



KMS 110 Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy

University Centre Kingston Maurward

Higher Education

Authority:

The 'HE Student Engagement Policy and Procedure' is approved by the Higher Education Academic Board in accordance with the Corporation's Standing Orders. It applies across all the academic activities of the University Centre Kingston Maurward.

Alternative Formats:

If you require this document in an alternative format, please use the following contact information: enquiries@kmc.ac.uk

Authority:

The HE Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy is approved by the Principal, the Deputy Principal and the HE Academic Board in accordance with the Corporation's Standing Orders.

Our Mission:

To deliver outstanding student-centred learning that is responsive to the rapidly changing environment, economy and society of which we are part.

We recognise that our graduates will be working in an era of unprecedented change and will face complex challenges at all scales from the local to the global (and where many future challenges are, as yet unknown). To address the challenge of change we will support and enable learners to access a rich, imaginative and creative educational experience which will motivate and empower them to achieve their full potential and contribute in the fullest way possible to culture, society and the economy throughout their lives. We will do that in a caring, inclusive, people-oriented and inspiring setting underpinned by partnership, dialogue and mutual respect.

This accords with the three foundational pillars of the wider KMC strategic plan – Inspire, Challenge and Care

Document Management, Approvals & Review:

Title	HE Higher Education Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy	
Manager	Deputy Principal Kingston Maurward College	
Approvals (Committee)	Approved by Higher Education Academic Board	
Approvals (Board)	Approved by Corporation	
Next Review Due	In three years	
Equality Impact Assessment		
Version Control	V1 July 2023 - DRAFT	

1 Purpose of this Strategy

1.1 This strategy sets out our approach to the development of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (TLA) at Kingston Maurward University Centre over the next five years. It has three main functions; to set out the context which UCKM will operate, communicate the University Centre's aims and aspirations in relation to Teaching, Learning and Assessment and identify a strategic approach to achieving that vision.

1.2 To that end we:

- Outline the context for learning in an environment of challenge and change.
- Explore the ways in which we will seek to respond to those challenges and how this will shape our approach to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Define the attributes possessed by a UCKM graduate.

1.3 The Strategy is designed to be inclusive, continuing to enhance student and staff teaching and learning as the University develops in new disciplinary areas and provides higher education for an increasingly diverse student population. It identifies areas where we wish to extend and develop excellence in teaching and underpins continued enhancement of the student experience across a rich diversity of contexts and disciplines.

1.4 The delivery of this strategy is approached in the companion TLA Policy.

2 The Context for Learning in an Environment of Challenge and Change

2.1 Graduates have never faced a greater range of challenges. These will impact on every facet of their future lives and careers. At the core we seek to enable our students develop a flexible, resilient, and imaginative mindset to enable them to thrive in, and contribute to, their communities and wider society.

2.2 Our approach is built on the core values of Kingston Maurward College and University Centre (see KMC Strategic Plan 2022). These are to:

- Inspire
- Challenge
- Care

2.3 These pillars underpin all our teaching and learning activity.

Internal Drivers (what we seek to achieve)

2.4 The Internal drivers are those aspirations and challenges which can be directly addressed by KMC strategy and policy. In educational terms we see the internal drivers as including:

- Ensuring that our learning and teaching is inclusive and supports a diverse student community whose needs and aspirations vary substantially, and that our academic policies and practices support and promote student and staff wellbeing.
- Maintaining and promoting academic integrity and respect in terms of our behaviours and the approach we take to academic standards and quality.
- Working collaboratively across staff and student communities, recognising the diversity of contributions that shape and build an excellent learning and teaching environment, and valuing the benefits of co-creation, partnership and collective endeavour.
- Recognising and promoting the importance of continuing professional and skills development for students and staff in realising our educational ambitions. Enhancing quality in teaching and learning and supporting students' career advancement.
- Harnessing the full potential of the curiosity, creativity, and enterprise that characterise interaction with the resource-rich environment of the working farm and estate at KMC.

- Promoting excellence in learning and teaching through evidence-based approaches that shape our teaching and assessment practices, learning design, and partnership development, recognising those efforts and achievements in terms of career advancement.
- Evaluating our programmes, our teaching practices and our associated investments in land-based teaching resources and technology in terms of their connection with, and impact on, sustainability and in particular, climate change. A strategy that advocates more engagement with learning technologies and with creation and refurbishment of physical teaching spaces, has an impact on our carbon footprint and so actions resulting from this strategy need to be incorporated into the University Centre's wider action plan in relation to climate change and sustainability.

External Drivers (what we know will impact on our strategy and planning)

- 2.5 The External Drivers are those over which we have no (or very limited) control or influence. Many of these drivers have complex impacts and interlinkages which extend beyond Higher Education and will shape the communities, society and economy of which our graduates will be part.
- 2.6 There are many currently known external drivers including demographic shifts, economic instability, the impact of Brexit, the long-term global impacts of the pandemic, and climate change. There are also external drivers which are not currently recognised and which, like the Covid Pandemic, have the potential to seemingly come from nowhere and impact on all aspects of society. As Covid demonstrates, such events may have a very "long tail" which impacts on current and future students' expectations of education, their health and aspirations, and the increased support that they will continue to need in the coming years.

