

HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

POLICY VERSION NUMBER	01
MEMBER OF STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR POLICY	Head of Department responsible for Higher Education

RECORD OF REVISIONS TO POLICY		
DATE	DETAILS	APPROVED BY

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Introduction

This strategy seeks to set out the Barnfield College's intentions with regard to its responsibilities and aspirations for the pedagogical experiences of its HE students. The strategy is based upon the messages from the Roehampton University Teaching and Learning enhancement strategy.

The College recognises the potential economic and social impact of Higher Education (HE) and high skilled jobs within Luton, surrounding areas, and across Bedfordshire and sees itself as a key part of driving knowledge based society of economic stability and social equality. Moreover to ensure that potential students who are vulnerable to non-participation are given realistic choices in progression and advancement of their studies.

The motivation behind this framework is that:

- Students as the primary users of the programmes of study experience an excellent learning and teaching, experience.
- Students are secure in the knowledge that their learning experience is informed through their feedback and learning needs and that this is in keeping with the expectations of learning in HE which has set out by the UK Quality Code.
- Through discussion and debate of learning and teaching, its purposes, principles and practices we can support colleagues in greater understandings of pedagogy and consequently contribute to students achieving higher standards.

Scope of the Strategy

It is to be used by both students and staff to inform the practice of learning and teaching of all students where the course is funded by HEFCE either directly or indirectly funded.

The Aim of the Strategy

The aim of the strategy is to set out the expectations of students' learning experiences and to outline the pedagogical approach that the College takes to enhancing this experience.

We seek to enhance learning activities within the College by bringing staff and students together to create a sense of belonging and of common purpose, enabling greater staff/student contact, more peer support and mentoring, and a greater sense of ownership of academic agendas.

The ultimate aim of Higher Education provision at Barnfield College is to produce graduates who are:

- Highly employable, exhibiting economically valuable graduate skills and the attributes of autonomy, criticality, creativity, resilience and who are excellent communicators;
- Ambitious yet idealistic and committed to ethical behaviours;
- Respectful of and value cultural differences;
- Able to access a wider range of employment and professional opportunities;
- Confident and competent to take on management roles in the workplace, the home and the community;
- Able to compete for senior and specialist roles within their vocational area;
- Entrepreneurs who are able and willing to innovate seeking ever more effective ways of working within the sector.

Ethos

This aim of this strategy is to empower teaching staff to develop teaching strategies which actively set out to challenge the orthodoxies in their subject

or discipline; to go beyond traditional modes of teaching and course content with a view to reconceptualising disciplines and develop students' ownership of their subject, their learning and their development.

Pedagogical Approach

The pedagogical approach at Barnfield College is informed by the College's mission statement and the strategic objectives of the College for Higher Education.

The College expects that all staff members to strive for excellence in their job role this includes its lecturers and curriculum staff, accordingly we expect staff to develop effective reflective practice that embeds a culture of continuous improvement.

Our approach to delivery is directly and explicitly focussed on the development of students' graduate skills that are underpinned by profound and current subject knowledge.

Higher Education at Barnfield College is based on three key precepts;

Academic

The College recognises the learning needs of its students in relation to their development of academic literacy we see this as a critical skill in enabling students to engage with, and articulate, their knowledge and understanding of their subject.

Central to this is the role of the lecturer in facilitating students' capacity to find their own voice within the discourses of their subjects. This will include developing the students' capacity to understand the use and value of engaging with the wider material that forms the discourse of their subject and how this can be utilised to develop and inform critical thinking and praxis.

Equally, students will be enabled to understand the iterative nature of representing and communicating their thinking whether this is through writing, oral presentation or work-based products. Central to these delivery paradigms is the tutor's role is promoting creativity and problem-solving together with tenacity and divergent thinking skills.

Employability and Professionalism

This learning and teaching strategy sees all student employability as far more than the acquisition of a particular job. It aims to empower our students to reflect on their own individuality within their chosen career, to behave ethically and to strive for excellence and praxis in their profession.

Employability and professionalism is based the notion that employability as: ‘a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.’

The College will ensure that our graduates stand the very best chance of securing the type of employment they want, and that they are in very high demand by employers. In order to achieve this, the College will provide students with holistic educational experience that develops in our students a range of knowledge, practical skills and attributes that will equip them for the future in whatever field they choose.

The College will seek to develop opportunities for leadership and management through its curriculum design as well as by developing research skills and communication skills together with the ability to manage their own intellectual, personal and professional development.

