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Curriculum
Design Guide

January
2010

Contents

All websites accessed on 16/12/09

Curriculum Design Guide

- revised edition January 2010

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to help programme teams plan and review their programmes. The guide provides practical support within a framework of principles of curriculum design that embrace national, professional and LJMU regulations and guidelines. It is designed to help programme leaders identify key issues to discuss with their teams; areas that require thought and resolution before students start the programme. Within the text there are brief explanations of points, with links to examples, checklists, further information and resources. Where possible, details of LJMU case studies and staff who can provide further support or ideas are given.

Where to start?

There are many pressures on curriculum design - responding to external requirements, whether professional or government driven, incorporating LJMU initiatives, creating and maintaining a 'market', delivering content and developing learners. Very few programme teams are able to start from scratch - most programmes are developed from existing programmes and modules. Even within these constraints there are fundamental questions that need to be debated. It is suggested, therefore, that at an early stage as many staff as possible are engaged in discussions and activities that will help with the design of the programme.

Although there is no agreed definitive list of principles of curriculum design a **useful set of principles** for anyone engaged in curriculum design is:

A well designed curriculum is:

- holistic and coherent
- inclusive / accessible / student centred
- one that fosters a deep approach to learning, encouraging independence in learning
- based upon / has links to research / scholarship
- based on feedback, evaluation and review.

A well designed curriculum takes account of:

- its market / its intake / its output
- its learning environment / resources / staffing
- national and LJMU requirements.

> **"** These principles relate to LJMU's Strategic Plan with its aim of
> …'further widening of access beyond our traditional student markets and improving retention by offering innovative and exciting courses based on student and employer needs, and providing appropriate support to students throughout their studies'. (LJMU Strategic Plan 2007-2012, foreword).
>
> As part of curriculum design there is
> …'continuous enhancement of our approaches to learning, teaching and assessment to provide efficient and effective learning opportunities, whilst maintaining high academic standards' …'encouraging broad research and scholarship that will underpin our undergraduate and post graduate teaching'; …'continuous enhancement of our relationships with employers and other external stakeholders to connect students and staff more closely to the world of work'. (ibid.) **"**

LJMU curriculum requirements

**Programme teams need to take into account LJMU curriculum requirements.
The most important are:**

1. University Modular Framework (UMF) regulations

All programmes leading to a LJMU award are expected to operate within the UMF. The regulations governing the UMF can be found at http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/umf/

There is a major review of the Framework every five years. Nonetheless programme leaders/designers should check each year for details of any changes.
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/UMF/88679.htm

There are important changes to the UMF affecting programmes from September 2011.

UMF Changes from 2011

- Year long 24 credit modules as standard for all undergraduate programmes

- Unnecessary overlap between learning outcomes within a programme should be removed

- An individual learning outcome should not be assessed more than once within a module

2. World of Work - WoW

This is the University's explicit strategic focus that encourages and enables all students to develop skills and attributes demanded and valued by employers. Put simply, the aim is to bring students and staff closer to the world of work. LJMU does this by maximising the opportunities that programmes provide for students to learn about themselves, to develop and practise skills and to experience the world of work.

Key factors for curriculum design in realising the WoW objectives are to:

- make the development of skills more explicit within the curriculum
- provide students with the opportunities to practise skills and to receive feedback
- enable students to reflect on, and articulate, the skills that they have developed while undertaking their university programme
- provide opportunities for students to develop their self-awareness and confidence as independent learners
- provide opportunities for all students to transfer skills into work-related contexts.

The key curriculum requirements relating to the implementation of WoW are that:

- an element of Work Related Learning (WRL) is a feature of all undergraduate programmes of at least 240 credits
- such programmes include a range of transferable Graduate Skills (see 2b) and identify the opportunities within the curriculum for those skills to be taught, practised and assessed
- programme teams encourage their students to achieve WoW verification; consider and develop opportunities that the programme provides for self awareness, organisational awareness and making things happen - the WoW skills.

2a) Work Related Learning (WRL)

The definition of Work Related Learning that has been adopted by the University is that WRL is about:

"…involving students learning about themselves and the world of work in order to empower them to enter and succeed in the world of work and their wider lives. Work Related Learning thus involves higher education students in four interrelated areas of learning:

- *Learning about oneself - one's capabilities, confidence, life interests and career orientations;*

- *Learning and practising skills and personal attributes of value in the world of work;*

- *Experiencing the world of work (or facsimiles thereof) in order to provide insights and learning into the world of work predominantly associated with the subjects of one's higher education studies; and*

- *Experiencing and learning how to learn and manage oneself in a range of situations, including (of course) those to be found at work and central to self-management and development activities."*

(*taken from Moreland, N. Work-related learning in higher education* (2005) Learning and Employability Series Two HE Academy)
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/ourwork/employability/work-related_learning_in_higher_education

2b) The Graduate Skills as agreed by Academic Board are:

A Analysing and Solving Problems

B Team Working and Interpersonal Skills

C Verbal Communication

D Written Communication

E Personal Planning and Organising

F Initiative

G Numerical Reasoning

H Information Literacy and ICT Skills

2c) WoW skills or attributes

In addition to Graduate Skills students can work towards WoW verification by developing evidence in the following three areas:

- Self Awareness

- Organisational Awareness

- Making Things Happen

It is likely that programmes provide opportunities for students to develop these skills and attributes within the curriculum. Staff are encouraged to make this explicit and to promote the benefits of working towards WoW verification to students.

For further details about WoW see
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/wow/

3. Effective Practice in Assessment - the 'blue book', September 2008

This guide is based upon a set of principles of effective assessment practice. The purpose of the booklet is to ensure that:

■ important assessment principles are applied consistently across LJMU

■ students fully understand LJMU's assessment practices and processes

■ LJMU assessment practice is aligned with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Code of Practice on the Assessment of Students.

It is expected that programme teams will use the guide when developing and reviewing their programmes and be able to show how they have implemented the assessment principles and practices outlined in the guide.
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84069.htm

The ten principles of assessment, articulated in the guide, apply to all forms of assessment, including e-assessment, at LJMU.

What do students value in assessment activities?

■ Unambiguous expectations

■ Real world, 'authentic' tasks

■ Opportunities to improve

■ Formative feed forward and fast feedback

■ Choice and flexibility

See LJMU's 10 principles of assessment
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84069.htm
and for further information
http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/
assessinglearning/05/index.html

Implementation of curriculum design principles and requirements - what do these requirements mean in practical terms for a programme team?

Realistically a programme leader is likely to start thinking about curriculum design when the programme is about to come up for review or when s/he has an idea about a new programme. In both cases a 'programme specification' is required. The development of a programme specification should not be viewed as another bureaucratic chore. Consideration of the areas covered by a programme specification should be used as a starting point for discussion. It is vital that a programme team develops and shares a common approach to the purpose of the programme in order that the programme is academically coherent and can be justified to students and other interested external bodies. Discussing a programme specification offers the opportunity for teams to think holistically about the programme - a key principle of curriculum design.

