Tameside College

HE Teaching and Learning Policy

2024/25

"Tameside college will transform lives by offering first class education and training in order to improve employability and generate economic prosperity." – College Mission

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Introduction

1.1. At Tameside College (we), our Higher Education (HE) Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Strategy states that we will strive to ensure continuous improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to support our HE students in attaining consistently high achievement, retention, progression, and satisfaction.

1.2. The purpose of this HE Teaching and Learning Policy is therefore to explain how the teaching and learning aspects of Tameside College's HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Strategy will be implemented.

1.3. It addresses the following aspects of the HE TLA Strategy, including:

- Environment for learning
- Planning for learning
- Facilitation of learning

1.4. The HE TLA Strategy also includes an additional aspect of Assessment for Learning. This aspect will be included briefly in this policy (section 6), and will be covered fully in the separate HE Assessment Policy.

Scope

2.1. This policy explains how the teaching and learning of our HE programmes will be developed, delivered and evaluated, regardless of delivery venue or staff involved.

Environment for Learning

3.1. The college Teaching Learning Framework expectations ensure that we model professional standards and develop these in students, creating an environment that allows them to focus on learning.

3.2. We will do this by:

- Planning, creating and developing a learning environment which reflects professionalism
- Modelling professional values and behaviours
- Setting a culture of high expectations

- Embedding and reinforcing the college values
- Creating stimulating spaces to learn, develop skills and increase confidence

3.3.   We cultivate a learning environment which is stimulating, welcoming and conducive to productive learning.

3.4.   We will do this by:

- Encouraging students to move outside their comfort zone while feeling supported
- Supporting students to challenge themselves
- Creating an environment which promotes a sense of stability, free from negative discriminatory judgement and supports everyone's physical and mental wellbeing
- Supporting students to identify and develop their own learning styles and motivational drivers and encourage them to apply these to their pursuit of success and achievement

3.5.   In addition to these we will enhance the HE student experience in the following ways.

HE Facilities

3.6.   HE students, have a dedicated learning area; this includes a HE Study Lounge. Entry is controlled by using your student passes and is available during college opening hours, in term time.

3.7.   New and upgraded college facilities are planned to be sustainable. All college facilities are informed by current health and safety requirements. All users are expected to respect the college infrastructure and should report any hazards, damage or material abuse to your teacher or course lead as soon as possible.

3.8.   Wherever possible adjustments are made to our infrastructure to enable students and staff who have disabilities to access our learning spaces and facilities. Students, staff and prospective members of the College community with disabilities are encouraged to make their disabilities known, this will enable us to assess your needs and plan accordingly. We recognise that additional adjustments and improvements

may be possible and always welcome suggestions. These may be made by email to hequality@tameside.ac.uk.

3.9.   HE students have access to the college student portal, through which they can receive information regarding attendance, feedback on assessed work and the grades awarded.

Student Support

3.10.   Students are able to seek additional advice from the Student Support Services, including careers advice and guidance, additional learning support, health and wellbeing or financial support. Referral can be made from members of your teaching team or the HE Quality officer, or you may self-refer by booking an appointment with a Progress and Welfare Advisor (0161 908 6767,email safeguarding@tameside.ac.uk) to help with any issues or problems you may be experiencing.

3.11.   All college staff and students have a right to work in a non-threatening environment. Any abuse or threatening behaviour, be it verbal, physical or electronic will not be tolerated, and offences will be thoroughly investigated and robustly sanctioned under the College's disciplinary procedures. Refer to the HE Acceptable Behaviour Policy for further information.

Learning Hubs

3.12.   In addition to spaces for teaching, the college provides three open-access Learning Hubs, providing networked computers and printing facilities; library facilities including a range of hard copy books, for which HE students have priority; study skills support from the college librarian; IT troubleshooting support from experienced team members (with IT services back up), and access to College email accounts. The central Learning Hub operates late opening by request contact hequality@tameside.ac.uk for more information.

