



CHERP

Centre for Higher Education Research
and Practice

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ulster.ac.uk



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- **Learning Design & Enhancement**
- **Integrated Curriculum Design Framework**
- **Professional Learning Plan**
- **Learning Environment Plan**
- **Teaching Excellence**
- **Scholarship & Pedagogic Research**
- **Institutional Research**
- **L&T Strategy 2018-23**

New Ulster University Learning & Teaching Strategy

**‘Learning For Success’,
2018/19 – 2023/24**

ULSTER UNIVERSITY
LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY
2013/14 – 2017/18

VISION

Empowering learners to excel in professional life through transformative higher education

GOAL

To lead innovation in learning through flexible, inclusive and accessible provision

We will realise our goal through the following three strategic aims:

To provide appropriate learning opportunities which are flexible, responsive to and inclusive of the needs of students, professions, industry and the wider community

To provide transformative, high quality, learning experiences through the promotion of meaningful staff student partnerships that engender a shared responsibility

To enhance Ulster's role as a sector leader for student employability as an integral part of the wider student experience.

and enabling aim:

To provide a supportive environment, in which innovative approaches to learning, teaching and leadership are encouraged, valued and rewarded, for all staff and students in the University

Core Strategic Aims 2013-18:

Institutional reference points to Learning and Teaching Strategy 2013/14-2017/18

- To enhance the **quality of the student learning experience**.
- To target, **recruit, support and retain** a diverse range of students.
- To promote and foster **creativity in curriculum design and delivery**.
- To promote **learning, professionalism and employability** through the integration of academic theory and relevant professional vocational practice.

External Evaluation of L&T Strategy 2016:

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Integrated & Inclusive Curriculum Design
- Student engagement, mobility and exchange

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Flexible Learning environments for knowledge, digital skills and independent learning
- Ongoing internationalisation, globalisation of the curriculum

STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY

- Employability plan for the university, faculty and school developments
- Cross-cultural experiences for international students

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LEARNING, TEACHING & LEADERSHIP

- Learning environment opportunities in new campus developments
- TEF Learning enhancement planning and evaluation

L&T Strategy Development:

- **L&T Strategy Planning group with Associate Deans**
- **Research on UK strategies, exemplars - concise, integrated and aligned.**
- **Strategy aligned to 5&50**
- **L&T strategy 2013-18, review & recommendations**
- **Evidence from institutional research**
- **Key institutional L&T priorities**
- **Staff-Student Consultation on evidence for future developments**
- **EUA EFFECT L&T Enhancement Principles**

Current Policy Context for Institutional leadership (for the entire institution) • 303 Universities - 43 European higher education systems. Ulster took part in the EFFECT Programme, one of 12 European universities.

- The changing role of university learning & teaching
- L&T as a priority in policy agendas
- Importance of strategic policy development as statements of intent
- Values-based L&T Strategy to set out pedagogical vision

In the Bologna Ministerial Communiqué, Yerevan, May 2015:

« *Enhancing the quality and relevance of learning and teaching is the main mission of the EHEA.* »

1.

The current policy
context:

L&T as a priority in
policy agendas

Promoting pedagogical innovation

Student-centred learning environments

Digital technologies

Link between teaching, learning and research

Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship

Effective learning activities

Enhancing academics' teaching competences

Students and stakeholders involved in curriculum design and QA

High levels of convergence:

Institutional development

- Institutions putting more emphasis on L&T than in the past (92%)*
- L&T strategy (86%)**
- Central unit for L&T (65%)***

** Either at institutional, or at faculty, or at both levels

*** At central level + both central and faculty levels

High levels of convergence:

Internal and external pressures

- Increased students' expectations towards teachers (92%)*
- Teachers increasingly incentivised to improve their teaching (89%)*
- Not enough time to optimally cope with all duties – research, teaching, administration (89%)*
- Increasing diversity of the student body (85%)*
- Increased expectations from employers/professional sector towards teachers (83%)*
- Recent/ongoing national reform help to enhance L&T (74%)*