Principle 1 - that the curriculum is holistic and coherent

During the early stages of reviewing and redesigning the curriculum the team should discuss broad questions about the purpose of the programme. Why does the team want to redesign the programme? What kind of student is the team hoping to develop?

Questions that could be used in discussion with the programme team:

- What are the most important intellectual/professional/creative/technical processes that a student will undertake on this programme?
- What are the skills, techniques, behaviours, professional practices that a student will develop?
- What distinguishes this programme of study in this University?
- On what does the academic content concentrate?
- What are the important values that inform this programme?
- How is the curriculum organised to ensure the above?
- How does the team view the process of learning vis-a-vis the content of learning?
- Does the team have a particular approach to the curriculum, why and how?
- Does the programme have a strategic approach to the development of WoW within the curriculum and provide opportunities to help students work towards WoW verification?
- Is employability a core aim?
- How does this programme of study relate to professional practice?
- Is this programme more than a collection of modules? How?
- What makes the level at which the programme is to be delivered appropriate?
- Does the programme match the benchmark statement?
  www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/default.asp
  or for foundation degrees www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationDegree/benchmark/FDQB.asp
  The Foundation Degree qualification benchmark is not specific to any particular discipline but sets out a generic framework for Foundation Degrees that serves as a reference point for use in programme design, delivery and review. Benchmark statements are also available for a range of Masters level subjects.

It may be useful to get together a group of students, recent graduates, employers or placement hosts who could discuss a similar set of questions.

A lot of activity, therefore, has to take place before a programme team can begin to complete a programme specification.

Developing a programme specification

Programme teams need to be sure that the programme outcomes are at the 'right' qualification level. The National Qualifications Framework (August 2008) http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/default.asp provides qualification descriptors which give a statement of outcomes that a student should be able to demonstrate for the award of a particular qualification. The descriptors also include a statement of the wider abilities that a typical student could be expected to have developed. These descriptors may be of use when discussing programme outcomes. (see also page 14)

A programme specification includes a concise description of the intended outcomes of learning from a programme, and the means by which these outcomes are achieved and demonstrated.

A programme specification should identify potential stopping-off points and give the intended learning outcomes of the programme in terms of:

- the knowledge and understanding that a student will be expected to have upon completion;
- cognitive skills, such as an understanding of methodologies or ability in critical analysis;
- subject specific skills, such as laboratory skills;
- transferable / personal development / practical skills: communication, numeracy, the use of information technology and learning how to learn.

In modular schemes the module is regarded as a discrete entity and a key building block in mixing and matching modules to provide programmes and choice to students. Programme teams are required to provide only core modules at level 1 and to run option modules only where they meet minimum student numbers. **From 2011 undergraduate programmes will be expected to operate 24 credit year long modules** which could help programme teams develop clarity in programme and level outcomes. This may help staff look at the curriculum as a whole, at the programme level, rather than as a collection of individual modules. The team should start from an overview of the programme and consider how the programme as a whole develops in terms of all aspects of teaching and learning - delivery, assessment, progression, development, coherence across and between modules, the impact of the teaching environment, etc. This does not mean that the team has to start again if the programme has been developed from a collection of modules but it would be useful to discuss with staff and students the few fundamental questions listed above in order to review, assess and ensure that there is coherence and agreement about the aims of the programme.

The LJMU guidance on programme specifications http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/66952.htm requires programme teams to use a particular layout for insertion into the electronic programme catalogue, Prodcat. Further information can be found on http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/66952.htm The QAA's guidelines on programme specifications can be found on www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/programSpec/guidelines06.pdf

Curriculum mapping or auditing is a good way to stimulate discussion about coherence. The teaching, learning and assessment methods that are in use or are proposed could be recorded on a programme grid, which will then show any imbalances. Although curriculum maps are no longer required as part of a programme specification they provide a useful tool for programme design and review.

An example of a curriculum map follows.

Example of a Curriculum Map for [name of programme]

This map provides a design aid to help staff identify where the programme outcomes are being developed and assessed within the programme. It also provides a check list for quality assurance purposes and could be used in validation, review, accreditation and external examining processes. The map makes the learning outcomes transparent. In this way it also helps students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the programme progresses. The map shows the main measurable learning outcomes.

	PROGRAMME OUTCOMES																								
	Codes	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6
M O D U L E S	Level 1																								
	Level 2																								
	Level 3																								

Knowledge and understanding

A1		A4	
A2		A5	
A3		A6	

Intellectual skills

B1		B4	
B2		B5	
B3		B6	

Professional practical skills

C1		C4	
C2		C5	
C3		C6	

Transferable/key skills

D1		D4	
D2		D5	
D3		D6	

UMF Changes from 2011

■ Unnecessary overlap between learning outcomes within a programme should be removed.

Mapping enables any overlap, at the programme level, to be identified. The curriculum should demonstrate coherence, continuity and the development of learning without unnecessary duplication and overlap.

A process of mapping will show which programme outcomes are fulfilled by which modules. It enables programme teams to see whether:

■ any outcomes are too heavily weighted, (e.g. if an outcome occurs in several modules)

■ any outcomes are insufficiently addressed; (e.g. can a student avoid a key outcome by a particular choice of modules?)

■ there is any unnecessary duplication of content and delivery

■ all students are given sufficient opportunity to achieve all the outcomes; (e.g. is a key outcome assessed by examination(s) only and can it be avoided by a student's choice of answers)

■ the programme is balanced and coherent.

Assessment and delivery methods could also be mapped. Bunching of assessments and over assessment are areas of concern for students. Mapping the number, type and deadlines of assessment will allow the programme team to consider whether there is unnecessary overlap and duplication of assessment and whether there is too heavy a reliance on a particular method of assessment. See *Effective Assessment in Practice,* in particular principle 9, page 36, for further information. http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84069.htm

Effective assessment

Assessment may be valid, reliable, fair and transparent but could fail to improve learning because it cannot be adequately resourced or managed efficiently. Alternatively the assessment chosen may be an efficient use of resources but may not be valid in assessing the learning outcomes or may not help students learn; e.g. an assessment via 100% exam where a student can omit the question on a key learning outcome and still pass, or where there is too high an emphasis on memory recall.
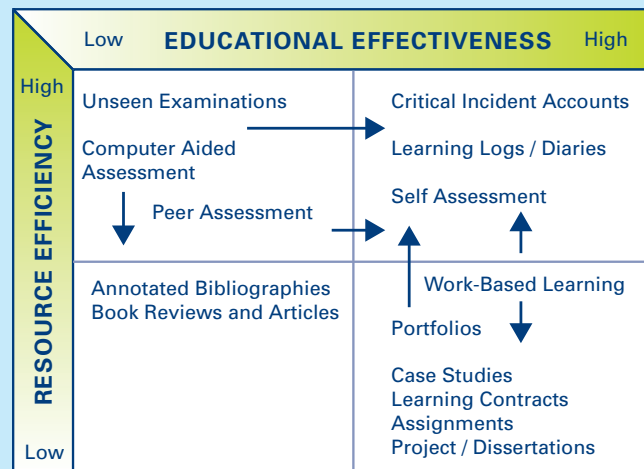

Figure 2. Survey of Some Assessment Methods: Summary Findings. Source Hornby

This framework cannot be definitive but it can provide a guide to evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of assessment methods. The way an assessment method is implemented can alter its position in the grid.

