

HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

Policy description:

This policy sets out how the College will approach improving the learning experience for Higher Education students, and the standard of staff's teaching and assessment.

Supporting documentation:

- HE Delivery Hours Guidelines
- The QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Work Related Learning Guidelines

Links to other policies:

- Freedom of Speech Policy
- HE Strategy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Prevent Strategy
- Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment
- Human Resources and Quality Strategy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Social and Electronic Media Strategy
- Staff Malpractice Policy
- Higher Education Accreditation of Prior Learning (also known as Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning; Recognition of Prior Learning) Policy and Procedures
- HE Student Academic Misconduct Policy
- Teaching and Learning Qualifications Policy
- Observation of Teaching Learning and Progress for Continuous Improvement Policy
- Technology Strategy

Formal Review Cycle:	Annual		
Latest Formal Review (month/year):	2018-07	Next Formal Review Due (month/year):	2019-07
Policy Owner:	Higher Education Business & Development Leader		
Impact Assessed by:		Impact Assessment Date:	

APPROVAL REQUIRED

SMT Y/N	Y	SMT Date approved:	08/01/19		
Governor Y/N	N	Committee:		Governor Date approved:	

PUBLICATION

Website Y/N	Y	Intranet Y/N	Y	Student VLE Y/N	Y	Other:	
Area/s of Staff Intranet:	HE, Quality						

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The College's mission statement is **"Enriching lives through learning"** with a key strategic goal to deliver, good value, high quality, learning for all students resulting in high achievement rates. The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework within which all aspects of learning, teaching and assessment are planned through high quality teaching and learning and course design.

The **HE Strategy** for the College includes the goals of improving **Quality Excellence and Innovation (HE Strategy 3.1.0)** and **Enhancing the student experience (3.1.)**. These specific goals involve a continuous focus on using student feedback to improve and enhance programmes.

Craven College recognises that learning occurs in many settings both formal and informal. The College is committed to continuous improvement of its programmes, its accommodation, its resources and its services in order to serve its students and its communities effectively. We aim for students studying at the College to gain excellent knowledge, understanding and skills in their chosen subject area and to prepare them for the workplace by providing a range of transferable employment skills.

This policy supports the standards and practices identified in the College Mission Statement and HE Strategic Plan. It is also written with reference to the **QAA UK Quality Code Expectations**.

CONTEXT

The whole College curriculum is broad and offers a wide range of subject areas, modes of attendance and work based training opportunities throughout the Craven area. Higher education provision is mainly developed by building on the expertise established within further education. The College is the only provider of higher education in the local area, the nearest HE provision by colleges and universities in West and North Yorkshire and East Lancashire are more than 20 miles away. The College has a major role to play in building the capacity of its students, staff and local communities to effectively participate in higher education, which will contribute to the pool of higher level technicians and qualified people in the regional economy. Of particular significance is the sector's role in facilitating social inclusion and sustainable regional development. Higher education is currently delivered on the College's main Aireville and linked Auction Mart campuses in Skipton, York Gate Garden and at The Aviation Academy at Leeds Bradford International Airport.

Policy remit

This policy applies to all students undertaking a course of Higher Education at Craven College.

1. General Principles

Setting and maintaining academic standards (UK QC Part A)

1.1 In line with the College's Higher Education Strategy, the HE Scheme provides an educational, administrative and quality assurance framework to facilitate the development of HE in Craven College. The Scheme provides an academically rigorous and vocationally relevant approach to higher education and related professional education in Craven College. It provides a framework for all qualifications at levels 4 and above delivered by Craven College and for the development of new courses.

The HE Scheme offers a comprehensive and hierarchical committee structure which is an effective mechanism for the management, quality assurance and enhancement of higher level programmes. Students are encouraged to be involved at all levels of the structure which follows the HE process through from Student Focus Groups, Course Team Meetings and HE Operational meetings to the Scheme Management Board.

