**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

**UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE GROUP**

**Student Education 20/21 Delivery Principles**

*These principles are provided explicitly for the delivery of student education in the 2020/21 academic session, given the differences in student education delivery required as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These principles are in line with existing Student Education Strategy and Priorities.*

*Faculties, Schools and Services are asked to use these principles as a framework for the design and delivery of student education in their disciplinary context. Support, guidance and professional development will be available to staff to support implementation of these principles.*

**Overall proposition for delivery of student education in 20/21**

The University will offer a:

“Student-centred active learning approach to deliver a high-quality research-based education in a hybrid mode, as part of a supportive, enriching and community-focused experience.”

This means:

* Education will be delivered in ways that ensures the safety of students and staff and protects the quality of education from all pandemic scenarios.
* Education will be delivered in hybrid mode, with all large volume teaching events online and use of campus facilities for face-to-face activity when and where possible to use safely.
* Educational content and activities will be designed and delivered to stimulate, engage and support students, in an inclusive and flexible environment.
* Our digital education capabilities will allow students to receive a learning experience that is interactive, engaging and pedagogically driven.
* Students will be able to learn and co-create research from, and with, our researchers, to create new knowledge through involvement in research processes, where possible.
* Students, regardless of their location, will be provided with a supportive and community-focused experience, including co- and extra-curricular activities where possible.

**Section 1: Programme delivery principles**

1. All Undergraduate programmes will commence and be delivered according to the normal academic calendar.
2. Postgraduate taught programmes will either commence in September or January (or in some circumstances at both start dates), as advertised, and will be 12 months duration.
3. Delivery of student education will ensure that: (i) the safety and well-being of students and staff are protected at all times; (ii) students’ interests are fully considered and protected; (iii) the integrity of the Leeds degree is maintained; and (iv) quality and standards are maintained.
4. The default position is, that whilst the campus will be open and available (where possible) for student use, group-based educational activities will be conducted online until they can be delivered safely in face-to-face mode.
5. Students will be able to engage fully with their education via online means while this remains necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff. Educational activities may be timetabled in physical locations on campus, subject to social distancing guidelines[[1]](#endnote-2) and prevailing government advice.
6. Education provision will ensure the quality and equity of education and experience for students on campus and those who are forced to study remotely for a limited period of time (e.g. international students unable to travel to Leeds, students isolating, or students with underlying health concerns).
7. Student education activities involving physical locations will at all times comply with the latest guidance on social distancing and any other provisions of government guidance, and the campus use framework.
8. Unnecessary physical interactions will in all cases be minimised to reduce risk of virus transmission.
9. When considering the use of campus whilst social distancing is in place, priority will be given to those activities where access to physical resources is absolutely necessary for completion of the degree programme, or where the student education experience is significantly enhanced by access to physical resources (i.e. laboratory, studio and performance space, essential library access, PSRB requirements etc)[[2]](#endnote-3).
10. Where teaching activities take place physically and students who are forced to study remotely are not able to attend the session, the session will take place online for all students, or a separate session will be arranged (taking account of local time, where students are based overseas). Where students are able to attend face to face classes on campus, they will be expected to do so.
11. The delivery of programmes that involve off-campus learning and teaching activities (e.g. field courses), both domestically and internationally, must comply with government guidelines and travel advice as well as any institutional restrictions in place. Timing and preparation of off-campus activity should factor in these risks and alternative methods to deliver learning outcomes should be prepared.
12. All incoming students will be enrolled in the institutional Welcome – Induction - Transition programme to support effective engagement with educational activities, and the overall experience, and will also have access to local information within their school[[3]](#endnote-4).
13. Delivery of student education will take place within the existing student education strategy, policies and priorities.
14. All modules will be delivered in a manner which ensures that enrolled students are able to meet the published learning outcomes, and relevant professional body requirements.
15. Students undertaking teaching and learning across multiple schools will be given special consideration to ensure the coherence, communications and quality of their education and experience is maintained.
16. Where delivery of student education involves external organisations and, including external physical and virtual learning environments, these principles will be shared and agreed with delivery partners.