What is the impact of the UMF changes on curriculum design - how much assessment?

- An individual learning outcome should not be assessed more than once within a module
- Unnecessary overlap between learning outcomes within a programme should be removed

The purpose of these UMF changes is to encourage student learning by ensuring that staff and students' workload is manageable. Programme teams should resist the temptation to rewrite learning outcomes into more smaller, prescriptive outcomes, in order to avoid a feeling of "*Since everything seems to count, everything matters a little but little matters a lot*" (QAA 2007 Enhancing practice, guide no 2, Integrative assessment.) By having fewer summative assessments students could be encouraged to concentrate on more in-depth learning. When considering overlap within a programme module teams will want to consider how the module relates to the aims of the programme(s) it serves and not engage in a rewriting exercise that adds little to student learning.

Are there any learning outcomes that do not contribute to the programme learning outcomes/level outcomes? If so why are they in this module?

There will be some learning outcomes where it is reasonable for them to be assessed more than once; for example, the assessment of skills and competencies such as communication, using equipment safely or argument and analysis.

Programme teams could discuss/review

- assessment activities across the programme so that assessment activities in one module complement those in other modules
- assessment loadings for programmes
- the use of simplified grading systems, where possible and appropriate, for modules
- module assessments to ensure that they are reasonable for the hours given for private study on the module proforma
- module learning outcomes against programme and level learning outcomes
- any duplication of learning outcomes, within and across modules
- variety of assessment methods across the programme
- the programme's assessment strategy including that for feedback, including feedback on examinations
- the impact of the introduction of anonymous coursework marking, where feasible from 2010, i.e. are there any modules where anonymous coursework marking is not feasible? See http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84284.htm for further information.

Shared modules between different programmes

Many programmes share modules and it is harder to map and change assessment when a module contributes to several programmes. Is the student experience different? Are the assessment outcomes better for one programme than another? Does the performance of students from different programmes vary? Check the appropriate *WebHub* data. Do the students experience the module differently according to their programme? Is the workload comparable?

Making assessment more efficient and (equally/as/more) effective - some suggestions to consider

- Assessment across modules - 'capstone modules' bringing together the experiences and learning across several modules into a project, portfolio or using a case study approach with components from different modules

- Alternative assessment methods which may reduce time spent on assessment e.g. short reports instead of essays, a poster instead of a report. Consider using peer and self assessment

- Using a summative assessment that builds on earlier work that has not been marked, such as, an examination that uses questions taken from exercises that have been done on a voluntary basis and where general answers have been provided electronically

- Feedback methods - oral taped feedback or podcasting, asking students to self assess, use of feedback statements, feedback from peers, wimba

- Consider the assessment strategy across the programme ensuring that students are given practice in assessment activities before being expected to engage in them - e.g. marking exercises and discussion of criteria before asking them to self or peer assess or preliminary work in groups before an assessment of a group exercise

- Whether performance in a coursework assessment such as in class tasks could provide exemption from a later examination. This would be likely to lead to increased attendance and motivation from students and increased feedback and learning from the class activity

- A flexible assessment system was introduced in a course in the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law, University of Queensland, to address concerns about failure rates, which were felt to be associated with the complexity of the course content and the diversity of the student body. The system adopted consisted of a compulsory final exam (60% at least), an optional mid-semester exam (25%) and five computer-managed learning exercises (15%). Students could choose from various combinations of one or more of the three forms of assessment, and their best score was used in allocating a grade.

Asafu-Adjaye J (2001) Flexible assessment in a business course, Teaching Large Classes: Case Studies, no 2, Australian Universities Teaching Committee project, University of Queensland www.tedi.uq.edu.au/largeclasses/case_studies_frameset.html (last accessed 16 December 2009)

Where applicable Graduate Skills are mapped and reviewed each year
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/productcatalogue/86224.htm

The Graduate Skills Map for Programmes

Programme title / Programme Modules	Analysing & Solving problems	Team Working & Interpersonal Skills	Verbal Communication	Written Communication	Personal Planning & Organising	Initiative	Numerical Reasoning	Information Literacy and ICT skills
Level 1								
Module 1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
Level 2								
Module 1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
Level 3								
Module 1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
All criteria in skill have been addressed								

Questions that could be used in discussion with the programme team:

- Is it realistic to be able to design and offer new modules, if there are gaps?
- Is there a balance between breadth of study and depth of study? Is it better to cover a few areas in greater depth rather than to try to cover too many discrete topics? Does the balance between breadth and depth change as a student progresses?
- Will students see the connections between modules - how can connectivity be encouraged?
- Is the most obvious way of progressing the content necessarily the best way to engage students? For example, does theory have to be taught before its application - could trying to solve an issue / case study be a way of motivating students to engage with the theory?
- Is there an assumption that the primary mode of delivery will be lectures and the primary mode of assessment exams and essays, if so, why?
- Are the key principles/aims of the programme developed throughout the programme? Are complexity of knowledge and skills developed as the student progresses?
- Consider how 'real-world settings' could be used to engage learners
- How does the programme use technology to enhance learning?
- Is there a variety of teaching and assessment methods?
- Consider how the methods of delivery could help to develop confidence in students' ability to learn the subject, e.g. problem solving activities, small tasks and immediate feedback early in a programme, working in tutorial groups, peer support and mentoring
- Is WoW infused throughout the curriculum?
- What's the school policy on PDP/how does PDP fit in/align with the curriculum?

The delivery and the assessment cannot be discussed in isolation from the aims of the modules and programme. It is essential, therefore, that the aims of the programme should be agreed by the whole programme team and importantly, embedded in the actions and words of the team.

"We teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject, but rather to get a student to think mathematically for himself, to consider matters as a historian does, to take part in the process of knowledge-getting. Knowledge is a process, not a product."

(Bruner, 'Toward a Theory of Instruction', 1966, p72, Harvard University Press, quoted in Ramsden, 'Learning to Teach in Higher Education', 2000, Routledge, p115)

✔ Checklist
Has the programme team:

- considered feedback from students and external examiners, advisors, employers, organisations etc where appropriate
- discussed and agreed the aims
- discussed the benchmark statement
- discussed a range of teaching methods across the programme
- discussed a range of assessment methods across the programme
- discussed LJMU's policies and guidelines
- agreed the programme specification

For further information/guidance on:

Writing a programme specification, LJMU guidelines
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/66952.htm

QAA guidelines
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/
programSpec/default.asp

Writing programme outcomes, LJMU guidelines
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84021.htm

Benchmark statements http://www.qaa.ac.uk/
academicinfrastructure/benchmark/default.asp

The National Qualifications Framework (August 2008)
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/
FHEQ/default.asp

LJMU's *Effective Practice in Assessment* -
the 'blue book', September 2008
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84069.htm

LJMU's WoW initiative http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/wow

Want to know more?

