StudyGroup

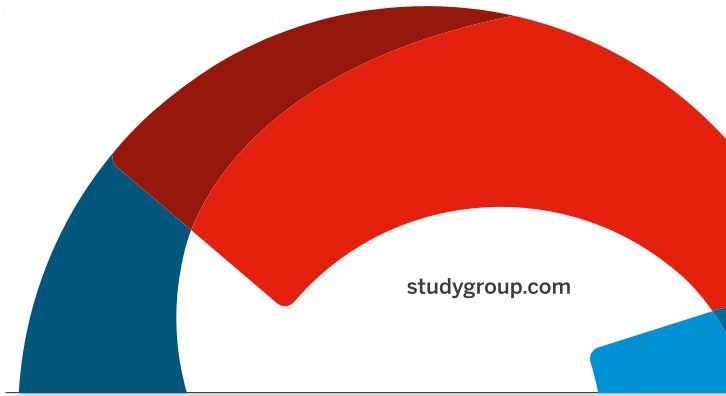
Learning, Teaching & Assessment Framework

Pedagogical Principles and Curricula Design Standards

Guidance

StudyGroup

Contents



Introduction

Study Group

1. Study Group is a leading provider of international education, with over 25 years' experience in driving success for thousands of students from across the globe. We are inspired by a shared vision to build a better world through education by supporting the educational ambitions of the students who come to learn with us in leading universities in the UK & Ireland, HENA and the rest of the world.

2. As a global education service provider, we aim to ensure that opportunities, innovations and expertise found in one part of the world can rapidly be applied in others. The cohort of students attracted by Study Group bring a diversity of cultures, views and outlooks to help us achieve our goal.

The learning, teaching and assessment framework

3. The learning, teaching and assessment framework is a key part of the wider approach to the design and assurance of the quality of the learning, teaching and assessment activities delivered to our students. It also supports and reinforces Study Group's vision, purpose, and mission:

    - Study Group's vision is for a better world through education.
    - Study Group's purpose is to increase student participation and success for Learning, Teaching and Assessment.
    - Study Group's mission is to be the leading strategic partner for universities by delivering value through global education solutions.

4. **Study Group's Learning, Teaching and Assessment framework's vision** is for an inclusive learning experience for all students.

5. **Study Group's Learning, Teaching and Assessment framework's purpose** is to support and guide Study Group staff to actively engage students in their learning journey and prepare students for academic and professional success in a global world.

6. **Study Group's Learning, Teaching and Assessment framework's mission** is to deliver academic excellence through agile curricula design and development creating market-leading, flexible, and innovative in-person, online and hybrid study programmes for our partners.

7. **Study Group's Learning, Teaching and Assessment framework's unique programme level student-centred design approach** shapes enhancement and innovation by listening to Student Voice, by acting upon student feedback and by equipping students with the fundamental subject-specialist knowledge, English language skills, employability skills and academic skills to become resilient, self-reliant, and successful students for our partners. This holistic and inclusive approach to design supports students to develop a diverse set of values and a global mindset that empowers them to become agents of change that strive for a better and more sustainable future for all.

This document

8. This document outlines the pedagogical principles and curricula design standards allowing colleagues to identify what they are and how they should be used in the design and development of learning, teaching and assessment activities. The **Pedagogical Principles** and the **Curricula Design Standards 2023-2024** outlined in this framework aim to:

    - enable academic staff to reflect on student learning and achievement in this period up to the end of the academic year and consider potential improvements in their practice, documenting their reflections in line with **Study Group's Observation in Learning and Teaching (OLT) policy** and the centre's self-assessment and Learning Development Plan.
    - inform planning of teaching, learning and assessment at both centre, programme and module level for programmes starting from September 2023.
    - guide academic staff in what is considered by the sector as good practice in developing, delivering and assessing learning whilst maintaining academic standards and ensuring that the quality of learning opportunities is upheld.

9. This document also details how the principles and design standards outlined in the framework link to the Observation in Teaching and Learning (OTL) policy as well as linking them to key external quality assurance standards and/or code or practice.

10. This document also provides guidance as to the modality of programme design and delivery.

Pedagogical principles

Principle P1: Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) principles are central to learning, teaching and assessment and the student experience.

Principle P2: Students are supported in becoming effective learners.

Principle P3: Pedagogical approaches are student-centred and inclusive.

Principle P4: Feedback is used to inform enhancement and innovation.

Principle P5: Assessment and feedback methods are appropriate and varied.

Principle P6: A programme level approach to design, delivery, assessment, feedback, and support is crucial to student success.

Principle P7: English language development is embedded within the curriculum and student experience

Principle P8: Employability skills are embedded within the curriculum and student experience.

Principle P9: Education for sustainable development is embedded within the curriculum and student experience

Principle P10: Reflective practice, community-based initiatives, and scholarly activity are at the heart of Study Group's approach to learning, teaching, and assessment.

Curricula Design Standards

Standard S1: Overview and student support.

Standard S2: Learning Outcomes.

Standard S3: Digital Technology and Tools.

Standard S4: Assessment, Feedback and Measurement.

Standard S5: Design and planning of activities and learning materials.

Standard S6: Design and Layout of VLE/ learning platform.

Links with QA policy, standards and codes of practice

Effective teaching practice at Study Group

11. Study Group colleagues (particularly those delivering learning, teaching and assessment activities) demonstrate effective practice in teaching delivery. This is demonstrated through the following areas of learning and teaching in Study Group's Observation in Learning and Teaching policy (OLT) which link to the Principles and Standards.

Area of learning and teaching (from the OLT)	Mapping to Principles & Standards (from the LTA framework)
The quality of planning and delivery of teaching and the impact this has on learning.	P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P10, S2, S3, S4, S5
The effectiveness of assessing, monitoring, and checking of individual learners' progress, and the use of feedback.	P1, P5, P7, P10, S1, S4, S5
The level of student engagement and the impact this has on learning.	P2, P3, P5, P7, P8, P9, P10, S1, S3, S5
The impact and effectiveness of inclusion strategies on student outcomes including removing barriers to learning.	P1, P3, P5, P7, P8, P10, S1, S3, S4, S5, S6
Reflective practice and effective use of feedback (from students, colleagues, external examiners, link tutors etc.) to make improvements.	P1, P4, P6, P10, S1

Quality Assurance

12. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Pedagogical Principles and Curricula Design Standards 2023-2024 is a central framework to be followed by Study Group staff alongside Study Group's Academic Regulations and other Study Group quality policies and frameworks pertaining to Study Group's Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy including partner university's learning teaching and assessment strategies where applicable.

13. It is of paramount importance that academic standards are met and maintained. Study Group is committed to internal and external peer consultation and involvement of PSRBs and the national regulatory requirements specified by Office for Students (OfS) , Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) , Higher Education Authority Ireland HEA Ireland, for maintaining quality and standards, and the standards set out in the Quality Code in the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education QAA Quality Code for Higher Education and the UK Professional Standards Framework (UK PSF).

Modality guidance

14. In the academic cycle 2023-2024, Study Group programmes will be delivered through a range of modes.

15. The approved module and programme specifications must ensure that outcomes, strategies, and tasks are achievable for all modes of learning. In devising schemes of work and planning learning activities, tutors may need to change the teaching activity to best suit the mode of delivery. It is important that these are broadly equivalent so that all students receive consistent experiences and can demonstrate their learning through the assessments, irrespective of the mode of delivery. Therefore, it is vital that each mode of delivery provides a broadly equal opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes.

16. All modes of delivery can include different pedagogical methods such as experiential, team-based, problem-based or action-based learning. Tools and platforms that complement all types of learning include Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) or Learning Management Systems (LMSs), laptops and mobile devices such as smartphones. Students should receive the technological requirements for study pre-arrival, and this should be reinforced to students by centre staff once they arrive. Technology enables tutors to rethink where and how they focus learning activities, enabling students to develop self-directed learning skills. Using the VLE as an enhanced learning tool within the context of programme delivery is the approach adopted by Study Group for 2023-24 academic year. It is important to note that students will be required to have access to the appropriate technology before embarking on a Study Group programme.

Dual-mode and online learning, teaching and assessment

17. This guidance is aimed specifically at learning, teaching and assessment that occurs as part of a programme or module that is dual mode (e.g., dual delivery; blended synchronous learning; or hybrid flexible teaching) and exclusively online learning and teaching:

18. Please refer to Study Group's (UK and Europe) **Recording Live Online Teaching and Learning Sessions guidance** when delivering live synchronous online teaching and learning sessions.

19. It is important to set clear expectations with students about what they can expect from the hybrid model, including how tutors will communicate with them, how tutors will deliver content, and how their learning will be assessed. Students should be aware of how they are expected to participate in class, whether in-person or remotely.

20. Technology should be used to make the **hybrid model** work for the tutor and students. For example, use online platforms and learning technology tools for discussion, collaboration, and assessment. Use conference tools to hold synchronous class sessions and allow remote students to participate in class discussions.

21. Hybrid delivery should be tailored to meet the needs of both in-person and remote students. When planning the delivery of tutor input, and selecting learning activities, it is important to consider how the session learning objectives will be met by both in-person and remote learners so as not to disadvantage either learner group.

