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525 YEARS
1495 – 2020

Mapping Against the UK Quality Code

SECTION 7: LEARNING & TEACHING

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SECTION 7: LEARNING & TEACHING

INTRODUCTION

The Quality Code is split into 12 themes, available online on the QAA website at <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>. The Learning and Teaching theme ensures the strategic direction of all learning, teaching and education activity within an organisation. Learning and Teaching is particularly important in the higher education setting, as one of the key strands of activity alongside research. This theme also ensures that all policies are in place to ensure students have a supported and meaningful educational experience. The Quality Code describes this theme as:

This Theme gives guidance to providers to help support the provision of effective, high-quality learning opportunities for all students, wherever or however the learning is enabled and whoever enables it. It applies to any learning opportunity that leads to the award of a UK higher education qualification or academic credit, from short courses involving single modules to multi-year courses. Learning and teaching enables students' achievement to be reliably evaluated through assessment, calibrated to the national reference points, for example the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications.

This theme aims to ensure there is strategic direction and a strategic approach taken to the learning and teaching activities within the University. It also ensures that all students have a high-quality education and student experience, with opportunities for growth and development.

In defining key terms that will be used frequently in this section, the Quality Code notes the following:

Learning: The process through which students acquire new, build on, or reformulate existing, knowledge, skills and practice. 'Teaching' is any activity that facilitates this learning.

Effective learning and teaching: Learning and teaching that enables student achievement towards their intended qualifications or awards, through education that they, and other stakeholders, value. This may be monitored through providers evaluating learner engagement levels.

Stakeholders: The wider community of individuals and bodies that inform, influence and/or contribute to learning and teaching practice in higher education.

SECTION 7: LEARNING & TEACHING

The Quality Code has three different sections: the expectations for standards; the expectations for quality; and the guiding principles. The relevant expectations for standards and quality are detailed below. The Guiding Principles are mapped to the University's own policies, procedures and quality mechanisms. There are two separate sections for the University's practices, detailing what the University does and has in place to support that expectation/principle, as well as the supporting documentation, which includes reference to supporting policy, procedure, website or other document.

EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY & CORE/Common PRACTICES
Courses are well designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.
From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.
The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.
The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience.
The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their education experience.
The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES	UNIVERSITY PRACTICES	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION
GUIDING PRINCIPLES		
1. Effective learning and teaching is underpinned by a shared understanding of the	The University launched its Aberdeen 2040 University Strategy in 2020. This puts education and research at its heart alongside strategic themes of inclusivity, international, interdisciplinary and sustainability. Aberdeen 2040 provides a defining vision for Education at the University and sets out a number of commitments as outlined in the link to our Strategy.	Aberdeen 2040 Strategy (Webpage) University Education Committee (Webpage) Principles and Guidance for Blended Learning (Webpage)

provider's learning and teaching strategy.

Providers adopt an evidence-based strategic approach to learning and teaching, developed and delivered in partnership with staff, students and other stakeholders (where relevant). Course-level strategies for learning and teaching are consistent with provider-level strategy and tailored to the specific needs of the discipline, which may include relationships with professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

The University's Aberdeen 2040 Strategy is supported by an operational plan for 2021-2025 which provides details of the actions, supporting measures, and KPIs to address each strategic commitment. Education Commitments are detailed in the operational plan and are being actioned through a series of Task and Finish Groups (TFGs) in the following areas: Aberdeen 2040 Delivery of Education, Aberdeen 2040 Graduate Attributes and Skills, Decolonising the Curriculum, Pastoral Support Review, Work Placements, Monitoring and Absence, and International Experience. These TFGs align to specific Commitments within the Strategic Plan in order to deliver changes to further advance the educational and student experience.

The Education TFG remits for Aberdeen 2040 Strategy have been shared with the wider community including through the University Education Committee and Senate. The focus for the Aberdeen 2040 work has been discussed widely and agreed through consultation with staff and with students.

