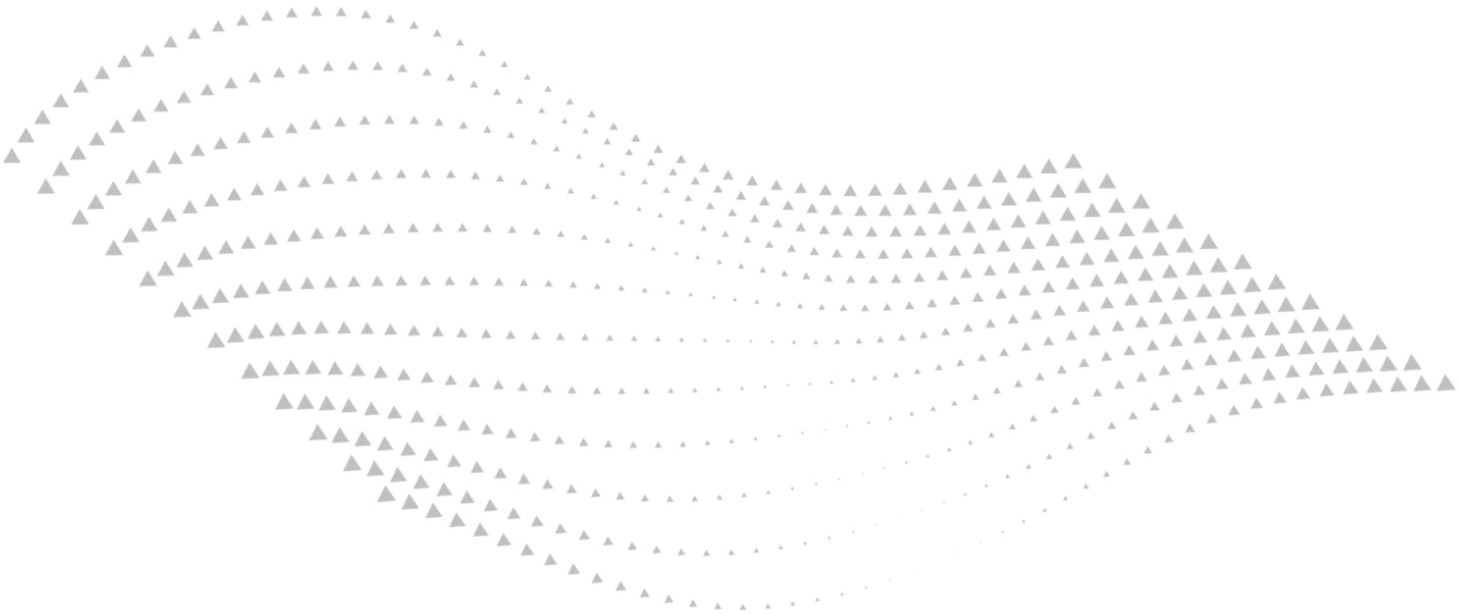
BIMM INSTITUTE | INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY THEATRE | PERFORMERS COLLEGE | SCREEN AND FILM SCHOOL

Higher Education
Learning & Teaching Strategy



Last approved:	September 2021
Approved by:	Academic Board
Next review due:	September 2025

Introduction

This Strategy, which applies to all Higher Education provision delivered at BIMM Institute, the Institute of Contemporary Theatre, Performers College and Screen & Film School (collectively referred to as "the Institute"), is comprised of six parts:

1. Strategic Aims & Principles.
2. Learning & Teaching Observation Policy.
3. Higher Education Assessment Policy.
4. Learning & Teaching Enhancement Plan.
5. Learning & Teaching Strategy Delivery Plan.
6. Higher Education Academic Staff Development Plan.

Values

Our mission:

To provide students with the best opportunity to achieve a sustainable career in the music and broader creative arts industries.

Our core values:

- That the development of identity, creativity and imagination are fundamental to success in the creative arts.

- That being creative requires risk-taking, collaboration, determination and the development of resilience through the experience of both success and failure.

- That students should be provided with opportunities to develop the communication, emotional intelligence, and teamwork skills that underpin continuous development of their creative practice.

- Our approach to learning and teaching will aim to produce graduates who are:
    - Employable and Entrepreneurial
    - Resilient and adaptable
    - Creative, collaborative and connected
    - Globally aware
    - Socially responsible
    - Intellectually curious
    - Self-aware

Part 1: Strategic Aims & Principles

Aims

The Institute commits to providing high quality teaching and support for its students and in line with the practices and guiding principles of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education and Advance HE's Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF). The Institute aims to meet these expectations as follows and we will ensure that:

- we articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching and promote a shared understanding of this approach among staff, students and other stakeholders.
- we articulate and promote the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in our approach to learning and teaching.
- courses are well designed and that learning and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes;
- learning and teaching practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional evidence-based practice, subject-specific and educational scholarship;
- students are actively engaged individually and collectively, in the quality assurance of their educational experience and its ongoing development and enhancement;
- everyone involved in facilitating learning and teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified, supported and developed;
- physical, virtual and social learning environments and student support services provide effective educational and developmental opportunities that are: safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use;
- every student is provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them;
- we articulate an institutional understanding of digital technology in learning and teaching contexts and of the benefits and challenges faced;
- the use of digital technology at the Institute is accessible to all students and integrated with real-world contexts;
- both lecturers and students are provided with opportunities to develop digital literacies;
- developments in Digital Learning & Teaching are responsive to needs at all levels of the organisation;
- the implementation of technology is subject to evaluation of its effectiveness.

Principles

Students are supported and enabled:

- We will ensure that students are supported to achieve their potential and we will address any barriers to success and achievement.

Outstanding Learning & Teaching:

- All pedagogical approaches adopted by the Institute will be flexible, diverse, inclusive and appropriate to the skills and needs of individual students.
- Assessment and feedback will enable learning through an approach that allows for reflection and dialogue, developing meta-cognition (awareness of one own thought processes and motivations/preferences in the context of learning) and recognising the shared responsibility of students and teachers in the process of giving, receiving and using feedback.

