



# Learning and Teaching Strategy

## Purpose of Strategy

To state the University's strategy for learning and teaching.

## Overview

The Strategy outlines the University's aims for learning and teaching, and its main strategies to enhance its learning and teaching.

## Scope: Strategy

The Strategy applies to all students in the University and to all staff that contribute to learning and teaching activities and to the broader student experience.

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## Document control

Dates	Approved: Jan 2017	Starts: Jan 2017	Equality impact assessment: 11 January 2017	Amendments: N/A	Next Review: 2019-20
Approving authority	Senate Learning and Teaching Committee				
Consultation undertaken	Colleges, Schools, support groups, Students' Association, UCU				
Section responsible for strategy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	University Strategic Plan				
UK Quality Code	Relevant to various sections of the UK Quality Code				
Strategies superseded by this strategy	Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email <a href="mailto:Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk">Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk</a> or telephone 0131 651 4490.				
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# Learning and Teaching Strategy

The University aims to:

- Be recognised nationally and internationally for providing research-led learning and teaching of the highest quality;
- Provide leadership in learning and teaching;
- Offer an educational experience that is inspiring, challenging, and transformational;
- Ensure all students from all backgrounds achieve their potential by providing a supportive environment and rich learning culture; and
- Equip students with the knowledge, skills and experiences to flourish and continue to learn in a complex world and become successful graduates who contribute to society.

## **We will work in partnership with students to bring about enhancements to learning and teaching by:**

- Facilitating effective dialogue with students and representation of student views at all levels of the University and across all modes of study; and
- Developing a Student Partnership Agreement that outlines the University's commitment to partnership with students and highlights priority areas for working together.

## **We will develop and enhance our curriculum by:**

- Embedding the University's excellence in research in our teaching and assessment;
- Using the curriculum to promote inclusion, equality and diversity;
- Supporting a culture of active and engaged students by providing varied opportunities for independent and student-led-learning within and beyond students' main programmes of study;
- Developing opportunities for experiential learning on campus, in the community, and in businesses and other organisations, nationally and internationally;
- Committing to the creative use of digital technologies in our teaching and assessment where appropriate whether online, blended or on-campus; and
- Utilising our world-class libraries and collections in innovative and research-led ways to enrich our curriculum.

## **We will use the flexibility of the standard undergraduate degree structure to build a rounded learning experience including:**

- The opportunity to learn in a research-rich context from year one and, in the Honours years, to specialise and to develop the research and enquiry-led skills to support original research in the core discipline(s);
- Learning experiences that equip students for whatever path they follow once they graduate, including:
  - Greater integration of graduate attributes and employability in all programmes;
  - University-wide courses in a broader range of skills, for example quantitative methods, digital skills and languages;
- The opportunity to participate in courses and modes of learning outside of a student's core discipline(s), and to develop academic skills alongside students from all parts of the University;
- The opportunity for all students to have an international learning experience; and
- A focus on reviewing and enhancing the experience of students on joint Honours programmes.



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**We will offer our postgraduate taught students the opportunity to develop cutting edge and advanced skills and knowledge in their chosen field by:**

- Developing our range of interdisciplinary and specialist programmes, drawing on world-class research expertise from across the University; and
- Building on and growing the University's portfolio of online learning programmes and using them to innovate with new approaches to learning and teaching.

**We will nurture a learning community that supports students by:**

- Ensuring that the Personal Tutor system delivers sustained, effective academic guidance and support;
- Reviewing how accessible, high quality, and well-provisioned pastoral support is best provided and accessed within Schools and from specialist support services;
- Developing assessment and feedback that delivers constructive and supportive dialogue between students and staff;
- Continuing to develop peer support for learning;
- Supporting our academic units to build a strong sense of community for both staff and students;
- Reviewing and enhancing the way that our physical and digital estates support high quality learning and teaching and interaction between staff and students; and
- Exploring whether learning analytics systems can help Personal Tutors provide effective academic support and enhance learning.

**We will recruit and nurture excellent teaching staff by:**

- Celebrating and rewarding the best teaching practices;
- Showcasing success in teaching in our internal and external communications;
- Recognising student education as a key element in our staff recruitment, promotion and annual review processes;
- Developing robust sources of evidence on the quality of teaching;
- Building communities of practice which encourage innovation and diffuse good ideas across the University;
- Embedding professional development in learning and teaching as a routine feature of academic work;
- Pursuing the aspiration that every educator is a digital educator, and that all teaching staff are supported in the appropriate use of the full breadth of learning technologies;
- Ensuring opportunity for reflection, development and innovation in teaching in workload modelling; and
- Recognising the important role played by tutors and demonstrators, and supporting them to develop high-quality teaching practices.

**We will optimise academic and professional support staff time devoted to core learning and teaching activities by:**

- Ensuring through the Service Excellence Programme that the University has high quality, efficient student administration and support services and associated IT systems;
- Reviewing the nature and duties of the academic role; and
- Simplifying academic policies and processes regarding learning, teaching and assessment whilst ensuring that all students across the University are treated equitably.