorporation of a Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategies document for each School needs to align carefully with existing processes and should not duplicate effort or resource.

The L&TESs for each School should encompass the whole academic portfolio for each School and should demonstrate intended developments and enhancements for PhD supervision and research masters, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes.

In future years the L&TESs and their associated analysis and impact measures should form part of TPRs and PPRs.

Schools should be encouraged to use their L&TESs as a dynamic and ‘live’ document enabling innovative and pro-active approaches to enhancement, in addition to responding to identified issues/topics whether internal or external. Importantly, it should be focused, brief and succinct with the University’s strategies contextualised to the aims of the subject(s) and discipline(s) of the School.

Template Design and Rollout

It is suggested that in the first instance the L&TESs template is piloted by one School to enable subsequent refinement and the development of supporting guidance prior to rolling out across all Schools.
The template should itself be reviewed at the end of the first year of introduction.

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The University of Edinburgh
College of Humanities and Social Science
Learning and Teaching Strategy, 2010

Overarching aims
To ensure that all our lifelong learning, undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students:

• receive the highest quality learning experience
• are enabled to develop fully as partners in their learning and as graduates for the 21st century
• have their student experience enriched by participating in a scholarly community characterised by world-leading research and by opportunities to study across an extensive range of disciplines

Strategic Priorities
Graduates for the 21st century, the current Quality Assurance Agency Enhancement Theme focuses on research and enquiry skills, communicating well, being personally and intellectually autonomous and students developing as effective individuals.

The following Strategic Priorities create a framework to ensure the highest quality learning experience for all our undergraduate and postgraduate students to enable these skills to develop:

1. Students as independent learners
Students will develop the ability to be personally and intellectually autonomous throughout their university education and beyond into their careers.

2. Supportive student environment
Students will have access to high quality academic and pastoral support that will enable them to feel supported and confident both personally and academically.

3. Research and enquiry
Students will benefit from the world-class research-led teaching environment which will enable them to develop a wide range of valuable skills (eg creative, imaginative, critical, analytic, evidence-based).

4. Communication skills
Students will develop their communication skills in a wide range of ways that will enhance their lives both within and beyond their University career.

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1 This Strategy replaces the Learning & Teaching Strategy implemented in 2007 and follows extensive consultation as part of a 3-year strategy review
5. **Assessment and feedback**
Students will have the opportunity to have their learning assessed in a range of ways and to receive feedback that will help them to continually improve.

6. **Collaborative approaches to learning**
Students will have opportunities to enhance their academic/professional development through learning in collaboration both with peers and with experts.

7. **Students as partners**
Students will be continually encouraged to engage in dialogue with staff about the quality of their learning experience.

8. **Staff development**
Staff will have access to appropriate support and development opportunities in order to maintain and enhance their ability to contribute to a high calibre student learning experience.

These strategic priorities are elaborated on further in Appendix 1, which provides examples of practical actions that Schools may decide to undertake in implementing the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Many of these examples are drawn from good-practice initiatives that are already underway in some Schools. The examples are intended to be neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, but rather to serve as a guide for Schools in planning how to implement the strategy in ways appropriate to their academic discipline(s) and to their current patterns of strengths and weaknesses.

**Actions for Schools**
Schools will be responsible for:

- Reviewing progress to date on all the priorities; identifying strengths and areas for further action and identifying three or four which they consider require the most development. However, all Schools will be expected to report their progress on all priorities whether that progress is significant or of a smaller dimension.

- Developing realistic targets for maintaining and further improving the learning experience and putting in place steps to measure such improvements.

- Setting deadlines (for example using 1, 3 and 5 year targets) by which they hope to achieve their agreed priorities and incorporating these into their School Plan (which is submitted to the College Office annually in January).

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2 Appendix 1 is a ‘living document’ and everyone is encouraged to contribute examples of good practice (with relevant urls) that can be shared to improve the learning experience.
• Regularly monitoring improvements through their own School mechanisms (with specific arrangements made clear in their action plans)

• Reporting to College Committees as and when required throughout the academic year

• Reporting on their progress on a yearly basis through the QAE Annual Reporting process (see Appendix 2 for suggested reporting pro forma)

**Actions for College Office**

The College Office has a facilitative role to progress the strategic priorities and will be responsible for:

• Working closely with other units (eg Institute for Academic Development, Careers Service, Employability Consultancy, Information Services, International Office) to ensure appropriate support is available to Schools

• Fostering the sharing and awareness of good practice across Schools (including e-learning and research-teaching linkages) through information published on the College website and supporting ongoing events appropriate to Schools’ needs

• Reporting regularly to relevant College Committees on its actions

• Facilitating effective communication with prospective students to raise awareness of how the Learning and Teaching Strategy will support them on the journey they will be taking from being a university applicant to becoming an alumnus

**The wider context**

Higher Education operates in an extremely competitive UK and global market and powerful drivers, both internal and external, demand continual improvement in the quality of students’ learning experience (see Appendix 3).
### Appendix 1: Strategic Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Areas for development include:</th>
<th>Some examples of practical action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1 Students as independent learners**   | Developing personal and intellectual autonomy                                                   | • Link graduate attributes to the curriculum, ensure graduate attributes are clear in all programme specifications and be explicit as to how students are developing such attributes  
• Develop processes to support students to self-reflect on how they perceive they are developing their skills  
• Be clear to students what is expected of them as learners  
• Implement HEAR  
• Develop and be explicit about employability initiatives  
• Extend current and develop new Peer Assisted Learning initiatives and share good practice across Schools  
• Use the innovative learning week in 2011/12  
• Implement an e-portfolio system (eg PebblePad) |
| **2 Supportive student environment**     | Providing a wide range of academic and pastoral support                                        | • Implement the Academic & Pastoral Support standards and principles
• Regularly monitor how well the principles are being implemented  
• Develop ways to get regular student feedback on how the principles operate in practice to inform improvements  
• Review overseas students’ needs (cultural and learning) & identify ways to meet those needs  
• Consider getting feedback at end of pre-honours and honours using specific questions on a programme questionnaire eg about how DoS system is working  
• Improve the quality of PGR teaching and research support  
• Improve the estate and IT facilities for PG students |
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<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Areas for development include:</th>
<th>Some examples of practical action</th>
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| 3 Research & enquiry | Research-teaching linkages and developing students as creative and imaginative thinkers | • Continue to improve the links so that teaching is informed by research  
• Extend the range of possibilities of linking research and teaching and implement new research-teaching initiatives  
• Adapt the nature of research-teaching linkages according to the student's level of study in order to facilitate the incremental development of research skills as students progress through different levels of study  
For examples of School RTL initiative see: [http://www.hss.ed.ac.uk/AcademicAdmin/LearnTeachStrategy/resourcesforstaff.htm](http://www.hss.ed.ac.uk/AcademicAdmin/LearnTeachStrategy/resourcesforstaff.htm) |
| 4 Communication skills | Developing a wide range of skills | • Seminar/tutorial/conference presentations  
• IT skills  
• Project collaboration  
• Networking  
• Blogs/wikis  
• Students providing support on Peer Assisted Learning Projects  
• Teach students how to feedback constructively to their peers  
• Writing skills including the ability to write for different audiences and different communicative purposes |
| 5 Assessment and Feedback | Implementing the Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles | • Implement the Feedback Standards and Guiding Principles [http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Committees/LTC/Feedback.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Committees/LTC/Feedback.pdf)  
• Develop innovative assessment models |
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<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Areas for development include:</th>
<th>Some examples of practical action</th>
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|                      |                                | • Regularly monitor student satisfaction  
|                      |                                | • Ensure robust quality assurance arrangements for PG teaching are implemented and monitored  
|                      |                                | • Develop e-learning initiatives for assessment and feedback at UG and PG levels including ones that make use of e-assessment tools  |
| 6  Collaborative approaches to learning | Enhancing professional and executive education | • Increase the number of joint PhDs  
|                      |                                | • Identify potential new areas for placements  |
| 7  Student as partners in their learning | Ensuring feedback from students is used to make improvements | • Develop a range of ways of getting student feedback  
|                      |                                | • Review and enhance role of Staff/Student Liaison meetings/consider emailing students for their feedback/use focus groups  
|                      |                                | • Make sure feedback is acted on and in a timely way  
|                      |                                | • Let students know what has been done as a result of their feedback  
|                      |                                | • Be clear what can’t be changed and why  
|                      |                                | • Develop processes for receiving regular feedback from PGs  
|                      |                                | • Use Postgraduate Research and Taught experience surveys data to identify ways to improve supervision and teaching  |
| 8  Staff development | Ensuring all staff are supported and developed to teach and supervise to the very best of their ability | • Share good practice within and across Schools  
|                      |                                | • Encourage participation in training opportunities provided by the Institute for Academic Development and keep a record of staff who attend – link to IAD for further information http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/humanities-soc-sci/iad  
|                      |                                | • Ensure 100% staff appraisal  
|                      |                                | • Encourage Continuing Professional Development and keep a record of staff who attend  
<p>|                      |                                | • Extend Peer Observation of Teaching initiatives as enhancement tools  |</p>
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<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Areas for development include:</th>
<th>Some examples of practical action</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Record staff who have undergone HEA PG cert training and who are Fellows and encourage others to take up the training</td>
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<td>• Record how many staff have had PG supervisor’s training</td>
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<td>• Develop PG tutors’ and demonstrators’ skills and keep a record of how many receive induction and training with reference to the University Code of Practice <a href="http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Codes/CoPTutoringDemonstrating.PDF">http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Codes/CoPTutoringDemonstrating.PDF</a></td>
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Appendix 2: Suggested pro-forma to support Schools in their QAE reporting

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<th>Specific aims</th>
<th>Target date to achieve aims</th>
<th>Progress against aims</th>
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Appendix 3: The Wider Context

The Learning and Teaching strategy is designed to relate to the broader context of the University, the Higher Education sector and the wider world. It provides a framework within which to address the challenges and opportunities arising from the following aspects of this wider context.