3.13.   The Learning Hub Teams page contains a range of resources to support the development of personal study skills as well as HE-specific resources pages providing links to eBooks and other support websites.

3.14.   At the beginning of your programme of study you will be offered a college induction which includes a detail of the resources available to you, including the Learning Hubs.

Feedback

3.15.   We routinely seek student and staff feedback on the appropriateness of the learning environment both at college and programme level. Students will be invited to respond to module, programme and college surveys, student members of the Board of Governors, the Academic Standards Committee and Boards of Studies will have opportunities to bring the student perspective to consideration of resource matters. Student course representative meetings provide a forum for the college to share the students' viewpoint and give you feedback.

Planning for Learning

4.1.   The college Teaching Learning Framework expectations ensure that we use expertise and subject knowledge to plan effectively which ensures that students develop new skills and knowledge at every learning opportunity.

4.2.   We will do this by:
- Constructively planning sessions using our expert subject knowledge.
- Challenging students to adopt professional practices and develop as experts.
- Ensuring that opportunities to inspire and engage students are evident throughout the learning journey and planning reinforces and encourages students' intended and aspirational outcomes.
- Planning cross curricular collaboration and embedding key themes (British Values, E & D, and Safeguarding) to allow opportunities to have a vision beyond their individual course and personal environment, promoting the intent for a well-rounded, fully equipped and resilient student.

4.3.   We inspire, support and motivate students to acquire and develop high-quality new skills and produce work of a consistently high standard.

4.4.   We will do this by:

- Demonstrating enthusiasm and passion for our curriculum area and convey this through creative and innovative teaching, learning and assessment strategies.
- Ensuring that the curriculum is underpinned by industry standards and successfully embeds work experience, including external speakers and transformational trips and visits.
- Inspiring students to develop their skills and knowledge through a variety of engaging tasks and resources.
- Consistently encouraging students to take pride in their work and take ownership in developing their academic and industry abilities to the highest standard achievable.

4.5.   In addition to these we will enhance the HE student experience in the following ways.

Course Design and Development

4.6.   Outline proposals for new courses are first considered through the college's internal curriculum planning process. This assesses the course's alignment with the College's HE Strategic Plan; the relevance of the course, in relation to developments in the subject area and regional business/ industry; and whether both staff and physical resources are available to teach the programme. Following this step, the HE Academic Standards Committee establishes a planning team to lead the course design.

4.7.   The quality and standards of a course are set during course design and development. During planning we draw on the expertise and subject knowledge of our staff, we take advice from employers and students and align the curriculum with the appropriate nationally recognised standards to ensure that students will be able to develop meaningful skills and knowledge at every learning opportunity.

4.8.   The course design team includes college staff and external advisors (both academic and business, commerce or industry), and where appropriate and possible will draw on the views of students and the regular advisory meetings we hold with representatives from universities, industry and commerce. These help to ensure that

the curriculum will be relevant to the needs of current local industry, and other stakeholders.

4.9.   Course development will follow the steps detailed in sections 1.2 and 1.3 of the HE Quality Procedures Staff handbook. Where the College is working with an external awarding body to develop the programme, these may require modification in order to accommodate its regulatory requirements.

4.10.   Course design teams will take account of key external reference points, in particular:

- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- The appropriate QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s)
- Any professional body or national standards for the subject area
- The regulations and procedures of the prospective awarding body
- Apprenticeship standards

4.11.   Other factors to be considered include:

- Aligning aims and learning outcomes with the subject benchmark statement and the level of the award.
- The college admissions policy and any specific requirements for the programme
- Alignment of the curriculum with the College HE Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy in order to:
  o Include a range of teaching and learning styles which bring flexibility of delivery in order to open education to those with varied working patterns and lifestyles.
  o Place emphasis on active learning, drawing on materials gained from the working environment or industry wherever possible. Helping students to develop the transferable skills necessary to produce work of a high quality in a changing and dynamic working environment.
  o Ensure the curriculum includes strategies and activities that are consistent with the credits and levels of the award, and which will help all students achieve their potential.

