

## Learning and Teaching Policy

The Learning and Teaching Policy of the College aims to build independent learners, with students taking increasing responsibility for their own learning. College staff are responsible for enabling such learning. Ultimately students should leave the College inspired, and capable of life-long learning, building upon the foundations and structure built through our programmes.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 1</b>
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<i>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.</i>
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Various approaches to learning have been adopted to achieve this aim:

- Direct contact (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials, guest speakers, external visits, case studies, online resources, or workshops),
- Collaborative learning (e.g. group projects, discussion forums, or debate),
- Independent learning.

The choice of which approach to adopt to achieve a given learning outcome or objective is left to the tutor, who will select the most appropriate approach on the basis of developing creativity in the thinking of the students by challenging existing precepts. Providing context is important in this regard, such as through using case studies, to expose the students to multiple realities in which the theories may apply.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicators 2 and 6</b>
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<i>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.</i>
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<i>Higher education providers create and maintain an environment within which students and staff engage in discussions that aim to bring about demonstrable enhancement of the educational experience.</i>
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The College Learning and Teaching Policy has been developed to ensure that students will:

- be able to learn and work independently;
- develop organisational skills;
- be able to adapt to changing circumstances;
- develop transferable skills from one context to another;
- be able to communicate their ideas in writing, speaking and practically;
- develop team-working and leadership skills.

### The role of Tutorials

Academic staff members can provide a wide range of advice and help. The College assigns to each student a staff member as an academic tutor. The College promotes the use of tutorials for both learning and communicating information. Failure to attend tutorials is often an indication that a student has difficulties. In this situation the College will take action to address poor attendance, offering support and providing learning materials.

The aims of tutorials are to:

- develop a reflective approach to learning;
- encourage students to develop problem solving techniques;
- help students with specific problems, whether pastoral or academic;
- develop a professional relationship between the tutor and student.

For modular programmes the taught modules' teaching contact accounts for about 40% of the student nominal learning hours associated with the module, unless stated otherwise in the programme specification. All the learning objectives of the module will all be addressed in the teaching contact hours. Tutors draw upon published literature, academic research and professional experience when preparing for direct contact sessions with students.

The final summative assignment, project or dissertation aspect of many of the programmes allows students to independently investigate a given subject matter, demonstrating their cognitive, analytical and evaluative skills through written and presented work.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 9</b>
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<i>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.</i>
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All postgraduate students will undertake a dissertation that amounts to approximately four hundred (400) hours of independent learning. The subject of the dissertation will directly relate to the student's chosen specialist pathway.

### **The Role of Assessment**

Learning and teaching must have formative assessment as an integrated part of the process, in order to help students and tutors understand strengths and weaknesses in the learner. This will provide an opportunity for appropriate strategies to be focused on the individual student, to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses. Formative assessment may be in the form of written class or home work, individual or group presentations, class debate, direct questioning or other relevant assessment techniques.

Summative assessment strategies depend upon the programme specification. Some commonly includes invigilated examinations and written assignments, others may involve an element of observation. All summative assessments accurately reflect the needs of the awarding organisation and fully fit awarding organisation expectations and guidelines.

The above guiding principles remain true and underpin the delivery of Online Learning programmes. There cannot be the same level of student contact on any online programme as on a face-to-face programme, but we believe that the interactivity built into our technology gives students a real opportunity to engage at the highest possible level. Group and individual meetings can easily be scheduled in private rooms, giving text, video and audio communication. This is fast becoming the standard meeting format for many institutes of repute including large multi-national companies, as the business environment grows to become ever more globalised.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 2</b>
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<i>Learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</i>
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As the virtual classroom is modelled on the real classroom environment, lecturers are able to deliver a lecture as they would normally, asking questions, organizing group discussions, handing presentation over to students etc. All of this is possible with the online classroom. The technical ability to quickly include online learners in such activities will be accessible to most lecturers with a little experience and to all lecturers through the services of a distance learning technician.

Lectures play an important role in learning. They are perceived as an effective means by which to communicate detailed, technical information to students at a pace that facilitates understanding whilst achieving the learning outcomes.

In order to simulate real world situations, the College makes use of case study teaching wherever applicable. This helps to prepare students for their future careers and enables them to relate theory and practice.

The Research Methods module and Study Skills sessions will enable students to develop their research skills to be used in all taught modules in addition to their assignments and/or dissertation.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 6</b>
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<i>Higher education providers ensure all students have opportunities to develop skills that enable their academic, personal and professional progression.</i>
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Students for whom English is a second language will have a proven minimum level to be eligible for enrolment. However, the College recognises that even then individual students will have differing strengths and weaknesses. Students will inevitably come from various cultures, hence their prior knowledge and experiences cannot be assumed to be the same. To address this factor and to ensure that language or cultures are not barriers to learning, the College adopts the following measures:

- Lecturers and tutors assessing student work should seek to identify students who could benefit from additional language support.
- Personal tutors should monitor a student's ability and seek to become aware of any issues that may affect a student's learning.
- Regular meetings of academic staff should identify where language intervention should be used.
- English language and mathematical skills support classes will be arranged by the College on a needs basis, guided by the academic staff intervention monitoring lists.
- Although all formal study and assessment happens in English, the College does not discourage, and may actually seek to encourage, student collaboration in a variety of languages of their choosing during their own personal study time.