All Schools and Professional Services Directorates develop annual plans which are reviewed centrally by the Senior Management Team and inform budget setting and planning. Within these, Schools and Directorates are required to comment on their strategic priorities relating to Education and how these align to, and progress made towards Education-related performance indicators. These plans also seek comment on alignment to the Aberdeen 2040 Strategic themes.

The University Education Committee has oversight of strategic matters relating to Education and the work in regard to delivery of Education commitments as set out in Aberdeen 2040.

Proposals for new degree programmes require business case approval through the Programme Management Committee. As part of the business case, Schools require to comment on the alignment of the proposed programme to their School plan.

	<p>Where programmes are accredited by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB), their requirements and guidelines are taken into account in informing curriculum design and assessment.</p> <p>In response to Covid-19, the University developed a range of Principles of Blended Learning, which are embedded into the education that we deliver. These were developed in consultation with Schools and the wider University community. Support for educational development is provided via the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) via school focused contacts. This structure enables colleagues to develop and deliver education in a subject-specific supported context.</p> <p>In addition, the Community of Practise accessible through the Enhancement Theme, has provided further opportunities for sharing good practise and access to peer support.</p>	
<p>2. Effective learning and teaching is underpinned by a focus on student achievement and outcomes.</p> <p>Providers design, deliver, monitor and evaluate learning and teaching with a focus on the outcomes to be achieved by the student and how effectively the chosen learning and teaching approaches enable this. Providers use a variety of evidence to assess student achievement and outcomes throughout their educational experience and respond accordingly.</p>	<p>For every degree programme, the relevant regulations are in place to ensure that students can achieve and succeed in their learning. This includes assessment regulations to ensure that intended learning outcomes are achieved and assessed appropriately. Aims and intended learning outcomes, at a course and programme level, are considered for appropriateness as part of the approval process and are made available to students ensuring transparency for learners and providing an ability to gauge progress towards the stated outcomes. In addition, students are monitored at a course level in terms of their progress towards the stated outcomes and a system for support exists for individuals who are flagged ‘at risk’ in terms of not being able to meet the intended outcomes.</p> <p>All courses and programmes are monitored annually through the University’s Annual Course and Programme Review procedures. These procedures draw upon a range of feedback to inform the process of review including student feedback through the course feedback form, Staff-Student Liaison Committee meetings, feedback from External Examiners, Programme Advisory Boards and Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies together with analysis of course data and feedback</p>	<p>General Regulations for First Degrees (Webpage) Supplementary Regulations for Postgraduate & Research Awards (Webpage) Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education Framework (Webpage) Inclusivity & Accessibility Reflection Document (Document) Student Support Committee (Webpage) Information Centre (Webpage) Student Monitoring (Webpage) Annual Course and Programme Review (Webpage)</p>

	<p>from the course delivery team and input from class representatives. While Schools manage the Annual Course Review process reviewing these internally, all forms are submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and these are sampled by QAC. Annual Programme Reviews are submitted by Schools to QAC and are discussed with Schools with any policy issues being referred to relevant committees for consideration, as appropriate.</p> <p>A Framework for Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education has been developed which draws together existing policies, guidance, resources, support and specialist training provided to staff and students. This responds to the commitments within the Aberdeen 2040 Strategy of inclusivity, aiming to provide all students with the opportunity to reach their full potential. This also takes into consideration elements of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The Planning Team provide data to Schools on non-continuation, degree classifications, graduate outcomes and league tables, by means of the PowerBI system. These data are then shared with Schools to enhance their quality processes and inform improvements. The data also form part of the discussion at the Student Support Committee, where data are scrutinised by academic and professional service members.</p> <p>Student outcomes and achievement are discussed as part of the University's ITR process with implications for learning and teaching identified (see section 5 below).</p>	
<p>3. Effective learning and teaching provides students with an equivalent high-quality learning experience irrespective of where, how or by whom it is delivered.</p>	<p>The University has a very diverse student body. Our students may be studying on campus in Aberdeen or on one of our TNE campuses, or online studying either a full degree or a single short course. We have a highly international student and staff population drawn from over 130 nationalities. We also have a long-standing commitment to widening access. Our Aberdeen 2040 Strategy recognises this diversity and places strong emphasis on inclusivity recognising our foundational purpose of</p>	<p>Aberdeen 2040 Strategy (Webpage) Inclusion and Accessibility (Webpage) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (Webpage) Equality Impact Assessments (Webpage) Widening Access (Webpage) Principles and Guidance for Blended Learning (Webpage) Risk Register Technical Guidance (Document)</p>

