

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY
Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

This document outlines the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy. It seeks to give a clear indication about what all students on a Lancaster programme (undergraduate, postgraduate, research students, distance learners, full-time, part-time, etc.) can expect from Lancaster's learning environment. The commitments and objectives described in this policy are expected to be experienced by all students on each programme of study and are intended to guide the development of specific strategies which support and develop this student-centred policy.

The policy is set out in three sections. The first focuses on the University's key core values which underpin our approach to learning, teaching and assessment. The second describes aspects of the learning environment which all students should experience as part of their programme. The third discusses aspects of the implementation of this policy.

Our Core Commitments

Lancaster University provides a stimulating and attractive learning environment where students can grow personally and academically. We describe this environment as student-centred, rather than teacher-centred, because it is designed with a focus on the learning and development needs of students as they engage with the knowledge and skills of their disciplines. Through this learning environment, we offer high quality programmes, which support students in becoming independent learners and are held in high regard by our graduates, external agencies and employers.

We aim to offer all students:

- a diverse choice of flexible programmes which are responsive to student need and demand, based on sound principles of design, and that are explicitly informed by, and benefit from, Lancaster's vibrant research culture
- high quality and innovative programmes that enable students to develop knowledge and skills that promote personal development, make a positive contribution to society and are valued by external agencies including other universities and employers
- an environment where the diversity of students' backgrounds and experiences is considered in curriculum development and the delivery of courses and transparent admissions procedures that do not unfairly discriminate between prospective students
- academic and pastoral support which aids and encourages students to fulfil their academic and personal potential and benefit from University life

Specific Objectives

Students on all Lancaster programmes will have the opportunity to:

- receive guidance that will enable them to choose an appropriate programme or module pathway at an appropriate level and have access to clear and specific guidelines concerning academic and administrative procedures
- develop the analytical and critical skills necessary to engage with their discipline(s) and to reflect on their academic and personal progress
- benefit from working with academic staff who have expertise in the teaching of their discipline and who are supported in developing, and rewarded for, high quality teaching
- experience a high standard of learning, teaching and assessment that is informed by research, taught by leading researchers and allows students to explore current research in their discipline(s)
- be given a clear indication of the level of academic work expected of them and be provided with timely feedback on how they are progressing towards attaining that level
- experience a variety of effective approaches to learning, teaching and assessment and to be involved in individual and collaborative enquiry within their discipline(s)
- experience fair and transparent summative assessment procedures and, where appropriate, receive timely feedback
- experience learning resources and services, including teaching spaces, library facilities and technologies, that support engagement with their academic discipline(s)
- provide feedback on their learning experience and to be given an indication of how this feedback has been used to further enhance their programme and the learning environment
- be represented by their peers in Departmental and Faculty decision-making processes related to learning, teaching and assessment
- access appropriate support that promotes personal development and facilitates engagement in their programme and in University life
- benefit from the knowledge and skills developed at Lancaster to continue to engage critically with their discipline(s), grow intellectually and make a positive contribution to society

Implementation

The implementation of this policy will take place through the review and development of strategies relating to the enhancement of the learning environment at Lancaster University. This focus on the strategic level implies that the effective delivery of the policy objectives will require Departments and Faculties to work in partnership with other parts of the University including CELT, CEEC, Colleges, ISS, the Library, LUSU, Recruitment and Marketing, Student Support, TQSO, etc.

The intention is that Departments, Faculties, support services and central administration will work together to evaluate their current provision and develop their strategies in order to align with the overall principles and objectives set out in this policy. This would include, for example, the review and development of the following strategies and procedures;

Example Strategies

- Departmental Strategic Plans
- Faculty Strategic Plans
- College strategies
- Student Support Strategy
- University Resource Strategy
- The University Assessment Strategy
- Professional Standards Strategy
- The e-learning strategy
- The IT strategy

Example Procedures

- Course Approval Process
- Annual Programme Review
- Periodic Quality Review
- Module/Course and Programme Feedback procedures

In summary, Lancaster University is committed to offering learning and teaching opportunities of the highest quality within a supportive academic and social community. This policy gives a clear statement of our institutional commitment to student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment and the objectives described indicate how the learning environment at Lancaster should be developed in the future. However, it is recognised that they describe features of the learning environment that, in many parts of the University, already contribute to Lancaster's distinctiveness and form a central part of our students' 'Lancaster Experience'. The aim of this policy is to ensure that these features are experienced by all students across all programmes and supported at all levels within the University.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee
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