

## Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy

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## Revision History

Version	New/Replacement	Summary of Changes
1.0	New	New strategy document for Learning, Teaching and Assessment
2.0	Replacement	Updated strategy document for Teaching, Learning and Assessment
2.1	Amendment	Language changes as requested through consultation with TLA Panel (removal of word “outstanding”)
3.0	Replacement	Updated strategy document for Teaching, Learning and Assessment, including incorporation of Assessment Framework

## **A. Introduction**

UCEN Manchester is a trading name of the LTE Group, for the delivery of higher education provision. The mission of LTE Group is “*Improving lives and economic success through learning and skills*”.

The mission at UCEN Manchester, is “*to deliver first-class technical and professional higher-level skills to meet the priorities of the Greater Manchester region and beyond.*” This applies equally to our extensive degree-level provision in creative, culture and sport – which as highlighted in the Greater Manchester LSIP form “a large part of the GM economy” – as it does to our higher technical education programmes.

UCEN Manchester offers an inclusive, diverse learning community that is committed to equality of opportunity and progression towards student autonomy. UCEN Manchester recognises that students have varying needs, and that the principles underpinning the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (TLAS) remain relevant to them whatever educational objective they are pursuing.

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

The delivery of UCEN Manchester’s overall strategic aims relies upon the professionalism, enthusiasm and practice of all those staff who teach or support student learning. Therefore to realise the strategy and meet the current challenges in higher education we will provide inspiring and engaging development programmes for all staff who support student learning.

UCEN Manchester encourages and promotes active reflection and incorporation of the five strategic principles by all academic teams in relation to programme development, review and delivery.

## **B. Principles**

UCEN Manchester will deliver to its objectives by:

1. Providing an excellent learning environment and enhancing the student experience.
2. Providing an innovative, flexible and enterprising curriculum.
3. Ensuring that assessment is an integrated and integral part of learning and teaching that focusses on the knowledge, skills and behaviours for employment.
4. Providing opportunities for staff to undertake continuous professional development that promotes learning and improvement.
5. Embedding a continual focus on student employability and graduate skills.

## **C. Strategic Objectives**

The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy is focussed upon six UCEN Manchester priorities:

### **1. UCEN Manchester will provide an excellent and inclusive learning environment and enhanced student experience, through:**

- 1.1. An academically rigorous curriculum that places students at its heart and which is inclusive and accessible to all with the ability to benefit:  
UCEN Manchester will aim ambitiously to raise aspiration levels for all students through thought provoking, stimulating and collaborative activities that inspire and challenge students to succeed.
- 1.2. High quality, interactive and creative teaching, learning and assessment with a focus on the quality of the classroom experience:  
Accordingly teaching, learning and assessment will be informed by best practice, and further developed in consultation with students, employers, professional and statutory bodies to provide a progressive learning experience.
- 1.3. Staff who engage and challenge their students, providing high quality teaching, scholarship and research:  
Research and professional-informed practices will be embedded in all student learning and particularly through experiential, active learning, studio work, laboratory, fieldwork and placements.
- 1.4. Access to leading-edge facilities, learning opportunities and the effective use of technology to support learning, teaching and assessment:

UCEN Manchester will encourage inspiring and innovative approaches to teaching and learning that capitalise on employing methods of learning that are effective and intuitive to students. In particular, we will develop and incorporate evolving technology-enhanced learning methods, where appropriate, in our programmes to ensure that students and staff have access to the best learning environment possible.

1.5. A continued focus and awareness of inclusive practices that engages and celebrates the diversity of our students:

UCEN Manchester is committed to widening access to students who would not normally progress into higher education and, to this end, have well established widening participation strategies that aim to make higher education more accessible to students locally, regionally, nationally and from a diverse range of backgrounds. Lecturers and support staff will continually reflect on teaching, learning and assessment practices, to ensure the approach meets the needs of and engages all students regardless of background.

Training in inclusive teaching, learning and assessment practices will continue to be provided as part of the staff mandatory continuing professional development programme, along with regular opportunities to share best practice through symposiums, research and publications.

UCEN Manchester will encourage inspiring and innovative approaches to inclusive teaching and assessment, implementing the recommendations from The Disabled Student Commitment, April 2023. In particular, we will continue to incorporate our five key principles to benefit students with disabilities in relation to respectful classrooms; timely completion and sharing of Personal Learning Plans (PLPs); accessibility of resources; communicating clearly with students; and ensuring all reasonable adjustments are in place for assessments.

**2. UCEN Manchester will provide an innovative, flexible and enterprising curriculum.**

2.1. By offering opportunities within a diverse curriculum, driven by employability, enterprise, and environmental and social sustainability;

All programmes actively enhance the ways in which employability is achieved by students, and nurture the development of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes in ways that are made explicit to students.