<p>The nature, content and context of students' learning experiences may vary but providers ensure parity of quality of learning opportunities by adopting inclusive learning and teaching practices (see the Assessment Theme for guidance on how this is mirrored in providers' approaches to assessment). Providers ensure that practices take account of different ways of learning, modes of study, diverse educational, linguistic, social and cultural backgrounds, and abilities to provide a flexible and inclusive approach that enables and empowers every student to fulfil their potential and achieve a successful outcome.</p>	<p>being “open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others.”</p> <p>As part of the University Aberdeen 2040 Strategy, inclusivity is a key strand and incorporates equality of opportunity and accessibility for all students. The University’s vision for Equality & Diversity is “To strive to create an inclusive culture which celebrates the diversity of the University’s staff and students. In recognising that this diversity brings new and engaging perspectives and enriches the experience of all who work, study and visit the University, we will take a proactive approach to embedding and mainstreaming the principles of Equality and Diversity.” The EDI policy supports this work.</p> <p>The University operates Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that no group is unduly discriminated against and to ensure activities are carried out in a fair and transparent way. All new policies should be reviewed by means of Equality Impact Assessments to ensure they are fit for purpose in an inclusive environment.</p> <p>The University has developed an Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education Framework which aims to enable inclusion and accessibility to be fully integrated into all aspects of the design and delivery of learning, teaching and assessment. The Framework draws together relevant guidance, policies, resources, support and specialist training relating to accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p>We have a long-standing commitment to widening access and removing unnecessary barriers for prospective students. In this way we aim to create an inclusive educational environment to ensure every student has the opportunity to reach their potential.</p> <p>Educational provision forming part of any collaboration e.g. TNE, joint degrees etc is subject to the same quality scrutiny as standard home campus provision. To ensure consistency of approach, and equality of experience, student outcomes and evaluations are considered as part of a</p>	<p>Resilient Learning Community of Practice (Webpage)</p>
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	<p>‘whole’ irrespective of mode, method and geographical location of delivery. For example, students studying at overseas campuses would be considered at Examiners’ Meetings alongside students on the Aberdeen campus; similarly, School Internal Teaching Reviews include all teaching irrespective of delivery method/location.</p> <p>In response to Covid-19, the University developed a range of Principles of Blended Learning, which are embedded into the education which we deliver. These were developed in consultation with Schools and the wider University community and were applied across the Institution, further ensuring consistency in our delivery of learning irrespective of individual circumstances. The University developed its ‘No Detriment’ policies and procedures to specifically to ensure equality in outcomes throughout this time.</p> <p>In addition, the Resilient Learning Communities Enhancement Theme ‘Community of Practice’ has provided further opportunities for staff to share good practice with supportive peers.</p> <p>Similarly, the Education Strategic Risk Register is maintained by the University Education Committee with its sub-Committees overseeing the relevant risks. This offers oversight and discussion on the key areas and risks pertinent to the Education portfolio.</p>	
<p>4. Effective learning and teaching is informed through reflective practice and providers enable staff to engage in relevant, timely and appropriate professional development that supports students’ learning and high-quality teaching.</p>	<p>The University’s periodic review process, Internal Teaching Review, allows for a holistic review of the pedagogic provision within the academic Schools. This process is focused on quality enhancement with the engagement of management, staff and students within the School. The School is required to complete a Critical Analysis prior to the review which reflects on the pedagogic provision currently taking place in the School.</p> <p>Every programme (or cognate group of programmes) is required to submit an Annual Programme Review, which encourages Schools to reflect, review and discuss each programme and its constituent courses.</p>	<p>Internal Teaching Review (Webpage) Critical Analysis Guidance (Document) Annual Programme Review (Webpage) Enhancement Themes, Leadership (Webpage) Enhancement Themes, University (Webpage) Annual Academic Development Symposium (Webpage)</p>