- o Promote sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusivity both in the curriculum and within our approach to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Alignment of the curriculum with the learning outcomes.
- The coherence of the programme.
- The assessment strategy, including volume, nature, variety and authenticity of assessments.
- The needs of students, including those with protected characteristics.
- Procedures for employer-based placements or work experience (if relevant).
- The use of learning technology.

4.12. External advisor(s) will be sought to advise, in particular, on the:

- Aims of the programme.
- Learning outcomes and their assessment.
- Curriculum and how it reflects the aims, learning outcomes and subject benchmark statements.
- Relevance of the programme, particularly in relation to developments in the subject area and business/industry.

4.13. The course and its constituent modules will be fully described using programme and module specifications which will define course and module learning outcomes, associated credit values, and the teaching, learning and assessment strategies to be adopted by the course team. These describe what students will know or be able to do on completion of their chosen programme. Careful attention will be given to their preparation since they will be an integral element in student recruitment, induction and course and module handbooks.

4.14. A preliminary internal validation meeting will be held in order to critically (but not confrontationally) challenge and test the proposals. If changes to the course are recommended after this meeting, these should be discussed and agreed by the planning team.

4.15. The final proposal for a new programme will be presented to the Academic Standards Committee for approval to submit to the prospective awarding body. The awarding body generally convenes an approval panel to consider the

documentation. The panel will then generally visit the College to conduct meetings with staff and students before coming to its decision.

Facilitation of Learning

5.1.   The college Teaching Learning Framework expectations ensure that we stretch and challenge students to ensure every student progresses rapidly to achieve their full potential.

5.2.   We will do this by:

- Incorporating stretching and challenging activities which are designed utilising a wide range of teaching strategies and seamlessly complement the curriculum.
- Organically embedding challenge at every opportunity to push students outside of their learning comfort zone.
- Supporting students to progress at pace whilst challenging, inspiring and supporting every student to achieve their potential.

5.3.   We use questioning techniques creatively to check progress and enable students to build knowledge and acquire skills, improving on what they already know and can do.

5.4.   We will do this by:

- Questioning students in a variety of ways which enables an accurate assessment of progress.
- Encouraging students to develop their depth of knowledge or skill in topic areas to ensure they develop a culture of continuous improvement.
- Using a variety of questioning techniques which are appropriate to the individual needs and level of each and every student.

5.5.   We use differentiation approaches innovatively to enable all students to make sustained progress.

5.6.   We will do this by:

- Using ILNPs to underpin personalised planning for learning to ensure that all individual student needs are supported and catered for through differentiation.
- Using a variety of differentiated approaches to learning which are executed effectively and enable barriers to learning to be overcome or supported.

- Being proactive, innovative and use a variety of differentiation techniques.

- Being confident to try new concepts.

- Monitoring student's engagement and benefit from the support given in the classroom and their progress as a result of this.

- Using formative assessment to assess students and plan for assessment activities which allow them to be challenged at all levels, develop their understanding of key topics and make sustained progress in the session and over a longer time period.

In addition to these we will enhance the HE student experience in the following ways.

Resources

5.7.   The college provides discipline-specific HE learning resources that are fit for purpose, appropriate for the programme, and where necessary, expose students to technology that is found in the workplace. The Academic Standards Committee is responsible for reviewing all new course developments proposed by curriculum areas and advise the college leadership team on the resources necessary to deliver the programme. A programme will only be approved once the appropriate physical resources are assured.

Teaching Staff Development

5.8.   Teaching staff work in partnership with students in order to facilitate students' understanding and application of key concepts and development of professional and learning skills so that they are better able to succeed both academically and in their chosen profession.

