



Leeds Trinity
University

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2015-20

Professionalism – Leeds Trinity has a long tradition, and an enviable reputation, in the development of employable graduates. This strategy is designed to build upon that history and take the opportunity to further develop this crucial strand of our work. We will retain the requirement for all of our undergraduate students to undertake an extended work placement during each of their first two years and extend the opportunity for all students to choose a further placement in their final year. In addition we will extend the use of our own students, alumni and partner employers to offer our students access to a mentor to support them in their professional development.

Social Responsibility – the University has a core set of values: dignity, respect, social justice and equality, which it strives to ensure are part of the lived experience of all of the University community. As part of this commitment, this strategy includes a number of actions designed to ensure our graduates have a clear understanding of their social responsibility and ethical professional practice. Two particular actions are central here. The first is the inclusion of a single, university wide module studied by all first year students, which is designed to engage students in critically thinking about a range of contemporary issues that present particular ethical questions. The module is designed to not only expose students to ethical frameworks but also to ensure the development of their skills in critical reflection. The second key action is the requirement for all students to maintain a current Personal Development Plan (PDP) throughout their time as a student, developed as part of ongoing dialogue with a member of academic staff who will act as their Development Tutor.

Development

The strategy is not designed to be a static document but will be subject to continuous review and updating as required. Much of the review activity will be generated as a consequence of academic colleagues generating data on numerous aspects of the strategy and publishing widely in academic journals. The work of researching the efficacy of the strategy will fall within the remit of the research centre which will also house an academic development unit which will provide ongoing staff development to ensure the strategy is both delivered and further enhanced.

Our overarching aim is to ensure that:

A Leeds Trinity University graduate will be a confident individual, able to make a significant contribution to society. They will be comfortable with knowledge at the boundaries of their discipline, understand the connections between different disciplines and be able to collaborate across disciplines in professional contexts. Their professionalism will be underpinned by a clear understanding of ethical practice.

Our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy will be: Applied, Collaborative and Engaged (ACE).

The key goals of the strategy are that we:

- A. Adopt a pedagogical approach that emphasises active enquiry and collaboration, allowing students to both shape and be responsible for their learning;
- B. Provide and support relevant technologies and learning spaces that give opportunities for flexible approaches to provision, enabling students to exercise choice in relation to where, when and how they manage their learning;
- C. Provide an educational experience that is student-centred and responsive to the needs and attributes of individuals;
- D. Retain a key role for applied learning through placements and volunteering opportunities, developing a range of employability skills;
- E. Develop critical thinking and analytical skills, enabling our graduates to make sense of an increasingly data rich world;
- F. Ensure that ethical practice, social responsibility and sustainability are central to what we do.
- G. Ensure that all of our staff have pervasive development opportunities so that they are well trained, current and innovative in their pedagogical approach

These goals are supported by the following objectives. We will strive to ensure that:

- i. All of our students are engaged fully in their learning.
- ii. All of our students will have a clear understanding of their current progress, their strengths and weaknesses and be able to plan their own development.
- iii. All of our students have the confidence and understanding to shape their own learning.
- iv. Our students have a clear understanding of their discipline and its boundaries and are able to work across discipline boundaries.
- v. Our students understand that knowledge is provisional.
- vi. Staff and students will make full use of technology in their learning and teaching.
- vii. Our curricula are both contemporary and relevant.
- viii. All of our students have significant workplace experience as part of their programme of study.
- ix. All of our students have the opportunity to work as volunteers in a range of settings.
- x. All of our students have established professional networks.
- xi. All of our students have access to a mentor.
- xii. All of our students are engaged in Personal Development Planning throughout their time at LTU.
- xiii. All of our students will have an understanding of their potential impact on society and the key ethical issues in their field of professional practice.
- xiv. Our staff are well trained and current in relation to pedagogical practice.
- xv. All of our students benefit from non-discriminatory enabling pedagogy.

- xvi. We establish a Centre for Pedagogical Research which will support all staff to undertake, and publish, research in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

In light of this, the following will be key features of our approach to Learning, Teaching and Assessment:

Learning and Teaching

- We will emphasise supervised small group activity as a key pedagogical approach such that the substantial majority of delivery is of this type.
- The substantial majority of all contact time will be based around student led enquiry.
- All students will have the opportunity to take part in at least one multidisciplinary team project in each year of study.
- The majority of formal lectures will be delivered via appropriate technology (video, podcast etc.) and will be supplemented by appropriate additional material including Open Educational Resources (OERs).
- All hand-outs should be downloadable in advance and include a summary of intended learning outcomes; all non-lecture sessions should be followed by a student-led summary of discussion posted on Moodle.
- All students will be expected to undertake weekly directed activities to support their learning.
- We will develop a single, university wide, module for all level 4 students that will deal with contemporary topics that raise significant ethical/moral issues. The module will be designed to also develop academic skills (academic writing, research, critical thinking, data presentation, information literacy etc.).
- We will introduce e-portfolios as part of a PDP process that runs across all years of all programmes.
- All of our students will have at least two extended work placements embedded in their programme of study.
- We will annually review all our programmes in terms of both content and delivery.

Assessment

- All students will undertake a programme level assessment in each year.
- All students will be involved in peer assessment at least once in each semester.
- All programmes will have at least one module per level where the mode of assessment is negotiated with students.
- All students will undertake formative assessment in every module studied.
- All programmes will publish an assessment matrix and accompanying narrative that clearly explains the rationale for each assessment, both content and type.

Development

- We will develop our own Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Pedagogy.
- We will hold bi-annual updating sessions for all relevant staff.
- We will develop a series of workshops and learning events in support of the strategy.
- We will conduct a research project to identify what forms of feedback students value most and adopt these approaches where possible.
- We will regularly commission further research projects to support the LTA strategy, the outputs of which will be published.