Holistic curriculum and constructive alignment
Biggs, J. (2003) *Aligning teaching for constructing
learning* http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/
detail/id477_aligning_teaching_for_constructing_
learning Biggs, J. (2003) *Teaching for quality
learning at university* Maidenhead, SRHE

Other curriculum design ideas

http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/
publications/Default.asp resources related to the
enhancement projects of the first year experience,
assessment, flexible delivery, employability and
responding to student needs.

www.hvlc.org.uk/ace/aifl/docs/C1/Reading_notes_
on_Self-theories.pdf notes on Dweck Carol S.
(1999) *Self-theories: their role in motivation, personality
and development.* Notes from Jo Tait of the Open
University.

Employability

LJMU's WoW initiative http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/wow
See the WoW handbook, particularly section 4
'*WoW in the curriculum*',
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/WoW/staff/96456.htm,
the staff section of the WoW website
http://ljmu.ac.uk/wow/staff/ for the latest
information and the Learning and Teaching website
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/85473.htm
for further support material.

Higher Education Academy publications
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/
employability

The Learning and Employability series is a range
of guides intended for senior managers and staff
in higher education institutions who are reviewing
or developing strategies and practice for the
enhancement of student employability.

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/
employability/disciplines
employability profiles by discipline

Beaumont C. and Frank B. (2003) *Enhancing
Employability through Problem-based Learning*
Delivering Employability Conference, UCLAN 2003
http://hopelive.hope.ac.uk/imc/staff/beaumoc/

*Employability and Good Learning in Higher
Education,* Peter Knight and Mantz Yorke,
Teaching in Higher Education, Vol 8, No 1, 2003.
http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/
routledg/cthe/2003/00000008/00000001/art00001

Knight, P. T. and Yorke, M. (2004) *Learning,
Curriculum and Employability.* London:
Routledge/Falmer.

Macfarlane-Dick, D and Roy, A (Eds) (2006)
*Enhancing student employability; Innovative projects
from across the curriculum,* QAA, Gloucester.

A well designed curriculum takes account of national and LJMU requirements

A programme does not exist in isolation and teams need to work within national and LJMU frameworks when designing or amending programmes.

A. National requirements

1. The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

(second edition, revised August 2008)

These qualification descriptors give a statement of outcomes that a student should be able to demonstrate for the award of an honours degree, foundation degree, masters degree, doctoral degree and for a certificate of higher education. The descriptors also include a statement of the wider abilities that a typical student could be expected to have developed. It is important to check these descriptors, especially for Masters programmes, where conversion programmes/modules would not be regarded as M level. It is also important that programme teams are aware of the definition of awards, particularly if ordinary degree or post-graduate awards are being proposed.
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/default.asp

The Qualifications Framework is different from level descriptors. Level descriptors describe hierarchies of learning that are designed to help staff write learning outcomes at the appropriate level. LJMU uses level descriptors developed by NICATS, which have now been adopted nationally. See http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84021.htm
for the descriptors and for guidance on how they could be used. Programme teams need to be able to justify the level chosen both for the award and for individual modules within the programme.

2. Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England - August 2008

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/england/credit/default.asp
In 2008, the QAA, on behalf of the Credit Issues Development Group (established by the Burgess Group), published the *Higher Education Credit Framework for England: guidance on higher education credit arrangements in England* following consultation with the sector and other bodies. In conjunction with the FHEQ, the HE credit framework promotes consistency of approach across the sector in the use of credit.

3.   Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) - Code of Practice

The QAA has produced a '*Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*'. The sections of the code are:

1. **Postgraduate research programmes**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section1/default.asp

2. **Collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning** (including e-learning)
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section2/default.asp

3. **Students with disabilities**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section3/default.asp

4. **External examining**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section4/default.asp

5. **Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section5/default.asp

6. **Assessment of students**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section6/default.asp

7. **Programme design, approval, monitoring and review**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section7/default.asp

8. **Career education, information and guidance**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section8/default.asp

9. **Work based and placement learning**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section9/default.asp

10. **Admissions to higher education**
    http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section10/default.asp

Each section of the Code is structured into a series of precepts and accompanying outline guidance. The guidance constitutes appropriate good practice. To assist users, the precepts are listed, without the associated guidance, in appendix 1 to the code. As part of quality assurance reviews, LJMU reviewers will consider the extent to which programme teams are meeting the expectations of the precepts in the available sections of the *Code of Practice*. Reviewers will focus on the precepts themselves, and not on the associated guidance: the latter may, however, provide a helpful starting point for discussion. The QAA expects that all institutions will be able to demonstrate that they are adhering to the precepts and that the *Code* is informing practice.
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp

4. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995), the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, (SENDA) 2001, and the Disability Discrimination Act (2005)

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and further amended in 2005. The principal change in 2005 was the addition of a duty to 'promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons' which took effect from December 2006. This does not create new individual rights for disabled people but does require the University to adopt a proactive and anticipatory approach that requires adjustments to be made in advance of an individual disabled person attempting to access or use any of the University's services.

The principles of the DDA are to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Disability Discrimination Act, Part IV (SENDA) 2001

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled applicants, potential applicants or students. Discrimination can take place by:

- treating disabled people 'less favourably' than other people, or
- failing to make a 'reasonable adjustment' when disabled people are placed at a 'substantial disadvantage' for a reason related to their disability compared to other people.

The Disability Equality Duty (2006)

This came into force in December 2006. This legal duty requires all public authorities to **actively** look at ways of ensuring that disabled people are treated equally.

There is an increasing awareness of the social model of disability and thereby an emphasis on inclusivity rather than the medical or deficit model which treats the disabled student as an exception or a problem.

The purpose of the legislation is to promote equality of opportunities so that disabled people can have full opportunities and choices including access to learning. It is not expected that academic standards should be in any way compromised.

Programme teams need, therefore, to be precise on what is, and what is not, a core element or aspect of a programme, so that they can assess where adjustments to teaching practices may be introduced.

Wherever possible courses and teaching practices should be accessible by design, so that only minimal adaptations need to be made for individuals. This also will help in complying with the "anticipatory" aspect of the Act.

In simple terms, the key question is 'would a disabled student be unable to achieve the outcomes of a programme? If so, what reasonable adjustments can

be made? If reasonable adjustments cannot be made (for example, because it would compromise academic standards or because there are specific professional requirements associated with the programme) then this should be made clear to applicants. It is important that such decisions are carefully considered and can be 'objectively justifiable'. Programme teams should take advice initially from Student Welfare before excluding disabled applicants or students.