5.9.   Our teaching staff are appropriately qualified in their subject discipline to enable them to develop and deliver the curriculum with confidence. They are qualified to at least one academic level above that which they are teaching or are prepared to engage in personal staff development to achieve this. Exceptionally we recognise that substantial current or recent workplace experience brings equivalent knowledge and expertise in lieu of an academic qualification.

5.10. We ensure that curriculum content remains up to date by arranging for teaching staff to maintain currency in their subject discipline. Heads of Department arrange specific staff development opportunities within their curriculum areas, including two Industry Update Days each year, which allow staff to update their subject and industry knowledge and practice. Teaching staff are able to seek support to attend external conferences, workshops, short courses or academic programmes in order that their subject knowledge and skill remains at the forefront of their discipline. Heads of Department are able to arrange for training to be delivered in-house for all teaching staff.

5.11. All our HE teaching staff undertake a comprehensive induction and are mentored through their early months in the job. They hold or are working towards a formal teaching qualification.

5.12. College-wide training needs are identified through staff performance reviews, through discussions at HE Academic Standards Committee, matters highlighted during the annual course monitoring process, from student feedback and through individual staff requests. This results in a college-wide programme of professional pedagogic development for all staff, within which specific HE sessions may be included. A college staff Teaching and Learning Conference is held annually, to which leaders in their field and pedagogical experts are invited to present and share good practice. HE staff are encouraged to engage in peer observation of teaching in order to share good practice.

5.13. HE Staff are encouraged to visit other HE institutions, generally our awarding or teaching network partners. These visits might involve attending assessment boards or planning meetings, work shadowing a colleague to ensure network-wide consistency of approach and standards. HE staff are also encouraged to participate in longer-terms of staff exchange in order to broaden experience and benchmark student achievement and standards. Staff are encouraged and supported to attend development activities offered by the Greater Manchester Consortium for HE in FE, the North West Regional Forum for HE in FE.

5.14. College membership of the Huddersfield University ITE Consortium opens access to the Huddersfield Teaching and Learning Conference, the Huddersfield ITE

Development Day, and all University academic staff development opportunities in addition to Consortium-specific training, meetings and other events.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

5.15.   We promote and welcome innovation in teaching and learning, using evidence-based approaches to shape our learning design, teaching and assessment practices, and encourage excellence in your learning experience.

5.16.   Learning is not always be confined to classroom-based lectures, tutorials and seminars. During their course students will undertake a variety of other active learning experiences, drawing on materials gained from the working environment or industry wherever possible. These may include individual and group-based learning activities, role-playing exercises, case studies, problem- and practice-based learning, practical exercises, directed and independent research, self-reflection, external trips and visits, hear speakers from industry and business, work placement opportunities, online learning, virtual reality and other e-learning opportunities, and community work. These will integrate and support classroom experiences.

5.17.   The approaches to teaching and learning being used will be described in your course and module information, available on your course MS Teams site. These activities will be designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their full potential.

5.18.   Advice is available from module tutors and course leaders, on the additional learning support and assistance in the development of academic skills available. Referral can be made by a teaching team, the HE Quality Officer, or self-refer by booking an appointment with a Progress and Welfare Advisor (0161 908 6767, email safeguarding@tameside.ac.uk).

5.19.   We consider feedback from students an essential element in teaching, in order to ensure that learning takes place at an appropriate pace and level so that you make and sustain progress. Feedback is often obtained informally through questioning of and by students during teaching sessions. Formative feedback will be given to you following in-module assessment, and follow-up questions often elicit further support.

5.20. Students have formal opportunities to provide feedback on teaching and assessment practice; collectively through course representative meetings and through course representatives' attendance at Boards of Studies, and individually through your personal responses to module, programme and college surveys.

Assessment for Learning

6.1. The college Teaching Learning Framework expectations ensure that we use summative & formative assessment that is well planned, enables progress reporting and supports timely intervention.

6.2. We do this by

- Clearly planning and sharing assessment at the start of the curriculum journey.