- 2.7 There are also external drivers which come from changes of Government and consequent changes in the Policy and Funding landscape. These will obviously impact on our approaches, the nuances within them and the specific measures and outcomes expected, impacting in turn upon our prioritisation of outcomes over the period of the strategy.
- 2.8 The inevitable conclusion is that KMC as a whole must retain a flexible, resilient mindset and be prepared to amend or review policies in the light of such challenges and contingencies. In the development of the teaching and learning strategy we have paid particular attention to the following external issues which we argue will be shape the near future:

Climate Change and Sustainability

- 2.9 It is increasingly obvious that climate change is real, pressing and will impact areas, such as the UK, which have thought themselves largely immune to the extremes of change.
- 2.10 Climate change and instability have obvious impacts on every facet of the natural, farmed and built environment. It has massive social and economic ramifications which unless approached positively can seem overwhelming to students. The key is to embed positive approaches to the challenges across the curricula and to make it a core thread rather than a specialist module.
- 2.11 This will be done using the 17 themes from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (see <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>). This provides a recognised, reasoned and rigorous human-scale approach to the challenges raised by climate change.
- 2.12 As a land-based institution Kingston Maurward will be at the forward edge of change and will, through its own conservation and agricultural activity, and its commercial estate, experience these challenges at first hand. This provides an outstanding opportunity to explore Sustainable Development and to educate through experience; involving students

in that process of adaptation and development that will be evident at the college.

Technological Change and Innovation

- 2.13 The rapid pace of technological change and innovation, including Agri-Tech and most recently AI (Artificial Intelligence) and the impact of this on: workplaces; job opportunities; societal debate; expertise, skills and ongoing upskilling; and for UCKM as an education provider, the impact on how we teach and assess, and on how students learn.
- 2.14 This is an area of such rapid change it will need to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Demographic Change and Labour Market Changes

- 2.15 Across the UK and much of the western world there is an aging population coupled to low rates of replacement which will ultimately lead to a gradual reduction in population. There are many factors behind this decline but its consequences for social and economic stability are profound; In particular a smaller working age population has to support an increasing senior cohort. This will impact on the labour market. The effects of a lower entry rate to employment are already being felt in many economic sectors especially where the ability to import temporary labour has ceased post-Brexit.
- 2.16 In the medium term it is likely that some economic activity may well be outsourced to AI systems, but it is likely that many “hands-on” sectors including social care, hospitality and agriculture will face labour shortages. This requires us to develop teaching and learning that places a premium on flexibility, cross-silo thinking and the exploration of alternative methods and technologies by working with businesses across our subject sectors.

Changes in the Higher Education Landscape

- 2.17 The impact of the Covid pandemic is likely to continue to have an impact on education for some time. This includes:

- Direct impacts on students for example their socialisation, attainment and horizons.
- Indirect impacts on the funding of student cohorts stemming from differential rates of regional economic recovery.
- On-going shifts in societal attitudes - both positive and negative - in relation to the perceived value of undergraduate degrees and higher education expertise generally, from the point of view of individuals, governments and sponsors who fund education.

2.18 UCKM must be part of the solution in terms of upskilling, fulfilling a meaningful civic role and in reducing inequalities in access to education.

2.19 It is likely that there will be increased demands from students for flexible modes and programmes of study, international experiences and new forms of virtual mobility, with an increased use of technological developments in teaching and learning, skills development for employment and career development, engagement with employers and international partners, recognition from professional bodies, and values-led education that contributes to a sustainable and fulfilling future.

2.20 UCKM will therefore be required to adapt to new forms of, and routes through, learning. These include growth in articulation and partnership routes, international developments that augment opportunities for physical and virtual mobility, and to emerging forms of academic credit such as micro-credentials.

3 Our Strategic Response to the Challenges of Change

3.1 Our students will be inspired to achieve their potential in a challenging but caring environment, enjoying exciting learning and high-quality facilities within a vibrant commercial rural estate. Employability will be central to our mission – enabling students to progress because of the education, training and skills they receive here.

- 3.2 Faced with complex multifaceted challenges we seek to develop a learning strategy encompassing flexibility, personal change management and with sufficient subject breadth to prevent silo-thinking.
- 3.3 The Strategy will reflect core higher education values of intellectual openness, democracy and love of learning together with the promotion of educational and social inclusion, sustainability and social responsibility. It aims to build on our established strengths in providing an inclusive and high-quality higher education. To that end we strive to create a learning community which encourages students to love their subject, and become good citizens, both within UCKM and in the wider world. For this reason, we have articulated the attributes that we aim to develop in all our graduates.
- 3.3 Our curricula are designed with the development of these attributes in mind, so that we can support every student to fulfil their own academic and personal potential and enable them to use the skills that they develop to contribute to transforming society for the better.
- 3.4 A key feature of UCKM is the interweaving of expert knowledge and practical applied learning based on a golden triangle of well-motivated students, inspirational educators and expert professional mentors. UCKM striving for excellence and quality in education, our capacity for continuous enhancement and innovation, means we are committed to inspiring our students for life, through creating possibilities, developing potential and building partnerships.