* Yes + Yes, to some extent

European Principles for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

- 1 The higher education learning experience nurtures and enables the development of learners as active and responsible citizens, critical thinkers, problem solvers, equipped for life-long learning.
- 2 Learning and teaching is learner-centred.
- 3 Commitment to learning and teaching is integral to the purpose, mission and strategy of the university.
- 4 Institutional leadership actively promotes and enables the advancement of learning and teaching.
- 5 Learning and teaching is a collaborative and collegial process involving collaboration across the university and with the wider community.
- 6 Learning, teaching and research are interconnected and mutually enriching.
- 7 Teaching is core to academic practice and is respected as scholarly and professional.
- 8 The university community actively explores and cherishes a variety of approaches to learning and teaching that respect a diversity of learners, stakeholders, and disciplines.
- 9 Sustainable resources and structures are required to support and enable learning and teaching enhancement.
- 10 Institutional QA for learning and teaching aims at enhancement, and is a shared responsibility of staff and students.



Learning & Teaching Strategy Mission:

We will deliver an excellent student learning experience through inclusive, relevant programmes and curricula, to ensure equality of opportunity and allow students to participate fully. 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:

- ***engage in critical enquiry***
- ***advance their career***
- ***be confident in their entrepreneurial endeavour***
- ***be resilient and responsive to change***
- ***exhibit professionalism***
- ***become local and global citizens who meaningfully contribute to professional communities and wider***

LEARNING FOR SUCCESS: Building 21st Century Learning Skills

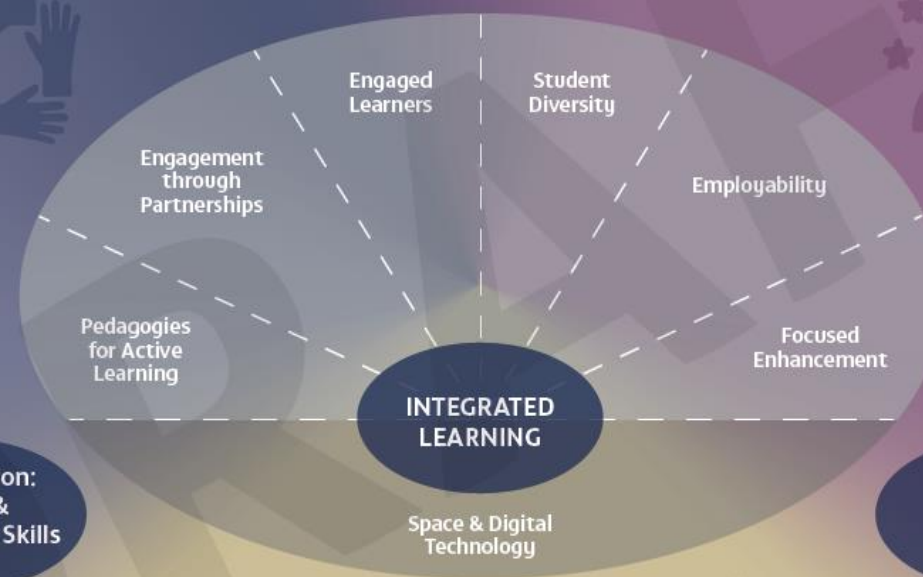
TEACHING EXCELLENCE

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Information:
Media &
Technology Skills

Learning
& Innovation
Skills

Life &
Career Skills



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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.
- **foster a culture that engages everyone in the University community in assuring and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching,** with distributed leadership and clearly articulated responsibilities at discipline and programme levels.
- **Provide a positive learning environment** that fosters positive mental wellbeing to stimulate and nurture an engaged student and staff community;
- **Create opportunities for students and staff to collaborate on activities,** learning opportunities (outside of the curriculum), events and civic engagement in order to enhance student engagement, and build belonging with the university community
- **ensure the development of learning spaces, both physical and virtual,** that provides excellent flexible technology-enabled facilities to support inclusive and interactive learning
- **Develop digital capabilities for work-based learning,** reflective of real life working environments by enhancing technologies, equipment and standards.