- **The University of Edinburgh Strategic Plan**
  Excellence in learning and teaching is one of the University's strategic goals. More specifically, enhancing the student experience and promoting equality, diversity, sustainability and social responsibility are included in the Plan’s strategic themes.
  Further University Strategic Plan information: [http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf)

- **The University of Edinburgh Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy**
  There is a complementary, synergistic relationship between the College’s Learning and Teaching Strategy and the University’s Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy:
  [http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Learning_Teaching_and_Enhancement_Strategy.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Learning_Teaching_and_Enhancement_Strategy.pdf)

- **The University of Edinburgh Internationalisation Strategy**
  The Internationalisation Strategy includes commitments to “offer a learning and living experience that explicitly meets the needs and expectations of international as well as domestic students” and to “best prepare our students to thrive in and contribute to an increasingly interdependent world”.
  Further Internationalisation Strategy information:
  [http://www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.9821!fileManager/internationalisationstrategy.pdf](http://www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.9821!fileManager/internationalisationstrategy.pdf)

- **Edinburgh University Student association (EUSA) and the student body**
  Partnerships between students and Schools are essential to enhancing the quality of the learning experience. For example, partnerships and good communication help to ensure that students are actively engaged in the learning experience and that there are good quality mechanisms for obtaining and responding appropriately to student feedback in order to further improve the learning experience.

- **An increasingly diverse body of learners**
  Approaches to learning and teaching need to be sufficiently flexible to take account of students’ varying cultural and linguistic needs and also to ensure equality for disabled students, as specified in the Equality Act 2010 and in the University of Edinburgh’s Disability Equality Scheme.
  Further Equality Act 2010 information:
  University of Edinburgh’s Disability Equality Scheme:
The need for professional accountability
Frameworks designed to promote consistently high standards of teaching and learning include the Enhancement Themes developed by the QAA Scotland and the review frameworks provided by Teaching Programme Reviews (TPRs) and Postgraduate Programme Reviews (PPRs).

Further Enhancement Themes information: http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/
Further TPR & PPR information: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/quality-unit/quality-assurance/internal-review

Research Excellence Framework (REF)
The Framework encourages increasingly high standards of research, which in turn enriches students’ learning experience by providing opportunities to be taught by internationally recognised experts in their fields. Additionally, the nurturing of students’ own high quality publishable research makes an important contribution to the REF.

Further REF information: http://www.sfc.ac.uk/research/ResearchExcellence/ResearchExcellenceFramework.aspx

Employability and Graduate Attributes
It is essential to continue to produce graduates whom employers wish to recruit and who are equipped to make an effective contribution to society. Therefore, there needs to be good integration between students’ learning experience and the graduate attributes and employability agendas.

Further employability information: http://www.employability.ed.ac.uk/Graduateattributes.htm

Funding pressures
As funding pressures on students and on the University increase, it is necessary to find creative, efficient and effective ways of continuing to achieve high standards of excellence in learning and teaching within available resources and also to invest in strategic initiatives that will maintain or increase resources for the future.
College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Learning and Teaching Strategy

The following six principles form the basis on which the Learning and Teaching strategies within the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine are based:-

1. **Educational Experience**
   The College aims to achieve the highest quality of educational experience for all students on the basis of identified best practice, rigorous feedback and evaluation from students, staff and employers and a policy of proactively enhancing the educational environment for both students and all staff with responsibilities in learning and teaching.

2. **Student Centred**
   The College aims to preserve and enhance the enthusiasm of students by avoiding overload of factual information and assessment, providing clear learning outcomes and goals and ensuring a supportive learning environment. Students will be given responsibility for their own learning and appropriate resources will be available to support this philosophy. The learning and teaching opportunities provided by group and team work will be facilitated. Curricula delivered within the College will have outcomes, teaching method, assessment and environment aligned to the interests of student learning.

3. **Learning through Enquiry in a Research Rich Environment**
   The College encourages an atmosphere of questioning and critical approach, training students to integrate knowledge, extrapolate it to new situations and to communicate synthesised information effectively. Students will be prepared for life long learning by developing generic skills such as time management, the ability to manage their own learning, study skills, the ability to critically appraise, writing skills, data collection and management, skills in experimental design and statistical analysis. Opportunities for learning will be made available to all students from our research activities.

4. **Learning Styles**
   A variety of teaching methods will be developed and utilized within the College to support a range of learning styles. Maximum use will be made of e-learning where it is able to enhance the quality and the efficiency of learning and teaching.

5. **Achieving Professional Accreditation**
   The College will work with relevant accreditation bodies such as the General Medical Council and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to ensure that students are prepared to the highest standard for entry to the professions.

6. **Learning and Teaching Staff**
   The College is committed to valuing the expertise of staff involved in learning and teaching by ensuring they have opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge regarding the scholarship of learning and teaching. Excellence in learning and teaching is a recognised path towards professional and academic development.
This paper sets out a revised College Learning and Teaching Strategy for 2011-13, written between Dec 2010 and March 2011, based on consultation and discussions with key College and School staff. It builds on the principles of the existing strategy, initially formulated in 2005, with more clearly defined targets that reflect the current challenges and opportunities that we face.

The strategy articulates with the developing University Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy and is intended to guide and inform, but not rigidly prescribe, School-level implementation of developments in and enhancement of learning and teaching.
College of Science and Engineering  
Learning and Teaching Strategy 2011-2013

Overarching aims

A1. To deliver taught programmes of the highest academic quality and to be renowned within and outside the University as a source of innovation in learning and teaching.

A2. To provide an excellent educational experience for all our students, supporting them in becoming highly effective learners, and equipping them with the skills required in their chosen discipline as well as those required for a wide range of intended careers.

A3. To embed the principles and practice of scientific enterprise at all levels of teaching, enabling all students to develop the authentic ways of thinking and practising appropriate to their discipline.

Strategic principles to realise these aims

P1. A supportive, scholarly community of practice (A1, A2)

• Within our academic community, we will promote the scholarship of teaching and learning, informing enhancements to teaching practice and evaluating effectiveness using evidence-based approaches. Scholarship in teaching and learning will be supported by appropriate mechanisms of recognition and reward for innovation, leadership and excellence.

• We will share effective practice between disciplines within and outside the College, developing and strengthening links through the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) and within discipline networks beyond the University.

• Key members of our community of practice are our students. They will play an active role in developments to our practices through consultation and discussion.

P2. Learning independently, collaboratively and with a spirit of enquiry (A2, A3)

• Our programmes should encourage students to become active constructors of their own knowledge and understanding, developing their autonomy and self-reliance rather than being passive recipients of received wisdom.

• Self-reflection, and the associated abilities necessary to critically evaluate one’s own work, will prepare our graduates to be independent and effective life-long learners.
• Working collaboratively will be an essential skill for all our graduates, and their studies should provide opportunities and facilities, both formal and informal, to facilitate the development and refinement of requisite skills.

• Permeating throughout a student’s learning experience should be the authentic spirit of enquiry by which our disciplines advance knowledge.

• The articulation between teaching and research should be promoted at all levels of our programmes and capitalised upon, illustrating knowledge advancement as a process of gradual synthesis of information from different sources and domains, not memorisation of facts.

• Our graduates should be capable of articulating and communicating a broad spectrum of complex ideas and issues and be able to discuss, debate and negotiate these, within and beyond the scientific community.

P3. Appropriate assessment, effective feedback (A1, A2)

• Our assessment practices should fairly evaluate both the domain-specific knowledge and expertise and the acquisition and development of a broad range of skills and competencies.