4 Strategic Areas for Enhancing our Teaching and Learning

- 4.1 This strategy identifies five areas as a focus for enhancing our learning and teaching. While we aim to see continuous improvement across all areas of Teaching and Learning these are those areas where we feel we can make the greatest impact over the forthcoming review period.
- 4.2 The areas identify what we would like to see as distinctive threads in learning and teaching at University Centre Kingston Maurward. They

build on achievements to date and provide a framework for our new curricula and development priorities.

Access and Inclusion

- 4.3 We are committed to widening access and participation in higher education. We will ensure the accessibility of our learning environments and provide continuing professional development for staff to implement best practice in inclusive learning and teaching, making effective use of technology where appropriate.
- 4.4 Our courses, curricula and approaches to learning and teaching will be attractive and relevant, and we will address attainment gaps identified in our [Access and Participation Plan](#). The impact will be reflected by a growing reputation for inclusive practice and the narrowing of our access and attainment gaps.

Shaping Confidence and Resilience to Realise Potential

- 4.5 We want to enable our students to 'find their voice' through engagement with the broad range of learning opportunities in subject disciplines, professional training and skills-based learning both within and beyond the formal curriculum.
- 4.6 We aim to develop confident and resilient graduates by providing effectively balanced inspiration, intellectual challenge and learning support.
- 4.7 Confident and resilient graduates will be self-assured in their own abilities and qualities, and be able to reflect upon setbacks, adapt, re-motivate and 'bounce back' to continue to work towards their aspirations.
- 4.8 We will develop our capacity to use analytical data to help support students in engaging and progressing. We are also committed to a recognition and reward structure for staff that celebrates teaching excellence, innovation and inspirational practice. We will see the impact of this in high levels of student engagement and satisfaction, and improved outcome metrics.

Promoting Intellectual agility and reflectivity through Active Flexible Learning

- 4.9 We recognise that technology is transforming learning and teaching and that the future will demand new skills, capabilities and ways of working. We remain committed, particularly for our undergraduate programmes, to a campus-based learning experience that prioritises reflective active learning.
- 4.10 At the same time, our students require greater flexibility in when and how they learn away from the campus, and in the use of technologies for blended learning.
- 4.11 We will develop the digital capabilities of staff and students and invest carefully in learning technology developments that enable greater accessibility and flexibility. This means our students will be highly engaged learners developing the skills to succeed in a global digital world.

Applied and Practice Inspired Education

- 4.12 Many of our students are studying on professional practice and work-related programmes where we work in partnership with employers to ensure effective practical application of skills. We are also committed to embedding research inspired teaching which enables students to understand and engage in research processes related to their discipline and have opportunities to engage with professional enquiry and innovation in partnership with staff.
- 4.13 Our aim is to build on our already strong reputation for hands-on practice-based excellence by linking research, knowledge exchange and applied learning through engagement with external communities and employers. This will result in more 'real world' learning for our students, who will graduate as confident and 'career-ready'.
- 4.14 To that end we aim to promote authentic assessments which not only enable an evaluation of a student's academic progress but also

capture their acquisition and application of practice-based skills and learning.

Education for Sustainable Futures

- 4.15 UCKM will seek to enhance and develop a strong reputation for environmental, economic and social sustainability. This will be closely tied to the exploration of the reality of climate change as witnessed through our commercial agricultural and estate activity.
- 4.16 This will be supported by the adoption of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a recurrent theme through all our curricula.
- 4.17 These Goals will ensure that curricula reflect and align with our values for inclusion, internationalisation, ethical and socially responsible global citizenship. The centrality of these goals will ensure that our graduates have a clear grasp of the principles of sustainability and are equipped with the tools and confidence to help transform communities and society for the better.

5 The attributes of a graduate of UCKM

- 5.1 Our Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy promotes focused development of graduate attributes that reflect our values and our mission, enabling our graduates to have a positive impact on their own lives and those of others.
- 5.2 These attributes are embedded alongside the formally specified curricula outcomes and are an approach to the higher-level characteristics which should be found in all our graduates.
- 5.3 The graduate attributes are an essential framework for curriculum and pedagogical development across UCKM. These will be embedded and made explicit in partnership with students through design of both the formal and co-curriculum learning opportunities.

5.4 In addition to formal programme learning outcomes we expect to see the following graduate attribute development:

Social responsibility

Graduates who are globally and socially responsible, culturally aware and understand the ethical impact of decisions.

Reflective and resilient lifelong learners

Graduates who are resilient and aspirational, intellectually curious and critically reflective lifelong learners.

Digital citizenship

Graduates who have high degrees of digital capability to actively and responsibly create, communicate and collaborate online.

Problem solving

Graduates who can employ analytical, creative and evaluative skills to investigate problems and propose viable solutions.

Teamwork and effective communication

Graduates who can work in teams and communicate effectively to a range of audiences.

6 Related Documents

This strategy aligns with other UCKM and KMC strategies and policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with:

- [KM Strategy – 2022-2025](#)