22. Tutors should be flexible and be prepared to adjust as needed to accommodate the needs of students and the realities of the hybrid model. Tutors should be open to feedback and make changes as necessary to ensure that all students can succeed.

23. For hybrid and exclusively online learning programmes, students should receive frequent communication from tutors to ensure they stay engaged and informed by providing regular updates about assignments, due dates, and other important information.

24. With hybrid delivery, a sense of community should be fostered in the classroom for both in-person and remote students. Tutors should encourage students to connect with each other. For example, through discussion forums, small group activities, and other collaborative work. Enrichment and social activities are fully embedded within hybrid learning programmes.

25. Fostering a sense of community is essential for all delivery modes. For exclusively online learning programmes and modules, a clear engagement strategy is fundamental to student success. Students are engaged through active learning, interactive activities such as discussions, group projects, and case studies. Students are provided with multiple opportunities to interact with each other e.g., through group and peer learning activities. This will help students to stay motivated and interested in the course material. Enrichment and social activities are fully embedded within exclusively online learning programmes. Please refer to Principles P2, P3, P7, P8 and P9 in this framework for more guidance.

Pedagogical principles

Pedagogical principles

26. Key Pedagogical Principles that underpin the Curricula Design standards are listed below, with guidance on designing, leading, and supporting all modes of learning.

P1	Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) principles are central to learning, teaching and assessment and the student experience

Description

- Learning, teaching and assessment strategies are agile recognising students' academic needs based on the principles of (**EDI**) and strive towards equity of opportunity for all students.
- All students receive holistic support to achieve their full academic potential.
- High levels of individual student support and effective feedback strategies are built into the programme specification.
- All learning opportunities are designed to be inclusive and accessible as detailed in the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework. These guidelines can be applied to any subject to ensure that 'all learners can access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning opportunities'.
- Sufficient and appropriate support and resources are provided to meet all students' needs, including those which may be linked to students' protected characteristics.
- Curriculum design creates a sense of community and common purpose and provides students with opportunities to build positive relationships with their peers.
- Individuals and diverse learning communities are respected and celebrated.
- Diversity, intercultural learning, and social awareness opportunities are appropriately embedded within modules and student experience enrichment activities; promoting understanding, respect, and tolerance for other cultures.
- Students are supported to develop a set of values and skills to operate in diverse cultural environments.
- Students are provided with safe opportunities to discuss their opinions and to challenge stereotypical thinking, discrimination, and prejudice.

Other sources of guidance

Study Group's Equality & Diversity Policy
Study Group's Student Behaviour Charter in the Study Group Disciplinary Policy
Study Group's Safeguarding Policy
Study Group's Student Experience Framework

P2 Students are supported in becoming effective learners

Description

- Students are supported to develop academic skills, to manage their timetables, prioritise work and independent study, and effectively engage with their learning.
- Students are supported to develop academic integrity values by providing multiple opportunities for students to practise academic integrity skills. (Please refer to further guidance in P5.)
- Students are supported to develop self-regulation and help-seeking strategies to become resilient, self-reliant, and successful.
- Clear guidance is provided to students on how to access and use physical and digital tools and resources required for learning and assessment relevant to the mode of delivery to remove barriers to learning. (Please refer to further guidance in P1.)
- Careful consideration is taken to ensure the learning resources students receive are appropriate to the level and time allocated for study and enable students to engage fully with their modules and programme.
- Course related administrative information is clear, up-to-date, and easily accessible to students.
- Expectations around attendance and engagement including self-study are clear; students are aware of the attendance, engagement, and academic processes in place to support them.
- Patterns of delivery, and assessment timelines are effectively communicated to students.

P3 Pedagogical approaches are student-centred and inclusive

Description

- Approaches offer flexibility and actively engage students in their learning and assessment journeys.
- Collaborative learning facilitates peer-to-peer interaction opportunities and fosters a sense of belonging.
- Digital technologies are used appropriately, playing a pivotal role in creating high quality learning and assessment experiences.
- Learning platforms and environments facilitate a student-centred approach.
- Materials are of high quality and are appropriately informed by subject matter research.

- Materials and activities utilise up-to-date theory and concepts and are appropriately informed by industry trends, and advancements in learning, teaching and assessment.
- Learning activities and formative assessments are well planned and aligned with module and programme learning outcomes, providing opportunities for students to extend their knowledge.
- Learning activities and formative assessments are inclusive, considering the needs of all learners. (Please refer to P1 & P5 for further guidance.)

P4 Feedback is used to inform enhancement and innovation

Description

- Feedback from students, colleagues, outcomes data, link tutors, employers or industry experts, and external examiners is used appropriately in the process of continuous improvement in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.
- All stakeholders are aware of the impact their feedback has on enhancement and innovation.

P5 Assessment and feedback methods are appropriate and varied

Description

- Assessments (formative and summative) are designed to guide the students through their learning journey and effectively signpost that journey.
- Assessments are valid, transparent, fair, and reliable. Please refer to Study Group's Academic Regulations for further guidance.
- Processes for marking and moderation are clearly articulated and consistently operated by those involved in the assessment process.
- Summative assessments are designed to measure module learning outcomes.
- Formative assessments are designed to support the learning process and to prepare students for summative assessments.
- Assessments are designed to offer flexible formats where possible. (Please refer to P1 for further guidance.)
- Assessments use a variety of appropriate pedagogical approaches such as, group assessment, peer-assessment, digital assessment, and self-assessment empowering students to become life-long learners.
- Students are provided with a range of assessment opportunities designed to be authentic and applicable to real-world scenarios.

- Assessments are designed to support students to develop academic integrity values avoiding academic misconduct. (Please refer to S1 and S4 for further guidance.)
- Students are supported with assessment literacy enabling students to gain a clear understanding of how assessment and feedback relate to intended learning outcomes.
- Effective feedback and feedforward methods are essential; these methods must be timely and constructive.
- Students are provided with a range of opportunities to actively engage with feedback.

Other sources of guidance

Study Group's Academic Regulations
Study Group's guidance on the use of AI Technology

P6 A programme level approach to design, delivery, assessment, feedback, and support is crucial to student success

Description

- Student Voice and feedback are fundamental to the programme and module design process. (Please refer to P4 for further guidance.)
- Coordination across modules supports student well-being and enhances student success.
- A holistic approach to assessment supports planning of authentic assessment opportunities and ensures students are not being overassessed. A reduction in the number of assessments supports student workload.
- Planning ensures an appropriate balance of course content, delivery methods, independent study, assessment types, feedback, and support mechanisms.
- Learning, teaching, and assessment activities are constructively aligned with intended learning outcomes.
- Delivery methods for programmes, whether the programme be online, in-person, blended or hybrid, are chosen for sound pedagogical reasons.
- Delivery modes must not transgress the sponsor status of the student e.g., in-person attendance requirements.

P7 English language development is embedded within the curriculum and student experience

Description

- Students are supported with the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills to improve students' language competence and to prepare students with language skills for university and for future careers.
- English language development is incorporated into all modules to maximise student outcomes.
- Student experience enrichment activities offer opportunities to enhance English language development.

Other sources of guidance

Study Group's Student Experience Framework

P8 Employability skills are embedded within the curriculum and student experience

Description

- Employability skills consist of the transferable skills that enable the student to navigate the labour market and succeed in the opportunities they choose to pursue (e.g., team-working, problem-solving, and sector awareness).
- Learning activities and assessments are based on the skills that employers and partner universities seek such as technical and transferable skills, which are aligned with graduate attributes.
- Students are equipped with both digital and practical skills relevant to their studies with changes in industry practices, trends and technological advancements (e.g., Artificial intelligence) being considered.
- Student experience enrichment activities offer opportunities to enhance employability skills.

Other sources of guidance

Study Group's Employability framework

P9 Education for sustainable development is embedded within the curriculum and student experience

Description

- Curriculum design provides opportunities for students to explore wider global perspectives of their discipline. (Please refer to further guidance in P1 for this.)

- Students are supported to develop awareness of the connections and interdependence of economic, social, and environmental factors globally.
- Students are supported to develop skills, attributes, and values across all academic disciplines to strive for a more sustainable world.
- A holistic approach is taken to embed Study Group's vision for sustainable development and the United Nation's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) goals into programmes through the subject-relevant learning environments, learning content, pedagogy, authentic assessments and learning outcomes.
- Students are actively involved in responsible decision-making and critical thinking activities to promote a global mindset for environmental and economic sustainability, and a just society for future generations.
- Student experience enrichment activities raise awareness of sustainability and offer opportunities for students to engage with sustainability issues.

Other sources of guidance

Study Group's Sustainability framework

P10 Reflective practice, community-based initiatives and scholarly activity are at the heart of Study Group's approach to learning, teaching, and assessment.

Description

- Effective and inclusive practice in learning and teaching is demonstrated through innovative academic professional development opportunities that are accessible to diverse populations and meet a variety of needs. (Please refer to P1 for further guidance.)
- The academic community is supported through collaboration, sharing knowledge and expertise, engaging with external stakeholders to widen understanding, and by gaining professional recognition.
- A growth mindset and ongoing professional development are fundamental in delivering high quality learning experiences to the student population.