• We will be mindful of making necessary space in curricula to balance quality and quantity of learning, utilising a wide range of assessment strategies across our programmes.

• Feedback on assessed work will enable reflection on prior achievements and also feed forward for future assessments.

• Our courses will promote the value of formative assessment to students as a vital ingredient for learning.

Targets for 2011-2013

T1. Building a more effective scholarly community of practice.

• All staff teaching on courses are expected to perform to an high standard, with regard to delivery, assessment and feedback. Various appropriate measures of teaching quality and effectiveness will be used to provide input to the Performance and Development Review process.

• The same processes will be able to evidence contributions from staff in teaching and learning that merit recognition and reward. We will continue to develop and promote career advancement routes for innovation, leadership and excellence in teaching and learning.

• We will further develop our integration and involvement with the IAD, through School secondee and cross-School initiatives that permit curricular development and innovation and that provide relevant training and development in specific areas.

• We will document and actively share effective practice more systematically. This will include themed workshops, more inter-School collaborations and establishing a College-wide teaching and learning ‘knowledge base’.

• Our community will involve a wide constituency, including postgraduate tutors and demonstrators, Principal’s Career Development scholars, Post Docs and RAs contributing to the teaching programme.
• We will continue to improve our mechanisms for academic and pastoral support for students, at all levels of our programmes, but particularly in their transition to studying at the University. We will consistently apply, and monitor progress against, the *Standards and Guiding Principles for Academic and Pastoral Support*.

**T2. A wider range of assessment practices to develop and assess relevant skills.**

• Our assessment practices should incorporate a broad range appropriate to the discipline, explicitly making room for formative development of skills as well as summative assessment of curricula.
• Where time-limited written assessments are utilised, we should make use of a more diverse range of formats, including open-book and/or take home exams.
• Assessments should test knowledge, application and higher-order skills such as synthesis of material or techniques going beyond what is covered in courses in appropriate combinations for the level of the course.
• We will share practice for the assessment of common skills, e.g. ‘problem solving’
• We will document and evaluate the impact of changed practices, e.g. through QA/QE.
• We will continue to ensure that assessment regulations permit developments in practice to take place and work to develop and refine them where they do not.

**T3. A broader cohort base and experience (PG and UG, on-campus and off).**

• We will continue to recruit talented and motivated students who can develop to their full academic potential whatever their personal, social and educational background. Where competition for places in high, we will recruit sustainable and manageable numbers.
• New programme development, and periodic review of on-going provision, will be informed by market demand and a strong business model that accurately reflects the full costs of development and delivery.
• We will establish the Integrated Foundation Programme (IFP) to permit suitably well-qualified students to access (the majority of) our programmes. We aim to recruit 75 students to the IFP by 2013.
• We will lay foundations for and then build capacity in Online Distance Learning (ODL) in areas with a proven market demand or relevant area of provision at PGT. Our approach will be collaborative and cross-College, to facilitate sharing expertise and emerging experience in pedagogy and infrastructure, and where appropriate, material. We anticipate offering our first distance courses in 2012-13.
• We will explore additional joint international collaborations, e.g. 2+2 programmes
• We will develop work / industry based dissertations for PGT students in appropriate areas.

**T4. Continued development of the estate to support different modes of learning and teaching**

• Our teaching and learning estate encompasses both physical and virtual spaces. Both will be developed collaboratively, with appropriate sharing of innovative practice.
• We will evaluate the use of recently refurbished spaces used by CSCE students, from the perspective of both staff and students, with the aim of greater understanding of what enables and inhibits innovative teaching methodologies and changing ways of learning.
• These findings will inform future developments in both teaching and study spaces, principally the new KB Library / KB centre developments but also on-going School redevelopments.

v2 March 2011
# University Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy

| **Contact Officer** | Susan Hunter, Academic Policy Officer, Susan.Hunter5@ed.ac.uk |

## Purpose

The policy contains the strategy for learning and teaching enhancement in the University of Edinburgh, supporting the University’s strategic goal of excellence in learning and teaching.

## Overview

The University Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy aligns with the University Strategic Plan and complementary Learning and Teaching Strategies in each College. It outlines the aims, principles and institutional strategic priorities for enhancing learning and teaching within the university. The 2010-2012 institutional strategic priorities are employability, assessment and feedback, student guidance and support and enhancement infrastructure.

## Scope

The strategy applies to all students and staff in the university. It is overseen by the Senate Learning and Teaching Committee.

## The Policy

**University Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy**

*The University Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy (LTES) comprises three facets: aims, underpinning principles, and strategic priorities for the period 2010-2012. These three facets are of equal importance and closely interrelated.*

*Responsibility for the University LTES lies with the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senatus. Each College also has its own LTES, for which it is responsible. University and College LTES ’s seek to be contiguous and to work in synergy, as part of an institutional approach to enhancement which is intentionally devolved.*

### CHIEF AIMS

1. to strengthen and enhance the quality of students’ experiences of university study wherever necessary, appropriate and practicable

2. to sustain an environment in which excellence in learning and teaching can thrive and where refinements and innovations in practices are prized and promulgated

3. to encourage everyone involved in teaching and supporting learning to play their part in enhancing as well as ensuring quality
**UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES**

The University's Learning-Teaching Enhancement Strategy is underpinned by the following principles:

a. it is well-aligned to the University's strategic goals, mission and ethos

b. it complements the learning, teaching and enhancement strategies of the three Colleges

c. it is forward-looking, engaging with evolving needs and circumstances and addressing prospective challenges and opportunities

d. it is inclusive, encompassing the full range of levels of study (UG, PGT, PGR) and patterns of provision at Edinburgh

e. it continues to value initiatives by individuals, course teams and subject groups to enhance local practices

**INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, 2010-2012**

1. **Employability**
   Focusing, coordinating and strengthening efforts to prepare students for the challenges of the 21st-century graduate workplace and optimise their employability

2. **Assessment and feedback**
   a. Improving the quality and consistency of feedback to students
   b. Encouraging and supporting the continuing evolution of assessment practices and policies to address 21st-century needs, challenges and opportunities

3. **Student guidance and support**
   Strengthening the framework of academic and pastoral guidance and support to students

4. **Enhancement Infrastructure**
   Developing structures and processes that support, facilitate and sustain the strategic enhancement of learning and teaching

**Keywords**

Learning, teaching, enhancement, strategic priorities
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| **Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines & Regulations** | University Strategic Plan: [www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf)  
College Learning and Teaching Strategies: [College of Humanities and Social Science Learning and Teaching Strategy, 2010](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf)  
[College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Learning and Teaching Strategy](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf)  
[College of Science and Engineering Learning and Teaching Strategy 2011-2013](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf)  
University e-Learning Strategy: [E-learning Strategy](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/gasp/strategicplanning/StrategicPlan.pdf) |
| **Policies superseded by this Policy** | The previous University Learning and Teaching Strategy is superseded by this strategy. |
Equality Act: Adjustments

Developing an Accessible and Inclusive Curriculum
Proposal for the Mainstreaming of Adjustments

Brief description of the paper, including a statement of relevance to the University’s strategic plans and priorities

The paper sets out a proposal for the mainstreaming of a small number of common adjustments for the benefit of all students. The paper has been produced in response to a request from the Learning and Teaching Committee. The paper sets out the definition and rationale for mainstreaming, the importance of it for the University, the evidence for action and the benefits for staff and students.

Action requested

Members are asked to discuss and approve the proposal.

Resource implications

Does the paper have resource implications? No more than the resource implications already associated with the implementation of adjustments

Risk Assessment

Does the paper include a risk analysis? No, but there are potential risks of legal action if (disabled) students are disadvantaged in future.

Equality and Diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? Yes, equality and diversity is inherent to the paper.

Freedom of information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes.

Originators of the paper

Tina Harrison, Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
Sheila Williams, Director, Student Disability Service
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Developing an Accessible and Inclusive Curriculum
Proposal for the Mainstreaming of Adjustments

Introduction

This paper sets out a proposal for the mainstreaming of a small number of common adjustments for the benefit of all students. The paper has been produced in response to a request from LTC. The paper sets out the definition and rationale for mainstreaming, the importance of it for the University, the evidence for action and the benefits for staff and students. Members of LTC are asked to discuss and approve the proposal.

What do we mean by mainstreaming?

‘Mainstreaming’ in education means the systematic consideration of the effects of teaching, learning and assessment practice and policy on disadvantaged groups at the point of planning, implementation and evaluation. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is equality; mainstreaming is a process that aims to achieve this goal. Hence, mainstreaming ensures that equality considerations are “built-in” not “bolted-on”.

Currently we “bolt-on” a number of adjustments to accommodate specific learning requirements of students. These adjustments whilst related to disability would also be of benefit to other students, for example international students for whom English is not their first language.