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 students, employers, alumni 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 civic, global and inter-connected society.**
- **enables integrated learning design and curricula** which actively seek the input of students and work collaboratively to identify and embed enhancements

Teaching Excellence – 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** which reflects ethical behaviour and standards of professionalism;
- **experience teaching which will promote engagement**, exploration, innovation, entrepreneurship, critical-thinking, problem-solving, aspiration and self-confidence;
- **experience transformative learning** individually and in interdisciplinary teams;
- **be engaged in a learning community** which facilitates the transition through programmes of study, work-based learning opportunities and into graduate-level employment.

Student experience – Staff and Students will:

grow, support and embed a culture of trust and respect in which everyone's views are valued, 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**, to develop current and future economically-relevant skills and knowledge.

Seven 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**
- **ACTIVE LEARNING**
- **COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP**
- **INCLUSION**
- **EMPLOYABILITY**
- **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**
- **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

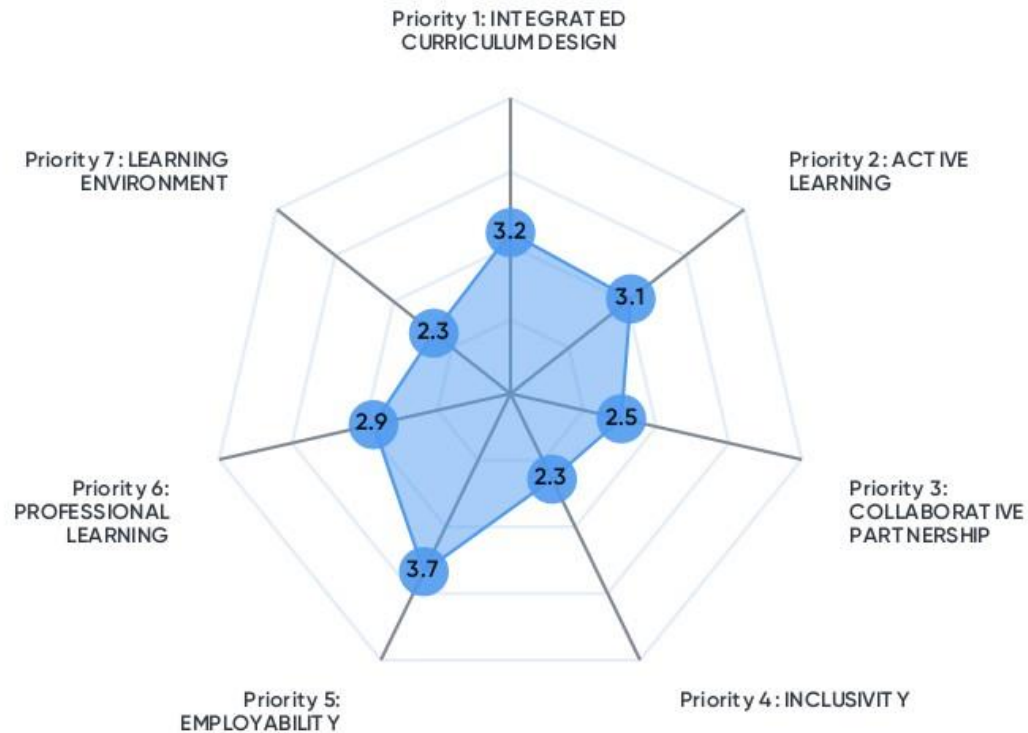
Strategic Priorities: Importance to practice