Curricula Design Standards

Curricula design standards

27. Colleagues are provided with academic professional development opportunities where appropriate and necessary in line with Principle 10 in the LTA framework to support with the implementation of Standards 1-6 below.

S1 Overview and student support

Based on Principles P1, P2, P4, P6 & P7

S1.1	Students are provided with information about the purpose and structure of the programme.
Description	**Examples**
• Students are fully registered on the programme and modules. • Staff ensure that students have access to the programme and module information. • The information given to help students understand the purpose of the programme and how it has been planned is clear and easy to understand. • Information includes but is not limited to: – details of the academic calendar delivery schedule – the delivery formats – channels of communication the types of activities, and assessments. – Students should be provided with a downloadable PDF of the Student Handbook – Students are provided with links to all institution-wide and/or centre-wide policies that apply to them, whether in the VLE/learning platform or in a provided handbook.	• Information provided in a ‘Programme Introduction'. • Information provided in 'Welcome', 'Start Here' on VLE/learning platform. • Programme Schedule or Module Schedule. • Student version of academic calendar. • An illustration, table, or other visual representation that demonstrates the online and/or in-person components of the programme/module/activities. • Student version of enrichment/student experience calendar. • 'Programme Outline/Overview or Module Outline/Overview'. • 'Module Map' or similar section on VLE/learning platform.

S1.2	Assessment policies and expectations are stated clearly at the beginning of the programme
Description	**Examples**
• Assessment expectations and grading are transparent for students. • Students are given clear dates for when they need to engage with or submit assessments. • Enough time must be provided so as not to disadvantage them in meeting the learning outcomes.	• Newsfeed/Announcement posts as delivery actions, providing information to students regarding upcoming deadlines or timed activities. • Highlight specific dates and times in the Module Overview. • VLE/Learning platform calendars highlight specific dates and times.
• Students are given clear, detailed, and accessible briefs for their assessments. • Students are given clear and detailed assessment criteria that will be used to mark their work and how this criterion or rubric relates to the marks, points, or percentages. It should provide clear guidance on the expectations of the tutor or assessor and provide them with the information they need to understand how their grade will be calculated. These criteria should be provided to students ahead of the assessment submission. • Assessment briefs and criteria can be easily accessed by students early in the programme and include instructions for completing the assessments.	• A list of all assessment activities that will contribute to the final grade, as well as their weightings, points, or percentages. • Student-friendly evaluation criteria for assessments are provided to students in whichever format chosen (rubric, checklist, or another instrument). • For group assessments, the evaluation criteria for individual or group performance are provided including information on how grades will be assigned to individuals or groups. • Clearly stated values for questions in quizzes or exams are provided (including partial credit or half marks).
• A clear and detailed statement is made at the beginning of the programme, explaining to students how their grades will be calculated.	• Explanation of the relationship between points and percentages if both are used. • An explanation of how the accumulated points, marks or percentages relate to the final grade.
• If grades are reduced through late submission, the policy guidelines for this should be stated.	• A clear statement about late submissions will be graded and any deductions that may be made.

	• A table with example marks with penalties incurred for each 24-hour period of late submission.
• **Academic integrity and late submission policies** are included. Please refer to **Principle 2** and **Principle 5** in the LTA Framework and **Study Group's Academic Regulations.**	• N/A
S1.3	**Students are given clear instructions about the expectations of communication and participation.**
Description	**Examples**
• Policies regarding the expectations of students interacting with tutors and peers are provided, either written or through a link. • Students are given a copy of **Study Group's Student Behaviour Charter** in the Study Group Disciplinary Policy at the start of their programme and the charter is regularly referenced during classroom or online communications with students throughout their studies at **Study Group**. • The expectations for interaction with both peers and tutors are clearly stated to students.	• N/A
• Students are provided with information about how they are expected to communicate in the classroom and/or online. This information can include email, discussions, forums, newsfeed posts and other forms of interaction and collaboration if applicable.	• In a group activity, students are given clear instructions about their participation in the group and how they are expected to communicate and collaborate with the members of their group. • A discussion post is considered substantive interaction if it is at least 250 words and presents original analysis and critical evaluation, rather than summary or description, of scholarly perspectives on the topic. • A description of how students' participation in the programme will be assessed, including expected engagement levels (e.g., how many

	discussion posts students need to make, how many responses they need to provide to peers, etc). • To receive 10% of their grade, students must participate in at least 5 discussions per week.
• Students are provided with the contact details of the tutor, department, and/or programme.	• In the Student handbook. • On the module VLE
• Information on when interaction between students and tutors will occur should be clear.	• A statement that students will receive replies to emails within 48 hours. • A statement that students will receive weekly posts to the newsfeed, providing them with important information regarding the upcoming week.
• Clear explanation of when tutors will respond to emails and release grades is provided to students. If the time is adjusted during delivery, students are informed of this.	• A statement that feedback will be provided within 2 weeks of the submission deadline is included.
• A clear explanation of the requirements of the student in interacting with the tutor(s) and peers is provided to help them manage their levels of participation. The more specifically the expectations are explained, the easier it is for the student to meet the expectations.	• Professional and respectful tone are used in communication with peers and all staff members, whether electronically or in-person. • Written communication uses Standard English rather than abbreviations or local slang. • Video communication uses a respectful tone in verbal communication and body language. • Spelling and grammar are accurate.

S1.4	Introduction of the tutor is made, and students have opportunities to introduce themselves.
Description	**Examples**
• The introduction of the tutor creates a sense of connection between the tutor and the students and is presented as professional as well as approachable. It includes basic information such as tutor's name, title, photo or other visual representation, field of	• Introductions for students to get to know tutors could include information regarding, a summary of their experience of teaching, appropriate personal information e.g., hobbies, audio, or video (including alternatives for

expertise, work email address, and work office hours. Please refer to 9.4 Communication in Study Group's Use of Technology Policy for further guidance on communications with students using technology.	accessibility), the role of the tutor, how the tutor prefers to be addressed.
• Students are asked to introduce themselves and are given instructions on how and where to do this.	• Introductions for students to share with the class could include prompts to share information regarding why they are taking the programme, what their strategies for success are, what concerns they have, what they expect to learn or achieve.

S1.5	Technology requirements for the programme, computer skills and digital literacy skills of the student are clearly stated and supported with resources.
Description	**Examples**
• Students are given detailed information about the requirements needed for the technologies being used, including information on where they can be obtained if external. Technologies refer to hardware, software, subscriptions, plug-ins, and apps (students should have received information pre-arrival). • Students are informed of what hardware they will need to complete the programme and are given guidance about which activities may be completed with different types of hardware (mobile or laptop). • Students are informed of the types of external devices required for the programme, including webcams, microphones etc. If any specific devices are needed, students are told how to obtain these. • Any software needed for the programme is easily obtained by students and downloadable from a variety of platforms (Windows, Mac etc.) where possible. If software is downloadable from only one platform, students are told about the specific limitations and requirements.	• If students need speakers, microphones, headsets, or any other external devices, this is clearly stated. • Links to downloadable resources are provided, including software and online tools: apps, plug-ins such as Acrobat Reader, media players, wikis, social media, etc. • Instructions are given about how to access materials through subscription services, including journals or databases. When available, links are given. • If any publisher materials are used, instructions about how to obtain and use access codes are given. • If external tools are used, students are provided with resources to use them, either through written explanation or a link. • Examples of programme-specific technical skills might include using the platform, external submission tools such as Turnitin, using email with attachments, creating and submitting files, downloading and installing software, using web conferencing tools and software.

• As well as general technical skills, students are provided with information relating to programme-specific technical skills needed to succeed, including the ability to locate, evaluate, apply, create, and communicate knowledge using technology. • Students should be made aware of the technology requirements of accessing the programme through the appropriate devices for study and how this will impact navigation and experience.	• Examples of technical support could include: – A description, or provided link, to the technical support offered by the institution – An email or link to the institution's technical support centre. – Links or video tutorials or other resources that provide instructions on how to use specified technologies, e.g., Zoom.
• Students are provided with resources for technology use, computer skills, and digital literacy skills.	• Basic digital literacy skills might include file sharing and organising, typing, composing emails, adding attachments, setting up accounts, downloading software, installing apps, using communication tools/VLEs. • Using online libraries or databases to gather relevant information, using online search tools for academic purposes, preparing a presentation of research findings. • Microsoft 365 skills and resources. • Free learning platform to support students to gain digital skills: learn my way.
S1.6	**Accessibility statements for external technologies used are clearly stated or provided with a link and institutional policies are provided to students.**
Description	**Examples**