<p>Effective student learning is facilitated by interaction with appropriately qualified, supported and developed teaching and support staff. Providers ensure that staff demonstrate up-to date knowledge and practice in both their subject and appropriate pedagogies. Providers ensure that staff engage in self-reflection to appropriately inform their learning, teaching and assessment design and practice. Staff are provided with access to continuing professional development (CPD) that is planned, monitored and evaluated (for example, for its impact on student achievement, where possible). Providers offer opportunities for all those involved in learning and teaching to inform each other's practice and experience.</p>	<p>These programme reviews are overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee, with support from the Academic Services team. They identify areas of good and innovative practice, while also highlighting areas for development and enhancement.</p> <p>The University is fortunate to have input in sector-level leadership in the Enhancement Theme, as our Vice-Principal, Education acts as Deputy Chair and our Vice President for Education (AUSA) is the Student Lead. Our institutional Enhancement Theme activities are overseen by the Steering Group and shared with the Resilient Learning Community of Practice. Activities are supported by the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) which also co-ordinates the University's Annual Academic Development Symposium which always aligns with the current Enhancement Theme to which external colleagues are invited. Other external-facing activities include our involvement with the 'Understanding Micro-Credentials and Small qualifications in Scotland' and 'Valuing and Recognising Prior Learning and Experience' clusters.</p> <p>CAD offers professional development (including programmes accredited by AdvanceHE) for all staff and PGRs who teach and support learning. Workshops, courses, networks and discussion fora encourage participants to focus on active student engagement.</p>	
<p>5. Effective learning and teaching is underpinned by routine evaluation of provision to manage and enhance their learning and teaching activities, including achievement of qualification and award outcomes.</p> <p>Providers use a range of internal and external information and</p>	<p>The University's annual and periodic monitoring processes include Annual Programme Review and Internal Teaching Review, respectively. Annual Programme Reviews are the process by which Programme Coordinators reflect and review their teaching provision on their courses and programmes. This process feeds into the wider annual monitoring activities and includes significant input from the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).</p> <p>The Internal Teaching Review process occurs every 5-6 years and allows Schools the opportunity to reflect on the pedagogic provision in their School. The Review Panel includes External Subject Specialists (ESS). The</p>	<p>Annual Programme Review (Webpage) Internal Teaching Review (Webpage) Internal Teaching Review Process (Document) External Examining (Webpage) School Planning Process Aberdeen Student Experience Survey (Webpage) NSS (Webpage) University 5th in UK for Student Satisfaction in NSS (Webpage) Student-Staff Liaison Committees (Document) Course Evaluation Forms (Webpage)</p>

