LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

College Values

one two three four five six

1. Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
2. Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect
3. Teaching and learning as the key to our success
4. Aspiring to excellence: quality is everyone's responsibility
5. Working together to get the best results
6. Empowering others to achieve their full potential
INTRODUCTION

- Blackpool and The Fylde College believes that learner success is the fundamental goal of the College. We believe that effective Learning and Teaching are vital to a high quality learner experience and critical to learner success.
- Ensuring the quality of the learner experience is directly linked to learners remaining on programme and achieving their qualifications in a timely manner.
- The learning and teaching experience has the predominant influence on learner success.
- The wider college experience including such areas as learning support, student services, enrichment, access to learning resources play a vital role and as such must be included in the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.
- Similarly the tutorial and pastoral systems are often “the glue” that holds all aspects of the learner experience and subsequently success together.
- In addition there are structures and systems which can be shared throughout all aspects contributing to the learner experience.
- The systems and strategies which allow us to help learners to be successful in terms of retention, achievement and progression, also provide the opportunity to measure and evaluate that success.

This paper outlines the cross college strategies that should be employed to ensure consistency of approach for all learners and a framework for Academic Schools to work within.

Pedagogies are the philosophical, technological and scientific bases of learning, teaching and assessment. They encompass the methods we use, the activities we design and employ to facilitate learning; the resources we make available to enable learning, our approaches to acquisition of knowledge and skills; the values that we hold and share with our learners; and relationships we engender between learners; between learner, employers and tutors.

Our pedagogies form the corner stones (or framework) of professional practice. It is therefore incumbent upon us to ensure that our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is consistent with the needs of our vocational learners regardless of their level of study as defined by the QCF; and is predicated on sound pedagogic principles that recognise the importance of transference of knowledge and understanding to vocational practice. It is the commonalities and synergies within the pedagogic processes that define our teaching and learning approach.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy must focus on enhancing the individual learner’s knowledge and skills that are critical for employment. It must also be relevant to the learner’s stage of study and should enable the learner to access their chosen career and progress in their future career.

In the belief that there is not a “one size fits all” approach for all students, we should have a wide range of strategies that can be employed to support all learners.
By fostering a supportive and aspirational environment that embraces best practices in learning and teaching, learner support and use of educational resources, Blackpool and The Fylde College strives to improve the student learning experience, which in turn will lead to improved learner achievement, leading to higher levels of learner attainment. Emphasis should be placed on developing learners with high levels of critical thinking skills and life skills that are important for both academic and occupational success.

**STRATEGIC AIMS FOR LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT:**
- To provide all learners with high quality Learning and Teaching that encourages high aspiration and achievement for all.
- To develop transferable skills in all learners to enhance effective employability opportunities.
- To provide and develop skills with learners that help them realise and take ownership of personalised learning and support, to realise their potential.
- To use assessment techniques and tools that recognise learning and promote challenge, and bring about successful achievement.

**THIS STRATEGY DOCUMENT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING KEY STRATEGIC AIMS OF THE COLLEGE:**

1. **EXCELLENCE**
   Deliver and be known for excellence
2. **ENTERPRISE, INNOVATION AND REGENERATION**
   Support economic regeneration through innovative and responsive provision and strong partnerships with local stakeholders
3. **EMPLOYER RESPONSIVENESS**
   Be the provider of choice for employers in the North West
4. **EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY**
   Secure and use resources effectively and efficiently to sustain high quality learning
5. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**
   Create a socially inclusive College for learners and employees
6. **ETHICAL APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENT**
   Promote and support sustainable development to ensure a more sustainable community

Alongside these strategic aims we will ensure that the College Values are evident in all the strategies employed to continuously improve the number of successful learners.
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM
- SMT will be responsible for driving the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy by actively, and demonstrably, applying its principles to all aspects of their work
- They will communicate their decisions, and the strategic thinking behind them, clearly and expeditiously to Management Forum members in order that the cascade of essential information to staff at all levels can be instigated (as appropriate) in an accurate and timely manner
- They will also ensure that Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy targets are included as a Key Performance Area in the annual performance reviews of all Forum Heads

MANAGEMENT FORUM - HEADS OF SCHOOL/ SERVICE
All Heads will take particular strategic responsibility for ensuring the successful implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy within their areas of responsibility. They will also:

- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, and acting upon it
- Provide regular feedback to SMT through the AMT and CMT cycle
- Establish channels of communication for staff to express their views and opinions on internal procedures, policies and practices
- Advise and recommend on future planning for learner issues
- Make Learning, Teaching and Assessment targets a key result area in staff performance reviews

MORE OPERationally THEY WILL:
- Plan implementation of all aspects of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy within their area
- Liaise with all personnel within the team who contribute to learner success and provide help and support where needed
- Include the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy on relevant School meetings involving appropriate personnel.