• Students are given access to information regarding accessibility of the platform and all additional required technologies. • Links are provided to accessibility policies of all technologies used. If one does not exist, a link to the vendor's VPAT is provided, or a statement indicating there is no accessibility statement. • Privacy policies of external vendors should be provided where appropriate. • Accessibility policies or statements clearly state that services or accommodations are available for students with disabilities and information regarding how to obtain the services is clearly stated. For multi-articulation programmes, this may be the responsibility of the individual institution.	• Examples of technologies requiring accessibility statements: • A VLE/learning platform including integrated third-party software, plagiarism detection software, web conferencing tools, polling tools, lecture-capture systems, media players, document-sharing systems, social media tools, mobile applications, publisher materials. • Examples of where these can be linked in a programme: – Student handbooks. – VLE/learning platform overview pages: pages on required technology software, page on resources, institutionally managed page that links all accessibility statements. – A link to the partner institution's accessibility policy if one exists. – A statement informing the student how to obtain disability support through the partner institution if these exist, a telephone number, email, or website.
S1.7	**Use of English Language is at an appropriate level for the learner.**
Description	**Examples**
• Language used with students should be graded where appropriate to ensure full comprehension of the message in all interactions with students.	• In email communications to students. • In announcements on the VLE/learning platform.
S1.8	**Module provides students with the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience.**
Description	**Examples**

• Students can feedback on their experience of the module, including the content, activities, learning tools, VLE/learning platform and interaction.	• Students can provide feedback on their experience of the materials using an interactive poll on the VLE/learning platform or in class. • Module evaluation surveys. • Staff-student committees/focus groups/student representatives.
S1.9	**Access to the academic support services and student services of the study centre and/or the partner institution is provided and clearly communicated to students on the VLE or learning platform.**
Description	**Examples**
• The VLE or learning platform should direct students to any of the following that is offered by the study centre or partner institution: • Online orientation; Access to library resources; Readiness assessments; Testing services; Writing and/or maths centres; Tutorials or other forms of guidance on conducting research, writing essays, citing sources, using programme-specific technology; Supplemental instruction programmes; Registration; Financial aid; Student or campus life; Counselling; Career services; Online workshops; Student organisations	• A description of the academic support services with linked resources. • Links to online orientations or demo programmes. • A link to the institution library, including information on how to use it appropriately. • Links to guides for academic writing skills, research skills and referencing skills. • A description of the support services and how to obtain them (phone numbers, emails, links). • Guidance on when and how students can use a support service or resource (for example, when students can meet with academic support tutors). • Links to each of the support service web pages.

S2 Learning Outcomes

Based on Principles P1, P2, P3, P5 & P6

S2.1	Module learning outcomes are measurable.
Description	**Examples**
• Measurable module learning outcomes and session learning objectives form the basis of alignment in a programme. • Measurable learning outcomes clearly describe what students will learn and be able to do if the module is completed successfully. Learning outcomes describe competencies using terms that are specific and observable enough to be measured by the tutor.	• Tutors can refer to guidance from *Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) revised* by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) when structuring effective learning outcomes and *IOWA State University Revised Bloom's taxonomy guidance and resources* and Bloom's taxonomy - Center for Instructional Technology and Training- University of Florida. • Examples of measurable learning outcomes: 1) Articulate personal attitudes and values related to genetic biobanking. 2) Explain the process of cloud computing. 3) Select appropriate strategies for professional development using design thinking. • Examples of non-measurable learning outcomes: 1) Understand the nature of rationality. 2) Know social science data collection methods. 3) Learn the basics of mechanical engineering.
S2.2	**Session learning objectives are measurable and aligned with the module learning outcomes.**
Description	**Examples**

• Session learning objectives align with module learning outcomes. The session learning objectives will be far more specific. • Session learning objectives clearly describe the skills, knowledge, or competency that students should be able to demonstrate at regular intervals throughout the module, aiming towards the achievement of the overarching module learning outcomes. • The module learning outcomes and session learning objectives are clearly highlighted to students on the VLE or learning platform.	• Example of session learning objectives that align with the module learning outcomes: Module learning outcome: 1) Upon completion, students will be able to accurately apply the rules of punctuation. Session learning objectives: 1) Students should be able to write sentences that correctly use commas, semicolons, and colons. 2) Students should be able to use apostrophes where appropriate. 3) Students should be able to use double and single quotation marks correctly.
S2.3	**The learning activities, learning materials, and digital tools are clearly aligned with the learning outcomes and this alignment is stated clearly.**
Description	**Examples**
• Students should be provided with information about the relationship between the learning activities and the stated learning outcomes, so that students are aware that they are being asked to complete the required activities to achieve the learning outcomes.	• Provide a table/module map that shows how the module learning outcomes relate to the learning activities. • A session introduction page provides a summary or overview of the session outcomes and their relationship to the learning activities in the session. • An explanation is given for how the module learning outcomes and session learning objectives are achieved through each learning activity.

• Learning activities, materials and digital tools used should clearly align with a student's progress towards mastering the learning outcomes and are not used simply for their own sake.	• Example of alignment between learning outcome and activities: 1) A learning outcome requires students to use images and symbols to connect with an intended audience. VLE or learning platform uses an activity asking students to incorporate images and symbols into a presentation and share with the tutor and peers. • Examples of how materials are linked to activities: 1) A list of assigned readings is accompanied by explanation of how the readings will be used by students (in discussions or forums for example). 2) A link to an external website includes both a description of the website and an explanation about how the information on the site will be used in the activities.
• Clear information and instructions are provided as to how digital tools support learning outcomes and enhance learning.	• Digital tools could include: – Discussions – Generative Artificial Intelligence (used ethically and critically) – chat rooms – gradebooks – social media – games – whiteboards – wikis – blogs – virtual classrooms – web conferencing – announcements – assignment and quiz tools – videos, and collaboration tools

S3 Digital Technology and Tools

Based on Principles P1, P2, P3 & P6

S3.1	Digital tools and learning activities promote active learning and interaction among students, peers, and tutors.
Description	**Examples**
• Tools and activities used throughout encourage students to actively engage in the learning process rather than passively absorbing knowledge. Activities should encourage ongoing interactions with tutors, materials, and peers.	• Discussions/debates/forums • Self-check/knowledge check activities/games • Polls/Whiteboard/Word clouds • Synchronous learning software, such as web conferencing, virtual worlds, or collaborative tools • Shared documents or wikis • Collaborative concept mapping
• Learning activities promote active learning through three types of interaction: learner-content, learner-tutor, and learner-learner. The purpose of the activities should be clearly stated and aligned with the learning outcomes.	• Example of learner-to-learner interaction could include: 1) Students are asked to record a practice of their speech and receive feedback from their peers. 2) Students work through an application problem with a partner before presenting to the class.
• Students are given an opportunity to engage with the content by doing something, such as discovering, processing, or applying concepts and information. Active learning involves guiding students to increase their levels of responsibility for their own learning.	• Professor Diana Laurillard's Conversational Framework and 6 learning activity types promotes active learning.
• EDI principles are applied when using digital technology. Please refer to **P1** in LTA framework for further guidance.	

S3.2	A variety of technological tools are used appropriately in the programme.
Description	**Examples**
• The programme uses a variety of tools, such as videos, discussion, games, podcasts etc., in sessions (in-person/synchronous) and on the VLE or learning platforms. • Technologies should be used appropriately for enhancement and innovation. Tools used should clearly align with a student's progress towards mastering the learning outcomes and/or assist them in developing their digital literacy. Please refer to **S2.3.**	• VLE/learning platform tools e.g. Blackboard Ultra, Canvas. • Videos. • AI tools (used ethically and critically). Please refer to Study Group's guidance on generative AI tools. Study Group's Safeguarding Policy and Study Group's Use of Technology policy for further guidance. • Immersive technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR). • Polling tools e.g. Wooclap has a free AI quiz wizard that writes quiz questions around the topic requested saving time for the tutor and freeing up more tutor interaction time with students. • Synchronous web conferencing tools e.g., Zoom. • A wiki used for group work. • Blogs used for journalling • Voice tools used for vocabulary, presentation skills, tone etc. • WISEflow for digital assessment with Artificial Intelligence enabled facial recognition software and automated marking.

S3.3	Technology tools used meet accessibility standards
Description	**Examples**
• Activity design should comply with accessibility standards, including provision for students with disabilities and learning difficulties. Please refer to **S6**.	• An activity that requires a discussion about a video should provide an alternative format for viewing the content within the video. • WISEFlow digital assessment platform provides information on accessibility and how to adjust settings in the Lockdown Browser accessibility.

• All technologies used in the programme should meet accessibility standards. The tools within the platform meet accessibility standards and there is an accessibility statement and access to the VPAT document in the VLE/ learning platform Overview as noted in **S1.6.**	
• For external technologies, check the vendor website for accessibility compliance and provide links to the accessibility policies where appropriate, as noted in **S1.6.**	

S3.4	Information is provided to students about protecting their privacy in the use of VLEs, platforms and tools.
Description	**Examples**
• Tools used in the programme include links to the privacy policies provided by the creators. • A single statement about institutionally provided tools can indicate all tools that the institution has vetted as compliant with the institution's policy on student data privacy. • N.B. There is a distinction between activities that require privacy policy statements and those that do not. For instance, YouTube links do not require privacy policies as students are not required to log in to watch them. • For tools not vetted by the institution, links to the privacy policies should be provided in the programme. If there is uncertainty around the privacy policies of an external tool, please contact: privacy@studygroup.com	• Privacy policies for social media and third-party websites being used. • Links to the privacy policies of external tools integrated into platform, such as plagiarism detection tools, messaging tools, and assistive technology. • Statements that explain a privacy policy does not exist for the tool. • Provisions for creating and using closed group on social media sites.