<p>feedback to enable them to keep their approach to learning and teaching under review, taking deliberate steps to facilitate the continuous improvement of the learning opportunities and support they provide. Evaluation and enhancement takes place for all learning and teaching activities.</p>	<p>ESS may come from a UK or overseas institution, from industry or from professional practice. The teaching review includes sessions with an array of stakeholders, including School management, academic and support staff, as well as students. One of the key elements within the Internal Teaching Review process is the Pedagogic Partnership Session, which invites academic staff and students alike to join together to create an action plan for the School and to assess each other's feedback.</p> <p>External experts, including appointed external examiners, assist Schools in the reflection and evaluation of teaching provision. Programme Advisory Boards and similar include industry and academic experts to assist the School/Programme in the enhancement of quality within the provision. External Examiners are appointed to every programme (or cognate group of programmes) and evaluate the teaching, learning and assessment within that programme. Formal Examiners' Meetings allow for an open and constructive dialogue with the School on matters pertinent to the assessment and degree classification of students. Schools are expected to liaise with their External Examiner on new assessments and changes to existing assessments to ensure their appropriateness. Where relevant, Schools also draw upon Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body guidance to inform the curriculum ensuring it remains in alignment with requirements.</p> <p>Provision provided with or through partner institutions is scrutinised on an annual basis through the reports submitted to the QAC.</p> <p>The planning process for Schools also allows for an evaluation of provision. Each School and Professional Services Directorate has the opportunity to meet with the Senior Management team and colleagues in the Directorate of Planning to evaluate their provision, aspects of good practice and aspects for development, as well as reviewing resource allocation and financial planning, which supports the teaching provision.</p>	<p>Programme Advisory Boards (Webpage)</p>
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	<p>In terms of student evaluation of teaching, the University uses an array of mechanisms to ensure teaching is high quality and that feedback can enhance their education. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Aberdeen Student Experience Survey</i>: this is an internal survey developed for University of Aberdeen students and is separate from national surveys, such as NSS. The survey gathers feedback on an array of University Services, facilities and activities which help to inform enhancements to the student experience. ▪ <i>National Student Survey (NSS)</i>: NSS is managed by the Office for Students on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council and gathers student opinion on the quality of their courses. This assists Universities in enhancing the student and academic experience. ▪ <i>Student-Staff Liaison Committees</i>: within each School, class representatives are invited to collaborative fora to discuss any ongoing issues or concerns that the School could act upon or seek University action on. These help to enhance the student learning and teaching provision, and allow for constructive dialogue with students. ▪ <i>Course Evaluation Forms</i>: every student has the opportunity to submit feedback on each of their courses. This is accessed electronically by a dedicated system and allows teaching staff to ascertain the issues and positive aspects of their provision. These forms feed into the wider annual monitoring activities, such as Annual Course Reviews and Annual Programme Reviews. 	
<p>6. Effective learning and teaching activities, facilities and resources make the learning environment accessible, relevant and engaging to all students.</p> <p>Providers design their learning environment to be safe, accessible and suitable for the nature of the</p>	<p>The University Estates Committee’s purpose is to oversee the University’s estate in order that it can support world-class academic, teaching and research activity. The Committee makes recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee and Court in terms of facilities development required to enhance the learning environment.</p> <p>The University has three Library sites, including the Sir Duncan Rice Library and Taylor Law Library on the Old Aberdeen Campus, as well as the Medical Library on the Foresterhill Campus. These libraries are available to students throughout their studies and during term time are open until late. During periods of exams, the libraries move to 24-hour</p>	<p>Digitally Enhanced Learning Spaces, Online (Webpage) Digitally Enhanced Learning Spaces, Toolkit (Webpage) Our Libraries (Webpage) Study Spaces (Webpage) Hardship Options, including Digital Poverty Fund (Webpage) Framework on Accessibility & Inclusivity in Education (Webpage)</p>

<p>learning activities and planned in a systematic way in consultation with students. The learning environment may encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical environment (seating, lighting and acoustics, availability of technology) • virtual environment (technological facilities including virtual learning environments and library systems) social learning environment (dialogue based on mutual dignity and respect and a safe environment for exploring new ideas and providing feedback). 	<p>opening which allows students the opportunity to study at all times of day. These ensure that resources and dedicated study spaces are available and accessible to students when they need them.</p> <p>The University also has an array of dedicated study spaces, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The University Libraries ▪ Computer classrooms which are available on all campuses, when not being used for teaching ▪ A number of drop-in co-lab based group student spaces in the Sir Duncan Rice Library and the Suttie Centre ▪ A small number of single occupancy study spaces, which can be booked for those with an online class followed directly by an on campus class and vice-versa. <p>The University also delivers transnational education through its Qatar Campus where teaching is delivered in partnership with AFG College and at the Aberdeen Institute of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence at South China Normal University. To ensure equity of student experience, care is taken to ensure the facilities and digital infrastructure align, where appropriate, with the Aberdeen campus taking account of cultural needs.</p> <p>The University uses Virtual Learning Environments to support delivery of teaching, learning and assessment, both for students studying on campus and those learning online. Since 2019, Schools have been moving their courses from the Institutional VLE, MyAberdeen (which uses Blackboard Learn), to Blackboard’s newer product, ‘Ultra’. The Ultra Course View provides a simpler, more modern, personalised and accessible course experience for staff and students, than before. The Schools who have still to move over to Ultra will have completed this it time for teaching in September 2022.</p> <p>Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and prior, extensive work was carried out by colleagues in Digitally Enhanced Teaching and Meeting Spaces Group, including colleagues from Estates, IT, the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) and the Dean for Educational Innovation, which was</p>	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Webpage)</p> <p>Decolonising the Curriculum Steering Group (Webpage)</p>
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set up to oversee the development of digitally enhanced classrooms to support the requirements for blended learning. This negates the necessity for some staff to 'double teach' and allows for online and on-campus students to be present in the same place. This work is also part of an ongoing approach to developing our physical and digital infrastructure, particularly in support of our education provision.