UCEN Manchester also acknowledges the importance of developing and/or embedding an awareness of environmental sustainability in the curriculum in order to encourage respect for the future, energy awareness and environmental good practice. We recognise that this

will be achieved in a variety of ways and at a range of different levels of engagement from bespoke programmes of study to specific modules, or by reference to sustainability issues in the existing curriculum and its associated resources.

## 2.2. Integrating teaching on courses with research and scholarship strategic themes

UCEN Manchester values teaching, research and scholarship equally and is committed to the provision of a supportive environment so that staff can further enhance student centred learning, scholarship-informed teaching and teaching informed research. Our students benefit from professionally-qualified and nationally recognised staff, well equipped to facilitate effective learning through innovative, challenging, relevant curricula and learning methods, and underpinned by research, scholarship and professional practice.

## 2.3. By being responsive to rapid shifts in employment and associated knowledge, skills and behaviours, enabling students to become effective lifelong, independent learners and able to make a significant contribution in their subsequent employment;

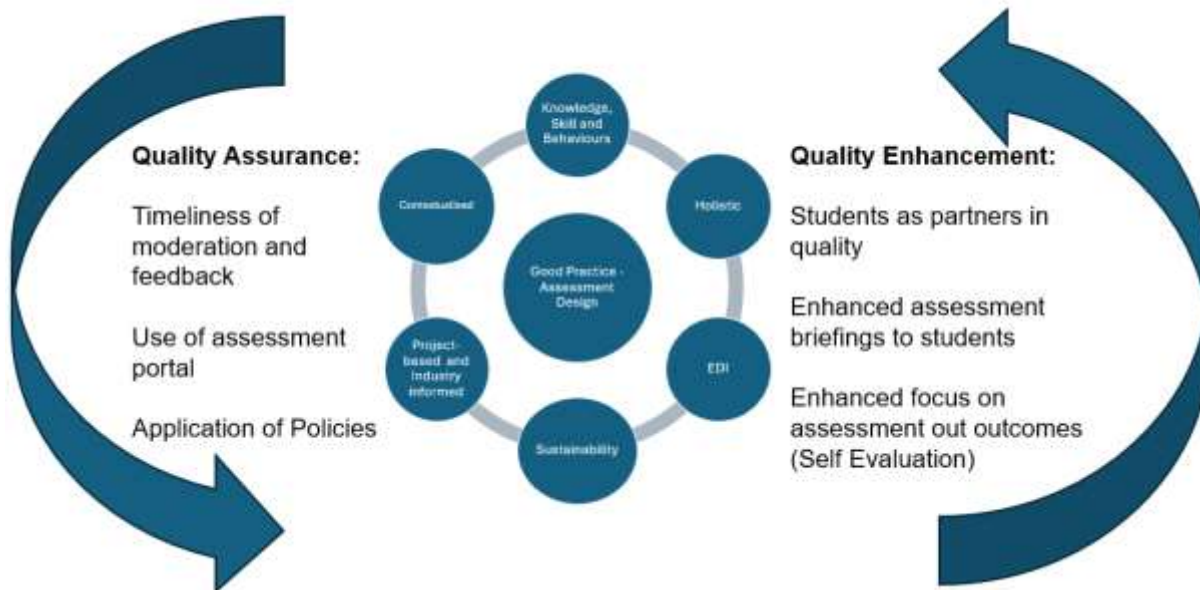
We will strengthen our business and alumni relationships, to support students in understanding their employability attributes, career opportunities in general and in relation to their programmes, including opportunities to take part in career development modules, research projects, volunteering, placements and internships.

## **3. UCEN Manchester will ensure assessment is an integrated and integral part of learning and teaching that focusses on the knowledge, skills and behaviours for employment.**

The Assessment Framework is intended to provide guidance to programme teams on approaches to assessment to assure standards and enhance the student experience, to be considered alongside relevant policies and procedures.

The core principles of design have been considered through consultation with staff and students, existing practices, reflective practice from staff symposiums (Feb 2024), and input from the Teaching, Learning and Enhancement Committee. They also reflect the shift towards a greater balance of knowledge, skills and behaviours for employment.

These principles are indicators of good practice to reflect upon within the assessment design, rather than mandatory requirements. It is expected that assessments will evolve over a period of academic years, to better reflect these principles.