- Incorporating a wide range of assessment activities and opportunities in the curriculum, in every lesson, to ensure the needs of all students are met.

- Giving students the opportunity to evidence their knowledge, skills and behaviours through the assessment process.

- Clearly communicating and planning assessment which enables both teachers and students to monitor progress and attainment and ensures that timely intervention strategies can be planned and implemented if required.

6.3. We ensure that feedback is timely, honest, and meaningful. The impact is students know what they are doing well and what they need to improve. We do this by

- Giving high quality, regular and honest feedback on assessment.

- Delivering feedback in a variety of ways which is constructive, encouraging and provides sufficient detail to inform students how to develop and improve further and recognises what they have achieved.

- Linking feedback to aspirational targets which are set collaboratively to allow learners to reflect on their work and have ownership of the required actions.

HE Curriculum Evaluation

Evaluation of HE curriculum delivery

6.4.   Monitoring of HE curriculum delivery aims to routinely evaluate and continually improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The College adopts a reflective approach and intends to encourage and promote professional dialogue between teaching staff about teaching, learning and assessment; recognise areas of strength and aspects of good practice that might be shared between staff; and confirm that effective learning is taking place and learner needs are being met.

6.5.   This includes both peer observations of teaching and learning and a college-wide teaching and learning monitoring cycle.

6.6.   The procedure for the Evaluation of the HE curriculum delivery is detailed in the Evaluating Teaching and Learning Procedure.

Annual Monitoring

6.7.   There may be occasions when there are urgent matters that require immediate resolution. These are best resolved immediately through your student course representatives, teaching staff and/or your course leader.

6.8.   Course are reviewed on an annual basis in order to reflect on what has gone well, highlight and build on good practice and identify aspects that would benefit from scrutiny and change. The monitoring process considers both in-year student achievement and also feedback from students, staff and employers in order to assure a vibrant, current and effective curriculum offer.

6.9.   In particular it aims to:

- Ensure the appropriateness and currency of learning outcomes and associated module content.
- Confirm and refine the programme and module teaching and learning strategies.
- Confirm and refine the programme and module assessment strategies.
- Review student achievement in order to identify aspects of the curriculum that would benefit from scrutiny and change.

6.10. Curriculum teams complete an annual course review at the end of each academic year. This is informed, by external examiners' annual reports, student surveys, student performance data, and contains both staff and student feedback.

6.11. The review provides an opportunity for course teams to propose improvement to delivery, indicative content, and specific details of assessment. Most of these can be addressed within the College's delegated responsibilities for teaching and assessment, requiring only small changes to student handbooks and assessment briefs.

6.12. More significant changes will normally require a formal modification process with the awarding body. Depending on the partnership agreement it may be considered in-year by correspondence. However, if the proposed changes would materially and significantly alter the curriculum content, or the way it is taught or assessed, and would probably be a topic of some discussion when the programme was validated, consideration will typically be more time consuming, and may involve a formal re-approval event.

6.13. This information feeds into an annual College HE self- evaluation document (SED) and an associated HE action plan. The action plan is shared with the curriculum team and action completions are monitored by the HE Quality Officer.

6.14. The SED also includes data collected from the college student record system on student applications, entry qualification, retention, achievement, progression and destinations as well as the student profile in terms of age, disability, ethnic minority and gender, this data will inform discussions of trends, future planning and the development of the annual HE action plan.

6.15. The SED is considered by both the Senior Leadership Team and by Governors to provide an annual overview of the health of College HE provision.

6.16. On occasion, if specific concerns emerge from annual monitoring, the HE action plan may include a 'deep dive' in a specific curriculum area to monitor the student journey and to ensure all students are making progress towards their full potential. This may include (but is not limited to) learning walks, work scrutiny, 1:1s with students, student focus groups, discussions with Heads of Department, staff and employers, and engagement with specific student support activities.