1.2 The College ensures that qualifications delivered are designed in line with the requirements of Framework for Higher Education Qualifications by consulting with appropriate external examiners when undertaking course design or consulting with established partners, employers and awarding bodies. This safeguards the student experience and ensures that the course is positioned at the appropriate level and is securely linked to the Benchmark Statements. (A1b)

1.3 All courses have clear aims; have a coherent programme of modules or units that are consistent with its aims. (A1b)

1.4 The College is aware of the need to differentiate between levels so that students achieve and progress at each level and to ensure that these programmes are equivalent to those delivered elsewhere. (A3.1/A1.c)

1.5 Courses will have clearly defined access and progression routes. (A3.1)

2. Assuring and enhancing academic quality (UK QC Part B)

2.1 Students benefit from high expectations, engagement, care, support and motivation from staff. Guidance will be provided from first enquiry to completion of studies and beyond. (B3)

2.2 Teachers of each module or unit will have appropriate up to date knowledge and skills. (B6)

2.3 All courses will be subjected to rigorous formal review and evaluation. (B8)

2.4 Staff will use their skills and expertise to plan and deliver teaching and learning opportunities using quality resources in order to support and meet each student's needs. (B3)

2.5 Teaching and learning sessions will be effectively managed to create an environment that is conducive to learning. (B3)

- 2.6 Students will be initially assessed to identify their starting point and monitored in their progress, set challenging tasks to build on and extend learning. (B2)
- 2.7 Students will be facilitated to understand how to improve as a result of frequent, detailed, accurate and personalised feedback from staff following assessment of their learning. (B4)
- 2.8 Assessment activities will be aligned to the unit or module learning outcomes and adhere to partner university or awarding body requirements. (B6)
- 2.9 Summative assessment activities will be second considered before being sent for external examining or external moderation. (B7)
- 2.10 Modules or units will be reviewed and evaluated informally and formally with the aim of continuous improvement of student learning. (B5)
- 2.11 Teaching and learning will develop transferable skills and support the achievement of learning goals and career aims. External bodies such as the partner institutions and the Higher Education Academy may be useful sources of consultation. (B4)
- 2.12 Enhancements of teaching and learning will be supported via the development of educational technologies, digital literacy and emerging pedagogies. (B3)
- 2.13 Appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance will support learning effectively. (B4)
- 2.14 Equality and diversity will be promoted through teaching and learning. (B4)
- 2.15 Students may make college aware of any Mitigating Circumstances through the procedure as appropriate. (B4)
- 2.16 Partner institutions ensure a single point of contact for the College and regular update meetings allow for jointly agreed goals and strategies. (B10)
- 2.17 The College will provide and maintain resources and facilities to support teaching, learning and assessment (B10)

Further Reading

- QAA UK Quality Code
- SPA (Fair Admissions Policies for Colleges)
- UK Professional Standards Framework

Appendix 1

Processes and Guidance

1. HE Peer and Formal Observation

The HE Observation procedure has been designed in alignment with the UK Professional Standard Framework for teaching and supporting learning in Higher Education.

The College policy states that all tutors involved in teaching will have a minimum of one no-notice formal observation and one peer observation every year. Where a tutor teaches both FE and HE, it will be ensured that one of these observations will cover their HE teaching. Formal observations will be carried out by staff experienced in teaching at HE level. Observations will result in the production of an action plan which is shared with the Head of School for appraisal purposes.

Peer Observation

- Tutors are given a 'window' of observation and required to choose a peer observer
- An observation process of an initial meeting, an observation and a feedback session is carried out. A specific focus for the observation is identified by the observee in order to develop their higher education practice. Tutors will also observe a session conducted by their peer.
- Peer observation is to be recorded in CPD activities

Further detail can be found in the College Observation of Teaching, Learning and Progress for Continuous Improvement policy.

2. Assessment to promote learning and achievement

2.1 Formative assessment

Every HE student should have the opportunity to improve their skills through formative assessment. This might take the form of in-class exercises, group presentations, practice reports or draft work. Feedback on formative work should show how improvements can be made to summative work.

It is important for students to fully understand the learning objectives and how these are aligned with the assessment criteria and students should be given training on the process. Exemplar work may be used where appropriate to demonstrate the standard and layout of assessments. Peer feedback on first drafts and marking exercises are also beneficial to develop skills.

2.2 Summative work

A range of assessment types should be available on each programme as appropriate. Assessment types may include presentations, reports, examinations, practical exercises, role plays, creative work, live briefs and essays.