The mainstreaming of adjustments is consistent with the ethos outlined in the University’s Accessible Learning Statement:

"We aim to help students maximise their academic potential and get the most benefit from their programme of study and university experience. In line with our strategic goal of excellence in learning and teaching, we seek to enhance the student experience by creating a learning and teaching environment, and culture, that is dynamic, accessible and inclusive."

The Student Disability Service (SDS) recommends that a student’s learning environment be “adjusted” based on robust information and assessment. Over the recent years that the SDS has been recommending adjustments and learning profiles (list of support recommended for an individual student), a number of frequently utilised adjustments and trends are discernible. These trends have been reported annually in the SDS Quality Assurance Report and were reported to LTC at its September 2012 meeting.
The University has an ‘anticipatory duty’ towards disabled students in respect of the Equality Act 2010. This means we should be planning ahead and anticipating the needs of disabled students and the adjustments they might need. We now have enough evidence to suggest that there are a small number of areas where the same adjustments are being made that we could consider mainstreaming. The benefit of mainstreaming a small number of adjustments is that we can: ensure that adjustments are being implemented; we can meet out legal obligation; and also enhance the learning experience for all students at the same time.

Proposal

Set against this context, it is proposed that we seek to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students by mainstreaming a small number of adjustments.

We propose that, unless there is a justified pedagogic reason\(^1\) for not doing so, all students can expect that we will:

- Provide course outlines and reading lists at least 4 weeks before the start of the course.
- Provide coursework/assignment questions and deadlines at the start of course.
- Order reading lists by priority/relevance.
- Provide lecture outlines/PowerPoint presentation slides and other materials used for in-class activities at least 24 hours in advance of the class on the VLE.
- Provide lists of key technical words and/or formulae at least 24 hours in advance of the class.
- Ensure that students are notified by email of changes to courses/classes.
- Permit all students to audio record lectures, tutorials and supervision sessions using their own equipment for their own personal learning.
- Ensure that microphones are maintained in good working order and are worn and used by teaching staff in all lectures regardless of the perceived need to wear them.
- Provide alternative assessments when requested to do so by the Student Disability Service.

\(^1\) A justified pedagogic reason must be made clear to students in advance in the course handbook. For example, for some subjects it may not be possible to put some material on the VLE because it is confidential or sensitive (i.e. information relating to patients in medicine). In other subjects it may be necessary that students prioritise reading lists for themselves – in such cases this should be reflected in the learning outcomes of the course and should be assessed, otherwise it is not justified.
Existing good practice

This proposal should not be taken to indicate that some, if not all, of the above adjustments are not already being mainstreamed in some Schools/Subject Areas. For example, many Schools already provide lecture outlines/PowerPoint slides on the VLE in advance of lectures as a matter of course, but it is by no means happening in all Schools. The School of Biological Sciences has already permitted students to audio record lectures and has established a mechanism for doing so that regulates the use of the recorded material and affords protection to teaching staff. This proposal is intended to ensure that we build on the existing good practice and experiences of colleagues in this area and provide a means of enhancing the learning experience for all students.

Why is it important?

The strategic and legislative imperative for revisiting our approach and practice is supported by a number of initiatives, including:

- **The University’s Strategic Plan 2012-2016**
  
  The proposal is consistent with the University’s Strategic Goal of ‘Excellence in Education’ and strategic themes of ‘Outstanding Student Experience’ and ‘Equality and Widening Participation’.

- **The University’s Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2012**
  
  The University is committed to embedding Equality and Diversity across all its work, including learning and teaching. The University has set targets at University Strategic level as well developing a single equality action plan to address our duties under the Equality Act 2010 encompassing all nine protected characteristics. There are specific actions in the Action Plan that this proposal directly aims to achieve: “4.14.2a Fully implement course adjustments for students. 4.14.4 Continue to work towards an inclusive environment for disabled students. 4.14.5a Reduce overall number of specific adjustments recommended on students’ learning profiles in favour of “mainstreamed” approach”.

- **Increasing diversity among the student population**
  
  Our student population is diverse and this diversity is set to increase. One third of our students are international, almost 10% of students have declared a disability.

- **The Scottish Government’s Widening Participation agenda**
The WP agenda will further increase the diversity of the student population. This diversity will enrich the student experience but may also increase the need for support for students.

- **The legal imperative of the Equality Act (2010) and the public sector Equality Duty**

  The Equality Act encompasses more groups who are more likely to be discriminated against and encompasses and supercedes the Disability Discrimination Act (and the race and gender legislation) which existed pre-2010.

  In addition to protecting disabled people from discrimination, the Equality Act also includes 8 other protected characteristics.

  All 9 protected characteristics are listed below:

  - age
  - disability
  - gender reassignment
  - marriage and civil partnership
  - pregnancy and maternity
  - race
  - religion and belief
  - sex
  - sexual orientation.

  We need to ensure as a University we have effective methods to meet our public duty under the Equality Act 2010 and develop inclusive cultures to enhance the student experience and promote an institution-wide understanding of equality issues and responsibilities. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out day-to-day work in shaping policy and in delivering services.

  We are required to have due regard to the need to:

  1. Eliminate discrimination
  2. Advance equality of opportunity
  3. Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
The evidence for action

In addition to the legal and strategic imperatives outlined above, there is also mounting evidence of the need for action with regards mainstreaming:

- **The proportion of students declaring a disability is rising**

  In the UK HEI\(^2\) sector the proportion of students declaring a disability in 2009/10 was 7.6%. The proportion within the University of Edinburgh is higher at over 9%. In both cases over half of the disabled students declared a specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia).

- **The propensity to declare a disability is not equally distributed**

  Creative arts students are more than three times likely to declare a disability (14.4%) than business students (4.5%). FT UG students are twice as likely to declare a disability than PG students. Chinese students are much less likely to declare a disability than white students: 3.6% of students respectively across UK HEIs compared to 9.2%.

- **The attainment gap between disabled and non-disabled students is widest in Scotland**

  The attainment gap between students declaring a disability and those with no known disability is the widest in Scotland at 7%, compared with 2.9% in Wales.

- **The number of adjustments issued by the SDS is rising**

  Within an academic year the Student Disability Service recommends around 14,000 adjustments; almost 5,000 of these are new adjustments each year and that number is rising in line with the year on year increase in the volume of disabled students.

- **Not all adjustments are being implemented.**

  The percentage of SDS survey respondents reporting they had “received all adjustments in all courses” reduced from 61% in 2010-11, to 49% in 2011-12 (SDS evaluation 2011-12). Failure to comply with a duty to make reasonable adjustments is classed as a form of discrimination under the Equality Act, exposing the University to serious legal risk.

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Benefits

There are a number of benefits to mainstreaming adjustments for students, staff and the wider University.

- Reduces the need for students to ensure that adjustments are being implemented
- All students benefit from mainstreamed adjustments – not just disabled students.
- Has the potential to contribute to a more positive student experience for all students that may influence NSS results.
- Mainstreaming the adjustments benefit staff in the long-term by building them into course design rather than responding to the needs of many individual students.
- Ensures compliance with the external legal environment.

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The University of Edinburgh

Senatus Learning and Teaching Committee

21 November 2012

Publication of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching

Brief description of the paper, including a statement of relevance to the University's strategic plans and priorities

This paper presents the recently published UK Quality Code for Higher Education – Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching.

The paper relates to the University’s Strategic Goal of ‘Excellence in Education’.

Action requested

The Committee is asked to note the publication of the Chapter and also that a mapping document (showing where the University fulfils the requirements and also highlighting areas for further development) will be presented to the January meeting of the Committee.

Resource implications

No.

Risk Assessment

No.

Equality and Diversity

No.

Originator of the paper

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Freedom of information

Yes.

Keywords

UK Quality Code; Learning and Teaching.
UK Quality Code for Higher Education

Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality

Chapter B3: Learning and teaching
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About the Quality Code

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code) is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education providers.¹ It makes clear what higher education providers are required to do, what they can expect of each other, and what the general public can expect of them. The Quality Code covers all four nations of the UK and all providers of UK higher education operating overseas. It protects the interests of all students, regardless of where they are studying or whether they are full-time, part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate students.

Each Chapter contains a single Expectation, which expresses the key principle that the higher education community has identified as essential for the assurance of academic standards and quality within the area covered by the Chapter. Higher education providers reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) are required to meet all the Expectations. The manner in which they do so is their own responsibility. QAA carries out reviews to check whether higher education providers are meeting the Expectations.²

Each Chapter has been developed by QAA through an extensive process of consultation with higher education providers; their representative bodies; the National Union of Students (NUS); professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; and other interested parties.

Higher education providers are also responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them, for example by funding bodies. The Quality Code does not interpret legislation nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements. Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Chapter where appropriate. Higher education providers are responsible for how they use these resources.