SENIor TUTORS (TEACHING AND LEARNING)
Senior Tutors (Teaching and Learning) have a defined role and responsibility for the improvement of learning, teaching and assessment within academic areas. They will have particular responsibility for embedding the operational outcomes in teaching practice within the College. They will also:

- Be the change agents associated with the implementation of this Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.
• Influence and guide personnel within the academic teams to use this strategy to improve the pedagogy which in turn will improve the student experience and success.
• Contribute to relevant staff development and scholarship activities to enhance learning opportunities across the curriculum.

ALL ACADEMIC DELIVERY STAFF (LECTURERS, ASSESSORS, INSTRUCTORS, LEARNING SUPPORT)
All members of staff who have any responsibility for effective learning, teaching and assessment must engage with this strategy and work to achieve the operational outcomes. They should also:-

• Work with peers and managers to use this strategy to improve the pedagogy, which in turn will improve the student experience and success.
• Take part in relevant staff development and scholarship to enhance learning opportunities across the curriculum.
• Use established channels of communication to feed back views on the impact of this strategy on their practice and the student experience.

COLLEGE VALUES
The values statements, together with the underpinning behaviours are central to the core business of the College, i.e. learning, teaching and assessment. This Strategy document, therefore, embraces all 6 College Values and believes that all the aims presented in this strategy are linked to and underpinned by the values.

COLLEGE VALUE STATEMENTS:-
1 – Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
2 – Showing fairness, courtesy, and mutual respect
3 – Teaching and Learning as the key to our success
4 – Aspiring to excellence: quality is everyone’s responsibility
5 – Working together to get the best results
6 – Empowering others to achieve their potential

In order to fulfil the 6 Strategic Aims, 6 strands have been identified to support colleagues in the understanding of how these aims will be achieved. These 6 strands are:-
1. CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DELIVERY – TO HAVE A FOCUS ON LEARNING BEING THE CENTRAL ACTIVITY IN CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DELIVERY.

LINKS TO COLLEGE VALUES
1 – Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
3 – Teaching and Learning as the key to our success
6 – Empowering others to achieve their potential

KEY PRINCIPLES
• High quality learning and teaching, based on evidence from pedagogy, focused on meeting individual needs and encouraging aspiration and achievement in all learners.
• Curriculum is innovative, flexible, linked to vocational practice, up to date, and clearly links to employment opportunities and occupational relevance.
• Embedded core skills of learning including English, Maths and other transferable skills.
• Curriculum is supported by enrichment opportunities which develop the individual holistically, to include employability, entrepreneurship and confidence building.
• High quality resources and facilities to support learning, teaching and assessment.
• Stakeholder input into curriculum design, which is reviewed and refreshed through feedback and involvement.

OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES
• To provide all learners with high quality teaching and learning that is focused on meeting individual learner needs and encouraging aspiration and achievement in learners.
• Recognising the diversity of the learner population, the curriculum must be designed to be modular; flexible and responsive to learner needs; enable learners to modify their attendance patterns to meet the family and work commitments and encapsulate the principles of life-long learning.
• Teaching staff must promote learning as an active process through which learners aim to become reflective, creative and disciplined with a genuine spirit of enquiry.
• High quality teaching will use a range of techniques and approaches through which learners’ skills in written and verbal communication will be developed and improved. Learners’ ability to reason, to critically evaluate, to see issues from all perspectives will also be developed and enhanced.
• To encourage dialogue between staff and learners which encourages learners to explore ideas, to ask and answer questions, to listen to staff and peers, complete work set and to reflect on what they have learnt.
• Develop effective, engaging and enthusiastic methods of delivery which uses open-ended tasks on specific areas of inquiry which will develop learners’ appetite for an attitude to lifelong learning.
• Staff involved in curriculum delivery must establish the “habit” of talking to learners about learning and how to develop the skills and attitudes to improve learning.

