Learning, Teaching and Assessment
Sub-Strategy 2012-2017

1) Summary

At the University of Wolverhampton we believe that students are our partners with a continuing joint investment in sustaining our institutional reputation for excellence in innovation, knowledge transfer and research. Students will benefit from teaching that is linked with professional practice, scholarship and research. They will graduate with the ability to operate in a fast-changing, dynamic and evolving world. Our teachers will be adept at linking professional practice, scholarship and research to their teaching to create a responsive, expert-based learning environment. We aim to develop students who are critically reflective, entrepreneurial, employable, digitally literate, well networked and socially responsible, in line with our institutional graduate attributes.

2) Context - Current Challenges and Opportunities

The current institutional challenges facing learning, teaching and assessment are to identify and meet the needs of a diverse student body, studying in a range of university delivery modes within a constantly changing socio-economic, technological, regional and global context.

We are faced with demands for increasingly flexible curriculum design as the university moves into an environment where students are faced with increased costs of their higher education and will expect to see direct vocational curriculum relevance with clear links to current and future employment.

In response to these challenges we have the opportunity to benefit from a world that offers increased virtual and networked connectivity, by providing learning, teaching and assessment anytime and anywhere within local, regional and international environments.

3) Vision - ‘Where we want to be’ in relation to learning, teaching and assessment

We aim to be innovative in our academic practice, providing programmes informed by research and delivered in a variety of modes by creative staff that have both academic and teaching expertise.

We aim to embed a culture of partnership in our learning, teaching and assessment, where staff and students work together in a responsible and collaborative environment.
4) Mission – ‘Overriding purpose’ of learning, teaching and assessment strategy

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is intended to provide all students with every possible opportunity to realise their potential, raise their aspirations and promote active student engagement with learning.

The university will work in partnership to develop, deliver and enhance its provision and educational experience with all key stakeholders including the existing student body, alumni, professional bodies or employers, industry and external agencies.

5) Goals – ‘What we must do to achieve our vision’

In order to achieve our vision, we must:

5.1 Provide inclusive, flexible, sustainable and collaborative learning opportunities and experiences

- Support and develop increasingly responsive learning systems, learning resources, spaces and environments in order to optimise all students’ active engagement in all learning modes.

- Promote networked learning by partnering students in the creation and use of interactive and collaborative learning opportunities which harness the range of current and developing potentials of connectivity and access to expertise.

- Provide innovatively designed, pedagogically sound, employer-responsive and, where appropriate, professionally accredited programmes. This will be underpinned by the development of course teams, partnered with students and central services, who will lead evidence-informed course development and annual course enrichment.

- Develop flexible modes of engagement with our stakeholder communities.

5.2 Recognise, value and reward professionalism in learning, teaching and assessment

- Develop academic and professional communities of practice for example, through supportive and developmental peer review and reflection in order to increase the systematic dissemination and embedding of good practice in learning and teaching and related subject and pedagogical research.

- Further develop the recognised continuing professional development profile and career opportunities of all individuals involved in teaching, learning and assessment, by providing the relevant staff development structure and support.

- Create and maintain a framework for evidence-informed, developmental, learning and teaching awards in partnership with the Students’ Union.
5.3 Engage with, and learn from, our students as partners in education

- Embed the Student Voice as an intrinsic part of the decision-making process of the University. Students will have an integral role in the enhancement of their academic and overall experiences through their student voice.

- Advise and support all learners in their academic decision-making throughout their studies. The Personal Tutor will systematically support the student’s academic progression and individual learning development needs.

- Create and develop well-designed and accessible assessments that are varied, inclusive and that will give students every opportunity to achieve their full potential. Assessment regulations will be fair and fit for purpose and will facilitate the highest possible achievement as appropriate for each student.

- Develop peer to peer support by providing students with opportunities to engage with their fellow learners to form a community of learning.

- Provide our students with high quality academic, administrative, technical and pastoral support as partners in their education, in order that they develop as independent learners, and to ensure that they have the appropriate support to develop skills essential for the world of work.

6) Resource Implications

6.1 Provide inclusive, flexible, sustainable and effective learning opportunities and experiences

- New E-learning platform and on-going investment in the associated support for the learning infrastructure
- Rolling programme of appropriate investment in computers and mobile devices that are used in support of learning, teaching and assessment
- On-going maintenance and development of physical and virtual learning and teaching spaces
- Support for the development of the university Framework for Skills
- Investment in innovative pedagogically sound technology e.g. lecture capture systems, classroom SMS systems
- Appropriate technical and pedagogical support staff posts:
  - e.g. Network Learning advisers, Open Educational Resources support

6.2 Recognise, value and reward professionalism in learning, teaching and assessment

- Investment in a sustainable staff learning and teaching award scheme
- Continued provision of, and support for internal and external learning, teaching and assessment CPD programmes
- Support of appropriate staff development time for individuals and course teams
- Investment fund to incentivise learning and teaching initiatives e.g. to support the development of students as partners in learning
6.3 Engage with, and learn from, our students as partners in education

- Improved management information system enabling easy access to learning, teaching and assessment data
- Investment in on-line feedback systems to support streamlined personal tutoring arrangements

7) Monitoring and Evaluation

*To focus on impact via evidence-informed institutional data and research*

- University Quality Enhancement Committee (or equivalent committee)
- Course journals
- Student feedback
- Periodic review
- QAA reports
- National Student Survey / Internal Student Survey
- Internal and external audit
- External examiner reports
- Individual appraisal

8) Dependencies and Linkages to other Strategies

Other Sub Strategies

- The Wolverhampton Offer
  - The student learning and teaching experience
- Research
  - Research-informed teaching
  - Pedagogical research
- Internationalisation
  - Global citizenship as a graduate attribute
  - Support for international students
  - Learning and teaching support for international partners
- Enterprise and employability
  - Employer informed curriculum design
  - Enterprise as a graduate attribute

Other Enabling Strategies

- Information strategy
  - Generation of easily accessible quantitative data relevant to learning, teaching and assessment
- Investment strategy
  - Networked (blended / distance) learning
• People strategy
  o Staff development programme to support learning and teaching
    ▪ Mandatory programme for new staff
    ▪ Support for curriculum development
    ▪ Support for innovation in technology
    ▪ CPD in learning and teaching for all staff
  o Staff awards in learning and teaching
  o Staff performance management
  o Staff appraisal

• Campus strategy
  o Maintenance and development of flexible learning opportunities
    e.g. learning spaces and furniture, appropriate opening hours of support facilities.

• Recruitment and Reputation Strategy
  o Students as partners in their educational experience
  o Staff as expert teachers and researchers in their field
  o University as a leader in networked (Blended / distance) learning

9) Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to be reported to Board of Governors

• Improved student retention
• Improved student progression
• Improved student achievement