The Expectation in each Chapter is accompanied by a series of Indicators that reflect sound practice, and through which providers can demonstrate they are meeting the relevant Expectation. Indicators are not designed to be used as a checklist; they are intended to help providers reflect on and develop their regulations, procedures and practices to demonstrate that the Expectations in the Quality Code are being met. Each Indicator is numbered and printed in bold and is supported by an explanatory note that gives more information about it, together with examples of how the Indicator may be interpreted in practice.

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education: General introduction³ should be considered in conjunction with this document. It provides a technical introduction for users, including guidance concerning the terminology used and a quick-reference glossary.

About this Chapter

This publication is a new Chapter of the Quality Code. It incorporates and supersedes the Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education (Code of practice), Section 2: Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed

¹ www.qaa.ac.uk/qualitycode
² www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review
³ www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/informationandguidance/pages/quality-code-introduction.aspx
Learning (including e-learning) (2010), Part B: Aspects specific to flexible and distributed learning, and the Code of practice, Section 9: Work-based and placement learning (2007). It also incorporates and supersedes those parts of the Code of practice, Section 3: Disabled students (2010) relating to learning and teaching. The evaluation of the Academic Infrastructure and consultation on subsequent changes which resulted in the development of the Quality Code identified the need for the introduction of a Chapter on learning and teaching covering all modes of study.4

This draft was subject to public consultation between May and July 2012. The final version of the Chapter was published in September 2012 and will be used as a reference point in reviews coordinated by QAA from August 2013.

Learning and teaching

This Chapter focuses on the learning opportunities that higher education providers make available to students and on the staff who teach and who support learning, including those staff who are not employees of the higher education provider and/or are not based at the provider. It applies to any learning opportunities that lead to a UK higher education award or award of credit, whether through short courses involving single modules or multi-year programmes of study. It covers students studying at all academic levels in Chapter A1: The national level5 (that is, all undergraduate, master’s and doctoral students) and irrespective of their:

- location - for example, campus-based, on placement or otherwise in a workplace, distance learning, or with a collaborative partner within the UK or internationally
- mode of study - for example face to face, e-learning, blended learning, or work-based learning, whether full-time or part-time
- academic subject
- age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, ethnic origin or national identity, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- previous educational background, breaks since the last experience of academic study, or time spent in the workplace
- nationality or fee status - for example home, European Union or international.

UK higher education embraces a wide variety of modes of both learning and teaching, which can be used in different combinations. These include flexible and distributed learning, work-based or placement learning, and technology-enhanced learning. At one end of the continuum, programme delivery, learner support and assessment are all provided by staff of the degree-awarding body on its campus(es). The other end of the continuum can be represented by a distance-learner who:

- has no direct contact with the degree-awarding body, its staff or other students
- has a programme of study delivered by an organisation that is not the degree-awarding body, and

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5 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-A1.aspx
The UK Quality Code for Higher Education

• is provided with support for learning from an organisation that is neither part of the delivery organisation nor the degree-awarding body.

Between these two ends of the continuum, there are many possible combinations involving learning and teaching, support, and assessment delivered by the degree-awarding body and/or delivering partner, and/or support provider. Some or all of the learning opportunities may be provided, for example, by an employer or organisation offering a work-based or placement learning opportunity, or an employer supporting its employee(s) on a higher education programme where the workplace is used as a learning environment. Work-based or placement learning opportunities can take place outside the UK, for example through exchange schemes.

The Chapter does not assume that:

• a student's place of study is physically located within the higher education provider whose academic award will be given on successful completion of the programme of study
• a student's programme of study is delivered directly by the degree-awarding body
• a student is directly supported by staff of the degree-awarding body
• a student is routinely working with other students
• the assessment of a student's achievement takes place at the location of the degree-awarding body.

Where learning and teaching is delivered through a collaborative arrangement, the responsibilities of each of the partners is defined in a written agreement. Ultimate responsibility for the academic standards of the award and the quality of learning opportunities made available rests with the degree-awarding body. Sound practice in the management of such an arrangement is articulated in Chapter B10: Management of collaborative arrangements.6

More detailed information about research degrees is provided in Chapter B11: Research degrees.7

What contributes to effective learning and teaching?

Identifying effective learning and teaching is complex, as it is influenced by many factors, which vary between individuals and different learning environments. Individuals learn when they acquire new (or modify existing) knowledge, behaviours, skills or values. There are many different ways to teach, all aimed at helping a student to learn. There are many ways to empower learners with the confidence to participate, critically and creatively, in the study of their subject area(s).

The central themes of this Chapter are:

• inclusive learning through promoting equality, diversity and equal opportunity
• higher education providers, staff (all those who facilitate learning), students and other stakeholders working in partnership
• learning facilitated by enthusiastic and capable staff through teaching and other types of support for learning, whether formal or informal.

6 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B10.aspx
7 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B11.aspx
Equality, diversity and equal opportunity

Diversity of staff and students brings with it different ideas, knowledge and experiences that contribute to an enriched learning environment. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, irrespective of the group or groups to which they belong, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, for example because of a declared disability, specific cultural background, location, or age, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in and responsibility for promoting equality.

Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. The nature of students' particular learning experiences may vary according to location of study, mode of study, or academic subject, as well as whether they have any protected characteristics, but every student experiences parity in the quality of learning opportunities. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary.

Offering an equal opportunity to learn is distinguished from offering an equal chance of success.

Working in partnership

In general, effective learning in higher education occurs when there is a partnership between the higher education provider, their staff and students, and any external stakeholder that results in:

- teaching that aims to be inspirational
- the co-production and enhancement of creative and transformational learning, and
- a schedule of assessment that is effective both in supporting learning and safeguarding academic standards.

Transformational learning involves a process of becoming critically aware of one's own tacit assumptions and expectations and those of others, and assessing their relevance before making an interpretation.

Partnership in this Chapter uses the definition set out in Chapter B5: Student engagement, emphasising that partnership is about joint working and not a formal legal relationship based on equal responsibility and liability. Joint working is based on a mature relationship and mutual respect. In the case of learning and teaching, a partnership between staff and students can empower students to develop further as active and independent learners who recognise and take responsibility for their own learning. Such a partnership, whether through formal or informal arrangements, acknowledges that while providers are responsible for providing inclusive learning opportunities and support for learning, the effectiveness with which the learning opportunities are used is a matter for students themselves.

This Chapter address the concept of students engaging with learning opportunities

8 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B5.aspx
and teaching activities. Chapter B5: Student engagement considers how higher education providers engage with students through their quality systems.

Teaching and support for learning

This Chapter is underpinned by recognition that learning and teaching take place in a variety of forms, involving a mix of formal and informal arrangements, and that what is commonly described as 'support for learning' plays a key role. For that reason the term ‘teacher’ is used to refer to any member of staff involved in facilitating student learning. Teaching is anything a teacher does to facilitate learning.

The term 'staff' refers to anyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning. It includes, but is not limited to, academic staff, graduate teaching assistants, specialist learning support staff, library staff and technicians employed by the higher education provider. It also includes staff not employed by the higher education provider but who interact with students studying for one of their awards; for example, through a collaborative arrangement or through supporting placement learning.

Effective learning and teaching activities and practices are enabled through, and depend on, staff who are appropriately qualified for their role and who engage throughout their career in continuing professional development, in the evaluation of their practice, and in developing their understanding of their subject and the learning process as it relates to their subject.

Student support and the provision of learning resources underpin effective learning and teaching. These topics are covered in Chapter B4: Student support, learning resources and careers education, information advice and guidance.

The role of assessment in learning and teaching

This Chapter addresses the role of assessment in promoting learning, especially as the basis for reflection and dialogue between staff and students. This activity is often referred to as assessment for learning and equated with formative assessment, being developmental. It is contrasted with assessment of learning - often equated with summative assessment - the principal purpose of which is to determine student attainment against predetermined criteria. An effective approach to summative assessment, however, reflects the capacity of any form of assessment to enable ongoing learning. Assessment of learning is addressed in Chapter B6: Assessment of students and accreditation of prior learning.

To derive maximum learning benefit from assessment, students need to receive timely feedback in a manner that is supportive, yet includes some personal challenge. Effective feedback is the result of: agreeing and communicating clear criteria before students complete the task; assessment that uses those criteria; and feedback based on the criteria and timed so that students can use it constructively in their next stage of learning. Effective feedback for learning also takes into account the need to build confidence as well as to communicate where and how improvements can be made. Effective feedback to support learning involves an ongoing dialogue between the student and staff, the student and their peers, and the student and an employer, for example, where the student is in a work-based or placement learning environment.

9  www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B4.aspx
10 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B6.aspx
Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about learning and teaching, which higher education providers are required to meet.

Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.
Indicators of sound practice

The Indicators below are mutually dependent, so they should not be considered in isolation. For example, strategy is not divorced from learning design, and learning design is informed by the careful evaluation of the effectiveness of actual practices through the collection and analysis of robust evidence. Furthermore, it may become evident from the evaluation of learning and teaching that the strategy itself requires modification.

The basis for effective learning and teaching

Indicator 1

Higher education providers articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching and promote a shared understanding of this approach among their staff, students and other stakeholders.

One strength of UK higher education is the diversity of its providers in terms of mission and range of provision. Each higher education provider sets out, in a form it deems appropriate, and implements its strategic approach to learning and teaching, indicating how it promotes student learning across all of its provision, across all academic levels and all organisational levels (for example, provider, faculty and department).

This strategic approach addresses the learning opportunities for every student, irrespective of: location of study (for example, whether on a campus or in a work-based or placement environment, in the UK or outside the UK) or mode of study (for example, part-time or full-time, or distance learning supported by technology). It considers how every student can experience parity in the quality of learning opportunities (see Chapter B10: Management of collaborative arrangements).

In agreeing their strategic approach, higher education providers recognise that effective learning occurs when students are enabled to:

- engage actively in learning, and participate fully in the learning opportunities that are presented to them
- understand their learning environment, its culture and resources
- embrace the aims and expectations of their chosen programme of study
- demonstrate understanding of, and an ability to reflect upon, the ways in which their skills and knowledge are developing
- recognise and value their existing knowledge and skills, and build upon them
- make effective and responsible use of advice, guidance and feedback from formative and summative assessment that is provided during their programme of study
- avail themselves of the opportunities to acquire and develop learning skills
- understand sound academic practice and behave with integrity
- contextualise and apply their developing knowledge and skills to their wider experience and plans for the future

11 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B10.aspx
Chapter B3: Learning and teaching

- work together in an informal environment as well as in formal learning sessions
- act responsibly in planning their use of the resources available to support learning, including the effective use of their own time in independent study
- give constructive feedback on their perception of the quality of their learning experience
- engage in monitoring and influencing the curriculum
- show commitment to attaining the academic standards that have been defined for their programme of study.

Students are uniquely positioned to comment on how the strategic approach to learning and teaching adopted by the higher education provider enables and supports student learning, and how enhancement of the opportunities provided can benefit their learning. Consequently, higher education providers involve students in developing, implementing and monitoring the strategic approach (see Chapter B5: Student engagement).\(^\text{12}\)

Themes that cross subject boundaries

In addition to subject-specific content, higher education providers consider the way their strategic approach reflects themes that cross subject boundaries. These themes reflect topics which may be considered to have a broad relevance to the purposes of higher education and its wider context in society. Where the themes are embedded within the curriculum and form an integral part of a programme of study, learning and teaching activities are designed to take them into account.

These themes may include:
- academic and digital literacies appropriate to the academic level of the student
- education for sustainability
- citizenship
- enterprise and entrepreneurship
- internationalisation
- ethical behaviour.

The design and approval of programmes is addressed in Chapter B1: Programme design and approval.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{12}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B5.aspx

\(^{13}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B1.aspx
Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Student-Experience-Research-12-Part-1.aspx

NUS (2012) Student Experience Research Part 3: Subject Differences
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Student-Experience-Research-12-Part-3.aspx

www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/outcomes-audit-learning-opps.aspx

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Graduates for the 21st Century
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/graduates-for-the-21st-century

Higher Education Academy: Education for sustainable development
www.heacademy.ac.uk/education-for-sustainable-development

QAA (2012) Enterprise and entrepreneurship education: Guidance for UK higher education providers
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/enterprise-entrepreneurship-guidance.aspx


Indicator 2

Learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Learning and teaching activities, support for learning, and resources together enable every student who engages appropriately to achieve the learning outcomes. The learning opportunities support students to make the transition into higher education and to progress academically and intellectually through their programme of study, whatever its level.

Learning outcomes

Opportunities for learning in higher education may be formal or informal. The term 'learning outcomes' recognises that learning will generate a range of outcomes, including the intended learning defined in the programme of study and learning which is generated by or as experience or which is the by-product of other learning activities.
The learning experience may therefore involve informal learning over and above the structured formal learning focused on the defined learning outcomes.

The concept of learning outcomes is applicable at all academic levels (Chapter A1: The national level)\(^\text{14}\) and to every subject of study (Chapter A2: The subject and qualification level).\(^\text{15}\) For postgraduate research students it links to Indicators 13 and 14 of Chapter B11: Research degrees.\(^\text{16}\)

Once determined, the learning outcomes for the programme of study map directly to the summative assessment, with the assessment methods being appropriate to offer every student an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the intended learning outcomes irrespective of how and where the student has studied (see Chapter B6: Assessment of students of the Quality Code).\(^\text{17}\)

Providing an effective opportunity to achieve learning outcomes

The planning and design of learning and teaching activities and associated resources:

- provides breadth, depth, pace and challenge appropriate for the learning outcomes, subject and level of study
- takes an inclusive approach
- develops appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding.

Achievement of learning outcomes may depend on fieldwork, placement or work-based learning and may need to satisfy the requirements of a professional, statutory and regulatory body or other external framework. In these situations the learning outcomes encapsulate the academic and professional competence standards essential to the programme of study and, at the same time, are achievable by every student undertaking that programme of study. Where optional or compulsory fieldwork, practical work, or work placement is part of a programme, prior consideration of reasonable adjustments enables the participation of disabled students. Higher education providers engage students and external partners providing fieldwork, placement or work-based learning opportunities in their internal quality processes to assure themselves that the learning outcomes are relevant and achievable (see Chapter B5: Student engagement\(^\text{18}\) and Chapter B8: Programme monitoring and review\(^\text{19}\)).

Providing an equal opportunity to achieve learning outcomes

The nature of students’ particular learning experiences may vary according to location of study, mode of study, or academic subject, as well as whether they have any protected characteristics, but every student experiences parity in the quality of learning opportunities.

\(^{14}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-A1.aspx
\(^{15}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-A2.aspx
\(^{16}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B11.aspx
\(^{17}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B6.aspx
\(^{18}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B5.aspx
\(^{19}\) www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B8.aspx
All methods of learning and teaching including group work, seminars, lectures, placements and practical classes create a variety of challenges for students. Providing each student with an equal opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. A flexible and inclusive approach to learning and teaching enables and empowers every student to fulfil their individual potential and minimises the need for individual alterations or adjustments. Through adopting inclusive learning and teaching practices, higher education providers enhance the learning opportunities for every student.

Diversity of staff and students brings with it different ideas, knowledge and experiences that contribute to an enriched learning environment. Higher education providers recognise that students have differing learning styles and come from diverse educational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and they consider whether examples and resources used in learning and teaching are drawn from a sufficiently broad range of sources, cultures and viewpoints. Higher education providers, their staff, and staff of external partners involved in facilitating student learning create a positive environment by aiming to eliminate harassment or discriminatory behaviour from among the peer group of students.

Higher education providers have a specific responsibility under UK equality legislation to ensure that disabled people are not put at a disadvantage. Providers offer disabled students learning opportunities which are accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary. Staff work in partnership with individual students to understand the implication of any specific requirements or reasonable adjustments for their teaching practices.

Where a programme includes learning that takes place in a virtual learning environment, providers ensure that it can be accessed fully by every student, or that reasonable adjustments can be made so that every student has an equal learning opportunity.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.


Higher Education Academy and Equality Challenge Unit: Ethnicity, Gender and Degree Attainment www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/inclusion/Ethnicity/ethnicity
Effective teaching and support for learning occurs when staff display a sound understanding and up-to-date knowledge of their subject and/or professional practice and they bring this to a variety of appropriately designed learning and teaching activities and assessment methods. They communicate enthusiasm, and draw on scholarship, research and professional activity to facilitate student learning. Staff create opportunities for learning which are effective by recognising the value of both individual and collaborative learning activities, the value of learning how to learn, and that learning is about interpretation, analysis and synthesis underpinned by reflection, not just the repetition of facts.

Reflective practice

In order that teaching and support for learning remains effective, staff reflect on their practice and consider how it might be changed and improved. They draw on a variety of sources to inform this, including feedback from: students gathered at different organisational levels from the individual teaching session and module upwards; examination boards and external examiners; and recent alumni and employers.

Effective reflective practice retains a practical focus. It may involve different organisational levels, from the individual teacher or programme teaching team, to a whole department, faculty or higher education provider. Successful reflective practice depends on self-awareness, critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation leading to new perspectives.
Scholarship and professional practice

Scholarship and research lie at the heart of higher education, but their nature will depend on the academic level of the programme, the subject area and the provider or providers of the programme. Scholarship may include conventional research (discovery of new knowledge), innovative application or integration of existing knowledge, for example in professional practice, or the study of learning and teaching processes and practices.