- Data and quality assurance processes must ensure that the Institute is able to monitor and respond to trends and make evidence-based interventions in order to maintain standards and enhance the quality of learning opportunities.
- Learning environments should be designed flexibly to promote deep and active learning, to enable diverse approaches and to reflect future workspaces.
- Learning and teaching will incorporate the appropriate use of technology enhanced and blended learning in order to support students and draw on innovative pedagogical practice.
- The use of digital technology will be driven by sound pedagogy and good educational practice.

Establishing and supporting learning communities:

- We recognise that knowledge, understanding and learning are socially constructed in learning communities where staff and students become partners as co-creators of understanding and co-producers of learning.
- A learning community should be a safe space for challenge and transformation where every individual is valued and respected.
- Our approach to learning and teaching should support a culture of active engaged students, both inside and outside of the Institute.
- We should develop opportunities for experiential and professionally authentic learning, in our colleges, with employers and within our local communities.
- We will support our students to become responsible for their own part in learning through the development of individual confidence and skills of self-reflection and questioning.
- We should support our students to challenge their own and others‘ pre-conceptions of the world and to develop their own viewpoint.
- We will work together to ensure we nurture resilience and promote wellbeing amongst all members of our community.

Valuing and supporting the development of staff:

- Lecturers are carefully selected, appropriately qualified and supported in developing their expertise and we are committed to the on-going development of all staff who support learning.
- Our approach to academic staff development ensures that learning, teaching and assessment practices are evidence-based, informed by scholarship and supported by up-to-date tools and technologies.
- We are committed to building lecturer expertise in curriculum design to provide accessible, diverse learning opportunities with clear paths into employment.

Effective and transformational curriculum design:

- We will develop our curriculum in a holistic and considered way using graduate attributes and overarching aims that provide direction in the formulation of learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment strategies at course level.
- We will include employers and other expert external stakeholders in curriculum development and review.
- Learning, teaching and assessment should be informed by both research and practice and draw on innovation in pedagogical research and practice including the incorporation of appropriate learning technologies.
- The curriculum should encourage students to ask deep questions, exploring uncertainty and challenging conventional thinking.
- Asynchronous and distance learning models should not be seen as inherently lesser experiences than synchronous and in person education. A critical approach should be taken to ensure that assumptions and past practice do not limit the design opportunities available.

Integrating employability and introducing diverse perspectives:

- Initiatives to support graduate employability should be embedded in the curriculum and informed by employers and other relevant stakeholders.
- For all undergraduate courses, the curriculum spine fosters transferable and soft skills such as personability, professionalism, healthy work ethic, emotional resilience, the origination and application of creative and critical thinking and contextual awareness. For further education courses, work related learning is integral to the wider study programme.
- Cultural and international perspectives should inform and be made explicit in the curriculum and support students in understanding of diversity and inclusion.
- Curriculum content should challenge cultural bias and stereotyping.

Integrating digital, distance and face to face approaches to learning:

- Ensure an institutional understanding of digital technology in learning and teaching contexts and the benefits and challenges faced.
- Digital technology should be viewed as socially constructed. Discourse that views technology as having innate educational ability or, conversely, views technology as just a tool limits our ability to critically evaluate its potential. (Hamilton and Friesen, 2013).
- Many of the supposed benefits of digital technology have not been realised over the last 30 years (Selwyn, 2011) and implementations of technology may have unintended consequences (see Lea & Jones (2011) discussion of Turnitin). A critical approach to the implementation of technology is required to ensure that benefits are realistic, challenges are appropriately taken into account and unforeseen outcomes are limited. The use of technology should be informed by research, theory and practice at the forefront of the field in relation to the effective and ethical use of technology in education.
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- Digital education requires an institutional understanding of the preparation and delivery requirements placed on lecturers as well as consideration of concepts such as contact time.

Ensure approaches to using digital technology are driven by sound pedagogy and good practice:

- The principles outlined above as equally applicable to real-world, blended and fully digital approaches to education. Principles such as those relating to communities of practice, feedback (particularly learner to learner), active learning, co-authoring of learning and authentic assessment should be at the forefront of the Institute's implementation of technology.

Ensure that digital technology is accessible to all students and integrated with real-world contexts:

- Technology cannot be separated from real-world contexts or viewed in isolation.
- Blended approaches cannot view the digital and real-world situations in which lecturers and students find themselves, as separate. The physical classroom and the digital technology employed should be integrated into a unified approach.
- Approaches to implementing technology should consider issues of accessibility, taking into account not only the potential benefits for students with specific learning needs, but an understanding of how technology can potentially perpetuate systemic issues - such as widening the gap between those who can afford the technology required to access and those who can't.

Ensure that lecturers and students are provided with opportunities to develop digital literacies:

- Technical ability with a given technology does not necessarily translate to the ability to work critically with these resources (Lamb, 2018).

- Different modalities and technologies present information differently, for example they may not present their information linearly (Kress, 2005). Thought needs to be given to how to support and assess students when using these technologies as traditional print standards may be limiting or not applicable (Adsanatham, 2012)
- When looking at multi-modal assessments facilitated by technology thought must be given to how students can be supported to realise the potential of new modalities (DePalma and Alexander, 2015; Adsanatham, 2012)
- Attention should be paid to the process of learning in digital environments, the different challenges that students face and the role of the institution of overcoming these. For example, students are often used to drawing together increasingly complex multi-modal materials however in order to fully engage with such materials they often look for institutional validation of what is acceptable (Lea and Jones, 2011).

