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Teaching and Learning Policy

1.1 The Context

The College's Teaching and Learning Policy is at the heart of our academic delivery at UKCB. All teaching should take place within the context of a clear, differentiated scheme of work and linked to the college's assessment schedule. It should be based on the highest expectations of what students can achieve and should take place within appropriately organised and managed groups with staff who feel confident of the subject content and their range of teaching techniques.

Effective learning occurs when students:

- 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.
- Work together in an informal environment as well as in formal learning sessions.
- Act responsibly in planning their use of the resource available to enable learning, including the effective use of their own time in independent study.
- Give constructive feedback on their perception of the quality of their learning Opportunities.
- Engage in monitoring and influencing the curriculum by participating in meetings of the Teaching and Learning Committee and by responding to questionnaires.
- Show commitment to attaining the academic standards that have been defined for their programme of study.

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- Encourage students to conduct research in their field of study by providing the necessary environment.

1.2 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.
- There are many different ways to teach, 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).
- It should be inclusive learning through promoting equality, diversity and equal opportunity to higher education providers, staff (all those who facilitate learning), students and other stakeholders working in partnership.
- Diversity of staff and students brings with it different ideas,
- Knowledge and experiences within learning environment. Promoting equality
Involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth irrespective of the group to which they belong, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds.
- Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual circumstances 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 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 offering learning opportunities which 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.
- 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.
- Transforming learning involves a process of becoming critical of those who are aware of one's own tacit assumptions and expectations of others, and assessing their relevance for making an interpretation.

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- Partnership, whether through formal or informal arrangement, 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.
- Teaching and support for learning. Learning and teaching take place in a variety of forms, involving a mix of formal and informal, 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 facilitating student learning. It includes but 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 arrangement with a delivery organisation or through facilitating 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.
- Practices and resources that enable students to develop and achieve their academic, personal and professional potential underpin effective learning and teaching. This activity is often referred to as assessment for learning. An effective approach to summative however, reflects the capacity of any form of assessment to enable ongoing 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.
 - The learning environment

The learning and teaching activities made available by a higher education provider take place within 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.

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This learning environment also encompasses learning opportunities provided, for example, through fieldwork or workplace or placement settings.

- Physical learning environments We will make available physical environments which 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 such as seating arrangements, lighting and acoustics, and availability of technology for planned activities. Where appropriate, learning spaces enable informal as well as formal learning. We will involve students in the process for developing a fully accessible environment, especially students with specific requirements, such as disabled or part-time students We will have a periodic review, for example to the refurbishment of learning 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. We will 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.
- Social learning environments
All interactions among students and staff (including staff who contribute to learning through fieldwork, placements and workbased learning) whether in person or through electronic means reflect the following characteristics:
Dialogue based on mutual dignity and respect
of safe environment for exploring new ideas and for providing feedback even when that is negative.

1.3 Planning for Learning and Progress

All planning, whether long (across a key stage/over a year etc.), medium (a unit of work, a term's work etc) or short (individual lessons) should make clear the desired learning objectives and success criteria, reflecting the ability of students and their prior attainment. It necessitates a shared understanding of schemes of work and understanding of the ways in which students learn best. Often the first stage of learning will be teacher led but allowing students to make relevant points. The second stage could then develop into a more open 'Workshop' based approach, where students will discuss topics in groups, allowing them to become semi independent. The final stage is to make them independent so that they are ready to take up real life jobs in the future, and could feature individual students being allowed to compose their own material.

1.4 Lessons

Effective lessons will broaden students' knowledge and experience, increase students' abilities to learn for themselves, build students' self esteem and promote the development of good

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relationships. In essence, students arriving with X amount of knowledge should leave with X+1 or X+2! It is important therefore to be well prepared.

In the planning of lessons account should be taken of the ability and special needs of the students. It should build on what students have already learned and understood and point the way to future learning. There should however be no “ceiling” to learning based on the student’s prior attainment and students should be motivated and challenged in the work they undertake.

There should be a clear plan for reflective learning within each lesson, and set in context in the scheme of the work. Clear learning objectives will be set at the start of each lesson, ensuring that students understand what is expected. The lesson will be placed into context so that students understand the reason why and what they are required to learn. Clear Learning Outcomes will be set, so that students will know when they have learnt something. Teaching should be arranged in a focused sequence of steps to activate learning and ensure that students can demonstrate that they have understood the sequential nature of the pedagogic frame work . At the conclusion of lessons, emphasis will be placed on the published Learning Outcomes, to ensure that students understand the key concepts of that project and to help them develop their future learning. Any homework setting and/or feedback should be planned into the lessons. Feedback should inform future planning and provide the basis of assessing student progress. Liaison with other parties such as the Learning Support assistants (where necessary) should be arranged in order to fully support the students educational needs.

In addition it will be necessary for the tutor to ensure that all the resources, materials and equipment required for the lesson are to hand and that the lesson begins on time and all necessary support materials are available and working before the start of a lesson.

1.5 Learning

1.5.1 Create an environment that is conducive to learning

- Use displays to create a pleasant working space and to reinforce key learning.
- Have a range of relevant and stimulating resources.
- Make classroom expectations and ground rules clear and constantly reinforced.
- Encourage, praise and reward progress and effort.
- Share enthusiasm and interest in the topic.

1.5.2 Monitor progress and create opportunities to assess what students have learnt

- Use open and closed questions.
- Make constructive comments that indicate what needs to be done.
- Use other assessment opportunities (peer and self, oral, debate etc) to make judgments about progress.

1.5.3 Be prepared to be flexible

- Respond to what is happening and change and adapt plans as necessary as you ascertain what is and is not being learnt.

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1.6 Follow-up to lessons

Reflecting on a lesson and evaluating its effectiveness in meeting its stated learning objectives is necessary to plan future work. This may be a shared or an individual activity and is to be encouraged as a means of sharing good practice and incorporating useful exemplar material within schemes of work. Schemes of work should be regularly reviewed and updated to incorporate new pedagogical practices.

What happens in individual lessons or over a series of lessons may require liaison with other parties (programme leader, Academic head, Head of Quality Control) in order to support learning, monitor progress or report achievement. Staff should refer to learning and teaching policies and College policies on homework, marking, rewards and sanctions, recording and reporting as appropriate.

All lessons observed will use the UKCB lesson observation sheet. Lesson observations in the college, as part of the Performance Management, are seen as an integral part to ensuring that the teaching and learning policy is adhered to and understood.

Next Review January 2020