• There is an expectation that learners will be engaged actively in shaping learning (and teaching) by:
  • Actively seeking feedback from learners on lessons and delivery approaches, either through general surveys or discussion or by training to observe lessons with staff observers.
  • Inviting learners to comment on or be part of the programme review process which evaluate SoW, and delivery methodologies.
  • Conducting regular surveys on the quality of the learning experience and how it could be improved, sharing results with learners and action taken as a result.

• Curriculum staff must ensure that every learner has made progress with learning in each lesson and that this learning is recorded on the ILP at regular intervals.

• Collaboration between Additional Learning Support / Student Services will provide individualised appropriate support to students.
2. TUTORIAL – TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE TUTORIAL ENTITLEMENT FOR LEARNERS WHICH IS UNDERSTOOD BY LEARNERS AND PROMOTES ASPIRATION.

LINKS TO COLLEGE VALUES
1 – Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
5 – Working together to get the best results
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KEY PRINCIPLES
• The tutorial and support and guidance systems are often “the glue” that holds all aspects of the learner experience and subsequently success together.
• Student access to learning support, mentoring or coaching.
• To provide every learner with an impartial, informative and effective recruitment process.
• To provide access for all learners to have their support needs identified. Following this assessment appropriate learning support or mentoring to be made available for learners.
• Level 3 learners to be targeted for heightening HE aspirations and progression, including removal of barriers for those who perceive they may have disabilities or difficulties preventing them from doing so. This underlying assumption of HE possibilities and progression aspiration also to be present throughout all levels leading to level 3.
• To focus on improving the consistency of high quality teaching to meet learners needs as effectively as possible.

OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES
• On commencement of their programme all full time and substantial part time learners are allocated a group tutor who will work with learners both individually and by group to identify and remove barriers to success, review individual progress against SMART targets, plan for progression and contribute to enrichment of the learner experience.
• In the first few weeks of their programme all full time learners on graded level 3 programmes will have a Minimum Target Grade (MTG) set which is calculated using incoming GCSE grades. Target grades are set for all other full-time students.
• Subject tutors will mark and assess work against individual students target grades and provide feedback that will indicate how to improve.
• All Full time and substantial part time learners have an entitlement to a minimum number of 1:1 tutorials with their group tutor to review progress, set SMART targets, acknowledge success and remove barriers to further success. Personal tutors will access information about current performance prior to meeting with learners to plan future progress.
• Whenever appropriate, the frequency of reviews will be accelerated to ensure that all students are fully supported at appropriate times to meet their individual needs.

• Each learner must have at least one member of staff who knows them, knows what they are learning (both in College and out of College), and understands their learning needs holistically. This member of staff must also be aware of wider factors that may be impacting on their learning and draw on specialist resources to help the learner progress.

• This member of staff, that is the person’s Personal Tutor will work closely with Subject staff to ensure that the student remains on track and meets their targets including performing checks outside of the scope of regular reviews.

• Each Full Time 14 – 19 learner must also have at least one member of staff who works with them to set and monitor targets for their learning and progress, and acts promptly and proactively to support the learner if targets are not achieved.

• To actively promote the development of learners who “learn how to learn” by becoming active, engaged, independent learners.

• To actively promote and support the development of the student's employability skills including:
  • Being able to communicate orally at a high level
  • Reliability, punctuality and perseverance
  • Knowing how to work with others in a team
  • Knowing how to evaluate information critically
  • Taking responsibility for, and being able to manage, one's own learning and developing the habits of effective learning
  • Knowing how to work independently without close supervision
  • Being confident and able to investigate problems and find solutions
  • Being resilient in the face of difficulties
  • Being creative, inventive, enterprising and entrepreneurial
  • Embedded in the curriculum
  • Supported in tutorial
  • Reinforced in the wider College
  • Knowing how to use numbers, language and IT effectively and appropriately.

• Use a central electronic
  • ILP – eTracker and ePortfolios
  • Examples are on Moodle E.G.
    • 1:1 set SMART targets
    • Stop the Track / Regular Reviews
    • Group Tutorials – ECM / Employability Themes
    • Set aspirational target grades
    • Supporting all delivery staff to support the students

• New staff trained at Welcome College and Teaching Essentials Programme
• Review via quality assurance processes
  • School QAM
  • Course Reviews
  • SAR/SED
  • Senior Tutors (Teaching and Learning, Support and Guidance)
3. ASSESSMENT – TO ENSURE ASSESSMENT METHODS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESS LEARNER AND CURRICULUM NEEDS AND PROMOTE ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESSION.

