

College of Arts Learning and Teaching Plan 2015-16

The College vision is “to promote a culture among both staff and students which values inquiry-based learning and imaginative teaching, building on the traditional strengths of an Arts degree in developing graduates who will make a positive contribution to society.” Goals set for achieving this include:

- Provide an unrivalled first-class student learning and teaching experience
- Offer attractive, inspiring and sustainable UG and PG programmes and courses
- Support our students to achieve graduate attributes

Achievements of 2014-15

- Employability:
 - Placements Toolkit produced
 - New placement-based course in History approved
- Student experience:
 - New advising system successfully implemented
- Course review:
 - New interdisciplinary Honours courses (CCA)
- Student experience: NSS satisfaction up 1.5%
- Feedback and assessment: Student focus groups

In relation to feedback, students have indicated that they would like:

- Fewer exams, more coursework spread across course (but uncomfortable with new forms of assessment)
- Consistent expectations for layout and referencing
- Examples of good and bad essays

Feedback and Assessment

The College has set the following strategic objectives for enhancing feedback and assessment:

- Constructive, targeted and timely feedback that supports students’ learning and development of skills
- Diversify assessments, integrate graduate attributes and KE into curricula and encourage innovative paths to independent learning and its assessment

Aims to achieve these objectives by:

- Primary focus of NSS Action Plan
- Staff focus groups to build on student groups in 2014/15
- Credit standardisation: a driver for diversification of assessment and review of curricula
- Focus on Feedback and Assessment: staff events in each School to encourage discussion and exchange of practice
- Contribution to LEAF project

Graduate Attributes and Employability

In relation to Graduate Attributes and Employability, strategic objectives include:

- Deliver curricula, training and supervision that enhance employability by increasing the number of work placements, internships and exchanges
- Imaginative research-led teaching, inquiry-based learning and supervision that enhances graduate attributes

Aims to achieve these objectives by:

- Placements Toolkit
 - disseminate and develop; practice-based dissertations (*Ms Weir, Director Careers Service, indicated that the Placement toolkit could be made available to all Colleges*)
- Student-focused activity reflecting on graduate attributes, for use in lectures or seminars across subjects
- Discuss graduate attributes toolkit for staff
- Subject-led initiatives, e.g.
 - TRS course, 'Skills for Honours and for Life'
 - Eng Lit: pilot framing disciplinary skills as graduate attributes

Enhancing the Student Learning Experience

The strategic objectives set for enhancing the student learning experience are:

- Extend the use of blended learning practices by engaging with technology and e-learning opportunities
- Regularly review, rationalise and refresh teaching to ensure is innovative, inspiring, cost-effective and competitive

Aims to achieve these objectives by:

- Establish network of learning and teaching innovators
- Support ongoing and new initiatives in e-learning
- Contribute to University strategies on active learning and virtual learning environment
- Review new advising system

Transitions and Retention

"Engage our diverse student community in our curricula, through initiatives to widen participation and support students at key transitions, improving student retention"

- PG intern to create and moderate Facebook groups for Virtual Peer Assisted Learning (VPAL), with support from LTU

Programme and Course Review

Regularly review, rationalise and refresh teaching to ensure is innovative, inspiring, cost-effective and competitive

- Several subjects reviewing their Honours curricula, often in response to credit standardisation
- Review of Level 3 (non-Honours) provision and identification of an appropriate and sustainable way forward

Strategic Issues

- Progress on
 - Incentivising teaching
 - Course approval
- Student numbers, timetabling
- Support for e-learning
- Counselling services