

**Swansea University Learning and
Teaching Strategy 2015-20**

Delivering research-led learning and inspiring teaching

Swansea University is dedicated to providing an excellent student learning experience through high quality programmes and research-led and practice-driven teaching delivered in an environment of research excellence. Our excellent outcome from the Quality Assurance Agency Institutional Review and strong student satisfaction as measured by the National Student Survey combined with exceptional results in the Research Excellence Framework is a testament to the success of this approach to date. This strategy which takes forwards our approach to learning and teaching for the next five years is built upon these firm foundations. We will continue to improve on our achievements, enhancing the research and practice led focus of our provision. We will also be continuing to improve our teaching practice through an enhanced approach to professional development emphasising excellent and inspiring teaching.

Professor Alan Speight, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Student Experience



Section 1: Priorities

Swansea University's *Learning and Teaching Strategy: Delivering research-led learning and inspiring teaching* is built around 9 priorities which include the two key areas of emphasis; research-led and practice driven learning and inspirational teaching.

These priorities are

- Learning will be informed by the University's academic strengths actively engaging students in research and practice.
- Inspiring teaching delivered by staff who are continually enhancing their professional practice
- Working in partnership with students to provide opportunities to shape their educational experience, to develop their learning and to support student engagement and achievement.
- Providing assessment and feedback which is timely, authentic, student-centred and developed in partnership with students
- Ensuring all teaching and assessment is inclusive, accessible to all students and that inclusivity is embedded within programmes of study and learner support
- Maintaining and developing an environment suitable to deliver an excellent teaching and learning experience, making effective use of technology enhanced learning.
- Providing appropriate, accessible, timely and sector leading support tailored to needs of individual students
- Ensuring programmes are continually improved to anticipate the demands of students, societal change, employers and of other stakeholders, e.g. Professional and Statutory Bodies
- Ensuring our graduates have maximum opportunities to develop academic and personal skills, self-reflection and ability for life-long learning that will equip them for a fulfilling career

The priorities were developed in consultation with the academic community and the student body. The priorities are developed in further detail in section 2 below.

Research Led, Practice Driven Learning

Our research led and practice driven ethos makes our provision distinctive. The basis for all learning at Swansea University is that it should be informed by current research and practice in the subject area or discipline. Teaching and assessment should reflect this, but wherever possible should seek to develop integration with research above this basic level, enabling students to develop essential research and development skills.

A continuum model has been developed to describe how students move from research informed learning to research active learning.

- **Research and/or Practice Informed** - learning is informed by and founded upon current research and/or practice. This is the minimum requirement for programmes at Swansea University.
- **Research and/or Practice Engaged** – learning is based upon the debate, reflection and review of current research and/or practice output, ensuring that students are developing basic skills. Students may engage in projects which require some level of research/practice, which will primarily be focused on skills development.
- **Research and/or Practice Evidenced** - learning is based upon the results of previous research or current practice requirements, or on lower level directed or independent study. Students undertake extended projects at undergraduate level, or postgraduate-level study requiring research skills and development.
- **Research and/or Practice Active** - learning is largely self-directed, with students actively pursuing a research agenda or professional practice at a higher level. Learning will primarily be independent study through postgraduate dissertations or theses.

Teaching and learning will involve a mixture of these approaches to ensure the student learning experience is fully rounded, with the acquisition of subject knowledge and the development of research skills and understanding appropriately integrated. **This continuum is described at Figure 1 at the end of the strategy.**

Inspiring Teaching

We want our students to engage with their studies and their wider place in the world around them. We believe the best way to do this is through inspiring and excellent teaching. Inspirational teaching is not the preserve of the elite few teachers but something all can achieve. It is not about inspiring performance or materials but demonstrating passion for the subject area and a will to engage students with their learning.

This strategy and the work of Swansea Academy of Learning and Teaching the University will deliver inspired teaching through expanded Continued Professional Development, a

dramatic increase in the numbers of staff with professional recognition, a performance culture which values teaching and ensures reflection and continuous improvement.

Monitoring and Implementation

The deliverables and Key Performance Indicators for these priorities are given below.

Achievement of the Learning and Teaching Strategy Key Performance Indicators will be monitored annually. Key Performance Indicators are aligned with those set out both in the HEFCW Corporate Engagement document and the Fee Plan.

Deliverables will be included within the Student Experience Action Plans as well as College and Academy implementation plans.

An interim strategy review will be undertaken in 2017 to ensure the priorities are still current and to update the deliverables.