Periodic review

6.17.   A thorough and detailed curriculum review of courses is conducted on a longer-term periodic basis. These might be triggered by sustained concerns regarding student success, or more typically by our awarding body requiring occasional reapproval or review of the curriculum.

6.18.   If initiated due to concerns regarding student success, this would generally include a quality audit which explores the student journey in detail, and might include planning, differentiation, longitudinal consideration of assessment, grading and feedback, assessment practices, quality assurance and student achievement.

6.19.   For a routine re-approval exercise involving an awarding body, this requires the course team to produce a reflective self-evaluation of the course over the review period, and a fundamental review and full re-approval of the curriculum.

6.20.   The re-approval exercise follows the normal planning procedures, but in developing the reflective self-evaluation the course team will draw on the following evidence from the period of approval:

- Outcomes of student evaluations, with examples of how the process has led to improvements in the student experience.

- Information provided to students (marketing information, module handbooks etc).

- Brief introductory information, for example, details of the shape and size of the provision, staff, and student groups.

- External examiner reports.

- The most recent professional or statutory body accreditation reports (if applicable).

- Annual Programme Monitoring documentation for the last three years, including action plans.

- Management information data which will enable the approval panel to have an overview of the trends affecting the programme. The following data should be considered as a minimum:
  o   Data on students against the College's Access and Participation aims
  o   Attrition data

- o   Graduate achievement data
- o   Graduate destination data
- o   Complaints and appeals data
- o   Module results

Student Voice

6.21.   Hearing and responding to the student voice is very important to us. Mechanisms are in place to actively seek and respond to the student voice.

6.22.   We ask students to give us feedback and raise issues at the earliest opportunity. This may be done informally, and students are encouraged to raise any issues, pastoral or academic, with teaching staff, students support staff or the HE Quality Officer at any time. This can be done in person or by electronic means.

6.23.   Our staff are all responsible for ensuring that they listen to student feedback and take necessary actions to resolve any issues raised. They will also close the loop, by feeding back what has been done with student feedback. This happens in a number of ways, including meetings, focus groups, the HE Newsletter, posters/notices or minutes of meetings.

6.24.   Formal feedback channels include approaching your course student representatives or students who sit on Boards of Studies or HE Academic Standards Committee; attending HE student forums; meeting with your course external examiner when they visit; and participating in module, course, College HE and National Student Surveys.

6.25.   Student surveys seek information about the student experience. Final year degree students will also be invited to participate in the UK-wide National Student Survey. Feedback from these surveys is used to ensure that we maintain consistent standards and enhance the student experience and quality of learning opportunities.

6.26.   Survey results are analysed, and action plans are developed to address issues raised or to report back to you where actions are not possible at that time. The output from and responses to the surveys are discussed in course team meetings so that issues can be addressed promptly, and the student feedback can influence curriculum

development. They also feed into our annual monitoring process, and the agreed actions are monitored through the action plans for each programme.

6.27. Course Representatives are elected and receive training and a handbook in preparation for the role, which involves meet regularly with staff on your behalf, enabling student opinions and experiences to be shared. Course Representatives attend Board of Study Meetings and points raised are shared with the appropriate College area and progress reported back.

6.28. A HE student representative attends the HE Academic Standards Committee, and two students are appointed as student members of the Board of Governors. The student voice is thus heard directly at the highest levels of both academic and college governance.

Equal Opportunities

7.1. We are committed to treating everyone fairly and providing an inclusive environment that offers equal opportunities for all, the chance for everyone to succeed and reach their full potential in with the Equality Act 2010.

7.2. The College is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment in which everyone feels safe and is treated with dignity and respect.

7.3. Policies are inclusive of all Tameside College Students, Enquirers and Alumni, regardless of age, civil status, dependency or caring status, care experience, disability, family status, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnerships, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, socio-economic background, sex, sexual orientation, or trades union membership status.

Related documents and Resources

- HE Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy
- Teaching Learning Framework
- HE Acceptable Behaviour Policy
- HE Quality Procedures Staff handbook