Ensure that developments in Digital Learning & Teaching are responsive to needs at all levels of the organisation:

- We support our lecturers to be reflective practitioners. Moreover, it is noted that the use of technology is largely dictated by lecturers (Selwyn, 2011) so it is vital that the reflections of lecturers are engaged with to identify developmental needs and these feed into the advancement of digital technology where appropriate.
- Institution-wide initiatives should be driven by clear pedagogic needs informed by themes emerging from data from sources such as teaching observation reports, learning analytics, annual monitoring reports and student satisfaction data.
- The student voice should be engaged with to ensure that the student experience in digital spaces is improved.

Ensure that the implementation of technology is subject to evaluation of its effectiveness:

- The implementation of digital technology will be assessed against the goals of the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Plan.
- Almost any intervention is likely to have a positive effect (Hattie, 2012). Therefore, it is important to evaluate how effective an intervention has been and whether it is an effective use of resources.

Pedagogic Approaches

The Institute encourages lecturers to adopt innovative and inclusive approaches to academic and vocational pedagogy and seeks to promote an active community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991) where students and professionals from the creative industries are able to interact and learn from each other through practice and participation. This approach fosters reflection on and in action (Schon, 1981) or metacognition (Flavell, 1979).

Furthermore, teaching should aim to make learning visible to both teacher and student and create an environment where there are opportunities to practice the skills being taught (Hattie, 2009) and make use of feedback as one of the most powerful influences on learning (Hattie & Timperley 2007). Teachers should also be flexible and open in their approaches, acting as experts in their subject, but also as guides or facilitators and as co-creators (McWilliam, 2008). We recognise that learning in the creative industries is both formal and informal (Green, 2002) and we seek to draw on what our students learn in class and outside in making the opportunities for learning we provide more effective. The Institute also recognises that learning in the creative industries is an iterative and aesthetic process (Finney, 2002) and above all a process of identity formation (Frith, 2004). Finally, that the education we provide should be an experience that is authentic to our students and one that encourages them to be creative and innovative practitioners.

Learning & Teaching practice reflects the stages of assessment through degree-level courses:

At FHEQ Level 4 UK or NFQ Level 6 in Ireland (Year 1 UK or Year 1 and Year 2 in Ireland):
Students are introduced to the methods and skills required for successful Higher Education study and will begin to develop a self-guided approach to learning. They will also acquire knowledge of the principles and theories associated with their area of study, and be able to present, evaluate and interpret data in order to make sound judgments. Learning and teaching at this level has a practical focus on the development of subject specific skills, with discussion and peer group feedback regularly encouraged.

At FHEQ Level 5 UK or NFQ Level 7 in Ireland (Year 2 UK or Year 3 in Ireland):
At this level we build on the foundations laid previously: students are encouraged to take a more critically reflective and self-guided approach to their learning, devising their own essay titles and projects. Students will acquire knowledge and critical understanding, the ability to apply underlying concepts outside of their original context(s) and an understanding of the limitations of knowledge in their field, whilst also developing skills appropriate to future employment. Learning and teaching includes a range of activities such as group work, experiential learning, industry field trips, guest lectures, work-based learning and placements.

At FHEQ Level 6 UK or NFQ Level 8 in Ireland (Year 3 UK or Year 4 in Ireland):
Students are required to become effective practitioners, with an in depth understanding of professional standards in their field and display high levels of self-organisation. Students should also demonstrate the ability to guide their own development and be critical and analytical. Students should likewise be able to respond to criticism of their own work positively. Furthermore, students will acquire a detailed understanding of the body of knowledge in their discipline, some of which will be at the forefront of the field. Students will also be able to solve problems: deploying techniques of analysis and enquiry; be able to sustain arguments; and support those arguments through reference to advanced scholarship, in their discipline. Learning and teaching offered by lecturers therefore leans towards tutorial assistance, seminars, reflection, and formative feedback.

At FHEQ Level 7 UK or NFQ Level 9 in Ireland (Postgraduate study to Master's level):
Students will develop mastery of complex specialised skills and knowledge. They will employ these skills and knowledge to conduct research or advanced technical and professional activity displaying high levels of autonomous decision making, supported through individual supervision. Students will develop deep systematic understanding of their subject/field and be able to demonstrate an understanding of methodological and theoretical models and their use within a discipline/subject. Students will be able to conceptualise and apply well-developed critical thinking to solve complex problems, through the application of research, enquiry, synthesis and creativity, employing skills of analysis and evaluation to make sound judgments/arguments. Students will be able to operate in abstract and unpredictable environments, working as effective members of a team and able to draw on innovative approaches and ideas. Students will be reflexive and will incorporate a critical ethical dimension to their work. Learning and teaching will focus on high-level skills development and academic supervision to support students to explore key areas within their discipline and its theory and practice.

Implementation of the Institute's Learning & Teaching Strategy

This strategy is owned and implemented by the Institute's Higher Education Learning, Teaching & Enhancement Committee (HELTEC) – a sub-committee of Academic Board. Implementation is achieved through the policies and action planning outlined in the sections that follow, which are in turn guided by the aims and principles laid out above. The quality assurance and enhancement of learning and teaching is operated through the Learning & Teaching Observation Scheme, with each college reporting thematically to HELTEC. HELTEC then uses this data and the data generated by Boards of Studies (BoS) to inform the themes for the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Plan (LTEP), which are responded to in the College Enhancement Plans (CEPs) that feed into institutional action plans.

Academic Staff Development

Staff development is supported both at college level and centrally through the principles laid out in the Academic Staff Appointment & Continuing Professional Development Policy and the associated annual Academic Staff Development Plan.

College teams are responsible for:

- Ensuring that lecturers deliver the approved curriculum.
- Ensuring that the course, module and assessment requirements are clear to the students, that feedback on assessment is of good quality and students are supported in developing their capacity to use feedback for learning/personal development.
- Ensuring that lecturers are assisted and supported with appropriate training to maximise the potential of their teaching.
- Helping tutors maintain a professional, respectful and relaxed environment conducive to students in the creative industries realising their potential.