**Section 2: Learning, teaching and assessment principles**

1. All learning and teaching practices, activities and supporting materials will be accessible for all students (Inclusive Teaching Practice Baseline Standard #1[[4]](#endnote-5)).
2. Where disabled students’ needs cannot be accommodated through inclusive design, teaching, learning and assessment activities will be altered as required, with support from Disability Services[[5]](#endnote-6).
3. Teaching and learning materials will be released in advance on Minerva (or appropriate system) so that students have sufficient time to engage with them prior to scheduled sessions (Inclusive Teaching Practice Baseline Standard #2).
4. An overview of planned learning and teaching activities will be described to students at the beginning of the semester, including expectations regarding engagement and level of contribution required.
5. All learning and teaching activities will follow a student-centred active learning approach, meaning that educational content and activities will be designed and delivered to stimulate, engage and support students through an inclusive and flexible approach[[6]](#endnote-7).
6. Sense of belonging will be built into online course design to mitigate against increased risk of isolation, disengagement and attrition. This will include opportunities to develop significant relationships with staff and students such as peer mentoring[[7]](#endnote-8).
7. All assessments (formative and summative) will be accessible, inclusive, engaging, flexible and appropriately timed, to meet the needs of all students and support learning. All assessments will follow the Leeds Expectations for Assessment and Feedback[[8]](#endnote-9).
8. All assessments will be submitted electronically through Minerva and feedback will be provided online (wherever possible). Staff are encouraged to mark assessments online wherever possible, and may be required to mark online where access to campus facilities is restricted[[9]](#endnote-10).
9. Education provision will support all students to realise their potential, and work to reduce degree awarding gaps and non-continuation rates will continue.

**Section 3: Online education principles**

The following principles will apply to all student education activities conducted online:

1. All students will be offered University-level support, training and advice about effective and safe online learning, and use of the required systems, technologies and software[[10]](#endnote-11), and offered support with access to suitable devices and equipment to allow for effective engagement with educational opportunities[[11]](#endnote-12).
2. Where teaching and learning materials can’t be provided electronically, module content and assessments will be appropriately designed to reflect this.
3. Teaching and learning activities delivered online will follow a student-centred active learning approach, and will be designed and delivered to support the learning needs of all enrolled students[[12]](#endnote-13).
4. Unless otherwise agreed by the University[[13]](#endnote-14), Minerva will be the main virtual learning environment for all teaching and learning activities, accompanied by use of other Leeds digital education systems (e.g. Teams, Top Hat etc.[[14]](#endnote-15)).
5. Teaching and learning activities conducted online will only use University of Leeds supported digital education systems, wherever possible. Any use of new digital education systems and technologies will be approved institutionally before use with students[[15]](#endnote-16).
6. Teaching and learning materials will be provided in Minerva as part of a coherent learning journey, using a range of accessible content including media, readings and narrative, alongside interactive activities (e.g. discussion opportunities)[[16]](#endnote-17).
7. Teaching and learning materials in Minerva will be provided using the University Minerva Template[[17]](#endnote-18), including instructions, guidance and navigation for students.
8. Teaching and learning materials will be provided in a range of file formats, to support students with limited Internet access and electronic device limitations. When using Minerva, this will be done automatically (where technically possible) through Blackboard Ally[[18]](#endnote-19). Support and guidance will be provided to staff[[19]](#endnote-20).
9. For programmes with students enrolled who are forced to study remotely from China, institutional advice and guidance will be provided in relation to use of systems, technologies and approaches for effective education[[20]](#endnote-21).
10. Teaching and learning activities conducted synchronously online will be interactive, ensuring student involvement, and ensuring time is available to answer students’ questions (during or after the session)[[21]](#endnote-22).
11. Teaching and learning activities conducted online will be of an appropriate length to ensure student engagement, and sessions over 1 hour will include regular breaks.
12. Where teaching and learning activities involve asynchronous online interactions, teaching staff will inform students how and when they will monitor, and respond to, discussions and comments from students, within the defined number of contact hours for the module.
13. The recording and publication of teaching and learning activities is encouraged (where technically possible) [[22]](#endnote-23), in line with the current Audio Video Recording Policy[[23]](#endnote-24).
14. All audio and video-based teaching and learning activities will be published with automated captions (where technically possible, and in line with University policy[[24]](#endnote-25)).
15. All modules with reading lists will make use of the Library Reading List in Minerva[[25]](#endnote-26).
16. The University will monitor student engagement with online learning and teaching activities (in line with the Learning Analytics Code of Practice[[26]](#endnote-27)), and support will be provided to students with low engagement.
17. Students will be offered regular opportunities to engage with module and programme leaders through scheduled communication activities and to provide in-module and programme feedback, and will receive timely updates on actions taken in response to feedback.