### 3.1 Considering Good Practice Core Principles within the Assessment Design:

In designing assessment, the framework of core principles should be reflected upon:

- Clearly identify the **Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours** relevant to industry and reflect upon this within the design of assessment. In doing so, this will directly impact on a greater variety of pedagogical approaches related to industry need.
- A greater emphasis on **project-based and industry informed design**, with assessments that are co-designed and assessed with industry partners. For example, being set a project brief that's designed and presented by industry partners to solve a real-life problem.
- Consider opportunities for **holistic** assessment. For example, assessment that covers related outcomes across more than one unit and, in doing so, creates a more realistic and work-ready assessment.
- Opportunities for greater **contextualisation** of assessments. For example, adapting PAD assessments so that they have greater relevance to each of the subject areas.
- Consider how the assessment supports **equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)** and **sustainability**.

### 3.2. Consistently applying quality assurances:

- All assessments will complete **timely moderation** activity prior to publication of briefs to students, and confirmation of assessment outcomes, overseen by the Programme Leader.
- All students will receive **timely assessment feedback** within the published timescales, overseen by the Programme Leader.
- All grades will be inputted timely into an agreed **assessment portal** (e.g., Mark book), enabling staff and student oversight of progress.

### 3.3. Consistently applying Quality Enhancements:

- Programme teams shall engage with **students as partners in quality**, providing valuable feedback through module reviews to inform future assessment activity.
- An **enhanced focus on assessment and outcomes** will be considered through the Programme Committees and annual Self Evaluation, including analysis of assessment outcomes by type.
- Tutors are required to provide explanations of assessment and related criteria within **'assessment briefings'** for all summative assessment, also available to access remotely (e.g., the use of video/Podcast).

**4. UCEN Manchester will continue to provide opportunities for HE colleagues to undertake continuous professional development that promotes learning and improvement.**

4.1 Promotion of qualifications that underpin high quality teaching, scholarship and research:

UCEN Manchester will promote qualifications which address the needs of academic and academic support colleagues throughout UCEN Manchester, as necessary, to support innovation and quality in learning, teaching, assessment and feedback.

4.2 Colleagues engaged in continuous academic and professional development:

UCEN Manchester also encourages academic colleagues to develop their learning and teaching expertise through CPD, HE Reviews of Learning, subject-specialist and higher-level courses, HEA Fellowships, and events both internally and externally.

4.3 Evaluation and development of teaching and assessment practices with peers and managers:

We will encourage innovative learning and teaching through HE Communities of Practice, and through supporting innovative projects and disseminating and promoting their results through the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee. We will develop systematic approaches for sharing and embedding effective practice through collaboration between colleagues at the annual HE Research Symposium.

**5 *UCEN Manchester will provide a continual focus on student employability and graduate skills.***

All programmes must actively enhance the ways in which employability is achieved by students, and nurture the development of knowledge, skills and behaviours in ways that are made explicit to students.

5.1 Support students to be independent, autonomous students;

UCEN Manchester recognises the importance of allowing students to develop as independent, autonomous students, in part by selecting learning methods that are the most effective for each individual. Such autonomy depends on maturity of judgement, self-critique and self-reflection, and the learning and teaching strategy places emphasis on the need to cultivate these qualities in students as they progress through their awards.



5.2 Enabling students to develop their intellectual powers, creativity, independent judgement, critical self-awareness, imagination, and personal skills that will clearly identify them as UCEN Manchester graduates, global students and as world class professionals:

UCEN Manchester will support all students to develop a wide range of knowledge, skills and behaviours to enhance their intellectual, career and personal development, for example: the capacity for independent critical thinking; to be enterprising and demonstrate entrepreneurship and employability skills; to work within an ethical framework and with academic integrity; and to recognise and benefit from learning opportunities throughout life.

**6 We will prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of students studying at UCEN Manchester from application to graduation. In relation to Teaching, Learning and Assessment, we will work to ensure that:**

6.1 curriculum takes a holistic and inclusive view of learners, using evidence informed practice and secure scaffolding to enable all students to develop skills, confidence, academic self-efficacy and improve performance.

6.2 curriculum is designed to facilitate students to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at an appropriate pace.

6.3 curriculum and pedagogic practice encourages deep learning, meaning, mastery and development.

6.4 curriculum design, pedagogic practice and academic processes consider and seek to impact positively on the mental health and wellbeing of all students.

6.5 clarity of role for academics in supporting student mental health, and guide staff to maintain supportive, appropriate boundaries.

6.6 ensure that staff in teaching and learning support roles understand how they can support student mental health and wellbeing through good pedagogic practice.

**D. Monitoring**

Implementation of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy will be monitored by the UCEN Manchester Teaching, Learning and Enhancement Committee, which will report directly to UCEN Manchester Academic Board, in line with the reporting structure.