LINKS TO COLLEGE VALUES
1 – Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
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KEY PRINCIPLES
• Assessment for learning lies at the heart of outstanding learning and teaching.
• The role of assessment is to move learning forward by establishing where each learner is in their learning, clarifying what the next learning goal is and then help the learner achieve that goal.
• Assessment practices will ensure that assessment is not an occasional activity at the end of a section of work, but a complex, joint activity between learner and teacher that improves learner’s achievements as well as their capacity to learn how to learn.

OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES
• Assessment strategies are many and varied and should encourage innovation, creativity, flexibility and choice. Core to any assessment strategies are the following activities:
  • Questions, tasks and discussions that elicit evidence of learning. They might involve developing new questioning techniques or designing discussions and questions around common misconceptions.
  • Providing feedback that moves learning forward. This means that all feedback is clearly structured to provide a focus on how to improve the work (even if it is a Grade A or Distinction piece of work). This may be coupled with grades or marks if appropriate. This may be accompanied by verbal feedback. All feedback should use and refer to target setting and achievement.
  • Feedback must also be provided in a timely manner and must be within 15 working days of the submission deadline. Effective feedback raises aspiration and empowers learning.
  • Providing clear, learning outcomes and/or criteria for success. Curriculum staff must ensure that learners are not ‘over’ assessed by ensuring formative assessment (assessment for learning) is used appropriately as a preparation for summative assessment (assessment of learning).
  • Engaging learners as owners of their learning and taking responsibility for their own assessment.
• Recording of assessment outcomes must be formally recorded on central college systems i.e. e-Tracker and HE Assessment.
• Assessment must be planned to provide formative and summative opportunities that are flexible and timely to individual needs. These plans should reflect all aspects of a course or programme of study. These plans should include ensuring assessments are revisited on an annual basis.
• To ensure assessment methods and learning opportunities address learner and curriculum needs, and should provide opportunities to achieve “high grades” throughout the course.
• Provide timely investigations to identify and arrest performance below expectation and potential, in relation to Value Added targets and other performance targets.
• The assessment of learning is critical to the quality of the curriculum. Indicators of quality include student progression and achievement. Assessment can be both formative and summative. The assessment process should foster active learning and provide students with the opportunity to apply their learning in a holistic fashion, encouraging independent learning, problem solving and good time management.
4. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, REFLECTION, SCHOLARSHIP AND INNOVATION: TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF TO UNDERTAKE CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT PROMOTES LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT.

LINKS TO COLLEGE VALUES
2 – Showing fairness, courtesy, and mutual respect
4 – Aspiring to excellence: quality is everyone’s responsibility
6 – Empowering others to achieve their potential

KEY PRINCIPLES
• The College is committed to continuous professional development as a central mechanism for improved staff motivation and job satisfaction.
• Continuously striving to improve the learning experience for all our learners is a continuous journey for all staff. It means staff recognise that personalised learning is a journey towards excellence that engages learners, curriculum staff and corporate staff in a process of continuing adjustment and improvement based on professional reflection and innovation: it has no defined end.

OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES
• Each member of staff has an entitlement to keep up to date via a minimum of five days continuous professional development per year. This provides opportunities for vocational updating through a staff development plan, and should include appropriate membership of professional bodies e.g IfL.
• All members of staff are contracted to have up to 1 weeks staff development throughout the course of the year. In addition all staff are supported in requests for extended study for development which range from postgraduate qualifications to short ‘just in time’ type courses.
• Continue to provide scholarship and development opportunities to staff through funded projects.
• ITE and regular professional development is fundamental to ensuring all delivery staff have these skills and that they are kept refreshed. The Teaching Essentials programme will ensure all staff new to Blackpool and The Fylde College will receive these fundamentals.
• The Teaching Innovation Programme (TIP) is integral to the continuous professional development of academic staff. Its purpose is to ensure that staff keep abreast of current developments in learning, teaching and assessment and are exposed to new ideas and theory. In addition, programme content
is informed by the outcomes of lesson observations across the College, both strengths and areas for development. Facilitated by their peers, the programme provides staff with space and time to reflect, debate and practise different approaches to learning and teaching. It is also a key forum for the sharing of good practice.

• The Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme (TEEP) is instrumental in supporting individual teachers and trainee teachers, to improve classroom practice. It is a proven, well regarded and successful model which focuses on effective learner and teacher behaviours. The College has invested in this Programme to further enhance and prioritise staff skills in learning, teaching and assessment. A programme of activity to use this model for further enhancement has been adopted by the College.