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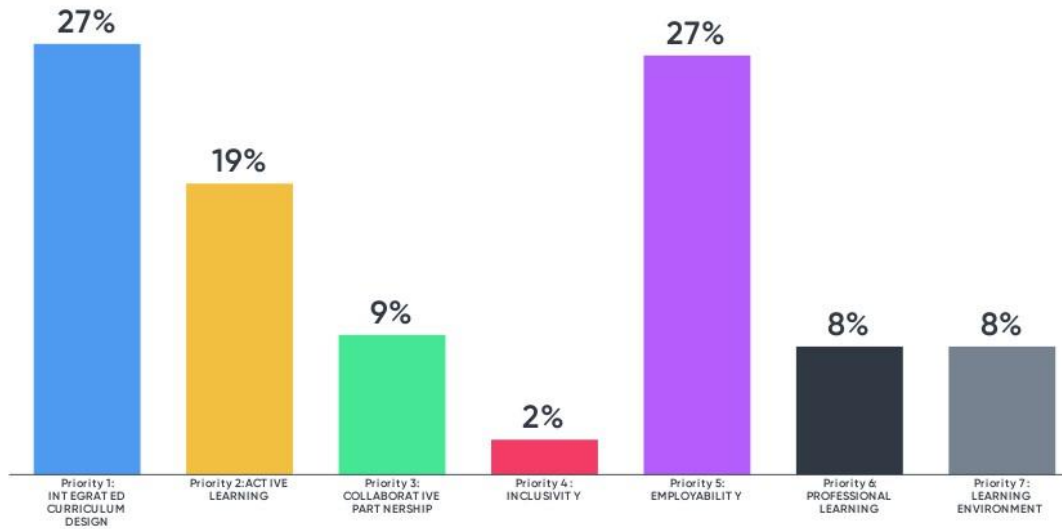


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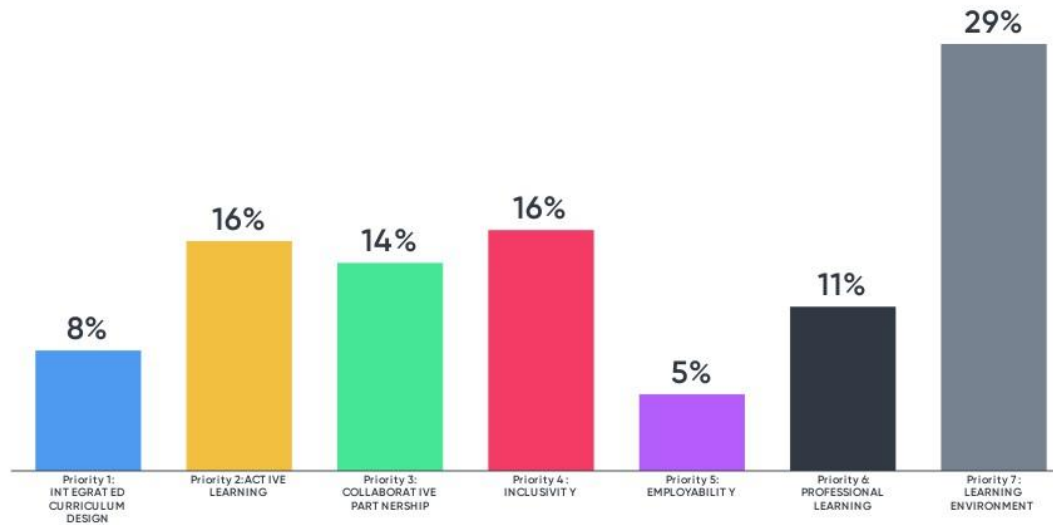
Strategic Priorities: Embedded in Practice



Select TWO that are embedded (at local level)



Select TWO that most need to be addressed (at local level) in the short term



INTEGRATED CURRICULUM DESIGN & ACTIVE LEARNING

- 1. To design contemporary and relevant course curricula, offering students learning experiences that promote enquiry-based learning and critical thinking.*
- 2. 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 interdisciplinary discovery.*

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP & INCLUSION

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

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

EMPLOYABILITY

5. To promote a holistic, student centred approach to employability, embedded within the curriculum, to enable students to develop, articulate and evidence the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to make a successful transition from university to the next stage of their career

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

6. 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.

7. 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

LEARNING DESIGN - Revalidation

- ***Integrated Curriculum Design***
 - Team-based, evidence-based
 - Integrated design and support
- ***Active Learning***
 - Enquiry-based Learning
 - Authentic Learning
- ***Employability***
 - Employer Engagement
 - Co-creation, stakeholder engagement
- ***Learning Environment***
 - Learning Activity Design, space and technology
 - Assessment, tasks, learning sequences

Thank you!

**Any questions
or feedback?**

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