In subject areas such as clinical medicine, music or performing arts among others, or where learning is taking place in the workplace, evaluation of professional practice directly informs student learning. The requirements of professional, regulatory or statutory bodies are also taken into account where applicable.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

Higher Education Academy: Resource centre  
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Research-Teaching Linkages  
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/research-teaching-linkages

Higher Education Academy (2006) Scholarly Activity in the context of HE in FE  
www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/universitiesandcolleges/heinfe/alldisplay?type=resources&newid=resource_database/web0462_scholarly_activity_in_the_context_of_he_in_fe_June_2006&site=york

Higher Education Academy (2007) Linking teaching and research in disciplines and departments  
www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/teachingandresearch/LinkingTeachingAndResearch_April07.pdf

Higher Education Academy: Becoming a reflective practitioner  
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/subjects/medev/Focus-_Becoming_a_reflective_practitioner

Indicator 4

Higher education providers assure themselves that everyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified, supported and developed.

Effective student learning is facilitated by interaction with appropriately qualified, supported and developed teaching and support staff. Staff may be employed by the degree-awarding body, by a collaborative partner, a work-based learning or placement provider, or may be a member of visiting staff; where responsibility sits for staff appointment, support and development is defined by the terms of the relevant collaborative arrangement (see Chapter B10: Management of collaborative arrangements).20

20 www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-B10.aspx
Applicants, support, and continuing development of staff

Higher education providers determine what is necessary to demonstrate that a member of staff is qualified to fulfil their role in teaching or supporting learning; whether this means the individual holds a relevant formal qualification will depend on the circumstances. Staff recruitment and appointment procedures include a means of ensuring new staff have an appropriate level of competence for the teaching and/or learning support role to which they are being appointed. In particular the provider considers the extent to which members of staff have:

- appropriate and current practitioner knowledge and an understanding of the subject they teach (which may be demonstrated by a qualification) and an understanding of the disciplinary scholarship appropriate to the academic level of the students they are teaching
- the necessary skills and experience to facilitate learning in the students they are interacting with, and to use approaches grounded in sound learning and teaching scholarship and practice.

Members of staff new to their teaching or supporting student learning role are encouraged to engage in appropriate induction and mentoring opportunities made available by the higher education provider.

Once appointed, and throughout their career, staff engage with opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capabilities and to reflect upon their teaching practice. Staff are encouraged to value their own and others’ skills, to recognise that they have a responsibility to identify their own development needs, and to engage in initial and continuing professional development activities. Higher education providers make opportunities available for all those involved in teaching and supporting student learning to inform each other’s practice and professional development.

Continuing professional development activities made available by the higher education provider are planned strategically, including the allocation of sufficient resources to cover the needs of both research and learning and teaching development. Protected staff time to engage in continuing professional development is identified and factored into workload considerations.

Higher education providers assure themselves of the effectiveness of their approach to staff development and support. Aspects considered may include any or all of the following: working with staff development teams; having online continuing professional development resources and modules for staff; and ensuring the availability of sufficient administrative support.

Higher education providers also have agreed procedures to identify staff in need of additional support to ensure their effectiveness, and provide them with opportunities (which the provider expects them to take up), support and mentoring to enable improvement of their skills and competency to an agreed level.

Individual staff members are able to access appropriate and timely support to develop inclusive forms of learning, teaching and assessment which are supported by technology. They are provided with guidance and support to understand the impact of equal opportunity and equality legislation on their roles, and have free
access to information on creating an inclusive learning culture for which they have a shared responsibility with the higher education provider. Higher education providers also recognise the importance of digital literacy for staff and make available suitable development opportunities.

Higher education providers have in place transparent staff recognition and reward processes, and promotion opportunities for all career paths.

The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education

The UK higher education sector has endorsed the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (UKPSF), which is published by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) on behalf of the four UK funding bodies as well as Universities UK, GuildHE, and NUS. The purpose of the framework is to help individuals and higher education providers enhance the learning experience of their students, by improving the quality of their teaching and learning support. It is written from the perspective of the practitioner and outlines the national framework for recognising and benchmarking teaching and learning support roles within higher education. The UKPSF has two components. The descriptors are a set of statements outlining the key characteristics of someone performing four broad categories of typical teaching and learning support roles within higher education. The dimensions of practice are a set of statements outlining: the areas of activity undertaken by teachers and supporters of learning within higher education; the core knowledge needed to carry out those activities at the appropriate level; and the professional values that someone performing these activities embraces and exemplifies.

The UKPSF provides a UK-wide benchmark by which higher education providers can demonstrate how they support staff and assure themselves that they are qualified to teach and support learning. It also enables higher education providers to demonstrate that their professional development programmes and activities meet expected national professional standards.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

UK Professional Standards Framework
www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf

Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA)
www.seda.ac.uk

Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE)
www.aldinhe.ac.uk

JISC: Learning Literacies in a Digital Age
www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/projects/elearningllida.aspx

JISC TechDis
www.jisctechdis.ac.uk
Indicator 5

Higher education providers collect and analyse appropriate information to ensure the continued effectiveness of their strategic approach to, and the enhancement of, learning opportunities and teaching practices.

Higher education providers use a range of internal and external information and feedback from diverse sources along with examples of sound practice and innovation to enable them to keep their strategic approach to learning and teaching under review, to modify it as appropriate and to facilitate the continuous improvement of the learning opportunities they provide.

Data sources on which they draw may include:

- feedback from students on their learning experience collected through internal mechanisms
- feedback from students through external instruments like the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)
- routine evaluations of modules and programmes incorporating feedback from staff and external examiners
- feedback from alumni and employers and placement providers
- retention statistics
- mark profiles for students, modules and programmes
- availability and quality of teaching and learning spaces for formal and informal learning
- uptake and utilisation of any virtual learning environment and assistive technology
- student academic appeals and complaints
- feedback from external reviews and accreditations, such as those of professional, regulatory and statutory bodies.
Evaluation takes place at different levels from the module, by the individual teacher or module team, through to senior management level and is appropriate to the mode and level of the provision.

The use of information for assurance and enhancement at programme and award level is addressed in *Chapter B8: Programme monitoring and review*.

The involvement of students in processes to assure and enhance providers' approaches is covered in *Chapter B5: Student engagement*.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

  www.osti.gov/eprints/topicpages/documents/record/884/1265593.html
- HEFCE (2010) *Enhancing and Developing the National Student Survey*  
  www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2010/rd1210/rd12_10a.pdf
- Higher Education Academy (2012) *Using PRES to enhance the experience of postgraduate researchers*  
  www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/postgraduate/using_pres_to_enhance...
The learning environment

Indicator 6

Higher education providers maintain physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use.

The learning environment

The learning and teaching activities made available by a higher education provider take place within a broad learning environment which comprises both physical and virtual facilities and the culture and ethos of learning promoted by the provider and its staff working with students and other stakeholders. This learning environment also encompasses learning opportunities provided, for example, through fieldwork or workplace or placement settings.

Physical learning environments

Higher education providers make available physical environments that are applicable and appropriate to each mode and location of learning, and which are safe and accessible to students. Learning spaces are suitable for the nature of the learning activities being provided, for example in seating arrangements, lighting and acoustics, and availability of technology for planned activities. Where appropriate, learning spaces enable informal as well as formal learning.

Higher education providers decide how to access specialist advice on accessible and inclusive learning space design that best meets their requirements and suits their context. Providers involve students in the process for developing a fully accessible environment, especially students with specific requirements, such as disabled or part-time students. Higher education providers have a systematic approach, for example to the refurbishment of learning spaces, rather than relying on making adjustments on an ad hoc basis.

Virtual learning environments

The use of technology to enhance learning can be an important means to enable students to engage fully in their programme of study. Higher education providers develop technological facilities and services (including virtual learning environments and library systems) that are accessible, inclusive and cater for a wide range of potential student requirements. Systematic consultation with students and staff about the accessibility of technological facilities enhances standards of usability.

Assistive technology can make methods of learning and teaching more accessible to a wide range of students. Wherever possible, assistive technologies are made available to all students through integrated organisation-wide systems, rather than through distributed facilities or those targeted at a subset of students.
Social learning environments

All interactions among students and staff (including staff who contribute to learning through fieldwork, placements and work-based learning), whether in person or through electronic means, reflect the following characteristics:

- dialogue based on mutual dignity and respect
- a safe environment for exploring new ideas and for providing feedback even when that is negative.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

Equality Challenge Unit (2010) Disability legislation: practical guidance for academic staff (revised)
www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/disability-legislation-practical-guidance-for-academic-staff-revised/

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Guidance for providers of further and higher education
www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/further-and-higher-education-providers-guidance

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Flexible Learning
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/flexible-delivery

Higher Education Academy: Flexible learning
www.heacademy.ac.uk/flexible-learning

JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee)
www.jisc.ac.uk

JISC TechDis
www.jisctechdis.ac.uk

Universities and Colleges Employers Association (2009) Health and safety guidance for the placement of HE students
www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/HSplace

Association of Learning Technologists (ALT): What research has to say for practice
wiki.alt.ac.uk/index.php/What_research_has_to_say_for_practice

Student engagement in learning

Indicator 7

Every student is provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them.