In supporting students to engage in their studies, the University has also set up a range of hardship funds, which includes a Digital Poverty Fund for those students who did not have adequate or necessary equipment to allow them to engage in their studies during blended learning. This is administered by the University student support team.

The University has recently developed its Framework on Inclusivity and Accessibility in Education, which draws on policies, guidance, resources, support and specialist training provided to all staff and students. This responds to the commitments within the Aberdeen 2040 Strategy of inclusivity, aiming to provide all students with the opportunity to reach their full potential. It also outlines the range of support available to students to support them in their studies, should they require it.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee also plays a role in ensuring that the University is a safe, inclusive and accessible space for all staff and students, regardless of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender, for example. The Committee includes members of senior management, relevant colleagues and memberships of various equality networks.

In addition, as part of the ongoing Aberdeen 2040 Strategy agenda, the Decolonising the Curriculum Steering Group will develop an approach which addresses embedded racial stereotypes and/or limited perspectives in the curriculum and will support Schools to develop learning materials which offer students a rich diversity of views and role models. This will help to facilitate a safe and inclusive pedagogic experience for students.

<p>7. Effective learning and teaching ensures that information about, and support for, learning and teaching is clear and accessible to all students and stakeholders.</p> <p>Providers give clarity on the responsibilities of staff, students and, where appropriate, other stakeholders (such as employers involved in work-based learning and apprenticeships) for learning and teaching and its support. Information is provided in an inclusive, transparent and accessible way. Providers engage students to monitor, review and evaluate this information to ensure that it meets the needs of different groups of students.</p>	<p>The University committee structures related to Education have been changed to include greater focus and collaboration with the academic Schools. These changes ensure that there is close integration and communication between School Education Committees and the University Education Committee and its sub-committees. This ensures that decision-making relating to Education matters is appropriately informed by the discipline specific perspectives of all Schools. This close working with Schools is further strengthened by fortnightly informal meetings between the Vice Principal, Education and the Director of Academic Services and Online Education with the School Directors of Education providing a forum for engagement, discussion and close collaboration.</p> <p>There are a range of communications that are provided to students prior to study and over the course of their studies that give detailed information on their teaching, learning and assessment. These are informed by the Student Communication Policy. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New Student Communications ▪ Ongoing eZines; providing relevant information on the student and academic experience ▪ Online Orientation; providing information on induction and orientation to students about their studies ▪ Orientation Events; which allow students to gain an insight into their studies <p>An area within the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which outlines the key policies and policy changes relevant to the students' teaching and learning is highlighted to students. This contains information and addresses issues such as what to do when absent, how to raise an appeal or complaint and processes for degree classification, among other things. Information is updated at least annually, with a communication issued to students and broadcast on social media to alert them to this important information. This ensures the information is disseminated to students in a clear and accessible manner.</p>	<p>Student Communication Policy (Policy), note this is currently being reviewed.</p> <p>Communicating with You (Webpage)</p> <p>New Student Communications (Webpage)</p> <p>Online Orientation and Induction (Webpage)</p> <p>Key Policies for Students (Webpage)</p> <p>MyAberdeen (Webpage)</p> <p>Toolkit (Webpage)</p>
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	<p>At a programme and course level, handbooks and information within VLE organisational areas provides students with specific information relating to their course and programme covering topics including intended learning outcomes, assessment arrangements, key contacts and deadlines.</p> <p>Key resources and information about student support services are available through the University's Virtual Learning Environment. Information is also available in the University's Toolkit which provides a rich set of learning resources.</p> <p>Detailed information regarding our relationships and working practices with employers and other stakeholders in relation to work-based learning is available in our separate document mapping our policies and procedures to Section 12 of the Quality Code relating to Work-Based Learning.</p>	
<p>8. Effective learning and teaching encourages and enables students to take an active role in their studies.</p> <p>Providers enable students to engage in independent learning relevant to the level of study, working in partnership with individuals and teams to display appropriate academic behaviour and integrity. Providers assist students to transition and progress through their studies.</p>	<p>The University has established transition programmes with a focus on widening access students and these have expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic to be available to all students. Recruitment and academic colleagues collaborate closely on these programmes. These programmes provide students with an insight into the University experience (academic and wider) and students can be signposted to more specific training, such as in relation to maths.</p> <p>A staged orientation programme enables students (new and returning) to enhance their skills in working with the University systems (such as the Virtual Learning Environments and Toolkits) before teaching begins. Orientation is at central University level, and also at School level, and is reviewed constantly to ensure that it is as effective as possible for students to be aware of what is expected of them and how to meet this. When students join the University, Professional Development courses for UG and PGT students enable further development of professional and transferrable skills which students can use to ensure they engage actively in their studies.</p>	<p>Widening Access (Webpage) Student Orientation (Webpage) Pastoral Support & Guidance (Webpage) Personal Tutoring (Webpage) Peer Support (Webpage) MyCurriculum (Webpage) Support & Wellbeing (Webpage) Study Resources (Webpage) Centre for Academic Development (Webpage) Accredited Programmes, CAD (Webpage) Inclusivity & Accessibility in Education Framework (Webpage) Disability Services (Webpage) Money Matters (Webpage) Policy on Lecture Capture (Policy) Class Representation, AUSA (Webpage) Student Feedback (Webpage) STAR Award (Webpage) Co-Curricular Activities (Webpage)</p>

