

Learning and Teaching Strategy

Version Number **1.4**

1. Purpose

The British Institute of Technology England (BITE) aims to provide the highest quality learning and teaching experience for all its students. BITE is committed to providing an educational experience that will enable its students to achieve their potential and to have the knowledge, skills and personal attributes to equip them for employment and life-long learning. BITE is currently building employability skills called the Institute Graduate with a view to further developing its Learning & Teaching policy.

BITE's educational aims for all its taught programmes are to foster in students:

i. Higher level intellectual skills:

intellectual and imaginative powers including analysis, synthesis, evaluation, constructive criticality, creativity and reflection.

ii. Subject expertise and understanding of context:

a thorough understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the subjects studied, together with an ability to situate them in context, for example, ethical, economic, social, environmental, professional and global.

iii. A positive approach to learning

a willingness to accept responsibility for their own learning, the aptitude to learn independently and collaboratively using initiative, self-discipline and a commitment to life-long learning

iv Community of learners

interaction with each other as a community of learners supported by well-qualified academic staff where staff and students work together.

v Graduate skills

a range of graduate skills including communication, self-management, interpersonal, intellectual, team working, practical/applied skills

vi Personal responsibility

critical self-awareness, personal responsibility and social citizenship, and play an active and responsible role in society.

vii Global perspective

a global and international perspective, being prepared for an ever changing world where technology plays an increasingly important role.

2. Principles

To provide students with the highest quality learning environment and to meet the above educational aims BITE is committed to promoting and supporting the following principles:

- i Learner-centred and blended learning approaches that encourages active student engagement and provides flexibility in how, when and where students learn.
- ii Complementary learning, teaching and assessment practices that are transparent, inclusive and fair and take account of the needs of a diverse student body.
- iii Fit-for-purpose curricula that have been developed in conjunction with appropriate stakeholders to enhance the employability of our graduates.
- iv Effective mechanisms that enable students to work with staff and other stakeholders in order to ensure that learning, teaching and assessment practices are continuously enhanced.
- v Academic and Professional staff who are valued, rewarded and supported as scholarly and reflective practitioners in higher education.
- vi The provision of high quality virtual and physical learning spaces and excellent learning resources.

3. Teaching

We see face-to-face teaching, in its various formats, as the main platform for student learning, strongly supported by the use of learning technologies, student-student interactions and work experience (where it can be gained). BITE considers the key functions of face-to-face teaching to be:

- the transmission of subject specialist knowledge and deepening the student's understanding of their chosen subject of study
- motivating, enthusing and inspiring students to want to learn
- fostering students communities where they can learn from each other
- providing students with rich, varied and exciting 'classroom' learning experiences

To achieve this we have identified the following as key:

- employing academic staff to teach who are well-qualified, up-to-date in their areas of specialist teaching and able to demonstrate continual professional development
 - the use of various mechanisms to provide a culture of continuous enhancement of teaching, for example, annual staff appraisal, observation of teaching and obtaining recognised teaching qualifications where appropriate
 - regular, comprehensive and measurable feedback from students about their learning experience. We use a modified version of the National Student Survey questionnaire to gain feedback from students about their learning experience
 - Use of external experts (industrial, public sector, self-employed, etc.) at appropriate points in our programmes.

4. Student assessment

Assessment is the key to knowing what students have learned and is often the area of students' experience that results in the lowest levels of satisfaction. To enhance student assessment BITE will ensure that:

- all forms of assessment foster in students deep thinking about their subject of study as well as making links across subject boundaries
- assessments are based on appropriate academic standards, and are fair, accessible and valid
- assessments are beneficial and supportive of the learning process
- assessments are designed to reduce/eliminate plagiarism
- feedback for coursework is provided to students in a timely way and with comments that provide information about both strengths and weaknesses of each piece of student work
- students receive back their marked work according to BITE's published timescales and that marked coursework is collected by students.