Part 2: Learning & Teaching Observation Policy

Policy Overview

The purpose of the Learning and Teaching Observation Policy is to clearly identify the way that lesson observations are used and managed at BIMM Institute. Our approach provides staff with the opportunity for reflection and evaluation of their learning, teaching and assessment practice and therefore ensures alignment with the regulatory requirements of the Office for Student (OfS). As an organisation, BIMM Institute places very high value on the quality of learning and teaching within its colleges and utilises peer observation of teaching in order to provide opportunities for feedback, reflection, mentoring, and to share good practice. Our aim is to develop a culture of critical self-reflection that is effectively supported by peer feedback. Written criteria on key aspects of practice to consider are provided to accompany feedback forms for use in peer lesson observations.

The Policy

The primary objectives of peer teaching observations are as follows – to:

- Develop new teachers as pedagogical professionals in line with sector expectations and both general and subject specific educational scholarship.
- Ensure that experienced teachers are fully supported in their classroom practice and their professional development.
- Maintain appropriate professional standards in line with the UKPSF and ensure and enhance the quality of the learning experience for all learners.
- Foster dynamic approaches to learning and teaching that are: student centred, holistic, creative, and innovative.
- Recognise and value the variety and quality of learning, teaching and assessment practice.

Implementation

Responsibility for implementing these objectives in Higher Education delivery is held by the Higher Education Learning, Teaching & Enhancement Committee (HELTEC), HELTEC works with Undergraduate and Postgraduate communities to ensure that criteria and approaches used are suitable and effective in achieving the objectives of this observation policy, considering the relevant educational and legislative frameworks, and approaches to teaching and learning specific to each area.

Observations - Operation

Operation of local peer lesson observation schemes is the responsibility of College Heads of Education/Heads of Learning & Teaching. It is recommended that all BIMM Institute College Lecturers will be provided with at least one observation opportunity during a three-year observation cycle. These observations will be undertaken by members of a team of observers in each college, who are trained and supported by their Head of Learning &Teaching/Head of Education.

Training

Staff who are acting as observers must undertake training and regular refresher sessions to ensure that they are up to date with the current scheme, and to develop their practice as observers in facilitating reflective dialogue in support of the teachers they observe. Staff new to observation will be required to co-observe until they are confident to work autonomously. The Observations Working Group, chaired by the Associate Dean: Learning & Teaching, and reporting to HELTEC will work to support colleges in their approach to training and delivery.

Reporting

Observers will not collect or share any data directly from individual observations, but will be asked to share key themes emerging from observations within college teams, and the Head of Learning/Head of Education in each college will submit a report on key themes to the Observations Working Group, which will produce a report for Semester 2 and Semester 3 HELTEC meetings.

Cross-College Collaboration and Sharing of Good Practice

College teams are encouraged to work collaboratively to find opportunities for staff to observe teaching in other BIMM Institute colleges outside of their home college, to share good practice and enhance the connections between members of the broader BIMM Institute community of practitioners across subject areas and locations. All Lecturers are encouraged to observe their peers, as and when they wish to, and colleagues at all levels within the organisation may drop in to observe teaching. Lecturers and Observers should also be encouraged to feed into the observations working group via their college Head of Education/Head of Learning and Teaching to contribute to the ongoing development of observation practice at the institution.

Part 3: Higher Education Assessment Policy

There are three broad purposes to assessment:

1. To allow a student to proceed to the next stage of a course or to graduate.
2. To classify the performance of a student.
3. To improve student learning (assessment *for learning* rather than *of learning*).

Aims – assessment should be:

- Valid (does the assessment deal with what we think we are assessing) and reliable (do assessors agree on grading).
- Explicit, accessible and transparent, and where possible assessment should be inclusive and equitable.
- Integral to course design and relate directly to course aims and learning outcomes.
- Manageable, and assessment should be carried out using both formative and summative methods.
- Feedback on assessment should be developmental; lecturers involved in assessing students must be trained to an appropriate level and student must be supported to interpret and use the feedback they gather.

Principles - to:

- Recognise that not all useful learning can be objectively measured.
- Ensure that the standard for each award and award element is set and maintained at the appropriate level, and that student performance is properly judged against this.
- Enable the wider public, including employers, to be sure that the student has attained an appropriate level of achievement that reflects the academic standards set.
- Ensure that there is an emphasis on assessment for learning that reflects professional practice and includes self-assessment, peer assessment and work-related assessment.
- Promote and enhance student learning by providing the student with continuous, motivating and constructive developmental feedback, which helps the student improve their performance and achievement.
- Enable students to understand the assessment process and develop skills of self-evaluation and professional judgement, and the ability to articulate and express what they have learnt to potential employers.
- Ensure that assessment is conducted with attention, integrity and with due regard for security.

The principles of the Institutes' Assessment Policy are achieved through:

- Evaluating the extent to which assessment tasks and associated criteria are effective and sustainable in measuring student achievement of the intended learning outcomes of modules and courses.
- Ensuring that the amount and timing of assessment enables effective and appropriate measurement of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes.
- Where possible, co-ordinating assessment deadlines, including resits, to avoid clashes and excessive assessment burdens for students and staff, whilst also ensuring appropriate frequency and regularity.
- Designing assessments that provide adequate opportunity for students to undertake assessment of work that is demonstrably their own designing out misconduct where possible.
- Encouraging students to adopt good academic conduct regarding assessments and ensuring that they are aware of their responsibilities.
- Promoting diversity and authenticity of assessment practice and requiring and enabling students to appropriately demonstrate their capabilities and achievements within each module or course.
- Providing and using clear assessment criteria and marking schemes and moderation to ensure that marking is carried out fairly and consistently.

- Undertaking a rigorous process of grading calibration and moderation to ensure that academic standards are consistently applied to measure student achievement.
- Providing appropriate, clear and timely feedback to students on assessed work in a way that promotes learning and personal development.
- Providing adequate opportunity for students to apply formative feedback (from lecturers or peers) to improve their performance in further assessments.
- Encouraging the development of feedback mechanisms that are flexible and suited to students' needs.
- Working with students to develop their engagement with feedback as a shared dialogue between student and lecturer.