### **Quality in Educational Provision**

As an 'alternative higher education provider', our 'product' is the provision of a quality educational experience. This experience will provide genuine opportunities for achievement and is as inclusive as possible whilst maintaining the integrity of that provision. The quality of our provision is judged by the relevant internal and external performance indicators, and by external agency guidelines provided by our awarding organisations and the QAA guidelines embedded in the Quality Code.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 5</b>
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<i>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</i>
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*teaching practices.*

This is accomplished by working within a devolved quality framework that ensures that quality management is embedded as close to the point of delivery and possible. This promotes and supports an integrated approach to quality enhancement initiatives across the institution, as well as monitoring the implementation of local teaching and learning strategies. Feedback is achieved via staff meetings and the various committees.

In framing its provision for international students the College is guided by the following QAA overarching principles, which apply throughout the whole of the typical student journey.

***An inclusive environment***

*Institutions should seek to provide an inclusive environment where the needs of international students are considered and met alongside those of other students in an integrated and embedded way.*

***Continuous improvement***

*Institutions should continuously reflect on and review their policies and practices, actively seeking and using feedback from students, to make improvements.*

***Student engagement***

*Institutions should ensure that international students are represented in student engagement activities and that their feedback is taken into account in making enhancements to existing policies and practice.*

***Clear and accessible information***

*Institutions should ensure that the information they provide at all stages of the student lifecycle is clear, accessible, accurate, and consistent across the institution. Where technical terminology is unavoidable, clear explanation should be provided.*

***Shared responsibility***

*Responsibility for meeting the needs of a diverse student body should rest with all staff within an institution, not just those with a specific remit for managing international students' experiences.*

***Staff development***

*All staff working with international students should have access to appropriate training and development opportunities, which support them in recognising and addressing the needs of students.*

**Source:** Bellingham, L. *The International Postgraduate Student Experience – QAA perspective*, UKCGE workshop, 19th April 2012, University of Edinburgh.

**Student feedback**

The promotion and enhancement of effective learning will only occur if issues are identified and rectified and if good practice is highlighted and shared. Student feedback is a key part of this process. The College provides a series of structured opportunities for students to provide feedback on all aspects of the learning experience

**QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 8**

*Higher education providers make available appropriate learning resources and enable students to develop the skills to use them.*

**Student responsibility to engage with the learning process**

The student induction process and every subsequent learning experience must emphasise to the student the need for them to take responsibility for their own learning. They must prioritise their

learning over many other aspects of their life and engage as increasingly independent learners, as they progress through their programmes of study.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 8</b>
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<i>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.</i>
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The process by which students become effective independent learners will depend on their interaction with staff and their peers, and be shaped by the physical learning environment. The College accepts its responsibility to provide a learning environment to meet these needs and to engage staff that share this aim. The QAA (QAA B3 Quality Code Learning and Teaching 2012) guidelines note:

*'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.'*

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B3: Indicator 7</b>
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<i>Every student is provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them.</i>
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### **Student Engagement**

We further recognise that it is important to be flexible so as to respond when necessary to changing patterns of student demand and student recruitment. We accomplish this by:

- reviewing the needs of potential students at undergraduate and postgraduate level so that this can inform the provision of taught courses;
- responding to the current demands for students by distance learning and part-time programmes of study;
- reviewing the portfolio of postgraduate taught courses with the aim of increasing our share of the market for postgraduate students;
- encouraging new initiatives in academic departments which enhance the College through improved academic standards and income;
- integrating the government's agenda for widening participation into the recruitment of students who are suitably qualified and can benefit from study at the College;
- keeping the student recruitment strategy under review to ensure that all aspects of the College's marketing, public relations and alumni development activities contribute to student recruitment in an integrated manner.

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter B4: Indicator 3</b>
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<i>A commitment to equity guides higher education providers in enabling student development and achievement.</i>
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### **Levels of Study and Achievement**

<b>QAA Quality Code Chapter A1: Expectation A1</b>
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<i>In order to secure threshold academic standards, degree-awarding bodies:</i>
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*a) ensure that the requirements of The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland/The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland are met...*

LCB adopts the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications in England Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) level descriptors for its programmes. Learning accredited at the following levels will reflect the students' abilities:

Level 4: Certificate of Higher Education: Students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Level 5: Students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.

Level 6: Students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
  - to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
  - an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
  - the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).

Level 7: Students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline

- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

(Source: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf>)

The above documents should be read in conjunction with the [LCB Student Welfare Policy](#) and the [Dissertation Supervision Policy](#).