THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy

2012 – 2015

The Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy (2012-15) builds upon the 5 strategic aims of the previous strategy, in order to consolidate a shared understanding of the priorities for learning, teaching and assessment. It is intended to engage all those involved in learning, teaching and assessment at the University of Kent, including students, academic staff, graduate teaching assistants, administrative and support staff.

The strategic aims are already embedded within the University Plan and overarching Student Experience Strategy for 2012-15, and provide a framework to guide the enhancement of learning and teaching by providing an education that is ‘demonstrably academically excellent, responds appropriately to student expectations, enhances their capabilities and prepares them for the future’ - University Plan (2012-15).

STRATEGIC VISION

A Place to Inspire You / An Approach to Challenge You

We will provide an inspiring student learning experience, by building on our reputation of providing high quality teaching in an international research environment, with a wide variety of opportunities for academic and professional development that will prepare students for the future.

STRATEGIC AIMS

The Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy will continue to achieve this vision by drawing together areas for enhancement based on both institutional and national priorities in learning and teaching:

(1) Challenge and support students to realise their ambitions through active engagement with their studies and full participation in the academic community

(2) Enhance students’ employment prospects and promote lifelong learning through the provision of flexible and diverse learning opportunities
(3) Foster and reward excellence in research-led teaching and enhance professional
development opportunities for staff

(4) Strengthen our learning and teaching infrastructure to respond to changes in
practice and new technology

(5) Encourage participation by all who can benefit from the Kent student experience.

STRATEGIC GOALS

The following overarching goals articulated below follow the review of the strategy,
emerging priorities and national context to inform activities and targets for 2013-14
and beyond. The goals identified map onto some of the Key Indicators in the QAA
Quality Code for HE aimed at Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality (Part B),
with particular emphasis on those sections that underpin the Student Learning
Experience:

- B3 Learning & Teaching
- B4 Enabling Student Development and Achievement
- B5 Student Engagement

(1) Challenge and support students to realise their ambitions through active
engagement with their studies and full participation in the academic community eg

Curriculum development

- Continue to provide a wide-ranging portfolio of programmes to attract a
diverse and internationalised student population
- Use a variety of teaching and assessment methods that will challenge
students and promote development of a broad range of skills
- Focus feedback to students on areas of strength or for improvement to
enhance performance and attainment
- Provide opportunities for wider engagement in the academic community
through seminars, societies or other social events
- Ensure information to students is accurate and highlights the distinctive
features of educational provision and opportunities (eg study abroad/Year in
Industry) from which all students can benefit.

Student support

- Provide student support that promotes academic and professional
development, as well as pastoral support through the Personal Academic
Support System and other initiatives
- Assess the value and impact of student support services for E&D purposes
- Provide information and support to students in a way the promotes effective
engagement with their studies throughout the student life cycle, to enhance
student engagement and retention rates
• Offer a range of opportunities to promote cultural and social awareness, within and outside the University.

**Enhance students’ employment prospects and promote lifelong learning through the provision of flexible and diverse learning opportunities eg**

**Learning opportunities**

- Explore new opportunities for blended and/or distance learning markets that will enhance profile by attracting new student groups and provide wider and more flexible opportunities for learning and/or extra-curricular activity (eg MOOCs, Kent EXTRA)
- Broaden the portfolio of collaborative programmes to provide a range of opportunities for learning and development
- Offer guidance to help students reflect upon their own particular approach to learning and provide support for personal development planning (eg MyFolo), that will inform career progression and engagement with extracurricular activities (eg HEAR)
- Promote and develop opportunities for multi- and inter-disciplinary study, in response to student demand to maintain market position and enhance reputation as UK’s European University.

**Foster and reward excellence in research-led teaching and enhance professional development opportunities for staff eg**

**Staff development**

- Provide opportunities for training of all staff who teach
- Develop HEA-accredited programmes/qualifications for initial and continuing professional development of academic staff in line with UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) - HESA
- Review opportunities to develop new skills that will enhance teaching and the student learning experience
- Use cross-institutional networks to support the development of staff with key roles related to teaching and to share good practice (eg QME, LTN, PASS and Faculty networks/forums).

**Recognition and reward**

- Work with Kent Union to promote their teaching awards scheme
- Identify staff for University teaching and learning support prizes through Schools/Faculties
- Encourage staff to achieve external recognition for excellence in teaching, including awards from HEA and other professional bodies
- Review policy and outcomes for progression and promotion of staff in roles related to teaching.
Strengthen our learning and teaching infrastructure to respond to changes in practice and new technology eg

Technology
- Encourage staff and students to make best use of core digital technologies to support teaching, learning, assessment and feedback.
- Explore new pedagogical and technological opportunities that will enhance current provision by supporting changes in the curriculum and L&T practice
- Adapt or develop teaching spaces in response to staff/ student expectations or feedback
- Support training in digital literacy and scholarship to support the professional development of staff and enhance the employability of students.

Quality enhancement
- Continue to review processes for quality management and enhancement in response to internal needs and external requirements (UK Quality Code for HE).
- Manage and achieve successful outcomes in external reviews (eg professional accreditations and QAA)
- Engage students in the quality management process through student representation on committees, working groups and audits
- Streamline quality management processes to ensure appropriate levels of accountability, but in ways that will allow good practice to be disseminated and inform the enhancement the quality of the student learning experience.

Encourage participation by all who can benefit from the Kent student experience eg
- Assess whether learning opportunities are fair and equal and accessible to all students, irrespective of background.
- Work with FE partners to identify progression routes into and through HE, that will enable the development and integration of vocational and academic programmes of study.
- Promote internationalisation of the student learning experience by developing new partnerships, that promote curriculum development and offer opportunities for awards or exchange.
- Enhance links with employers and professional bodies as a route to contributing to regional and national developments.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

The strategy differs from its predecessor in a number of key ways to reflect the development of the University Plan (2012-15) and related strategies, changes in
quality management and planning processes, in order to provide an increased focus on the dissemination of good practice and enhancement. It places a much stronger emphasis than previously on how the Strategy is to be implemented locally and monitored institutionally by:

- Integrating with other University strategies to simplify, yet consolidate, strategic direction and approach. For example, this strategy focusses more explicitly on L&T enhancement in a way that supports Employability, International, Widening Participation and Graduate School agendas.

- Aligning the strategy more effectively with the annual cycle of University processes for monitoring and planning, so that progress can be monitored against student progression and achievement, as well as student satisfaction (NSS) and areas for enhancement identified in response to internal/external developments.

- Embedding a culture of enhancement by more effectively coordinating the dissemination of good practice through existing networks at University, Faculty and School level that will improve the student learning experience. Representation by students should to be encouraged at these informal forums.

The University's Learning and Teaching Board (LTB) is responsible for implementing and monitoring this strategy to promote a shared understanding of the priorities for the enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment. The L&TE Strategy will be reviewed annually by LTB in light of annual monitoring and plans (Schools, Faculties and professional services) to ensure that the objectives of this strategy are embedded at all levels and achieved within an appropriate timescale. The L&T Enhancement Strategy and collated progress reports for 2009-12 are available at: [http://www.kent.ac.uk/ualt/strategies/ita.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/ualt/strategies/ita.html)