

**(DRAFT) ULSTER UNIVERSITY LEARNING & TEACHING STRATEGY:
'LEARNING FOR SUCCESS'
2018/19 – 2023/24**

Introduction

Ulster University is an ambitious, strongly inter-disciplinary, international university, with an outstanding reputation for teaching and research, in developing knowledgeable and skilled individuals who consistently reach their goals and transform our economy and society. This reputation, based on a rich historic legacy, is one that we aim to further grow and enhance through academic excellence. In delivering on these challenging ambitions, we must also consider the broader experience that will be unique for each staff member and student, from campus life through the learning journey to employability and beyond. These goals will be achieved through genuine partnerships and empowerment of our staff, students, Students' Union, employers, professional bodies, government and community stakeholders.

The University continues to lead innovations in education and prepare our students to take a leading role in civic society and providing an engaging, caring and supportive learning environment. As outlined in the Five Year Strategic Plan, Fiftieth Year Strategic Vision, **5&50**, 2016–2034, we will continue to provide the highest quality learning and student experience. This Learning and Teaching Strategy will guide our ambition for academic excellence in teaching and the student experience, while building on our previous strategic priorities and successes, to encourage sustained creativity, interdisciplinary thinking and international perspective.

Our Vision:

As Northern Ireland's civic university, Ulster University will shape educational experiences to inspire, engage and challenge students in a research-led environment, ensuring workplace-readiness and lifelong skills to contribute to society as a whole.

Our Values:

The experience at Ulster University is based on our **core values** which afford our students and staff the opportunity to belong to a supportive, nurturing, yet challenging and inspiring learning community. We will further enhance accessibility and inclusion, providing a broader and more diversified educational experience.

Our Mission:

An excellent student learning experience will be delivered through inclusive, relevant programmes and curricula. Excellence in learning at Ulster University will provide all students, whatever their background, with a high-quality, challenging and rewarding experience that fosters students' ability to:

- demonstrate critical enquiry
- advance their career
- be confident in their entrepreneurial endeavour
- be resilient and responsive to change
- exhibit professionalism
- become global citizens that meaningfully contribute to professional communities and wider society

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The University will:

- enhance the quality of the learning environment, support and facilities, and equip students and staff with the ability to use effective learning pedagogies, spaces and technologies to enable student success.
- advance learning and teaching enhancement with distributed leadership and clearly articulated responsibilities at discipline and programme levels.
- provide active and collaborative learning environments that stimulate and nurture an engaged student and staff community;
- ensure the development of learning spaces provides excellent flexible technology-enabled facilities that support inclusive and interactive learning;
- foster a culture that engages everyone in the University community in assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching.

TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Teaching Excellence at Ulster University will be achieved by supporting, valuing and developing our staff to deliver excellent teaching that:

- shapes dynamic, innovative and integrated curricula using contemporary methods of pedagogy, embraces diversity and increases opportunities for success for all;
- co-creates, with employers and other external stakeholders, economically and socially relevant programmes;
- embraces the opportunities presented through evolving technologies to facilitate and complement learning and teaching practices;
- prepares graduates to be engaged contributors to a global and inter-connected society.
- enables integrated learning design and curricula

Ulster Staff will:

- place the students at the heart of the learning experience to ensure academic excellence;
- engage in scholarship and reflection to ensure the currency and effectiveness of their own learning and teaching practices;
- work collegially with peers, students and other stakeholders, both internal and external to Ulster, to further enhance learning opportunities and practice;
- actively seek out opportunities to engage in professional development of learning and teaching practices.
- be recognised and rewarded for high standards of learning and teaching innovation and delivery

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Ulster Students will:

- be at the heart of University activity;
- engage in collaborative, learner-centred, active learning environments;
- experience teaching which will promote exploration, innovation, entrepreneurship, critical-thinking and problem-solving;
- experience transformative learning individually and in teams;
- be engaged in a learning community which facilitates the transition through programmes of study and into employment.

Staff and Students will build a culture of trust and respect in which everyone's views are valued equally, working in partnership to:

- nurture vibrant and diverse student and staff communities who have a deep sense of belonging and identity, taking pride in Ulster University;
- foster a shared vision and understanding for all staff and students to view themselves as partners in learning;
- co-design, develop and shape innovative curricula and learning opportunities;
- promote enquiry-based learning methods to facilitate exploration, innovation, critical thinking, leadership and problem solving;
- encourage creative, independent learning and enquiry, economically-relevant skills and knowledge.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The Strategy establishes the following priorities that will inform expectations for learning experiences and teaching practices for all students and staff:

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM DESIGN: To design contemporary and relevant course curricula, offering students learning experiences that promote enquiry-based learning and critical thinking.

ACTIVE LEARNING: To extend the opportunities for students to discover and learn in active, authentic and innovative ways to build critical thinking capabilities through research inspired, enquiry-led learning and opportunities for multidisciplinary discovery.

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP: To engage all students and provide them with the opportunity to belong to the learning community that works in partnership with peers and staff.

INCLUSIVITY: To promote an inclusive curriculum with international perspectives that meets the needs and expectations of our diverse community of learners.

EMPLOYABILITY: To develop a flexible graduate workforce that is multi-skilled ensuring work-readiness through course, community and civic engagement.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: To ensure that all staff involved in teaching and learning support are recognised educators, that value and engage in continuous development of their professional practice.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: To enhance the quality of the learning environment, support, facilities and equip students and staff with the ability to use enhanced learning pedagogies, spaces and technologies effectively for inclusive student learning.