Glossary

Assessment criteria: These are based on the intended learning outcomes for the work being assessed, the knowledge, understanding and skills markers that the Institute would expect a student to display in the assessment task.

Marking schemes or rubrics: These provide clear statements on the quality and defining characteristics of work submitted for assessment against marking bands and are used by markers to guide marking decisions. The Institute utilises generic level-based marking schemes that work with assessment criteria to guide students and markers.

Authentic assessment: This involves designing credible tasks that require students to utilise prior knowledge, recent learning and relevant skills to tackle complex 'real world' problems (Wiggins, 1989, 1993,1998, Hmelo-Silver, 2004, Gulikers, Bastiaens and Kirschner 2004). Authentic assessment can play an important role in higher education courses that seek to equip students with the transferable skills that employers increasingly demand of graduates. Although it formed a focus for discussion among educational professionals throughout the 1990s, the adoption of 'authentic assessment' approaches in HE remains rather patchy (Herrington & Herrington 2006), not least because of the many challenges it presents to the designers of assessment tasks. Foremost among these is how to ensure 'fidelity to the real-world ways in which knowledge is used in the discipline or field of study' (Maclellan 2004: 21). There are some excellent documented examples of authentic assessment practice in laboratory-based sciences (Emery 2001), psychology (MacAndrew & Edwards 2002), teacher education (Moss & Godhino 2005) and business studies (Southern & Barr 2002).

Diagnostic assessment: This is used to show a student's preparedness for a module or course and identifies, for the learner and the teacher, any strengths and potential gaps in knowledge, understanding and skills expected at the start of the course, or other possible problems. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning. Diagnostic assessment may also be used as part of formative assessment, allowing lecturers to identify the gap between current ability and desired levels of performance.

Formative assessment: This has a developmental purpose and is designed to help students learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment.
Black and Wiliam (2009) suggest the following types of activity as examples of formative assessment:

- Sharing success criteria with learners.
- Classroom questioning.
- Comment-only marking.
- Peer and self-assessment.
- Formative use of summative tests.

This list is far from exhaustive but provides a starting point to consider the use of formative approaches. There is a great deal of debate over the definitions of formative and summative (Taras 2005, 2008; Black

& Wiliam 1998, 2000). However, for our purposes we will accept that assessment designed to provide developmental feedback from lecturers or peers (and which may also provide feedback to lecturers from students) as its primary goal is in essence formative.

Portfolio assessment:
In its simplest form, a portfolio is a collection of objects. The objects (often referred to as artefacts) may be written, physical, digital or artistic, or any combination thereof. Portfolios are always more than a single item of work. The artefacts included can represent abilities across a range of topics and collected at different times. Often students are asked to provide some sort of commentary or reflective narrative to supplement or synthesise the raw items in the collection. Many professions require members to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to personal and professional development, often recommending or requiring the use of a portfolio for this purpose.
Additional guidance on the use of portfolios in assessment is provided below.

Summative assessment: This is used to indicate how far a learner has succeeded in meeting the assessment criteria which is used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or course.

Synoptic assessment: This is an assessment that encourages students to combine elements of their learning from different parts of a course and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.

What makes Portfolio Assessments work well?

- **Student Choice**
  Student choice has a number of benefits relating to assessment, depending on what choices are given. Giving ownership to students has the potential to increase engagement, as they can choose topics and approaches that are important to them.
  Student choice is at the core of what makes portfolios work well; below we discuss authentic learning and multimodality (an inter-disciplinary approach that understands communication and representation to be more than about language), both of which are augmented by student choice.

- **Authentic Learning**
  Portfolios allow students to capture and arrange authentic practice with which they are engaging. This can be even stronger if the portfolio itself is an example of authentic practice, such as a showcase portfolio that can be shown to people in hiring positions.
  What is authentic to a student may be individual in many circumstances, using music as an example: one student may want to be a pit musician, one may want to do session work while another may only be interested playing with a band. While all of these activities involve playing to a high standard, the authentic practice, the affinity groups associated with this practice and the resulting portfolios will look very different. Allowing students the opportunity to explore these differences in authentic practice can be a powerful learning experience.

- **Multimodality**
  Multimodal approaches to assessment allow students to use the most effective means of communication for what they are trying to convey. This freedom of expression can unlock the door to allow students to engage in more authentic practice as they are given the means to effectively record and present that practice. Students also have the opportunity to link multimodal assessments with career goals, for example, a student wanting to go into a career on YouTube may choose to lean toward video assets in order to develop their skills as a videographer.
  The literature also highlights that students have often developed literacies in multimodal domains such as social media and multimodal assessments allow them to take advantage of emerging literacy practices.

What stops Portfolio Assessments from working well?

- **Being Overly Prescriptive**
  Being overly prescriptive negates many of the advantages noted above, as it removes student choice and ownership over the work. Moreover, it does not teach students good portfolio building practices which are often rooted in building the portfolio for a specific audience.

- **Lack of Support for Multimodal Approaches**
  As mentioned above, a key advantage of multimodal assessment is that students can choose the most appropriate means of representation for a given situation. However, students may need support to ensure they have sufficient information to make a good decision about which modality to use and may also need support enacting that modality.

Key Difficulties:

- **Portfolio Length**
  Portfolio length is difficult to account for, as not all assets require the same effort to produce and lengths and word counts often do not easily translate between modalities. There are various approaches to this problem within academia and real-world situations:

- **Asset limits**
  Under this approach, rather than setting an overall word count, the assessment would stipulate the minimum and maximum number of particular types of artefacts and the length of individual artefacts. For example:
  - *7-10 Audio/video artefacts – each artefact should be no longer than 3 minutes long. This is a combined limit, meaning that when combined the number of video and audio assets cannot exceed 10.*
  - *7-10 Blocks of explanatory text – each block of text should be no longer than 300 words.*
  - *0-10 images*

  In order for this approach to work a change in how word counts, or length is calculated would be necessary to create a coherent system that is easy for students to understand and markers to implement. As portfolio platforms often do not calculate word counts across an entire portfolio, and as adding together multimodal elements would be tedious for marking teams, it is recommended that markers only mark up to the word count/time limit for each block/asset. For example, if the student supplies a 5-minute video, the marker would only watch the first 3 minutes. Any content beyond the limit also wouldn't be counted so, considering the example above, the 11th video/audio artefact would not be viewed or marked.