Pastoral support systems (such as the undergraduate Personal Tutor) and peer support systems provide a framework within which students can raise questions informally, and also access more specific support (for example Registry, MyCurriculum and Student Support) to ensure they have the necessary information and support.

The Student Learning Service (SLS) in the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) works closely with students and academic staff. SLS provide support for students and staff, ensuring students are able to take an active role in their studies. For example, SLS provide support with respect to Specific Learning Differences.

The Accessibility and Inclusivity in Education Framework draws together resource and practice to support staff in enabling all aspects of Education to be inclusive such that all students can take an active role. The Disability Team in the Student Support and Advisory Team, School Disability Coordinators and academic staff collaborate to ensure that any reasonable adjustments can be delivered in an effective and timely manner.

Financial support is available through the Hardship Fund to all students in need. This was particularly valuable in providing IT hardware support in COVID times.

The University's established policy regarding recording of lectures, alongside the practice of lectures only being recorded (and now captioned) in COVID times has provided flexibility for students and more options for their active engagement in their studies.

The Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA) School Convenor system and Class representative system provides a formal structure for students to influence actively the ongoing and future delivery of teaching and learning for example through Staff-Student Liaison Committees. The *You Shape UoA* feedback system and the Aberdeen Student Experience Support also provide other opportunities for feedback and academic and

[Principles and Guidance for Blended Learning \(Webpage\)](#)

[How Do I Encourage Active Learning in the Online Environment? \(Webpage\)](#)

[Students with Specific Support Needs \(Webpage\)](#)

[Equality, Diversity & Inclusion \(Webpage\)](#)

[Student Monitoring \(C6 and C7\) \(Webpage\)](#)

professional services colleagues work closely to ensure issues are considered by the relevant person.

In terms of co-curricular activities, the Careers and Employability Service support a range of activities to enhance and support student learning. Some of these initiatives include the STAR (Students Taking Active Roles) Award, volunteering opportunities, career mentoring, study abroad, and enterprise and entrepreneurship. These activities are recognised on the Student Transcript as a recognition of the extra- and co-curricular activities that have been undertaken throughout their studies.