The assessment approval system ensures that all assessments are internally and externally approved. The process is that:

- Assessment briefs are reviewed by external examiners (foundation degrees and degrees)
- Assessment briefs are brought to the Assessment Approvals Committee for approval
- Assessment briefs for all other level 4 and above courses will brought to the Assessment Approvals Committee for approval prior to approval by the Awarding Organisation

2.3 Assessment Submission Procedure

- Details regarding assessment submission are found in each Module Handbook, and in the Student Handbook for each course
- Deadlines are non-negotiable, students experiencing problems outside their control must apply for an extension or mitigation
- The submission deadline time is 12 midnight on the deadline date for electronically submitted work
- All written work and other work that can be submitted electronically will be submitted via Turn-it-in, which enables proof of submission
- Other coursework must be submitted during College opening hours, at a time set by the module tutor and must include a cover sheet signed by the student and tutor upon receipt
- Cover sheets are available on the College HE VLE, and have a tear-off slip which will act as a receipt for each assessment for students to retain
- The relevant regulations for each programme (available on the HE VLE or website) explain the consequences of missing a deadline

2.4 Marking and feedback guidance

Feedback should be given to the students inside a four-week period. Students are made aware that all grades are subject to approval by the Board of Examiners and ratification by Partner Universities as appropriate.

Feedback should:

- Align to learning outcomes
- Be suitable to level and encourage a scholarly approach
- Identify academic skills and transferable skills in addition to specific learning outcomes
- Identify strengths to build on
- Identify areas to consider
- Clearly express professional judgements

2.5 Marking electronic submissions

Whilst electronic submission programmes are a useful guide as to the originality of student work, tutors should not see them in isolation. These programmes are not infallible and small alterations in the use of a referencing system, for example, may suggest a higher similarity rating than expected. Occasionally texts are used which the programme does not recognise and can be wrongly identified as the student's own work.

Where the tutor believes that it has an impact on the originality of the work the HE Student Academic Misconduct Policy should be consulted.

2.6 Referencing

It is key that students understand the need for referencing sources properly and can demonstrate the range of resources they have used and the way in which this research is supporting the development of their work. The College produces a Harvard Referencing Guide which tutors use as a baseline of practice for students. However, the College recognises that developing technologies, the range of electronic devices and software programmes in use, means that students may choose to use an alternative system. Discussion with the student and a consistent approach is recommended.

2.7 Second Consideration and Internal Moderation

Second consideration of assessments enables marked work and feedback to be critically appraised to ensure that the marking criteria have been correctly applied and that feedback to students is constructive. Second Consideration is applied to higher education assessments except where the Awarding Organisation has other requirements.

Responsibilities of second consideration are:

- to ensure that assessments carried out are accurately assessed
- to ensure that feedback to students supports their learning and development
- the Course Tutor/HE Sector Tutor or Higher Education Business & Development Leader will second consider the marking of assessments by tutors within the course delivery team, with their own marking being second considered by an appropriate member of staff.
- new tutors will have more support with their first marking from a more experienced member of staff
- Sample size will be 30% or 3, whichever is the greater
- Sample size should also ensure that a range of marks and students are considered
- All fails should be second considered

2.8 Student Attendance

Whilst attendance is not mandatory (in line with HEFCE Guidelines) the College does recommend that students should attend at least 80% of the programme. It is clear that good attendance is linked to success. Course tutors should alert the HE Office where students have poor attendance. These students are contacted by the HE Office via letter and email to encourage good attendance. Course tutors liaise with students to establish whether there is a need for additional support (either academic or pastoral) and to remind students of the guidelines for the mitigation and extension procedures.

2.9 Guidelines for teachers

- Suitable programme information will be issued to all student
- Course/Student Handbooks and Module Handbooks will be available to students at the start of their programme
- Employability/professionalism and enterprise will be a themes for all sessions
- Session delivery will recognise, integrate and support the needs of individual students and regularly check that learning has taken place
- Information Learning Technology will be participative and used to enhance learning where appropriate
- Assessment schedules will be planned at the outset of the academic year and conveyed to students and support staff
- Planning will ensure student assessment workloads are balanced throughout the year and reasonable
- Students' work will be assessed with constructive and positive feedback and returned in a timely fashion according to the planned assessment schedule
- Staff will support students to achieve their goals and refer them to other staff and support services as necessary
- Staff will be supported through continuous professional development, reflective practice, observations of teaching and learning, mentoring and assessment processes
- Staff will engage in and record 30 hours of professional development in each academic year