- **Defining Length by Target Audience**
  This is potentially a more authentic way of prescribing the length of a portfolio and will encourage students to engage with concepts of good portfolio design. Engaging students with questions such as how long will your target audience have to review the portfolio? What information will be important to your target audience? And how can I structure my portfolio to create a compelling narrative for my target audience? These are likely to be more important questions for our students as they move into the world beyond the Institute and may have to create portfolios for employers, etc.
  With an approach such as this, minimum expectations can be set, and again these can be rooted in authentic practice, for example "a booking agent would expect to see at least 1 video of you performing" or "your film show reel should include only your best work".
  Maximum expectations can also be set in line with what the audience for that particular portfolio would expect to see and markers can take on the role of that target audience. For example, your portfolio should be ready to send to a booking agent. Often, agents and people in hiring positions do not have time to read lengthy portfolios, so they need to be succinct, easy to navigate and curated to draw the reader's attention to your strengths. There is no strict limit how many assets or how long

your portfolio could be however, each marker will only spend 10 minutes reviewing your portfolio and will only mark what they were able to view during that time.
With this approach, peer feedback exercises would be recommended to ensure students receive regular feedback on the clarity of their work and if it is reviewable in the time given.

- **Supporting Evidence Approach**
  By having the student led portfolio element support a more regulated assessed element, such as a reflective essay, there can be more freedom allowed to the student regarding how they construct and choose elements to include in their portfolio. This approach can be good for focusing on professional/authentic practice and focuses students on questions such as what does a particular standard look like? And how do I evidence that I have achieved this standard? Under this approach, the portfolio would be a required element and non-submission would result in a failed grade for the assessment.

- **Presented Portfolio**
  This approach mixes the portfolio approaches with presentation approaches, this allows students to create a portfolio relatively free of strict limitations but requires them to present the portfolio in front of a marker within an allotted time slot. While it is possible to have success with this model, often it is better to have a conventional presentation as portfolio platforms do not present as well as other options, such as PowerPoint.

Assessment Loads & Equivalences

Assessment Type	Equivalence	Student Effort (hours)
Essay	1000 words	10
Report or case study	1500 words	10
Examination	1 hour	10
Group report	750 words per member (group of 2)	5
Reflective journal or learning log	2000 – 2500 words	10
Oral presentation	20 minutes	10
Oral exam (viva)	20 minutes	10
Group presentation	10 minutes per member	5
Skills test	10 minutes	10
Performance assessment	10 minutes	10
Composition	1 minute	10
Audio Visual work	1 minute	10
Coding	A simple patch	10

Assessment weighting at FHEQ levels:

Level 4: 15 credit module = 2,250 essay words or equivalent
Level 5: 15 credit module = 3,000 essay words or equivalent
Level 6: 15 credit module = 3,750 essay words or equivalent

The table above represents the time taken to complete a task from beginning to end including research/preparation/rehearsal/revision time and the time required to write/compose/record/review/ proof/edit/mix the final work. Normally a single weighted module will include at least one formative (weighted) and one summative (weighted) assessment. Portfolio assessments may include a mix of elements and types of material that are conflated to provide an overall weighted unit of assessment.

Guidance on Designing Effective Assessment

Assessment must be designed to develop high standards of learning. Students' learning is enhanced when assessment builds on previous learning and requires demonstration of higher order learning and integration of knowledge. A high-quality learning process requires a balance between formative and summative assessment ensuring that summative assessment does not dominate. One of the roles of formative assessment is to give students opportunities for preparation and practice before they are summatively assessed.

Therefore, we should aim to design assessment for learning – so that assessments across modules levels and courses work together in a constructively aligned sense to assist students in achieving the outcomes for the course. Assessment should always be a learning opportunity for students. Too much, or poorly designed assessment, will lead students to take a surface approach to learning and may result in their leaving their course without having developed the attributes that we and employer's value in graduates. A 'fair' assessment load is one that ensures that performance of the learning outcomes for the module is assessed as efficiently as possible. Learning outcomes must therefore be appropriate and the chosen methodology capable of reliably and consistently measuring the students' achievement of them.

If a module only has one summative assessment, then it must provide opportunities for formative assessment. Formative assessment plays a key role in supporting student learning, providing opportunities to practice skills and measure knowledge, and developing students' assessment literacy. Course teams should also recognise that formative graded (low weighted) assessments might at times be more beneficial than purely formative (non-weighted) assessment and that they may choose to incorporate those instead.

Assessments, and the feedback received on them, should be used to structure and scaffold students' learning throughout a course. For this reason, course teams should think about assessment not only at module level but also (where possible) across a FHEQ level and the course overall. In particular, course teams should work to ensure that students have exposure to a range of appropriate assessment types and that workload is balanced across the academic year and the course as a whole.

In deciding the number and methods of assessment for each module, consideration should be given to the type and quantity of feedback that will most benefit students. Course teams should take the provision of appropriate feedback (including feedback turnaround deadlines) into account when deciding on appropriate assessment deadlines, types, and lengths.

Course teams should think about the progression of assessment (i.e., from FHEQ level 4 to 6) not purely in terms of assessment length or duration but also in terms of complexity. An essay with a higher word count or a longer exam is not necessarily more difficult, nor does it necessarily assess higher-level cognitive skills. Therefore, assessments should be designed to measure intended learning outcomes; therefore, as learning outcomes change over the stages of a degree, so too should the design of assessment questions and formats.