EVALUATING OUR SUCCESS:**We will:**

- judge our success in delivering our mission through faculty-wide institutional measures for academic excellence in Education
- deliver the Strategy via related enabling implementation plans and targets
- use national indicators to measure performance against sector bench-marks
- % Staff with HEA Fellowship
- NSS and UKES satisfaction and engagement scores for teaching
- Staff engagement with professional development opportunities for learning and teaching (including participation in peer supported review of teaching PSR, and TEL development)

L&T Strategy Framework, Explanatory Statements & Supporting Plans/ Strategies

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	Supporting Plans/ STRATEGIES
<p><u>INTEGRATED CURRICULUM DESIGN</u> <i>To design contemporary and relevant course curricula, offering students learning experiences that promote enquiry-based learning and critical thinking.</i> Learning design will be informed by integrated and inclusive curriculum content, learner data, employer engagement and technology enhanced methods.</p>	<p><i>Faculty Actions Plans:</i></p> <p>Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences</p> <p>Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment</p> <p>Life and Health Sciences</p> <p>Ulster University Business School</p> <p><i>Enabling Plans:</i></p>
<p><u>ACTIVE LEARNING</u> <i>To extend the opportunities for students to discover and learn in active, authentic and innovative ways to build critical thinking capabilities through research inspired, enquiry-led learning and opportunities for multidisciplinary discovery.</i> Learning, teaching and research are interconnected and mutually enriching, stimulating innovation and creativity in the learning experience and advancing knowledge. Students will be supported and encouraged to actively engage in all aspects of the learning experience, sharing the responsibility for their own learning.</p>	
<p><u>COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP</u></p>	

<p><i>To engage all students and provide them with the opportunity to belong to the learning community that works in partnership with peers and staff. Learning is a collaborative and collegial process involving meaningful engagement and co-creation across the university and with the wider community.</i></p>	<p><i>Integrated Curriculum Design Framework</i></p> <p><i>Learning Landscape Plan</i></p>
<p><u>INCLUSIVITY</u></p> <p><i>To promote an inclusive curriculum with international perspectives that meets the needs and expectations of our diverse community of learners.</i></p> <p>The University community will support a variety of approaches to learning and teaching that respect a diversity of learners and stakeholders, taking cognisance of a global environment and disciplinary differences. We will tailor the design of learning opportunities to fulfil the needs and capabilities of diverse learners within an enabling learning culture.</p>	<p><i>Professional Learning Plan</i></p> <p>Strategies:</p> <p>RESEARCH & IMPACT STRATEGY</p> <p>DIGITAL STRATEGY</p>
<p><u>EMPLOYABILITY</u></p> <p><i>To develop a flexible graduate workforce that is multi-skilled ensuring work-readiness through course, community and civic engagement.</i></p> <p>The student learning experience will enable the development of learners as confident, active and responsible citizens, critical thinkers and problem solvers, equipped for life-long learning.</p>	<p>EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY</p> <p>LIBRARY STRATEGY</p> <p>OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE STRATEGY</p>
<p><u>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING</u></p> <p><i>To ensure that all staff involved in teaching and learning support are recognised educators, that value and engage in continuous development of their professional practice.</i></p> <p>Teaching and learning are professional and skilled activities, which are core to broader educational practices. In recognition of the fundamental importance of staff in delivering an excellent student experience, we will provide and support a range of opportunities for professional development and recognition.</p>	<p><i>UUSU/UU Partnership Framework</i></p>
<p><u>LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:</u> <i>To enhance the quality of the learning environment, support, facilities and equip students and staff with the ability to use enhanced learning pedagogies, spaces and technologies effectively for inclusive student learning.</i></p> <p>Learning and teaching enhancement will be supported with sustainable digital resources and structures, with distributed leadership and clearly articulated responsibilities at discipline and programme levels. We will make learning resources accessible, based on principles of the universal design for learning.</p>	

Appendix 1: Ulster University L&T Strategy (2018-24) EVIDENCE BASE

<u>Internal</u>	<u>External</u>
Faculty Actions Plans	Bersin (2016) Predictions for 2016: A Bold New World of Talent, Learning, Leadership, and HR Technology Ahead, Deloitte Consulting LLP (website)
L&T Strategy 2013-18 (https://www.ulster.ac.uk/cherp/about/learning-and-teaching-strategy)	(2016) Driving the Skills Agenda: Preparing students for the future. The Economist Intelligence Unit report, sponsored by Google (website)
SP 5&50 (https://www.ulster.ac.uk/fiveandfifty/home)	(2006) JISC Designing Spaces for Effective Learning (website)
'Assessing progress with the implementation of the University of Ulster's Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18'	(Sept 2017) European Principles for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning (website)
Curriculum Design Principles	Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/)
Learning Landscapes report	(2015) Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice. Department for Business, Innovation & Skills https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523546/bis-16-265-success-as-a-knowledge-economy-web.pdf
Ulster Student Learning Principles (http://adl.ulster.ac.uk/principles/)	Stern Report (2016), Building Success and Learning from Experience: An Independent Review of the Research Excellence Framework. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/research-excellence-framework-review
Ulster Student Partnership Agreement	
What Works? (https://www.ulster.ac.uk/cherp/programmes-and-projects/what-works)	
Employability/ Careers (Learning Gain project, EDGE, HEAR, Graduate Qualities)	