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S4 Assessment, Feedback and Measurement

Based on Principles P1, P2, P3, P5 & P6

S4.1	Assessments serve multiple purposes within a module to enhance student learning.
Description	**Examples**
• In each module, assessments are designed for the following purposes: 1) **Assessment for Learning (AfL)** is ongoing assessment that guides students in their learning by providing feedback on their progress and informs tutors of the learning needs of students (Typically, **pre-assessment** and **formative assessment**). 2) **Assessment as Learning (AaL)** allows students to critically evaluate their work through self-monitoring and self-regulatory activities (**Formative** or **Summative assessment**). 3) **Assessment of Learning (AoL)** measures student achievement against learning outcomes (**Summative assessment**). • Please also refer to further guidance in **P 5.**	• a module may have two summative assessments – one mid-term and a final exam, but self-check quizzes with immediate feedback are conducted so students can check their understanding of the material (AFL). • students are required to submit a draft of a lab or essay, receive feedback and modify based on that feedback before final submission (AFL). • students are asked to work collaboratively on a task/project and evaluate each other's contributions and provide feedback (AaL). • students are asked to grade themselves using the rubric and discuss with the tutor if there is a discrepancy between their expected grade and actual grade (AaL). • Students complete an end of module essay or exam (AoL). • Students work on a report over the term, selecting a data set, describing and illustrating the data set with tables and graphs, and then analysing and summarising it as a presentation or written report. Each step is assessed and graded at specified points within the term culminating in a final grade (AoL).
• **Pre-assessment** or **diagnostic assessments** are used where necessary to assess student's skills and knowledge before teaching the subject and skills. The data from the pre-	• An assessment to check the digital literacy levels, Maths or English levels of students. • The results of the pre-assessment are used to provide students with additional support sessions or support

assessment is used to inform learning and teaching activities.	mechanisms where appropriate and inform intervention strategies
• **Formative** and **Summative** assessments are used appropriately to enhance student learning within modules. • **Formative assessments** are designed with a developmental purpose, supporting students to learn more effectively by providing students with feedback and feedforward on their performance, as well as how to improve or remain consistent. • **Formative assessment** opportunities support students to develop academic integrity values by providing students to practise their academic integrity skills. • **Summative assessment** is designed to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria and the intended learning outcomes of a module.	• When designing a purposeful and inclusive assessment, the following assessment approaches can be considered for both formative and summative assessments: – Individual assessment – Group assessment – Peer-assessment – Self-assessment • Purposeful assessments can also be created digitally through the use of the platform WISEflow to support students with their digital literacy. Students should be digitally ready for university and the workplace as digital transformation is the norm.
S4.2	**Assessments are constructively aligned to module learning outcomes and teaching activities.**
Description	**Examples**
• All assessments support the learning intentions of the module and appropriately measure the student's ability against pre-set criteria. Activities and assessments are coordinated. Please see **S2** for further guidance.	• **Learning outcome**: To critically evaluate appropriate literature in subject discipline, identify gaps and present findings in a coherent manner. • **Assessment/learning activity:** An essay or presentation that assesses a student's ability to critically evaluate literature related to a specific research question within subject discipline identifying gaps and presenting findings in a coherent manner. • **Learning outcome**: To identify types of research methods and their advantages and disadvantages. • **Assessment/learning activity:** An MCQ of short answer questions, which demonstrates a student's ability to

	identify types of research methods and their advantages and disadvantages. Or • Students write a few paragraphs outlining how different research methods can affect the process and outcome of a given research project. • **Learning outcome:** Apply fundamental concepts in Calculus. • **Assessment/learning activity:** Students apply fundamental concepts in Calculus on a set of problems.

S4.3	Assessments are sequenced, varied, suited to the level of the programme and students' needs.

Description	Examples
• Assessment types are varied to allow for students to be measured against different stages of learning, from understanding through to application. • The assessments are sequenced to allow students to build on prior knowledge and use feedback in previous assessments for improvement. • Assessments are paced to give students adequate time to improve.	• First assessment is an explanation/description of a concept through a quiz, the next is the application of the concept through a paper, and the final is a critical evaluation of the concept through an exam. • Examples of an assessment sequence that is **not** varied or well-scaffolded: – All assessments are MCQs. – All assessments come at the end of a programme.
• Assessments are suited to the type of programme and the skills and expertise of the students.	• Example of an assessment sequence that is **not** suited to the programme or student: – An introductory module that has an assessment requiring students to complete an independent research project, where the students have no prior knowledge of conducting research.
• Assessments are suited to the discipline where appropriate. • Authentic assessment is used where appropriate.	• Example of an assessment **not** suited to the discipline: – **Learning Outcome:** Explain basic atomic structure, periodic table, and chemical bonding.

	• **Assessment:** an 1800-word essay in Chemistry to measure the learning outcomes: – **Describe theories, concepts, methods and principles of different chemistry topics including organic, physical, inorganic and analytical chemistry.** • Issues with the 1800-word essay in Chemistry example: – The 'essay' assessment type is **not** suited to test the learning outcomes. A comprehensive exam would be more suitable. – An 'essay' is **not** appropriate for Chemistry as it is not an authentic assessment type for the discipline.
S4.4	**Frequent opportunities are provided to students for tracking their learning and reviewing their progress with timely feedback.**
Description	**Examples**
• Students are provided with consistent, timely, and substantive feedback throughout the programme allowing them to track their progress.	• Knowledge-check tests that include informative feedback, not just the correct answer. • Self-scoring quizzes.
• Once students have received the results of their assessment, they are provided with guidance on how to improve and enhance their performance.	• Practice written tasks that have individualised feedback, such as journals, reflections, or questions. • Practice written tasks with students provide peer-to-peer feedback on each other's work.
• Dialogue feedback is provided appropriate to the content of the course.	• Tutorial with students around feedback and feedforward strategies
S4.5	**Students have access to their coursework grades, weightings, and feedback.**
Description	**Examples**

• Students have access to their assessment marks, percentages weightings and feedback so that they can keep track of their progress during the module. • Progress reports providing feedback are easily accessible and clearly communicated to students.	• Explain the use and structure of the reports that students receive at the beginning of the module or in the Module Overview section. • Encourage students to actively engage with their reports writing down SMART targets. • Students have access to VLE/platform gradebooks (where functionality allows).

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S5 Design and planning of activities and learning materials

Based on Principles P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8 & P9

S5.1 Activities provide students with opportunities for higher order thinking and problem solving.

Description	Examples
• Students are given opportunities to engage with the content to promote higher order thinking and problem solving. • Using the following sequence of learning where appropriate: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.	• Scaffolding learning sequences to move from low order thinking such as concept description, (for example, asking each group to take a concept and define it for other groups), to higher order thinking such as analysing how a concept has been applied to a real-world situation reported in the news'. • Tutors can refer to guidance from Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) when structuring effective learning activities. Bloom's taxonomy -Center for Instructional Technology and Training-University of Florida. • Tutors can utilise Artificial Intelligence to help with content creation for low-order thinking tasks such as knowledge and comprehension so that they can concentrate on creating higher-impact tasks and spending more time on student interaction. E.g. Mindsmith: AI-powered Microlearning

S5.2 All modules provide activities and learning materials that support students to develop an awareness of diversity, intercultural learning, and social awareness.

Description	Examples
• Tutors incorporate diverse perspectives (where relevant) into the learning and teaching activities and materials offering various ethnic and racial perspectives avoiding stereotypes. • Tutors establish an open dialogue with students around different perspectives	• Reading lists, case studies, slides, and lesson materials offer various ethnic and racial perspectives. • Ask students to contextualise or share stories on the topic from their cultural perspective.

while remaining sensitive to cultures and beliefs. • Students are supported with raising students' social awareness. This can be linked to employability and sustainability learning activities. Please refer to **S5.4 and S5.5** for further guidance.	• Create a virtual field trip to a museum or national park. Students are guided through an activity that provides an educational experience through the use of images, videos, and audios.
S5.3	**All modules provide activities and learning materials to support students with English language development.**
Description	**Examples**
• Students should be able to understand the level of English used throughout the module. If specific terminology is used, it is defined clearly to students.	• Mathematical terminology that has multiple meanings in English, such as 'transformation', 'negative', 'mean' may require discussion with students regarding the alternative meanings. • Discipline-specific terminology, such as 'paediatric' in Medicine. • Use labelled images and videos to illustrate new concepts, so that students understand what is being referred to. • In the AES module, authentic input materials (texts, lectures, podcasts) expose students to vocabulary from a range of different academic fields. • In the AES module, students are taught strategies for dealing with unknown and subject-specific vocabulary as part of the reading and listening skills development components of AES. • In the AES module, incorporation of the fully customisable "Integrated Skills" component into the AES module in 2021 has also allowed tutors to replace input texts thus allowing students to interact with pathway specific vocabulary and concepts at a deeper level. Where needed and appropriate, subject specific vocabulary is explicitly explained as part of a glossary or pre taught in lead-in activities. • Booster course available to all centres (Effective Writing Skills) also provides

	explicit guidance on how to identify, record and revise discipline specific language.
• Provisions are put in place to help support students' understanding of the materials. • Tutors monitor and check comprehension of activities and learning materials.	• Glossaries, corpus tools and AI powered tools. E.g. Twee – Tweak your lessons with the power of AI, https://chat.openai.com/ • Vocabulary games e.g Quizlet live. • Linked resources for elaborate definitions. • Use of open-ended questions by tutors in class time or through digital polls to check student comprehension. • Students are asked to explain the task instructions in their own words (spoken or written). • Students are asked to explain a theory or concept from the topic they are studying this week to their peers (individually, in pairs, or in groups). • In the AES module, asynchronous content is benchmarked to appropriate CEFR levels on all variants of AES, ELPO and PSE (with appropriate checks completed prior to the course approval). Content is scaffolded and segmented to facilitate learning, and students are guided through the asynchronous materials through on-screen narrative and clear, explicit and level-appropriate instructions. Explicit and immediate feedback is provided for all learning activities to strengthen understanding – variety of feedback mechanisms are used including textual feedback, video feedback and exemplars. • In the AES module, Centres have access to the writing booster course and a language development support course is currently in development (estimated to go live in Sept 2023). • In the AES module, tutors provide bespoke support tailored to their group's specific needs in live sessions.