Indicative assessment methods (group or individual)
Unseen examinations under controlled conditions.
Open-book examinations under controlled conditions.
Multiple choice tests under controlled conditions.
Multiple choice questionnaires via the VLE (automated feedback and multiple attempts allowed).

Practical performance, aural (viva voce) and sight-reading examinations under controlled conditions.
Practical and or technical competency tests under controlled conditions.
Coursework assignments: dissertations, projects, reports and portfolios, articles, reviews, proposals, timelines, surveys, problem-solving exercises, design tasks, research reports, case studies, business reports, work-related learning portfolios, essays, marketing plans, learning or practice diaries, reflective essays and reports, blogs and logs, mapping exercises, notebooks, lyrics, arrangements, storyboards, scripts, arrangements and transcriptions.
Presentations: oral reports, conference papers, podcasts, videos, pitches, panels, posters, graphics, pamphlets websites and promo packs.
Production tasks: audio/audio-visual artefacts, compositions, computer programs, problem-solving exercises, design tasks, fieldwork, events.
Synoptic examinations: projects, portfolios and dissertations.
Peer assessment (of performances, compositions, artefacts, presentations and written work).
Self-assessment (of performances, compositions, artefacts, presentations and written work).
Classroom activities, tasks, questioning, polls and quizzes.
Placement assessment.

Part 4: Learning & Teaching Enhancement Plan (LTEP)

Introduction & Aims

The Institute commits to providing high quality teaching and support for its students. The Institute aims, via its learning and teaching strategy to address the different needs of individual learners and ensure that all students have equal and fair access to learning resources. In line with the QAA UK Quality Code and the Advance HE UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), the Institute aims ensure that:

- we articulate and implement a strategic approach to learning and teaching and promote a shared understanding of this approach among staff, students and other stakeholders;
- we articulate and promote the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in our approach to learning and teaching;
- courses are well designed and that learning, and teaching activities and associated resources provide every student with an equal and effective opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes;
- learning and teaching practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional evidence-based practice, subject-specific and educational scholarship;
- students are actively engaged individually and collectively, in the quality assurance of their educational experience and its ongoing development and enhancement;
- everyone involved in facilitating learning and teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified, supported and developed;
- physical, virtual and social learning environments and student support services provide effective educational and developmental opportunities that are: safe, accessible and reliable for every student, promoting dignity, courtesy and respect in their use;
- every student is provided with clear and current information that specifies the learning opportunities and support available to them;
- we articulate an institutional understanding of digital technology in learning and teaching contexts and of the benefits and challenges faced;
- the use of digital technology at the Institute is accessible to all students and integrated with real-world contexts;
- both lecturers and students are provided with opportunities to develop digital literacies;
- developments in Digital Learning & Teaching are responsive to needs at all levels of the organisation;
- the implementation of technology is subject to evaluation of its effectiveness.

The LTEP sets out the direction for successfully supporting achievement of the above strategic aims of the Institute through thoughtful engagement with on-going, iterative cycles of activity and reflection structured as follows:

- Identifying a small number of key development areas for us to focus on, allowing for sustained attention and progress.
- Setting clear goals for improvements in the identified areas, including both output ('what will we do?') and outcome ('what should this achieve?').
- Designing and carrying out activities to achieve those goals, with clear lines of responsibility and report, via group-wide and college-based staff development initiatives.
- Taking an evidence-based approach to monitoring and evaluating our progress towards achieving our goals.
- Reporting on the impact of project work with a view to establishing systematic approaches to enhancing learning and teaching for use across all colleges.

Goals (2020-2022)

The LTEP sets out four primary goals which identify the key areas for both college and group-level action planning to address as appropriate. The goals set forth are for the period 2020-2022 and have been agreed by members of HELTEC, who hold responsibility for oversight of this plan.

1. To develop approaches to Assessment and Feedback (output) to improve student achievement and progression (outcome).
2. To support students in taking effective and self-aware approaches to development of academic, practical, cognitive and personal skills throughout their studies (output) to improve student achievement and progression and ensure that the Institute students possess graduate attributes which higher education aims to provide (outcome).
3. To make effective use of appropriate technology to enhance learning both inside and outside of the classroom (output) to ensure that student learning environments are appropriately flexible, and that learning opportunities support self-directed, formal and informal learning in an integrated manner (outcome).
4. To establish and maintain active, student-centred learning environments which prioritise visible learning to improve student achievement, attendance, retention and progression.
5. To advise on and support the establishment and development of scalable infrastructure and resources to more effectively support student achievement, attendance, retention and progression.

Defining and measuring impact

Impact in a Higher Education context can be broadly defined in typologies as follows:

- ***Process impact*** – changes in the way processes are organised (i.e. learning and teaching).
- ***Systems impact*** – changes in the support systems (finance, IT, VLE, reward and performance management systems i.e. teaching observation and staff appraisal, etc.).
- ***Structural impact*** – the organisation of the institution, such as names, titles, branding and the way an institution is organised.
- ***Policy impact*** – changes to frameworks policy and process that set the direction for institutional behaviour.
- ***Cultural impact*** – changes to the paradigm of the institution – the way we think and talk about ourselves, our values, routines and internal and external relationships.[1]

It is also important to assess impact in terms of:

- *Who is impacted?*
- *Raised awareness - has your approach changed stakeholder conceptions?*
- *Increased understanding - Has your approach improved the knowledge or increased the skills of stakeholders?*
- *Has your approach changed practice /policy and have stakeholders taken action or applied what they have learned?*

Measuring impact - self-assessment:

- *What do we do that is working?*
- *What else could we do?*
- *What needs to change?*
- *Next steps?*

Should we feel that we have successfully achieved these goals before the end of the academic year 2021/22, we will begin work on our next set of priorities. Similarly, if we feel that further focus is required in these areas at the end of academic year 2021/22, we will seek to extend these goals as necessary.