There is no duty on a student to disclose a disability. However, institutions are expected to take reasonable steps to find out about a student's disability. Once a student has disclosed a disability, or once an institution might reasonably be expected to know about a student's disability (for example, if it is visible), the institution has a responsibility not to discriminate.

What to consider when reviewing or designing programmes

- **Access to the programme:** Does the programme have particular entry requirements? Are these clear? Who can and who cannot access the programme? What adjustments could be made?

- **Learning and teaching methods / Learning activities:** Are there any activities such as field trips, laboratory sessions, physical activities, work-based experiences, exchanges and other activity outside LJMU? Group work? Presentations? Do these prevent particular groups from accessing the curriculum or hinder participation in activities? If yes, then consideration must be given to alternative arrangements and approaches that could be available. Is there a variety of teaching methods?

- **Assessment:** Is there a range of assessment types? Are appropriate alternative assessment methods available if required? Could students choose an assessment type?

- **Administrative arrangements:** How are students supported? Is support signposted? Do staff know the procedures to follow if a disability is disclosed?

Further information

Understanding the Disability Discrimination Act. A Guide for Colleges, Universities and adult learning providers in Great Britain. (2007) Disability Rights Commission http://www.skill.org.uk/page.aspx?c=63&p=152

LJMU Disabled Students guide http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/StudentServices/Welfare/60318.htm

LJMU equality and diversity web pages http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/EOU/

5.   Other legal requirements relating to inclusivity to consider

The Race Relations Act (2001) requires the University to promote race equality; to assess the impact of its policies on students and staff of different racial groups; and to monitor, by reference to those racial groups, the admission and progress of students and the recruitment and career progression of staff.
http://www.ecu.ac.uk/inclusive-practice/promoting-race-equality

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) was amended in 2006 and required a gender equality scheme by April 2007.

In the SDA, unlawful discrimination is defined as:

- Direct and indirect discrimination on grounds of sex
- Discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy, maternity and paternity leave
- Discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment
- Direct and indirect discrimination against married persons and civil partners
- Victimisation
- Harassment and sexual harassment.

Single Equality Bill
The Government has introduced a single equality bill to bring together all these aspects of discrimination together with new aspects of discrimination - age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. The bill is currently going through parliament and is expected to become law in 2010.
http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-bill-briefing-04-09

For further information relating to all strands of equality and how policies affect higher education see http://www.ecu.ac.uk
LJMU equality and diversity web pages http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/EOU/
LJMU's equality action plans http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/EOU/91824.htm

B. LJMU requirements

1.   LJMU Strategic Plan, 2007-12

'The core business of the University is provision of a well-designed, inclusive and accessible curriculum that promotes student success. Enhancing the learning experience for all our students is at the heart of our LTA strategy'.

Strategic Plan, page 18.

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is a fundamental strand of the Plan. Curriculum design is, therefore, essential to achieving part of the Plan's objectives.

The Strategic Plan has been delivered to every member of staff and is available on www.ljmu.ac.uk/Vice_Chancellor/94357.htm

2.   LJMU Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy

http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb
The overall aim of the strategy is to enhance the learning experience, by promoting curriculum design, delivery and assessment that enables all our students to achieve and to develop as capable, independent, lifelong learners. The Learning Development Unit has a remit to promote, support, co-ordinate and disseminate developments, including a number of projects, which may assist in curriculum design.

Key objective from 2009-12 strategy

To provide learning experiences that actively promote student success, progression and achievement.

We will do this by:

- Delivering a holistic integrated curriculum (in its design, delivery, assessment and learner support), that is informed and enriched by research and scholarly activity and enhanced by technology

- Supporting the learning needs of all our students, whatever their background, experience and pattern of study

- Providing opportunities for students to develop, through provision of a work related curriculum, the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enhance their employability and support their life wide learning

- Providing appropriate staff development that supports the continuous improvement of learning and teaching

3. The UMF regulations
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/umf

Key changes from 2011

Year long 24 credit modules for undergraduate programmes

This provides a wealth of opportunities to engage students in active learning, to provide diagnostic and formative feedback throughout the year in order to help students develop, learn and pass the summative assessment. How can programme teams provide effective formative feedback that students will take on board? And can programme teams do this in an effective way that doesn't increase staff work?

There is nothing in the UMF Regulations, or the *Effective Practice in Assessment* guide to prevent marks being given to assessment tasks that are primarily formative; for example, giving 10% for an essay plan.

Providing **formative feedback** should not be interpreted as a requirement to read and comment on draft work.   There are other ways of providing formative feedback which are a more efficient use of staff time and potentially more useful in terms of developing learning. Here are a few suggestions:

- Encourage students to do tests, multiple choice questions, on Bb, in their own time. No marks given for this but in the summative assessment the questions are taken from those on the website

- Use students to provide feedback to each other. Mark only the final piece of work

- Use of in class communication tools - wimba classroom and clicker systems can give immediate feedback to students. Students' responses can be kept anonymous

- Invite students to discuss feedback - ask a wide ranging set of questions. Ask them to provide an example of helpful feedback and to identify why they regarded it as helpful

- Discuss assessment criteria and student answers, good, poor and indifferent - why is this piece of work better than this one

- A marking workshop prior to an assignment/assessment is likely to improve students understanding

- Require students to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the module via evidence of their own choice

- Provide computerised feedback statements

- Students could discuss with each other what tutors' comments mean. Discuss comments made on previous students' work

- Use real life projects or challenges that have the potential to challenge the students, connect with likely employment and professional activity, providing an opportunity to work together learning   from each other

- Promote student engagement, reinforce ability to improve, learn, develop and achieve, rather than rewarding jumping through hoops

- Consider the assessment strategy across the programme ensuring that students are given practice in assessment activities before being expected to engage in them - e.g. marking exercises and discussion of criteria before asking them to self or peer assess or undertaking preliminary work in groups before an assessment of a group exercise

- Ask students to estimate the mark from the feedback they have received

- Consider whether performance in a coursework assessment such as in-class tasks could provide exemption from a later examination. This would be likely to lead to increased attendance and motivation from students and increased feedback and learning from the class activity.

Want to know more?

ASKe publications. ASKe (Assessment Standards Knowledge exchange) is a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning based in the Business School at Oxford Brookes University. There are a number of papers about assessment arising from the projects. http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/index.html

Gibbs, G and Simpson C. (2004) *Does your assessment support your students' learning?* Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, 1.