Learning

The academic success and personal development of our students is dependent on their taking personal responsibility for their learning and taking up the opportunities offered by the environment in which they work and study. A key consideration of the staff group is to foster independence of thought together with the capacity to challenge their own thinking and that of others in order to develop confidence as co-creators of knowledge.

Through our teaching we will seek to enable students to reflect on and understand their own learning processes as an autonomous undergraduate who strives for excellence within meta-learning experiences.

Student feedback and learning experiences

Student feedback has been continuously collated over the years since Barnfield College first started to deliver Higher Education provision.

Students have expressed the following expectations:

- Teaching is challenging and clearly focused on the learning outcomes of the programme and modules;
- Clarifies the learning expectations of set tasks whether they are formatively summatively assessed.
- Draws on the professional experience of the tutor particularly at high levels or specialist work;
- Sets high expectations, is explicit and transparent;
- Recognises the specific learning needs of non-traditional students;
- Uses assessment tasks that are clearly related to vocational experiences
- Clearly communicates and embeds the principal academic thinking skills of synthesis, critical analysis and evaluation that underpin their discipline.

The fundamental approach to teaching at Barnfield College is based on systems and strategies that facilitate learning in a clear, explicit and professional way which is based on deep and current subject knowledge that covers the Learning Outcomes comprehensively. Teaching, training and assessment will employ some, or all of the approaches outlined above making a judgement of what best suits the needs of the students and the requirements of a programme.

A critical self-awareness of the need to challenge and evaluate all our activities is fundamental will inform our on-going quality enhancement and development. We will ensure that high quality teaching is it is supported and enriched by learning and teaching strategies that enable students to become active and autonomous students who take responsibility for their own learning as creators and co-creators of knowledge and ideas, not the passive recipients of teaching.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process and must be fair and transparent. It must also encourage learning, by engaging students appropriately in the assessment process and by offering them feedback that enables them to improve their work further. The College Higher Education

Assessment Strategy sets out clear parameters for the provision of feedback, and the expectations that teaching staff have of students in this regard. The College will encourage students to use tools such as *Turnitin* to facilitate an understanding of the nature of plagiarism and to provide them with an opportunity to self-police in advance of the submission of coursework and other assessed material.

Resourcing of higher education

Staff, facilities, equipment and learning materials

Barnfield College acknowledges the importance of recruiting staff with appropriate disciplinary specialisms, qualifications and experience and are recruited to fulfil identified disciplinary needs.

The College continues to liaise closely with its collaborative HEIs to ensure that students are fully equipped to engage with the learning process. All students have equal library lending rights and they are fully inducted into the HEIs learning resource centre.

These facilities are augmented by specifically selected learning and research materials at the College, this means that good value is made of finite resources and that students are fully supported.

Continuous professional development and scholarly activity, which includes professional updating

All staff will continue to participate in Continuous Professional Development as is required by the Institute for Learning and the Higher Education Academy; this is enhanced through the College's sponsorship of scholarly activity which is appropriately matched to the developmental and quality needs of HE provision. To this end these activities will focus on; practice-based research, pedagogical research, ensuring that subject expertise reflects the depth and breadth of knowledge as is necessary in a HE teaching environment and research that ensures that employer engagement is embedded into disciplinary development.

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility for the quality and standards of learning and teaching *lies with each and every lecturer and subject area leaders.*

However, effective leadership and good management are also vital to ensure that tutors are supported in implementing the learning and teaching strategy.

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Head of Department 19+ are responsible for:

- Developing full and accurate strategies and frameworks that allow staff deployed to teach on Higher Education programmes to work efficiently and develop those skills that promote excellence in learning, teaching and assessment;
- Identify and remain updated on current thinking of those pedagogical practices that contribute to effective and outstanding teaching, learning and assessment;
- Using the student feedback process to accurately reflect on the quality of learning and teaching and make appropriate development plans to address both emerging issues and to promote and share excellent practice.

Heads of Department (subject areas) are responsible for:

- Observing, and making accurate judgements with regard to the quality of teaching and assessment within their area of responsibility;

- Feedback to staff openly candidly and in sufficient detail that will allow staff sufficient information to reflect fully on their capacity to promote the principal of excellent teaching;
- Provide appropriate support to tutors to become excellent practitioners.

Lecturers are responsible for:

- Planning, implementing and assessing those units or modules for which they have responsibility with due regard to the diverse learning needs of their students within a multi-cultural society.
- Reflecting fully, accurately and candidly on the impact of their teaching on their students' learning.
- Participating in Initial Teacher Education Programmes and Continuing Professional Development.
- Identifying, seeking support for, and actively addressing their own developmental needs within the College's strategic plan.
- Promptly responding to student feedback in relation to their learning experience.