	• In the AES module, as part of the AES provision, all tutors complete 1 hour of asynchronous provision per group: this includes building a strong asynchronous teacher presence, facilitating building communities of learning and providing endorsement and/or personalised feedback as and when appropriate. Schemes of Work available to tutors and HoEs provide ideas on how to check comprehension of the learning materials in preparation screens during live sessions.
• Provide materials on the VLE/learning platform before sessions to give students the opportunity to prepare for sessions and adapt the materials if needed due to student need (EDI).	• Handouts • Slides • Interactive activities • Incorporate flipped learning strategies
• Opportunities are provided for collaborative learning, group work and student led activities to allow students to actively develop their English language skills.	• Resources and ideas for collaborative learning: Active and collaborative learning Interactive activity ideas Collaborative learning ideas Students as classroom leaders • In the AES module, opportunities for collaborative learning is embedded into asynchronous AES materials on the Insendi platform; this includes mini project work, paired conversations and group research; ideas on how to incorporate collaborative learning and student-led activities into live/ in-person sessions are provided in the Schemes of Work available to centres on the training module.
• Students are provided with opportunities to engage with a range of activities that support with listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills.	• Students listen to a short video and write notes on the main ideas. • Students use notes to take part in a discussion on a topic with their peers. • Students read a text and write a short summary. • Students present a summary orally. • Students write down the solution to a problem.

	• Students explain how they solved the problem to the tutor or peers orally.
S5.4.	**Modules provide activities and assessments that simulate real-world applications and provide students with an awareness of the employability skills they are developing**
Description	**Examples**
• Students are given the opportunity to develop and apply employability skills in authentic, real-world scenarios, applying transferable skills to a variety of contexts within and across industry and subject areas. • For all modules: applying subject knowledge to activities that are likely to take place in the workplace related to the subject.	• In a Business module, a case study based on the failure of an IT project for the London Ambulance Service requires students to understand and evaluate the steps that led to the failure. • In a Business module: students develop a business proposal or bid for a real company based on the company's needs/problems, and work as a team to address different components of the project, then present their proposal. • In an Economics module: students evaluate the effectiveness of a particular economic model and create a formal report. • In a Law module: students write a client letter advising them of their rights in relation to a particular issue. • In a Physics module: students develop a solution to a physics issue and present their approach and solution through an oral presentation. • In a Psychology module, students investigate the impact of social media presence and judgements that can be made by employers on prospective candidates, which may have implications for future employment.
• Relevant transferable and subject specific employability skills and graduate attributes developed in learning activities and assessments are explicitly highlighted to students. • Using the **Study Group Skills for Success** icons within teaching materials and on the VLE/learning platform in relevant activities helps to signpost to students just what additional skills they	• The application and transferability of soft skills are discussed in relation to tasks assigned during class.

are developing alongside their subject knowledge. Refer to **Study Group's Employability framework** for more detail on the specific skills that students should develop.	

S5.5	Modules provide activities and assessments that support students with developing an awareness of sustainability by applying their subject knowledge to sustainability issues

Description	Examples
• Students should be given the opportunity to apply their subject knowledge to a range of sustainability issues, developing and/or evaluating solutions to economic, social, and environmental problems. • The connections and interdependence of global economic, social and environmental sustainability issues are explicitly highlighted to students in the learning activities and assessments in the context of the subject specific field. • Using sustainability issues as the focus of assessments/projects, giving students the opportunity to apply their subject knowledge to real-world/authentic problems/situations.	• In a Business module, students can investigate the impact of the pandemic on sustainability in relation to how business plans had to change and adapt. • In a Business module, students investigate how much corporations waste and their impact on sustainability. • In an Education module, students can investigate the impact of the pandemic on sustainability. What could have been done differently from an educational perspective. The use of disposable masks versus fabric, the amount of printed signage. • In a Finance module, students can investigate the impact of the pandemic on sustainability. What could have been done differently from a financial perspective. The cost of PPE, hand sanitiser, bins etc. • In a Finance module, links are made between Finance and Sustainability e.g., Sustainable economic models, stability, and equilibrium points. • In a Law module: discussions and activities on how access to justice and the rule of law can foster sustainable development. E.g., improving the respect of human rights, and how the rule of law informs satisfaction of social, economic, and cultural needs as well as the development of public policies and the governance of institutions. • In a Maths module, students use climate change data in Mathematical modelling to predict weather patterns.

	• In a Maths module, students can investigate the impact of the pandemic on sustainability. Students can investigate the mathematicians' predictions of those who would become ill during the pandemic. • In a Psychology module, principles, and strategies to promote pro-environmental behaviours, such as using incentives, social norms, framing and nudging can be covered. • In a Psychology module, students can investigate the impact of the pandemic on sustainability – what could have been done differently from a psychological perspective. How has the pandemic affected consumer behaviours e.g., throw away wipes, coffee cups. • In a Politics module, students investigate migration and refugees and the politics around inequality. Facilitate orderly, safe, regular, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. • In Project skills/Extended Project module, students could have a project question from a sustainability perspective. How could your campus or course become more sustainable? • In a Project Skills/ Extended Project module, students investigate cross cultural understanding and behaviours and attitudes with regards to sustainability.
• Refer to the United Nation's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) goals in learning activities. assessments and on the VLE where relevant.	• In a Psychology module, students can investigate the psychological barriers of going to food banks and the reasons people donate to food banks (UN goals: 1 No poverty; 2 Zero Hunger). • In a Psychology module, regarding Fairtrade, students investigate how much more people prepared to pay for their coffee if it is sustainably sourced (UN goals: 8 Decent work and Economic growth; 12 Responsible Consumption and Production).

	• United Nations Education for Sustainable Development icons.
S5.6	**Students are provided with a variety of learning materials and activity types.**
Description	**Examples**
• Students are provided with a variety of activity types to promote engagement with the content through different means.	• Practice tests, discussions, reflections, whiteboards, forums, MCQs. • It is recommended that direct tutor delivery of content should be restricted to no more than approximately ten minutes at a time, followed by an activity.
• Students are provided with information through a variety of learning materials.	• A combination of texts from authors, videos, websites, articles, podcasts.
S5.7	**Source, permission and copyright information is provided for all materials used, where appropriate**
Description	**Examples**
• Permission has been sought and granted for all external materials used. • Sources used in the programme are clearly identified with reference to their original source in the correct format applicable to the programme. • Access to materials for students residing in censored countries, such as China, should be checked. • The following does **not** require permission: – Journal articles where access is granted through an institutional library database and permission is already granted for use in teaching materials. – Instructional materials that are open source.	• Examples of sourced materials requiring permission to use: – Journal articles (if not open access). – Images or diagrams from textbooks. – Videos from a repository. – Paraphrasing copyrighted material or directly lifting content from a copyrighted source.
S5.8	**The materials represent up-to-date theory and practice.**

Description	Examples
• The instructional materials are up-to-date and reflect the current environment of the student.	• A medical module may include the latest breakthrough research. • Using lecture recordings that are up to date, which include recent trends in data usage of a digital business in a Business module.
• Older works may be included if they are considered 'seminal' or 'eminent'.	• Ivan Pavlov's experiment on dogs in the 1890s.

S5.9	The volume of materials and activities is appropriate.