Hornby, W. (2004) *Dogs, Stars, Rolls Royces and Old Double Decker Buses: Efficiency and Effectiveness in Assessment* www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/Assessment/outcomes.asp

Hounsell, D. (2008) *The trouble with feedback: New challenges, emerging strategies* Interchange Spring 2008 www.tla.ed.ac.uk/interchange/spring2008/hounsell2.htm

Land, R. (2004) *Streamlining assessment: making assessment more efficient and effective* www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/themes/Assessment/outcomes.asp

Leeds Metropolitan University (2009) *Designing First year Assessment and Feedback a guide for university staff*

Nicol, D.J. and Macfarlane-Dick D (2006) *Formative assessment and self regulated learning: A model and seven principles of good feedback practice* Studies in Higher Education Vol 31 (2) pages 199-218

QAA (2007) Integrative assessment *Balancing assessment of and assessment for learning* Guide No 2 QAA www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/publications/Default.asp

REAP (Re-engineering assessing practices in Scottish higher education) project http://www.reap.ac.uk

Rust, C. (2002) *The impact of assessment on student learning - how can the research literature practically help to inform the development of departmental assessment strategies and learner centred assessment practices.* Active Learning in Higher Education, 3, 145-158.

Rust, C., Price, M. and O'Donovan, B. (2003) *Improving students learning by developing their understanding of assessment criteria and processes* Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 28.2, pages 147-164

4. WoW initiative

www.ljmu.ac.uk/WoW/staff/index.htm

5. Other specific award regulations and procedures

- **Collaborative provision** - www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/66930.htm

- **Certificates of Professional Development** www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/91139.htm

- **Foundation degrees** www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/66935.htm and www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationDegree/benchmark/FDQB.asp

- **Professional doctorates** www.ljmu.ac.uk/UMF/90761.htm

6. Personal Development Planning (PDP) / e-portfolios

PDP is 'a structured and supported process undertaken by an individual to reflect upon their own learning, performance and / or achievement and to plan for their personal, educational and career development. It is an inclusive process, open to all learners, in all HE provision settings and at all levels' (QAA, 2009)

PDP is intended to help students:

■ become more effective, independent and confident self-directed learners

■ understand how they are learning and relate their learning to a wider context

■ improve their general skills for study and career management

■ articulate their personal goals and evaluate progress towards their achievement

■ develop a positive attitude to learning throughout life.

The ideas that underpin these conceptions mean that PDP is:

■ a structured process that is integral to higher level learning

■ concerned with learning in an holistic sense (both academic and non-academic)

■ something that an individual does with guidance and support: the latter perhaps decreasing as personal capability is developed so that it becomes self-sustaining

■ a process that involves self-reflection, the creation of personal records, planning and monitoring progress towards the achievement of personal objectives.

The minimum expectations for PDP at LJMU are:

■ that all programmes at level 0 and level 1 must ensure that Personal Development Planning (PDP) is introduced as part of induction

■ every student must have an opportunity to review his/her progress at least twice an academic year (if programme of study lasts for an academic year or longer). The first such opportunity must be within the first six weeks of the start of the year/programme

■ that all students registered on a LJMU HE award must be provided with opportunities for PDP at each stage of their programme

■ that all level 0, 1 and 2 students are provided with opportunities for PDP within the curriculum

■ that all programmes provide opportunities for PDP for levels 0, 1 and 2 within the curriculum and provide opportunities for PDP for levels 3, M and D which may be within or without the curriculum.

The University has developed an e-portfolio in Blackboard which students can use for PDP. http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/WoW/staff/96734.htm The e-portfolio aims to support students as they gather evidence and reflect on their work related experiences and their personal and skills development. While it is not compulsory for students to compile an e-portfolio, it is expected that the vast majority of students will do so. A variety of templates has been developed by LDU and can be added as pages to the e-portfolio. There are also support materials available. The Graduate Development Centre http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/WoW/staff/96482.htm also offers a wide range of workshops and other events which are free to students which could be useful to PDP.

PDP and WoW

The following guidance seeks to highlight the key features of PDP that the University is promoting in the context of WoW within the curriculum.

What is the role of PDP in supporting WoW?

PDP is central to supporting students record, reflect, and work towards the achievement of their aims and goals. It is important, therefore, that there is a consistent understanding of, and integrated approach, to PDP from tutors in order to maximise the opportunities students have, especially if they wish to engage in WoW. PDP processes help students to reflect on their personal development; to evidence their skills development; and can help students develop as individuals. It is a requirement that all programmes (that last for an academic year or longer) provide at least two review meetings a year. Usually programmes provide more than simply an opportunity to review progress and PDP is part of a wider programme focus. That focus could be on employability, professional practice, citizenship or the global community.

At a minimal level it is expected that PDP sessions provide feedback to students on how they are performing academically and in developing skills, where any gaps might be, and how they can secure the required skills and experience. In terms of developing the WoW skills PDP can continue to be used as a supporting process to help students reflect and action plan for WoW verification. PDP could also be a vehicle for developing WoW skills as part of the curriculum. For example, students could be required to plan for and reflect on a work placement; could be asked to engage in self awareness activities for career planning; could practise and develop skills such as 'persuading and influencing' via group work.

By definition PDP is a personal endeavour but there are ways in which the curriculum can prompt and support this important activity. Consideration should be given to how existing or developing approaches to PDP might be utilised to assist students in increasing their self-awareness, setting goals, identifying aspirations beyond graduation and articulating their strengths and weaknesses to themselves and to others. The emphasis here is on providing opportunities for students to be able to reflect on their learning, how they learn best and how they might adapt their learning styles and approaches in different situations. By emphasising that work related learning, employability and PDP is taken seriously programme teams can help establish a culture of engagement with WoW. By providing a rich and varied teaching, learning and assessment environment, appropriate to the subject content, programme teams will be helping students develop their future capabilities, as well as implementing good curriculum design.

PDP sessions could refer students to the opportunities in the curriculum where they may be able to evidence not only Graduate Skills but WoW attributes too. The onus is on the student to make the most of their opportunities. It is important however that students are advised of opportunities and encouraged to engage in PDP and WoW. Equally students are likely to have extra curricular opportunities that they can use to help with their personal development and WoW 'verification' e.g. volunteering, part time work, mentoring, family responsibilities etc and PDP sessions could remind students to think about appropriate extra curricular activities.

PDP and postgraduate study

Many students are likely to have been introduced to PDP either during an undergraduate course or as part of a professional review activity in the workplace. At postgraduate level PDP should be designed to build upon the skills and self knowledge that a student already has in order to help to develop and refine a student's personal, academic and career goals. The same minimum requirements for PDP, outlined above, apply to LJMU postgraduate programmes of at least a year's duration.

On a taught postgraduate course an initial PDP session could involve the students in reviewing their motivation for the programme. Even if the programme is clearly vocational not all students may be able to articulate why they have chosen the course and what they think it will add to their existing skills and qualifications. If a student has drifted onto the course and is uncertain what they want to do at the end of the programme PDP could be used to help them focus on their strengths and attributes and to consider the options that may be available to them. Most postgraduate programmes will expect students to be able to manage their own time and workload effectively. Other skills likely to be developed in postgraduate programmes and useful for future employment, may include:

- Project or dissertation management

- An ability to respond to criticism

- Tenacity and determination

- Self motivation, self management

- Critical analysis, evaluating evidence

- Research skills

- An ability to make informed decisions on complex issues

PDP, within a postgraduate programme, should provide a framework to help students reflect on their progress, identify any needs and support, establish goals and reflect and record progress. Employers are likely to want to know what a postgraduate course has added to undergraduate study. The way in which a student articulates the benefits is likely to make a difference to their employment or promotion prospects. PDP can help students with their career planning. With some postgraduate programmes PDP could be linked to professional body requirements where there is a culture of continuous professional development.