[1] Adapted from: Seel, R. (2006) *The nature of organisational change.* http://www.new-paradigm.co.uk/nature_of_change.htm

Part 5: Learning & Teaching Strategy Delivery Plan

This plan will be reviewed on an annual basis at HELTEC.

Goals:	Planned activities:	Impact assessment:
1. To develop approaches to Assessment and Feedback (output) to improve student achievement and progression (outcome).	Delivery of training to colleges on engaging students with their feedback. Development of new level-based assessment/feedback rubrics. Through the modification and approval process enhance assessment design to further develop opportunities for digital and flexible learning.	NSS and Module Survey data Retention, progression Achievement data Student feedback Approval panel feedback Learning analytics data Teaching observation data
2. To support students in taking effective and self-aware approaches to development of academic, practical, cognitive and personal skills throughout their studies (output) to improve student achievement and progression and ensure that the Institute students possess graduate attributes which higher education aims to provide (outcome).	Review how the Institute's Graduate Attributes are being understood and used. Use learning analytics to inform enhancement activity. Monitor closely the implementation of the new curriculum, with a focus on supporting students to develop both digital literacy and assessment literacy. Monitor the effectiveness of our new approach to academic and careers support through guided personalised learning opportunities (Personal Tutors).	Student staff and employer feedback Learning analytics data Retention, progression Achievement data Teaching observation data Student and staff feedback
3. To make effective use of appropriate technology to enhance learning both inside and outside of the classroom (output) to ensure that student learning environments are appropriately flexible, and that learning opportunities support self-directed, formal and informal learning in an integrated manner (outcome).	Monitor and review strategy and produce an action plan Support colleges to implement technological enhancements effectively.	Reports from the Digital Learning Working Group NSS and Module Survey data Systems and learning analytics data Retention, progression Achievement data Student and staff feedback Teaching observation data

4. To establish and maintain active, student-centred learning environments which prioritise visible learning (output) to improve student achievement, attendance, retention and progression (outcome).	Support and enable teaching staff to employ active learning strategies that are effective and student centred. Monitor and review learning resources to ensure that they are flexible, student centred and provide high quality learning opportunities to all students.	Teaching observation data NSS and Module Survey data Learning analytics data Retention, progression Achievement data Student and staff feedback
5. To advise on and support the establishment and development of scalable infrastructure and resources (output) to more effectively support student achievement, attendance, retention and progression (outcome).	Monitor and review current and future infrastructure needs and make recommendations to Academic Board	Reports from working groups Student and staff feedback Teaching observation data NSS and Module Survey data Learning analytics data

Part 6: Higher Education Academic Staff Development Plan

Introduction

The Institute is committed to the continual enhancement of learning and teaching for the benefit of students and staff. A major area for activity in terms of enhancement is a commitment to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of lecturers and those who support learning and teaching within the Institute. This activity is also aligned with our institutional strategic plan through the aim to:

- Be innovative in our approach to excellence in Learning and Teaching.

It is also aligned with our Learning & Teaching Strategy in terms of the following strategic aims:

- Ensure that learning and teaching practices are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional evidence-based practice, subject-specific and educational scholarship.
- Everyone involved in learning and teaching or supporting student learning is appropriately qualified supported and developed.

Furthermore, the Institute's Academic Board has devolved responsibility for academic (and related) staff development to its Higher Education Learning, Teaching & Enhancement Committee (HELTEC) under the following term of reference:

- To determine priority areas for educational development and enhancement in the colleges and commission and support the delivery of targeted education development and training activities and evaluate the effectiveness of such activities.

Scope:

This plan covers all colleges in the UK and Europe delivering Higher Education (HE) Provision. It does not cover training provided within colleges and centralised professional teams that is not related to teaching and learning, academic development and quality enhancement (although it does cover related activities such as admissions and enrolment), nor does it cover activities such as annual inductions for staff and student representatives, which are devised and delivered locally and reported/overseen by the Institute's Senior Management Group (SMG).

Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives of this plan are aligned to the Institute's Learning & Teaching Strategy and the Learning & Teaching Enhancement Plan.

Goals:	Activities:	Facilitated through:	Outputs:	Evaluation:
1. To ensure the induction of Lecturers is effective.	Development of a new online Introduction to Learning & Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) programme.	Learning & Teaching and Digital Education teams.	All staff new to teaching in Higher Education to have completed successfully.	Participant feedback. Heads of Learning & Teaching feedback. Observations.
2. To support Lecturers in the delivery of teaching & learning online.	Development of a range of CPD provision for specific aspects of online delivery	Learning & Teaching and Digital Education teams.	Staff supported to deliver online effectively.	Participant feedback. Observations.

3. To facilitate Continuing Professional Development for academic staff.	Development of the HEA Fellowship (experience) Scheme into D3 award CPD Programme	Facilitated by Learning & Teaching team supported by Advance HE colleagues.	Advance HE. Accredited D3 (Senior Fellowship) CPD Programme	Increase in the number of staff holding fellowship.
	Re-accredit our PG Cert with Advance HE.	Learning & Teaching team.	Successful accreditation.	Advance HE evaluation.
	Postgraduate Funding Scheme.	Improved communication of the scheme.	Better visibility of the scheme.	Increase in the number of staff with PG qualifications.
	Learning & Teaching Development Projects.	Improve the communication of funding opportunities.	Increased application rate.	Facilitate the enhancement of pedagogy through research.
	Run the Professional Development Course for External Examiners.	Learning & Teaching team and Advance HE colleagues.	A successful first cohort.	Increased numbers of staff acting as external examiners.
4. To improve the assessment literacy of staff and students.	Facilitate assessment calibration for marking teams.	Learning & Teaching Team.	Calibration implemented.	Positive comments from External Examiners.
	Roll out the use of feedback Rubric.	Learning & Teaching Team.	Widespread use.	Positive comments from staff, students and External Examiners.
	Review the Institute's Undergraduate Generic Marking Scheme.	HELTEC.	Enhanced scheme.	Positive comments from staff, students and External Examiners.

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