**The University of Edinburgh**

**College of Humanities and Social Science**

**Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013 - 2016**

***Overarching aim***

*To support an academic community that stimulates in our students a life-long thirst for knowledge and learning, encourages a pioneering and independent attitude and contributes to society, within and beyond the university.*

***Objectives:***

1. *To encourage students to develop fully as partners in their learning, enriched by participating in a scholarly community characterised by world- leading teaching, research and practice across a range of disciplines.*
2. *To promote and support a diverse and inclusive community of learners and teachers.*

**Strategic Priorities to realise these objectives**

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

**1. To instil in our students the ability to learn independently, collaboratively and with a spirit of enquiry:**

* We will inspire students to be personally and intellectually autonomous and to adopt a collaborative approach throughout their university education and beyond.
* We will encourage students to develop a wide range of research skills through world-class teaching within a research-led environment.
* We will provide students with opportunities to enhance their academic/professional development through learning in partnership with both peers and experts.
* We will develop ways of linking Knowledge Exchange and learning/Teaching to enhance student experience and public engagement with our programmes
* We will provide students with the opportunity to develop their skills in a wide range of ways that will enhance their lives both within and beyond their university career, through additional courses designed to promote and enhance:
* opportunities for language learning and cultural exchange
* opportunities to acquire the numerical and statistical skills necessary to handle data and evidence with confidence
* opportunities for learning about sustainability and social responsibility

**2. To nurture a supportive scholarly community of practice**

A scholarly community of practice requires the active and equal participation of students and staff in the process of developing coherent understanding and transformative learning within each discipline:

* **Working with students as partners**

Students will be encouraged to be actively involved in dialogue with staff about the enhancement of our practices.

* **Providing a supportive student environment**

Students will have access to high quality academic, pastoral and peer support that will assist them to feel supported and confident, both personally and academically, throughout their studies, so that they become confident and successful independent learners.

* **Developing our staff**

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.

* **Sharing good practice**

The sharing of effective practice amongst staff and students, between disciplines (within and outside the College), and developing/strengthening links with IAD and within discipline networks beyond the University, will be facilitated and encouraged.

**3. Appropriate pedagogy, assessment and effective feedback**

We will promote and support the development and continuous improvement of our courses and programmes to provide our students with the optimum learning experience, which is distinctively an Edinburgh experience:

* **Curriculum Design**

Principles of curriculum design - breadth, depth, innovation, use of research, etc. will continue to ensure that the structure, content and assessment methods of our programmes encourage active, collaborative and independent learning.

* **Flexibility**

Flexibility of pathways, modes of learning and assessments are to be encouraged across individual courses and programmes across the College.

* **Assessment/Feedback**

Students will have the opportunity to have their learning assessed in a range of formative and summative ways across courses and programmes, and to receive feedback that will help them to continually improve.

Feedback on assessed work will enable reflection on prior achievements and performance, and also feed forward to inform future assessments. Every course will include a personalised Formative Feedback Event (varying, depending on the pedagogy and subject matter of the discipline) mid-way through the semester.