Further information

LJMU's *Personal Development Planning Guide* (2007) http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84505.htm

LJMU's Learner Support Guide (2004) http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84505.htm

Personal Development Planning: Guidance for institutional policy and practice in higher education www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/ progressFiles/guidelines/PDP/default.asp

WoW information

http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/WoW/staff/index.htm or contact the Learning Development Unit or Graduate Development Centre for further help.

✔ Checklist
Has the programme team

- developed a shared understanding of what PDP means
- reviewed the opportunities within the curriculum for PDP
- ensured that PDP is introduced as part of induction for all programmes at level 1 and 0
- ensured that progress reviews are available
- agreed format of progress reviews
- ensured that PDP is identified within a programme specification
- ensured that students are provided with information about the approach to PDP within the programme
- clarified the role and responsibilities of tutors with respect to PDP
- considered involvement of support staff
- considered how PDP can encourage students to engage in WoW
- arranged staff development
- decided on responsibilities of students towards PDP
- discussed and decided on any documentation to be used, e.g. diagnostic questionnaires, reviews, skills audits, letters to students, IT or paper files etc
- decided on possible assessment
- decided on timetabling
- decided on allocation of students to staff
- updated contact list
- considered attendance requirements
- considered feedback and evaluation
- considered data protection and confidentiality issues
- put quality assurance/feedback processes in place
- considered any ICT support/ e-portfolios for PDP and their support materials

Want to know more?

The Centre for Recording Achievement
http://www.recordingachievement.org
is a national network organisation and a registered educational charity. It seeks to '*promote the awareness of recording achievement and action planning processes as an important element in improving learning and progression throughout the world of education, training and employment*'.

www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/
ourwork/employability/PDP_and_employability
see series 2, number 7 Personal development planning and employability

Cottrell S. (2003) *Skills for Success: The Personal Development Planning Handbook* (2003) Palgrave Macmillan
www.palgrave.com/skills4study/pdp/index.asp -
on line adaptation of the book.

Cottrell S. (2008) *The Study Skills Handbook 3rd ed* Palgrave Macmillan

D. Gosling (2003) *'Personal Development Planning'*, SEDA paper 115.

Kumar A. (2006) *Personal Development Planning and the Progress File,* a comprehensive resource guide on PDP with links to other articles.
www.hlst.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/
guides/pdp.html -

Kumar A. (2007) *Personal, Academic and Career Development in Higher Education* SOARing to Success Routledge

C. Other national policies and guidelines

As well as regulatory issues the programme team should be aware of other policies and guidelines that are currently influencing programme design. These are:

1. **The Leitch Review, subsequent reports and *Higher Ambitions - the future of Universities in a knowledge economy* (Nov 2009),** the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The Government continues to drive for more, and more employable, graduates; and aims to raise the skills and capacity for innovation and enterprise of those already in the workforce. The Government expects universities to take responsibility for how their students are prepared for the world of work. The Government is also concerned to increase the numbers of students studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Higher Ambitions - the future of Universities in a knowledge economy (Nov 2009), BIS

This report sets out the Government's objectives for universities:

- all who have the ability to benefit can access higher education
- universities to make a bigger contribution to economic recovery and future growth
- to strengthen the research capacity of universities and its commercialisation
- to promote quality teaching
- to strengthen the role of universities in their communities and regions and in the wider world.

There will be a continued emphasis on encouraging STEM subjects and an increasing emphasis on improving the quality of the student experience.

> "Universities are not factories for producing workers; they are educational institutions that exist not only to generate, transfer and inculcate knowledge but also to enable those who benefit from higher education to use that knowledge".
>
> Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, November 2009.

World Class Skills: implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England
www.dfes.gov.uk/furthereducation/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.view&NewsID=32

Leitch review of skills: Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills. Final report HM Treasury, 2006 www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/leitch_review/review_leitch_index.cfm

Higher Ambitions - the future of Universities in a knowledge economy (Nov 2009), BIS
www.dius.gov.uk

2. Widening Participation in Higher Education

The Government remains firmly committed to widening participation. The goal remains for at least 50 per cent of 18 to 30 year-olds to enter university. There should be a wider range of study opportunities - part-time, work-based, foundation degrees and studying whilst at home - available to a greater range of people. Widening access and improving retention are key strategic aims of LJMU. Programme teams should, therefore, consider the '*widening participation*' agenda as part of curriculum design.

"*There should be no artificial caps on talent*".

Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, November 2009.

Want to know more?

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2008/nao.htm National Audit Report, June 2008, on the progress and development of widening participation in higher education. It examines national trends in participation and the progress made by the HE sector in addressing some of the barriers to widening participation.

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/ Details of HEFCE's widening participation goals and projects.

http://www.actiononaccess.org/ - Action on Access works with institutions to support widening participation

www.dius.gov.uk/higher_education - The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, higher education home page
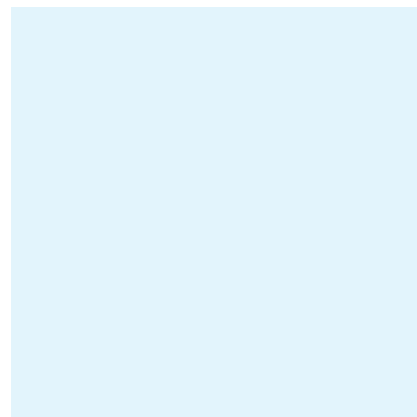
Principle 2 - that the curriculum is inclusive and accessible / student centred

What does inclusive, accessible and student centered mean?

How do we engage students in learning, what support do we give them? How well do we know our existing students? How can the curriculum be appropriate to all students, whatever their background, experience and pattern of study? Is accessibility just about physical access or does it mean something else as well? Do we need a variety of methods of delivery? Is the programme aimed at a particular group of learners, e.g. professionals updating their skills? How does the team know what delivery methods are used? Has the team discussed a team approach to delivery? What is the role of the programme team in supporting students vis a vis the role of Welfare Services?

Whatever the team thinks about these questions there are certain minimum requirements that all staff need be aware of:

It is against the law to discriminate against a student or applicant because of a disability, race, or gender. The Government has introduced a single equality bill to bring together these aspects of discrimination together with new aspects of discrimination - age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment. The Bill is currently going through parliament and is expected to become law in 2010.

The University is required to monitor the success of students not only in order to improve the success of all students but also in order to check whether specific groups are doing as well as other groups.

The purpose of the existing legislation is to promote equality of opportunities so that all people can have full opportunities and choices including access to

learning. It is not expected that academic standards should be in any way compromised. In terms of the curriculum the programme team should monitor the composition and success of its students; whether the content could exclude a particular group of students; and whether the methods of delivery and assessment place certain groups at a disadvantage.