**Section 4: Student experience principles**

1. Students will have access to high quality, flexible, student support services.
2. Students will receive regular opportunities to discuss their academic progress.
3. Students will have access to a range of opportunities to support their personal and professional development, both integrated with academic delivery, and as co-curricular options.
4. Students will experience an environment in which they are inspired, prepared effectively for their future, and enabled to relate the skills gained through their University experience to their future direction.
5. Students will be invited to provide feedback throughout their time at University, as partners in their own education.
6. The University will continue to work in strong and active partnership with Leeds University Union.

**Guidance notes to accompany Student Education Delivery Principles**

1. University of Leeds social distancing guidelines [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. Principles for timetabling in teaching spaces will be issued separately. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. Further information about the structure of the Welcome-Induction-Transition programme will be circulated, and there will separate versions UG and PGT students, and for programmes starting in September and January. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. See the Inclusive Teaching Practice website for more information: <https://inclusiveteaching.leeds.ac.uk/> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. For more information on preparing teaching for students with disabilities see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2020/03/Teaching-disabled-students-remotely.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
6. An online course is available for all staff to support the process to adapt your teaching to online delivery (<https://minerva.leeds.ac.uk/webapps/blackboard/content/listContentEditable.jsp?content_id=_7241843_1&course_id=_513984_1&mode=reset>). Further advice, support and guidance will be provided to Faculties and Schools to assist with implementation of a student-centred active learning approach, in a range of pedagogical and disciplinary contexts. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
7. Further advice, support and guidance will be provided to Faculties and School to assist with creating a sense of belonging and building effective social communities. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
8. See the Leeds Expectations for Assessment and Feedback for more information: <https://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/22170/quality_assurance-related_policies/1147/leeds_expectations_for_assessment_and_feedback> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
9. See the Digital Practice website for more information about online assessment: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
10. This information will be provided to students within the Welcome-Induction-Transition programme. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
11. This will be coordinated by Student Support Teams. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
12. For an overview of the support available to staff, see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/online-support-for-staff/> [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
13. Any exceptions to the use of Minerva as the main VLE will be agreed in advance via the relevant Pro-Deans for Student Education, who will seek advice from the Dean of Digital Education. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
14. For more information about digital education systems, see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/digital-tools-and-resources/> [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
15. All requests for use of new digital education systems, tools and services should be submitted via Faculty IT Business Relationship Manager, relevant Pro-Dean for Student Education, or directly to [digitaleducation@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:digitaleducation@leeds.ac.uk) [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
16. Further advice, support and guidance will be provided to Faculties and Schools to assist with creation of an effective online learning journey in Minerva. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
17. For access to the Minerva Module Template see: <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/vle/staff/build/template/#/page/5d317bf86153a40e746eb974> [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
18. For more information about Blackboard Ally, see: <https://www.leeds.ac.uk/vle/staff/build/ally/> [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
19. For more information about digital accessibility, see: <https://digitalaccessibility.leeds.ac.uk/> [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
20. For more information about support students studying in China, see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/73/2020/05/Designing-and-delivering-online-learning-for-students-in-China.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
21. For more information on creating and delivering synchronous online classes, see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/guides-to-support-online-learning/> [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
22. For more information about recording educational activities, see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/guides-to-support-online-learning/recording-and-sharing-your-lectures-with-personal-capture/> [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
23. For access to the current Audio Video Recording policy, see: <https://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/policies_procedures_codesofpractice.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
24. For information about captioning recordings of educational content, see: <https://digitalpractice.leeds.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/online-resources-for-use-in-teaching/video-content-for-use-in-teaching/making-learning-materials-more-accessible-for-students/> [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
25. For more information about the Module Reading List tool, see: <https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1204/lecturer_support/97/make_items_available_for_students> [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
26. For access to the current Code of Practice on Learning Analytics, see: <https://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/policies_procedures_codesofpractice.html> [↑](#endnote-ref-27)