



LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

Introduction

London School of Commerce & IT (LSCI) recognises that ‘Individuals learn when they acquire new (or modify existing) knowledge, behaviours, skills or values. There are many different ways to teach, all aimed at helping a student to learn. There are many ways to empower learners with the confidence to participate, critically and creatively, in the study of their subject area(s).

The College is committed to provide an inclusive learning experience for all. Indeed, diversity is something that can be celebrated as enriching the learning process. The academic experience of students is recognised, and teaching staff work to ensure knowledge and understanding of the UK educational system. The majority of our students may not have encountered coursework as an assessment vehicle before. Therefore, they need clear guidance as to how this should be structured and how plagiarism and other unfair practices must be avoided.

London School of Commerce & IT embraces the idea that effective learning must be a partnership between the College, the teaching staff, the students, and the awarding organisations. The aim is for the teaching to be inspirational, providing knowledge, skills and understanding – as well as providing a context for students to be motivated, innovative and increasingly independent learners.

The ability of the College to offer an effective learning environment is primarily dependant on its academic and non-academic staff. Staff must share the aims and aspirations of the College. They must be appropriately qualified and willing to engage in professional development throughout their careers. The College has a responsibility to provide a context for this development. They must be willing to evaluate their practice via a process of teaching observation and appraisal. The College will manage this process and provide the best possible learning environment for its staff and its students.

Resources for learning and the learning environment

The College recognises its responsibility in providing a safe and effective learning environment. This is perceived as the physical nature of the building and its facilities, plus learning materials (physical and electronic) that support learning. The adequacy of the learning

environment is monitored by feedback from staff and students and from reviews initiated by the awarding organisations.

The College is committed to provide for the maintenance of the learning environment to ensure its adequacy for current and future cohorts. This is reviewed by the Academic Quality and Enhancement Committee and is recognised as shaping the quality of learning, with obvious impact on progression and completion by its students. This is further enhanced by the provision of adequate academic and recreational resources such as the library, and student breakout facilities.

London School of Commerce & IT aims to promote teaching and learning in a supportive yet challenging environment that enriches the learning experience by:

- providing a well-maintained physical environment for teaching and learning and ensuring that the College is an environmentally friendly and pleasant place to study;
- developing and maintaining a socially and culturally diverse environment which ensures that students have the opportunity to be exposed to new and challenging experiences;
- providing facilities for the welfare and support of students that enable students to effectively participate in their studies.

The College aims to provide the best possible range of learning resources appropriate to the needs of students, staff and relevant to the programmes of study. We continuously review all aspects of the teaching environment so as to provide the best possible teaching and learning for current and future student numbers.

The Role of ICT in Learning

In a rapidly evolving world of technology, it is a fundamental objective that we maximise the potential of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to facilitate flexible approaches to teaching, high quality learning and assessment, both on and off campus. These developments will be supported by sound educational principles and are embedded in the learning opportunities we provide.

This includes reviewing and enhancing ICT support for the delivery of teaching, facilitation of student learning and assessment and taking full advantage of the potential of new technology in teaching, learning and assessment. Within the College this means implementing the use of a developing Virtual Learning Environment to support teaching and learning by providing open access to College, via wi-fi to students' own hardware.

Maximising Human Resources

A central theme of any effective Learning environment is the recruitment and development of high quality staff, and the admission of students able to flourish and succeed in the College's distinctive environment.

The College recognises that a coherent and strategically aligned programme of staff recruitment and subsequent educational development must underpin implementation of the effective operation of any Learning strategy. This will come from the provision of a range of opportunities for continuing professional development including, but not limited to, both generic and discipline-specific teaching quality enhancement opportunities.

The College is developing a scheme whereby staff can request focused CPD events, with other requirements identified in appraisal and teaching observations.

Quality in educational provision

As an 'alternative higher education provider', our 'product' is the provision of a quality educational experience. This experience will provide genuine opportunities for achievement and is as inclusive as possible whilst maintaining the integrity of that provision. The quality of our provision is judged by the relevant internal and external performance indicators, and by external agency guidelines provided by our awarding organisations and the UK Quality Code.

This is accomplished by working within a devolved quality framework which ensures that quality management is embedded as close to the point of delivery. This promotes and supports an integrated approach to quality enhancement initiatives across the institution, as well as monitoring the implementation of teaching and learning strategies. Feedback is achieved via various committee meetings.

In framing its provision, the College is guided by the following QAA principles that apply throughout the whole of the typical student journey.

An inclusive environment

Institutions should seek to provide an inclusive environment where the needs of international students are considered and met alongside those of other students in an integrated and embedded way.

Continuous improvement

Institutions should continuously reflect on and review their policies and practices, actively seeking and using feedback from students, to make improvements.

Student engagement

Institutions should ensure that international students are represented in student engagement activities and that their feedback is taken into account in making enhancements to existing policies and practice.

Clear and accessible information

Institutions should ensure that the information they provide at all stages of the student lifecycle is clear, accessible, accurate, and consistent across the institution. Where technical terminology is unavoidable, clear explanation should be provided.