Higher education providers make clear to students the learning opportunities and learning and teaching support available to them and how they can access these.
Care is taken to ensure coherence in information that relates to different organisational levels of the provider or elements of study (for example department, programme or module) and which is given at different times.

The information provided to every student reflects the specific nature of the learning opportunities available and learning support provided, including any study undertaken at a location that is not at the campus of the provider (for example in a fieldwork, work-based or placement environment) or through a virtual learning environment. It also indicates whether the learning opportunities and support are made available by the provider or by an external stakeholder such as a collaborative partner or employer.

Higher education providers actively engage students to monitor, review and evaluate this information, to ensure that it meets the requirements of different groups of students. The involvement of students in quality assurance and enhancement is addressed in Chapter B5: Student engagement.23

The provision of information for prospective and current students is addressed in Part C: Information about higher education provision.24

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

Teachability project: Creating accessible information about courses or programmes of study for disabled students
www.teachability.strath.ac.uk/chapter_1/tableofcontents1.html

Universities UK (2002) Student Services: Effective approaches to retaining students in higher education
www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/services.pdf

www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/retention/What_works_final_report.pdf

NUS (2012) Student Experience Research Part 2: Independent Learning and Contact Hours
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Student-Experience-Research-12-Part-2.aspx

QAA (2011) Contact hours: a guide for students
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/contact-hours-student.aspx
Indicator 8

Higher education providers take deliberate steps to assist every student to understand their responsibility to engage with the learning opportunities provided and to shape their learning experience.

A key characteristic of UK higher education is the emphasis placed on students to engage in independent learning, working in partnership with staff and displaying academic behaviour and integrity appropriate to the level of study. Consequently, providers explain what they expect of students and how they will assist them to make the transition into and through their studies.

Students undertaking fieldwork, work-based or placement learning may have additional responsibilities to the learning provider and to others such as customers, clients, service users, other employees and the general public they may encounter. This includes the responsibility to meet the norms and expectations for professional conduct in the particular field of work or study that they are undertaking. For students using their existing workplace for their work-based learning, such norms, expectations and responsibilities are often covered in an employment contract and may be more obvious than for students joining a workplace to undertake a placement.

As active members of a learning community, students depend on interaction with staff and with their peers to support their learning. Achieving independence in learning means that there are always some opportunities for students to shape their learning experience. For some students this may not extend beyond selecting optional modules, undertaking additional reading or practice of relevant skills. For others it may extend to the negotiation of assessment titles or engagement in self-selected research for a dissertation or equivalent practice-based module.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

NUS (2012) Student Experience Research Part 4: First Year Student Experience
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Student-Experience-Research-12-Part-4.aspx

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: First Year: Engagement and Empowerment
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/first-year

Higher Education Academy: Academic integrity service
www.heacademy.ac.uk/academic-integrity
Indicator 9

Every student is enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff.

Assessment for learning

The design and delivery of learning and teaching activities, including assessment, provide opportunities for feedback that promotes learning. The activities are informed by an understanding that, while the purpose of formative assessment is to facilitate learning, summative assessment also has a formative element which may relate to the development of transferable knowledge and skills beyond the specific subject matter of the assessment task itself. The engagement of students in learning is stimulated by their understanding of the value of feedback obtained through those activities provided by staff and peers, and the opportunity to reflect on that feedback to inform further development. Effective dialogue with staff builds on that feedback and reflection.

The assessment schedule of a programme, module or session considers the dual needs of assessment for learning and assessment of learning. It facilitates feedback, reflection and dialogue, taking into account the value of students having time to put their learning into practice, including in the next applicable summative assessment.

Reflection and personal development planning

Students are encouraged to reflect on the formal and informal feedback they receive and use it to engage in a dialogue with staff to help plan their future learning. Many higher education providers factor into the student learning opportunities offered a process based on personal development planning (PDP). PDP is a structured and supported process undertaken by a learner to reflect upon their own learning, performance and/or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development. It is an inclusive process, open to all learners, in all higher education provision settings, and at all levels.

Higher education providers are responsible for ascertaining which laws and regulations apply to them. To meet the Expectation of this Chapter of the Quality Code, higher education providers may wish to consider the indicative list of reference points, guidance and examples of good practice below.

QAA (2012) Understanding assessment: its role in safeguarding academic standards and quality in higher education (2nd edition)

QAA (2009) Personal development planning: guidelines for institutional policy and practice in higher education
www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Personal-development-planning-guidance-for-institutional-policy-and-practice-in-higher-education.aspx

Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA)
www.recordingachievement.org
QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Integrative Assessment
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/integrative-assessment

QAA Scotland Enhancement Themes: Assessment
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/assessment

QAA Scotland Personal development planning toolkit
www.qaa.ac.uk/scotland/DevelopmentAndEnhancement/Pages/Personal-development-planning-Scotland.aspx

Higher Education Academy: Assessment and feedback
www.heacademy.ac.uk/assessment

NUS: Ten Principles of good feedback
Appendix 1: The Expectation and Indicators

The Expectation

The Quality Code sets out the following Expectation about learning and teaching, which higher education providers are required to meet:

Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chosen subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

The Indicators of sound practice

Indicator 1
Higher education providers articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching and promote a shared understanding of this approach among their staff, students and other stakeholders.

Indicator 2
Learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Indicator 3
Learning and teaching practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice, and subject-specific and educational scholarship.

Indicator 4
Higher education providers assure themselves that everyone involved in teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified, supported and developed.

Indicator 5
Higher education providers collect and analyse appropriate information to ensure the continued effectiveness of their strategic approach to, and the enhancement of, learning opportunities and teaching practices.

Indicator 6
Higher education providers maintain physical, virtual and social learning environments that are safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use.

Indicator 7
Every student is provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them.


**Indicator 8**

Higher education providers take deliberate steps to assist every student to understand their responsibility to engage with the learning opportunities provided and shape their learning experience.

**Indicator 9**

Every student is enabled to monitor their progress and further their academic development through the provision of regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff.
## Appendix 2: Membership of the Advisory Group for this Chapter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Dr Mark Atlay</td>
<td>Director of Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>University of Bedfordshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harriet Barnes</td>
<td>Development Officer</td>
<td>QAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Tim Burton</td>
<td>Assistant Director</td>
<td>QAA (Chair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Alan Davidson</td>
<td>Dean for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching and Assessment</td>
<td>Robert Gordon University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Ian Giles</td>
<td>Emeritus Fellow, formerly Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit</td>
<td>University of Southampton (specialist writer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Hall</td>
<td>Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit</td>
<td>Roehampton University</td>
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<td>Katya Hosking</td>
<td>Inclusive Curriculum Officer</td>
<td>Cardiff University</td>
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<td>Professor Sharon Huttly</td>
<td>Dean of Studies</td>
<td>London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan M Jones</td>
<td>Director of Education (Architecture)</td>
<td>Queen's University Belfast</td>
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<td>Matthew Kitching</td>
<td>Representation and Development Manager</td>
<td>Buckinghamshire New University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Rose Luckin</td>
<td>Professor of Learner Centred Design</td>
<td>Institute of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah MacDonald</td>
<td>Director of Standards and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>Pearson Higher Education Awards</td>
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<td>Dorothy McElwee</td>
<td>Head of Higher Education and Training Programmes</td>
<td>North West Regional College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Christine Macpherson</td>
<td>Assistant Director</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Dr Jenny Naish</td>
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<td>Head of Educational Development (Oxford Learning Institute)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Simon Rouse</td>
<td>Principal Lecturer, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences</td>
<td>York St John University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Jon Scott</td>
<td>Academic Director, College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology</td>
<td>University of Leicester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Jo Smedley</td>
<td>Director, Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching</td>
<td>University of Wales, Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen Thinnesen</td>
<td>Dean of Higher Education</td>
<td>Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen Thomas</td>
<td>Independent Formerly Head of Teacher Excellence</td>
<td>Higher Education Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Mary Thorpe</td>
<td>Professor of Educational Technology</td>
<td>Open University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Wicklow</td>
<td>Head of Quality and Student Engagement</td>
<td>National Union of Students</td>
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