Description	Examples
• The volume of learning resources students receive is appropriate to the level of study and enables students to engage fully with their programme. • Too many materials and activities may be overwhelming for students. If a wealth of materials and activities are necessary for a module, clear signposting on the VLE/learning platform combined with explanations in sessions highlight to students the activities that are deemed necessary for success on the module. • Too few materials and activities may limit opportunities for students to review learning concepts, to develop high order thinking skills, to develop independent study skills reducing students' chances of success on the module.	**N/A**

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S6 Design and Layout of VLE/ learning platform and materials

Based on Principles P1, P2, P3 and P7

S6.1	Instructions are clear on where to find various components of the programme and modules. Clear instructions and signposting support students with navigation of the VLE/learning platform.
Description	**Examples**
• Information posted on the VLE/learning platform at the start of a programme provides: – Information about the purpose and structure of the programme**.** Please refer to **S1.1.** – Guides for the students to explore the VLE/learning platform with indication of what to do first. – Clear navigation instructions for the VLE/ learning platform using active language. – If the above information is provided in the student handbook, students are provided with access directly on the VLE/ learning platform, or through a link.	• Please refer to examples in **S1.1**. • A programme/module 'tour' or similar. • 'Read through the interaction guidelines'.
S6.2	**A logical, consistent, and clear layout is used throughout, making the programme easy to navigate.**
Description	**Examples**
• Navigation throughout the programme is consistent, logical, and efficient. The navigation strategy should facilitate ease of movement through the programme, modules, and the activities. • The programme design enables students to easily understand where they are in the programme and to easily return to the home page from anywhere.	• See examples below these bullet points.
• A consistent layout and design are used throughout, making the content, learning materials, tools, and media easy to locate from anywhere in the programme.	• A consistent design template used for each module across the VLE/learning platform.

• Pages have links, files and icons that are labelled and easy to understand with meaningful names. All links work properly, and none are broken.	• File named 'Week 1 lesson 1 Sociology slides' rather than 'SW164.DOCX'.
• The modules follow a logical sequence. The hierarchy of material on a screen is clearly indicated through different heading formats and numbering.	• Week 2: The PhD application process: – 2.1 Introduction & session objectives – 2.2 Session Preparation – 2.3 Associated Reading – 2.4 Session Review
• Approximate timings for activities are highlighted on the VLE/learning platform appropriate to the **Guided Learning Hours** so that students can plan their time effectively.	• This activity should take approximately **15 minutes**.
S6.3	**There is enough 'white' space on the VLE/learning platform and within learning materials for easy viewing.**
Description	**Examples**
• 'White' space is the area of the layout that is left empty. The space refers to the background and does **not** need to be white in colour. This space can be around, between and inside the objects you place in the VLE/learning platform and learning materials. • Put 'white' space around objects and text, headings, and content, so that each area is clearly separated. • Use clear spacing between letters, words, sentences lines, paragraphs, and blocks of text. • There should be enough 'white' space surrounding text to enhance readability, including the avoidance of large chunks of text at once or too many images.	• Refer to your partner university's accessibility guidelines on 'white' space. • Refer to the Improve Your E-Learning Designs Using White Space (articulate.com) website, for examples of 'white' space.
S6.4	**Choice of colour contrast between text and background to ensure information is accessible to people with low vision, colour vision deficiency, and/or users with screen readers.**
Description	**Examples**
• Focus on choice of colour contrast between text and background to ensure information is accessible to people with	• To check the contrast ratio, refer to a contrast checker such as:

low vision, colour vision deficiency, and/or users with screen readers. • Avoid red/green, red/black, green/black combinations as these are inaccessible to people with the most common types of colour vision deficiency. • Colour enhances aesthetic appeal. However, colour may not be seen by all users. If your background colour is light, your text should be dark (e.g., black text on a yellow background) and if your background colour is dark your text should be light (e.g., yellow text on black). • Colours are not used randomly as this can create distraction and a lack of readability. • Colour coding or highlighting is used to serve specific instructional purposes. Colour is not used alone to convey meaning.	• Free online tool for evaluating colour contrast according to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
S6.5	**Thorough proofreading is undertaken to minimise presence of errors.**
Description	**Examples**
• Grammatical or spelling mistakes should not be present as they can distract from learning.	• Example of a spelling error that prevents comprehension: *'Some people have called for peach in the Middle East.'*
S6.6	**Text is formatted with titles, headings, and formatting styles to enhance readability.**
Description	**Examples**
• Text is formatted to enhance comprehension and flow of learning, including headings for large topics.	• Content on one screen begins with the topic of AI in Organisations so the heading is 'AI in Organisations'.
• Content is split up between topics and separated through headings.	• Content on one screen begins with the topic of AI in Organisations, so the heading is 'AI in Organisations'; the second part of the screen focuses on the ethical side of AI, so the heading 'Ethics of AI in Organisations' is used to separate the two topics.

• Avoid italics and underlining as they are not typically picked up by screen readers. To emphasise text, apply bold formatting to two or three keywords at a time. Italics, underlined text, block capitals or large areas of bold text can be difficult to read for people with visual difficulties.	• Content on one screen begins with the topic of AI in Organisations, so the heading is '**AI** in **Organisations**'; the second part of the screen focuses on the ethical side of AI, so the heading '**Ethics** of **AI** in **Organisations**' is used to separate the two topics.
S6.7.	**Tables and images are accompanied by a title and summary description, and source information if applicable**
Description	**Examples**
• Tables have a caption, which is a heading describing the information presented in the table.	• **Monthly GDP**
• The heading appears first, then the summary, which is a description.	• **Monthly GDP** • Monthly real gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have increased by 0.3% in January 2023 (Figure 1) following a fall of 0.5% in December 2022. Monthly GDP is now estimated to be 0.2% below its pre-coronavirus levels (February 2020).
• A source or reference is included if the material is pulled from an external resource.	• Source: GDP monthly estimate from the Office for National Statistics.
• The table appears after the description to provide a coherent structure and context for students using screen readers.	• Figure 1: UK GDP is estimated to have increased by 0.3% in January 2023
S6.8	**A consistent style guide is used throughout for improved readability and structure of the modules and programme.**
Description	**Examples**
• The style guide maximises usability and minimises distractions on the VLE/ learning platform and in the learning materials. If using a partner's institution's VLE, check if there are existing style guides. • Content is formatted to serve specific purposes.	• A local style guide may include instructions/information on: - colour scheme, heading and body styles, content grouping etc. • Similar content is grouped together and changes in topic are indicated through headings. • Heading and body styles are consistent throughout.

	• Text content is readable by assistive technology.
S6.9	**Text content is readable by assistive technology.**
Description	**Examples**
• All text, including HTML and PDFs should be in a sans-serif font, in a standard size 12 pt and readable by assistive technology. • PDFs are not always readable by assistive technology, so PDF documents should be structured and have a very specific reading order so that assistive devices can translate them efficiently. • PDFs containing texts are not just image scans; any texts in PDFs must be readable by screen readers.	• Examples of sans-serif font: Verdana, Arial, Roboto. • Use of accessibility function/score in VLE/learning platform to provide alternative formats and to check accessibility of learning materials.
S6.10	**Text equivalents for non-text elements are provided and audio description is provided for video-only content.**
Description	**Examples**
• Any material integral to learning presented in a non-text format is also provided in a text format as alternative provision for students with accessibility needs. • All images (unless decorative) have alternative text and description, so all students have access to equivalent information and convey the accuracy of the content.	• Use of accessibility function/score in VLE/learning platform to provide alternative formats and to check accessibility of learning materials. E.g. Blackboard Ally uses Artificial intelligence to build a more inclusive learning environment for users. • All tables are written as text and not embedded as images, nor presented as screen captures. Please refer to further guidance in **S6.7** • Documents or HTML titles and headings are formatted using a style guide. Please refer to further guidance in **S6.8** • Please refer to the following Harvard guide on writing alternative text.
• Videos and audio are provided with text alternatives.	• If the audio content corresponds with a visual to convey meaning, captions provide an equivalent experience, conveying a correct representation of the

	audio content, the visual, the speaker, and any meaning conveyed through sound. • If the audio content does not correspond with a visual to convey meaning, then a text transcript is sufficient. • Visual information that is critical to meaning is conveyed through audio description i.e., scripts for any in-house produced videos include verbal descriptions of the visual content).
• Images and text should be understandable without colour.	• Colour alone is not relied upon to convey meaning. The meaning is conveyed in a way that does not require a reliance on colour. Please refer to further guidance in **S6.4**
S6.11	**Hyperlink text is descriptive and makes sense out of context.**
Description	**Examples**
• Hyperlinks need to clearly explain where they are taking the student so should include a concrete noun and an action verb.	• Visit the academic professional development hub. **not** • You will find more detail by clicking here.
S6.12	**Programme multimedia facilitates ease of use.**
Description	**Examples**

• Multimedia used for content or feedback is easy to use, intelligible and works across devices. • Audio quality is clear and of high quality.	• Strategies to ensure the usability of multimedia: 1) Graphics and animations are used to enhance instructional materials without causing distractions. 2) Images are appropriately sized and can be viewed easily. Check the pixel requirements of the VLE or learning platform when uploading images. A device responsive platform resizes the content e.g., Teesside University VLE Blackboard Ultra requires at least 1200 by 240 pixels in the Module Banner so that it can be viewed on all device screens. 3) A video window can be resized; resolution is sufficient for comprehension. 4) Long videos are broken into shorter segments or searchable. 5) Users can control movement through presentations e.g., by being provided with a set of Microsoft PowerPoint presentation slides that they can look through at their own pace, or through interactive activities that allow the user to click through the slides themselves. 6) Video streams smoothly without interruptions. If a video requires a high bandwidth, that information is included with the video. 7) Interactive elements critical to the content can be used on multiple platforms and browsers or guidance is provided about the best browser to use.