Shared responsibility

Responsibility for meeting the needs of a diverse student body should rest with all staff within an institution, not just those with a specific remit for managing international students' experiences.

Staff development

All staff working with international students should have access to appropriate training and development opportunities, which support them in recognising and addressing the needs of students.

Excellence in teaching

In order to continue to provide high standards of educational provision, we aim for all teaching to be delivered by staff that has had access to initial training in the pedagogy of higher education, or previous experience, and thereafter opportunities for continuing professional development. We achieve this by:

- providing continuing professional development opportunities for teaching staff on various training programmes;
- encouraging, where appropriate, staff to devote a reasonable proportion of their time to interaction with their professions either by joining and taking part in professional organisations or by achieving professional recognition and reward;
- encouraging our teachers to teach in other Colleges or Universities and share good practices for our staff and students
- recognising and promoting high quality teaching and assessment.

Learning and Assessment

The College recognises the role of assessment in promoting learning. Summative assessment events provide the structure for the promotion of learning, and the acquisition of the knowledge and skills to be tested in the learning outcomes associated with any particular assignment or examination. The learning process must facilitate this opportunity to provide formative assessment points.

As a result, a characteristic of the weekly learning experience will be an aspect of formative assessment. This formative assessment will allow students to measure their skills and understanding. The formative assessments will also rehearse for the student the nature and scope of the summative assessments which follow. The College also recognises the formative nature of early summative assignments, as they provide a critical guide to the student as to their level of achievement.

The College has detailed its assessment strategy in a separate policy, but it is pertinent to note the role of assessment as a key factor in promoting effective and efficient learning.

Student feedback

The promotion and enhancement of effective learning will only occur if issues are identified and rectified and if good practice is highlighted and shared. Student feedback is a key part of this process. The College provides a series of structured opportunities for students to provide feedback on all aspects of the learning experience.

Student responsibility to engage with the learning process

The student induction process and every subsequent learning experience must emphasise to the student the need for them to take responsibility for their own learning. They must prioritise the learning over other aspects of their life and engage as increasingly independent learners as they progress through their programmes of study.

The process by which students become effective independent learners will depend on their interaction with staff and their peers, and be shaped by the physical learning environment. The College accepts its responsibility to provide a learning environment to meet these needs and to engage staff that share this aim.

Student Engagement

We further recognise that it is important to be flexible so as to respond as and when it is necessary to changing patterns of student need and student recruitment. We accomplish this by:

- reviewing the needs of potential students so that this can inform the provision of new courses;
- encouraging new initiatives to generate College revenue by introducing new courses;
- encouraging students to engage themselves with the extracurricular activities e.g. cultural club and entrepreneurial club.

Widening and Increasing Participation

The College aims to ensure that there is a more balanced social profile of students participating in higher education and that there is fair access. The College will further enhance its outreach activities to encourage and enable a wide range of students to enter higher education.

In addition, the College will aim to ensure that its practices with regards student progression are executed in strict accordance with its Equal Opportunities Policy in order to ensure students succeed.

Student Skills Development

Ensuring that students are equipped with the appropriate skills to complete their course and to take what they have learnt onto a professional platform where they can effectively compete in a global marketplace is fundamental to our goals.

We want our students not just to pass exams, but to succeed at achieving their goals set within and beyond the bounds of the College.

Building independent learners

We actively encourage students to become independent learners and to take responsibility for their own learning during their studies and beyond. This is part of our commitment to lifelong learning. We continually implement, refine and develop strategies for teaching and learning that foster approaches to learning which recognise the teacher as a facilitator of other people's learning.

This process is further enhanced by promoting interactive learning with teachers and collaborative learning with each other.

Development of study skills and employability

All students will eventually participate (if they are not doing/have done so already) in the world of work. The College acknowledges that it is important to encourage students to recognise and log the development of their own skills, and be aware of the importance of these in the development of their academic and professional careers.

We promote this by making the development of abilities and attributes connected with employability more transparent to students. London School of Commerce & IT actively seeks to develop students across a range of generic and discipline specific skills. We also offer career guidance and support throughout a student's enrolment enabling them to determine the most suitable path for them as individuals. The students also engaged in an Entrepreneur Club to explore employment related opportunities and enhance skills for job readiness.

Disabled Students

Our commitment to open access and widening participation ensure that we adjust our Disability policy, including assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures designed to:

- proactively consider accessibility for disabled students in the design and conduct of the assessment;
- allow reasonable adjustments to provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes;
- recognise the needs of all types of disability, including physical and mobility difficulties, hearing impairments, visual impairments, specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, medical conditions and mental health problems;
- be widely publicised in an accessible format and easy for students to follow;
- be agreed with individual disabled students and all appropriate parties.

Unfair Practice

Whilst Unfair Practice such as plagiarism, collusion and data fabrication are traditionally associated with Assessment, it is pertinent to include some mention of them in a Policy dedicated to the learning process.

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