• High quality CPD which builds capacity in staff to reflect, improve and innovate. This development can be supported and encouraged in a number of ways:
  • Knowledge and skills transfer is often slow and takes time to perfect and integrate. Making small, incremental changes are more likely to result in sustainable change. True knowledge transfer occurs when a practice that has been shown to be effective in one location is transferred (with modification if needed) and applies successfully to another.
  • Staff need to be coached and supported to embrace the transfer of knowledge and skills. The use of technology needs to support this more effectively e.g. e-mentoring may be a highly effective method for knowledge and skills transfer.
  • Staff need to see unfamiliar methodologies being used in practice. It is not effective to tell or read about some new method or idea. Most staff will need to see the idea “in action” in the classroom, workshop, etc and be able to question learners and staff. The use of peer review and drop-in arrangements (both internally across and within Schools externally with peers) are vital to this development.

• Planning and undertaking this type of development activity needs to run in parallel with the routine and must have a sustained focus on learning, teaching and assessment. Allowing staff to work together in small teams to engage and learn from other practitioners or providing some choices to staff on which practices they need to change will engage them in taking responsibility for moving forward. We recognise the value of informal activities between colleagues as a natural driver for change.
5. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT – TO ACTIVELY PROMOTE AND USE TECHNOLOGY TO INFORM LEARNING AND TEACHING, TOGETHER WITH STIMULATING LEARNING SPACES AND ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT SUCCESS AND PROGRESSION.

LINKS TO COLLEGE VALUES
1 – Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
4 – Aspiring to excellence: quality is everyone’s responsibility
5 – Working together to get the best results

KEY PRINCIPLES
• The learner experience (not only the classroom but the real work environment, workplace, LRC, refectories and corridors) is the predominant influence on learner success.

OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES
• Learning environments must support interaction, knowledge sharing and learning amongst curriculum staff, support staff and learners.
• Learning environments must be flexible enough to allow for a wide variety of learning and teaching approaches and greater diversity of learner groupings.
• The physical layout and arrangement of teaching spaces should support and encourage interaction between learners, to facilitate peer learning and to promote learners as a resource for each other.
• Sharing good practice and collaboration with peers will also be facilitated within College between curriculum areas and with external peers and employers.
• Effective and timely assessment of learning is enhanced by the use of technology within the process (see section on assessment).
• The learning environment should be welcoming, safe and provide a culture of professionalism in keeping with the subject or vocational area, and in line with the guidance in the Professional Boundaries document.
• The learning experience should also provide an area to take risks, try something new, respond to challenges in an environment that provides respect and constructive feedback.
• The learning environment should also provide staff with learning opportunities through reflection and feedback.

Links to College Values
1 – Placing the learner at the heart of all we do
2 – Showing fairness, courtesy, and mutual respect
3 – Teaching and Learning as the key to our success

Key Principles
- Emphasis should be placed on developing learners with high levels of critical thinking skills and life skills that are important for both academic and occupational success.
- The development of employability skills in any learning and teaching must be a core thread that is evident throughout.
- For more than forty years, the strategic aim of Higher Education (HE) curriculum at Blackpool and The Fylde College has been linked with economic development and supporting local industries and commerce to achieve their business objectives.
- Employability is further developed through the Employability Strategy document.

Operational Outcomes
- The model of learning should therefore be focussed on employers’ skills needs and the design of the curriculum should be action led. Individual learning outcomes should express the importance of executing relevant tasks, solving employment related problems, using creativity and managing risks.
- Employer engagement should be both direct and indirect. In those vocational areas of curriculum that have a high prevalence of small and /or medium sized enterprises (SME), direct engagement is unlikely to provide a comprehensive view of the needs of the industry.
- Employability Skills are:
  - Being able to communicate orally at a high level
  - Reliability, punctuality and perseverance
  - Knowing how to work with others in a team
  - Knowing how to evaluate information critically
  - Taking responsibility for, and being able to manage, one's own learning and developing the habits of effective learning
  - Knowing how to work independently without close supervision
  - Being confident and able to investigate problems and find solutions
  - Being resilient in the face of difficulties
  - Being creative, inventive, enterprising and entrepreneurial
  - Embedded in the curriculum
  - Supported in tutorial
  - Reinforced in the wider College
  - Knowing how to use numbers, language and IT effectively and appropriately.