6. Institute Graduate

Employability, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

The Institute has created the Institute Graduate to allow all students have the opportunity to gain employability skills while studying at the institute.

In addition we encourage students to include additional learning opportunities within their chosen awards and co-curricular activities such as work experience, volunteering and the development of employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills.

Being Employable...

... involves the development of a set of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that makes graduates more likely to gain employment, have the capability of being effective in the workplace and be successful in their chosen occupation to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

Being Enterprising ...

...involves a set of skills and attitudes that can enable a culture of identifying opportunities, creativity, risk taking and innovation. It can involve many activities – for instance organising an event, planning an overseas trip or involvement in a social enterprise. Equally it can be about finding new solutions to old problems in your workplace, conducting a piece of research in a resourceful way, starting a new society or being involved in a community project. Employers value enterprising people!

Being Entrepreneurial...

...very often involves using enterprise skills to create new businesses and bring them to market. There is considerable support for those wishing to do so while at Institute. However, being entrepreneurial is not just about business skills or starting new ventures; it is a way of thinking and behaving relevant to all parts of society and the economy in terms of mindsets, behaviours, skills and capabilities to come up with new ways of doing things well and the flexibility to change career direction.

7. Digital technologies

BITE recognises the importance of digital technologies in supporting and enhancing student learning. Evolving and digital technologies will be exploited to support and enhance student learning from face-to-face teaching. Digital technologies will be used to:

- help students develop global and international perspectives in preparation for their future career and employment
- deliver, where appropriate and achievable, more online assessment Examples of the types of digital technologies that can be exploited to support teaching and enhance student learning include: social learning networks, Ebooks, mobile technologies, Wikis, conferencing technologies.

7. Staff development to support the strategy

All staff involved in teaching at BITE will have an annual observation part of which will identify continual professional development plans and the means by which they keep up-to-date in their specialist areas of teaching. We wish to be able to provide staff development opportunities for all staff tenable them to continuously enhance the teaching and learning experience provided to students. Some of the areas we wish to progress are identified below:

- Staff development opportunities offered through Human Resources which may include - how to be a module leader, how to be a project supervisor, how to use technology to support learning
- consideration of developing and offering to new teaching staff a Higher Education Academy (HEA) accredited teaching qualification
- sharing good practice in teaching, learning and assessment
- curriculum design and innovative assessment methods

We recognise the importance of leadership and management in supporting and promoting staff development, Programme Managers and Programme Leaders will have a key role to play here.

8. Observation of teaching

We are committed to enhancing teaching and identifying excellent practice through a process of observation of teaching. An annual Observation of teaching aims to:

- shares good practice and helpsteaching staff further improve the learning experience offered to students
- ensure that critical and constructive feedback is provided to teaching staff so that they are aware of strengths and areas for enhancement
- Gain an overall profile of strengths and areas for enhancement across all teaching so that staff development initiatives can be developed.

9. Measuring success

The successful implementation and monitoring of this Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy will be achieved through:

- setting quantifiable targets of student satisfaction
- an annual review of L&T Policy at the Learning & Quality Committee which will then be considered by Academic Board.

(a) Targets

The following targets for students satisfaction will be set and performance assessed through results of the scores from the modified National Student Survey:

- Students rate their overall satisfaction with their programme at 85% or greater, with no individual component (teaching, assessment, academic support, programme organisation, learning resources and personal development below 75%
- the programme/qualification completion rate to be at least 90% based on initial enrolment
- 30% of students gain some form of work experience whilst studying on their programme

(b) Governance and Annual monitoring

Governance

Ownership of BITE's Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy resides with both teaching and administrative staff. The strategy is reviewed annually and approved by Learning & Quality Committee and Academic Board.

Annual Monitoring

The Learning and Teaching Strategy is reviewed at least annually by the Learning and Quality Committee. The L& Q Committee also:

- evaluation of student feedback, via questionnaires by Programme Leaders
- considers staff and staff development activities that have been undertaken
- reviews observations of teaching.