Appendix

References

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Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education 2023 [Accessed: 24 March 2023]

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Glossary

Aegrotat	An award to a student who was not able to complete their programme of study due to illness or other force majeure.
Accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L)	Experiential learning recognises learning achieved outside a learning formal education or training system that cover areas of the formal taught programme. The process can be equated to a 'credit transfer' process at a partner HEI.
Academic Appeal	A request by a learner for a review of a decision about their progression, assessment or any award. An academic appeal should not be confused with a complaint.
Annual monitoring (AM)	Our annual process to ensure approved programmes continue to meet our criteria for quality assurance, and that students studying on the programme are getting a high-quality experience.
Applicant	Anyone applying to a programme provided by one of our Centres or one of our partner universities.
Approval (AP)	The process that leads to decisions about whether a programme meets the requirements of our criteria for quality assurance. Continuing approval depends on satisfactory monitoring.
Artificial Intelligence	Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the capability of a computer or a robot that is operated by a computer to carry out tasks that usually necessitate human intelligence and decision-making. While there is currently no AI that can replicate the full range of tasks performed by humans, certain AI systems can perform certain tasks at a level comparable to that of humans.
Asynchronous	Learning that does not occur in the same place or at the same time for a whole cohort. Students can access resources and communicate at any time and are not restricted to accessing this learning at any specific time. It enables students to learn at their own pace in their own time.
Augmented Reality (AR)	Images produced by a computer and used together with a view of the real world. E.g. a student can be immersed in a virtual place or a situation by putting on a Virtual/Augmented Reality Headset or glasses and will be able to view images from the real world and the virtual world.
Blended learning	Teaching and learning that combines thoughtful integration of in-person delivery and delivery in a digital environment.
Cohort	A group of students on the same programme.

Community-based initiatives	Community-based initiatives are professional development opportunities that are designed and delivered in collaboration with individuals and teams across the Study Group academic community.
ChatGPT(AI)by OpenAI	According to Turnitin (2023), ChatGPT -3.5 (AI) by OpenAI is an abbreviation of Generative Pre-trained Transformer that was rolled out in November 2022. It is a (LLM) that leverages existing content from the internet; it can generate a diverse range of unique textual responses from user input. ChatGPT 3.5 can produce original text that is tailored to a user's specific request. According to Future learn (2023) Chat GPT utilises deep learning to create text that appears to have been written by humans such as essays and poems. In March 2023, ChatGPT 4 became available on a paid subscription. It is more likely to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate content and respond accordingly and with more accuracy than ChatGPT-3.5. ChatGPT 4 can also accept images as well as text.
Conflict of Interest	When someone involved in a QA process has a significant connection with and ISC or programme which means they cannot be involved in the assessment of that programme.
Curriculum	A structured plan to provide specific learning and teaching activities to support the development of students' knowledge, skills, behaviour and understanding. The plan is generally organised as a sequence of modules so that a student receives specific learning and teaching. The curriculum includes things like the syllabus, teaching strategy, an assessment strategy and necessary learning resources.
Deep learning	According to Turnitin (2023), deep learning is a type of Artificial Intelligence that relies on neural networks to convert information, or data into a specific format and it has proven to be very effective for a variety of tasks. Generative AI models are a specific type of deep learning. IBM (2023) states that deep learning and Machine Learning are sub-sets of artificial intelligence, and deep learning is a sub-set of machine learning. The difference between deep learning and machine learning is how the algorithms learn. machine learning is reliant on human intervention when learning whereas deep learning does not need human support to process data so deep learning is a more scalable version of machine learning.
Dual-mode	This refers to a teaching method where the same learning activities are experienced by students on-campus (in-person) and remote (e.g., at home). Students can participate in the same learning activities flexibly in a way that works for them in-person, via video conference or asynchronously.

Educator	An individual who is involved in teaching, assessing or aiding learning. This can include people who are permanently employed and others who help to deliver the programme such as sessional or visiting lecturers.
External examiners	Appointed by Centres to monitor the assessment process for the academic elements (and any practical elements) of programmes and to ensure that relevant academic standards are met.
Generative AI	According to Turnitin (2023), the term Generative AI encompasses a broad range of artificial intelligence that employs learning algorithms to create new content such as digital images, video, audio, text, or code.
Governance	The policies, processes and monitoring arrangements that make sure that a programme is well run.
Higher Education Institution (HEI)	A partner organisation of an ISC, most often a university but can be any organisation that offers tertiary education.
High-level individual support	High level individual support refers to taking all practical, reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure the student is adequately supported. All classroom adjustments, curriculum planning, and exam access arrangements must be implemented following assessment of individual student need.
On-site delivery	Teaching and learning takes place with teaching staff and students in the same physical space. The typical example is the traditional lecture in a lecture hall.
International Study Centre (ISC)	The Study Group entity that is responsible for the design and delivery of approved programmes linked to one or more partner HEIs. Also referred to as 'Centres'.
Large Language Model (LLM)	According to Turnitin (2023), Large Language Model (LLM) is a term that refers to Artificial intelligence that has been trained on vast amounts of textual data to enable it to generate responses to natural language inputs that appear to be produced by humans.
Leadership	Providing a strategy, vision or direction for a programme.
Machine Learning	Turnitin (2023) states that machine learning is a type of AI that creates algorithms that enable machines to learn and adapt based on new information and data, without requiring human intervention.
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	NLP can support with inclusion and accessibility by supporting students to be able to understand written text, providing simplifications, summaries, and translations. According to Turnitin (2023) NLP permits machines to interpret through voice or text the information conveyed by humans. IBM

	(2023) refers to NLP as the sub-field of artificial intelligence that involves computers that can interpret spoken and written language similar to how humans do. NLP encompasses computational linguistics, which is a field that involves modelling of human language built upon a set of pre-defined rules, statistical machine learning and deep learning models. Computers are programmed to recognise the meaning of language through text or voice data formats. NLP is behind translation programs; it can react to verbal requests and provide summaries of large quantities of text quickly. NLP is used in various ways in everyday life. For example, within voice-activated GPS systems, digital assistants, speech-to-text software, and customer service chatbots, among others. However, NLP is also becoming increasingly important in business solutions that aim to optimise business operations, enhance employee productivity, and simplify crucial processes.
Online delivery	Students take part in sessions solely through digital technologies (such as video conference software or VLEs).
Open-ended approval	Where we approve a programme on an open-ended basis, subject to satisfactory monitoring. This removes the need to regularly arrange approval events for programmes unless a concern is raised, or the programme fails to engage with regular monitoring.
Panel	A set of individuals appointed to assess and approve education programmes against the CQA.
Panel member	A person who we judge to have the necessary skills, knowledge and ability to assess a programme against the CQA and to make recommendations about the approval and monitoring status of the programmes we quality assure. A report written at the end of an approval or monitoring process.
Panel report	The report is in a standard format and contains recommendations about the ongoing approval of a programme
Programme	The academic provision, practical experience and assessment which in totality form a set of teaching and learning experiences that can be approved against the criteria for quality assurance.
Programme leader	The person who has the overall professional responsibility for a programme.
Professional body	An organisation which carries out work which may include promoting a profession, representing members, producing curriculum frameworks, overseeing some education and training programmes and offering continuing professional development (CPD) offers.

Programme Approval & Variation Committee (PAVC)	The Study Group committee with delegated responsibility for ownership and oversight of the implementation of quality assurance and enhancement processes.
Quality Assurance	The way the QAE team, on behalf of the Academic Board of Study Group, monitor and evaluate the various aspects of our centres or departments that deliver academic services. This includes scrutiny of policies, procedures, systems and practices to make sure, as far as possible, that criteria for quality assurance are being achieved at a threshold level.
Recognition of prior learning	The process for assessing an applicant's previous learning from experience or formal learning (or both). This can lead to credit transfer or other transition arrangements into a programme, where appropriate
Recommendation	Recommendations are observations on the programme or Centre which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval or ongoing approval. recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and when the particular criteria has been met at, or is just above, the threshold level.
Strong AI	(also known as General AI) According to Turnitin (2023), Strong AI or General AI refers to artificial intelligence that can perform any cognitive task that a human can do. Future learn (2023) describes Strong AI as systems that can solve unfamiliar problems. Strong AI is equivalent to the human brain and can take on a variety of different tasks. This type of AI does not currently exist. IBM (2023) adds that strong AI can be separated into two categories: Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) and Artificial Super Intelligence (ASI). AGI is a type of AI that
Synchronous learning and teaching	Involves scheduled interaction with individuals coming together at the same time for a session.
Virtual learning environment (VLE)	Web-based platforms which host a variety of learning materials, including but not limited to administrative information (e.g., course timetables). Some also have social features, including group collaboration and discussion tools.
Validating Body	The partner institution which validates the programme and, if appropriate, any final qualification.
Weak or Narrow AI	According to IBM (2023) Narrow AI, also known as Weak AI or Artificial Narrow Intelligence (ANI), refers to the kind of artificial intelligence that is trained and designed to execute specific tasks with high efficiency. Examples of such applications include Apple's Siri, Amazon's Alexa, IBM Watson, and autonomous vehicles. Future learn (2023) concurs that Weak or Narrow AI is AI that has learnt to carry out certain tasks providing similar examples such as, virtual personal assistants like Amazon Alexa.

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