The move to blended learning in the light of COVID has led to teaching, learning and assessment being delivered in different ways, providing a variety of means for students to engage actively. Discussion through the Aberdeen 2040 Delivery of Education Task and Finish Group is currently giving consideration to the future approach to be taken to delivery.

The University recognises the links between delivery of teaching and learning and the wider University experience. There is regular collaboration between students, Professional Services Directorates and School to ensure that students are provided with the best opportunities to engage actively with their studies, particularly in relation to students with particular experiences and characteristics (e.g. disabled, race, estranged from family).

The University has an established system of monitoring engagement with study to identify at an early stage those who may be struggling. This allows active engagement and support to be provided to ensure that students can be helped to get back on track with their studies.

The delivery of education is structured around the Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison, 2008; Vaughan, 2013). This model is based on an approach that students are supported to develop a social presence and through this be supported to enhance their active engagement with learning opportunities.

	<p>CAD offers professional development (including programmes accredited by AdvanceHE) for all staff and PGRs who teach and support learning. Workshops, courses, networks and discussion fora encourage participants to focus on active student engagement.</p>	
<p>9. Providers encourage and enable students to evaluate and manage their own learning development, supported by opportunities for ongoing dialogue with staff.</p> <p>Providers encourage students to evaluate their learning experiences and provide feedback in dialogue with individuals and teams through deliberate steps that inform the enhancement of learning and teaching.</p>	<p>Within each Academic School, students are engaged in evaluation of their teaching and learning experience in a myriad of ways. This includes the Student-Staff Liaison Committees, which include representation from all student cohorts, levels and degree programmes. This is facilitated by the Class Representation System, linked closely with the Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA). The Course Evaluation Form process further allows students to provide feedback at a course level both in regard to areas for improvement but also areas of good practice.</p> <p>As part of course design staff are encouraged to ensure that assessment strategies include sufficient opportunities for formative assessment and feedback, in addition to summative assessment. These provide students with opportunities to evaluate their own progress within a course.</p> <p>The University recognises the importance of feedback in supporting and developing students' learning and the value of self-evaluation as part of this process. As such, the University operates a Feedback Framework which provides students with a clear set of expectations for this process.</p> <p>The Student Monitoring process is used to highlight students who may be at risk of not meeting learning outcomes at a course level, as part of a supportive framework. Students are encouraged to meet with staff to discuss any issues they may be encountering and are signposted to additional sources of support.</p> <p>The University places strong emphasis on the involvement of students on committees and in decision making. Each School has an Aberdeen University Students' Association elected School Convener who is the lead student representative for each School. They work closely with the</p>	<p>Student-Staff Liaison Committees (Document) Course Evaluation (Webpage) Class Representation, University (Webpage) Class Representation, AUSA (Webpage) Student Monitoring (Webpage) Feedback Framework (Webpage) Design, Deliver and Evaluate your Teaching (Webpage) University Education Committee (Webpage) Senate, Membership (Webpage) Cognitive Presence (Webpage)</p>

elected class representatives to feed any concerns about courses and programmes to the School. The School Convener (or other student representative) attends School-level committees (e.g. School Education Committee) where they are able to contribute to discussions around future courses and programmes, policy matters, feedback (e.g. NSS results) and other matters. At a University level, AUSA representatives are also full members of all Education committees including the University Education Committee and the Quality Assurance Committee along with Senate which is the University's main academic decision-making body.

The Vice President for Education at AUSA is included on the Vice-Principal, Education's informal education team. The Vice-Principal, Education also meets with the AUSA Education Committee monthly, to foster good relations in the spirit of collaboration and transparency.

The Student Learning Service offers academic skills advice and guidance to students to evaluate and manage their learning, through one-to-one sessions, workshops, and online resources.

Within the Community of Inquiry Framework approach embedded within the University of Aberdeen's teaching development, the domain of cognitive presence encompasses a focus on supporting students to track and review their progress. Cognitive presence refers to the extent to which participants, both students and teaching staff, are able to construct meaning through sustained communication. This kind of communication, as opposed to one-way dissemination of information, encourages critical thinking.