Section 2: Learning and Teaching Strategy Priorities – deliverables and performance indicators

Priorities	Key deliverables	Key performance indicators				
<p>Priority 1: Learning will be research-led and practice driven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning will be informed by the University's research specialists, will actively engage students in the research process and be driven by practice in the workplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will be enabled to do research and use and demonstrate an evidence-base in their learning Students will understand how to apply research to their ongoing careers Students will be actively engaged in the research process and encouraged to undertake direct enquiry Teaching will be informed by current research and our world-leading researchers 	<p>Include Research Led Teaching in programme review and approval for all programmes by the end of the strategy period.</p>				
<p>Priority 2: Inspiring teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspiring teaching will be delivered by staff who are continually enhancing their professional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the internal route to HEA accreditation and increase the number of staff professionally accredited and nationally recognised for teaching Enhance the Teaching in Higher Education Certificate for new staff members and introduce a refresher/enhancement programme Introduce mandatory teaching related Continuing Professional Development for all staff delivering teaching Ensure that the staff are supported to have an informed discussion of teaching in their Professional Development Review Implement the Peer Observation of teaching policy 		2013/14	2014/15	2016/17	2020
		NSS <i>Teaching on my course</i>	87%	89%	91%	95%
		Percentage of teaching staff professionally accredited	12%	20%	50%	80%

Priorities	Key deliverables	Key performance indicators				
<p>Priority 3: Promoting Student Partnership and Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work in partnership to support student engagement, experience and achievement To provide students with opportunities to shape their educational experience To work with students to support the development of their own learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure transparent and robust student representation for all students Formal recording of student activities and non-academic achievement e.g. on Higher Education Achievement Record Ensure student engagement with our planning around Student Surveys and Annual Programme Review. Promote the Student Partnership agreement Ensure that all student feedback is used to improve learning and teaching both at university, college and programme level 	<p>During the 2014/15 academic year the new proposed student voice questions from the National Student Survey will be incorporated into the Student Experience Survey. KPIs will be established using these results.</p>				
<p>Priority 4: Excellent Assessment and feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University will provide assessment and feedback which is timely, authentic, student-centred and developed in partnership with students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver assessment which for learning rather than learning for assessment To provide timely feedback for learning that facilitates improvement (feedforward) Enhance student self-reflection to identify opportunities to improve To diversify assessment moving away from over-reliance on exam-based assessment to more flexible methods 		2013/14	2014/15	2016/17	2020
		NSS Assessment and Feedback Category	71%	73%	75%	80%
<p>Priority 5: Inclusive teaching and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All teaching and assessment must be inclusive Teaching and assessment must be accessible to all students Inclusivity must be embedded within programmes of study and learner support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning resources specific must be accessible prior to teaching Professional Development Review targets on inclusive teaching and assessment in terms of Continued Professional development needs Engage students in the planning and delivery of inclusive teaching and assessment Provide training, support and guidance to enable inclusive teaching and assessment including a single repository for policies and procedures 	<p>Inclusivity to be included in programme approval and review and all programmes to embed inclusivity by the close of the strategy period.</p>				

Priorities	Key deliverables	Key performance indicators					
<p>Priority 6: Learning environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain and develop an environment suitable to deliver excellent teaching and learning experience, making use of technology enhanced learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To create and maintain a flexible teaching space infrastructure To ensure the online environment is accessible and adaptable and of high quality To ensure innovative best-practice is shared amongst staff and students 		2013/14	2014/15	2016/17	2020	
<p>Priority 7: Learner support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide appropriate, accessible, timely and sector leading support tailored to the needs of individual students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide learner support which is both generic and specific Clearly signpost learners and champion support available To provide staff with Continuing Professional Development opportunities around learner support and embed these in the Professional Development review process To develop a seamless community of practice between colleges and professional services 		2013/14	2014/15	2016/17	2020	
<p>Priority 8: Programmes continually improved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure programmes are continually improved to anticipate the needs of students, societal change, employers and of other stakeholders, e.g. Professional and Statutory Bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular, risk and evidence based programme review using Programme Quality information Ensure continued engagement with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, students and employers where appropriate Implement the Curriculum Review and Innovation programme working with SEA to embed employability in the curriculum Create a culture of staff and student engagement in development of programmes and modules 	<p>Maintain Quality Assurance Agency confidence judgements and professional body accreditations</p>	<i>NSS Learning Resources Category</i>	75%	76%	78%	80%
			<i>NSS Academic Support</i>	82%	84%	85%	88%

<p>Priority 9: Graduate skills and qualities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure our graduates have maximum opportunities to develop academic and personal skills, self-reflection and ability for life-long learning that will equip them for a fulfilling career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide students with opportunities to identify strengths, weaknesses and to develop strategy for improvement Maximise opportunities for students to experience, demonstrate and have documented their skills and qualities development Engage with graduate employees and increase opportunities for placements Ensure opportunities for exchange visits, internships and placements Embed quality and skills development in learning, teaching and assessment 	Employability of Students	2013/14	2014/15	2016/17	2020
		DLHE targets (% of graduates in professional/managerial level employment)	78%	79%	80%	83%

**Integrating Teaching, Research and Professional Practice:
A Research-Led, Practice-Driven Model for Swansea University**