The team's awareness and assumptions about their students may adversely affect some groups of students or applicants. Assumptions about prior knowledge, decisions on marketing and publicity about the programme, timetabling, the use or non use of technology, staff knowledge of cultural differences, the variety, or lack of variety of delivery and assessment techniques across modules, the choice and use of field trips/excursions/practicals all affect students differently. Is it possible that the team's assumptions and decisions are excluding, or disadvantaging, particular groups of students? Using a variety of teaching and assessment methods, where appropriate to the learning outcomes, will help students with different approaches to learning. Can alternative arrangements be made available to those students who, for example, are unable to access parts of the programme such as field trips? Could the team offer alternatives to all students? What are the practicalities of such an approach? Adjusting the methods of learning, teaching and assessment to meet the needs of a wide range of students is likely to benefit all students and possibly will improve student performance.

For further information about the equality and diversity legislation see page 16.

International students and internationalising the curriculum

Many programmes at LJMU have significant number of students who have come to study from overseas. Providing an inclusive approach to teaching and learning is particularly relevant for these programmes. However, being explicit about the academic processes that the programme employs will benefit all students not just international ones. Most students would welcome information about what is 'good' work, how work is assessed, what the rules are for behaving in lectures, seminars, practicals etc. Consider the diversity of students on the programme and be aware of social and cultural differences that may affect a student's view of assessment and teaching methods. Make sure all students know about assessment, teaching methods and what is expected from each method, the nature of study that is required outside of class and the nature of relationships with staff. Similarly using straightforward language, avoiding jokes and jargon and allowing students to discuss ideas with friends, in their own language if they wish, before any discussion or presentation to a larger audience, will help many students. Provide activities that enable students to get to know each other and model inclusive behaviour by setting rules such as making sure everyone talks in turn, without interruption. Consider the use of exercises and discussion in the early stages of programmes, or in induction, about inclusivity and diversity as a way of raising awareness with students. This may also offer an opportunity for students to raise any concerns or issues.

In terms of curriculum design, as opposed to delivery, it is useful to consider whether the curriculum is heavily Western and Eurocentric. Are different viewpoints and perspectives studied? By developing an awareness of other cultures, values and beliefs, students and staff will be better able to live and work in a global community. Programme teams could consider different perspectives and challenge their own assumptions in order to develop an awareness and critical appreciation of diverse cultures and perspectives. Consider providing students with multiple ways of acquiring knowledge; multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skills and multiple ways of engaging them. An inclusive approach that treats students as individuals, whilst also developing a cohort identity, is likely to help all students succeed. Use culturally diverse examples, materials and case studies. Consider whether the material and examples used in assessment (e.g. case studies, exam questions) are clear to a diverse range of students and free from stereotypes. Be aware that certain contexts of case studies or assignments could cause difficulties for some students, e.g. an assignment that asks students to observe behaviour in pubs, or a management case study that considers managing a brewery may be difficult for students who have religious or ethical objections to alcohol. Unless the modules are dealing managing breweries or public houses then alternative settings could be used.

It is important that case studies and teaching materials do not use stereotypes of different cultures or that individual students from overseas are not expected to be representative of their country or ethnicity in the same way as staff would not expect a white English student to represent, or speak on behalf of all white English people.

Check that the wording for tests and examinations is clear and unambiguous. Avoid complex sentence structures, double negatives or embedded questions. If specific cultural knowledge is essential; such as knowledge of the UK electoral system or UK law, state this explicitly and provide advice on how knowledge gaps for any student can be filled.

The programme team should be able to demonstrate that it has considered the effects of international students and other diverse student groups not only in terms of LJMU's and the Government's drive to widen participation but also in terms of how all students are supported by programme teams and the University. How can we increase students' confidence in their ability to learn and to succeed; what can we do at the very start of their programmes which would help them form friendship groups, and feel a part of their programme, and a part of LJMU - factors which are likely to contribute to student success. What opportunities are there for students to plan their learning and what support does the programme provide? All the evidence suggests that the most effective support is that provided within the programme. Drop in centres and other support services have important roles to play but student support within the programme is fundamental to the success of the programme.

Questions that could be used in discussion with the programme team:

- Has the programme team considered the programme's / School's recruitment and progression statistics by gender and ethnicity? Are certain groups under-represented, do certain groups do less well? How are any imbalances addressed?

- Does the curriculum, scholarship, research involve previously under represented groups?

- Are there opportunities to present diverse view points and different approaches in the curriculum?

- Do/(how do) assignments take account of the diverse background and cultures of students?

- Is there any evidence that the School/subject area staff have sought the views of disabled students or Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, or of the 'minority' gender where there is an imbalance?

- What does the programme team do to encourage students to be 'inclusive'? (e.g. diversity workshops at induction, group working where groups are assigned randomly)

- Is there a range of assessment methods across the programme?

- Is there a range of teaching methods across the programme?

- Discuss the possibility of students choosing an assessment method/assessment topic

- Do the admissions criteria present any unnecessary barriers e.g. a requirement to be physically fit/mobile in a sports programme when a disabled sportsperson could be included

- Do staff know the procedures if a student declares a disability to them? Are staff aware of their responsibilities?

- Can staff give an example of any adjustments made to the curriculum or to teaching practice in response to either the equality duty or to inclusivity?

- How are students advised about disclosure and the Disabled Students' Allowance?

- Do staff, and students, think the disclosure procedures work?

- Do programme documents make reference to alternative approaches/arrangements? To materials being available in other formats?

- Do staff and students know who their disability co-ordinator is? What do they think the role of that person is?

- What has the programme team considered in order to remove any barriers to access to field trips, work placements, specialised equipment or Graduate Skills by particular groups of students?

- What staff training has taken place on equality and inclusivity?

✓ Checklist
Has the programme team

- discussed the implications of the likely background, qualifications and experience of its students

- considered an inclusive approach to curriculum design and delivery

- considered and put in place a learner support policy

- put in place the administrative arrangements required to provide practical support

- become aware of the single Equality Bill

Further information/guidance

Learning Development Unit
e-mail: learningdevelopment@ljmu.ac.uk

Learner Support Guide, December 2004, pp.10 -11 for details of further information/support. See http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84042.htm

Welfare Services
www.ljmu.ac.uk/StudentServices/Welfare/index.htm

Disability Coordinators Network
e-mail: LDU-DISCO@ljmu.ac.uk

Want to know more?

Equality and Human Rights Commission
The Commission provides guidance on its website for Higher Education institutions with respect to fulfilling the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and the Positive Equality Duty and all other aspects of equality. See its website for the Codes of Practice.

www.equalityhumanrights.com/your-rights/disability/disability-in-education/

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Understanding the Disability Discrimination Act.
A Guide for Colleges, Universities and adult learning providers in Great Britain. (2007) Disability Rights Commission
http://www.skill.org.uk/page.aspx?c=63&p=152

National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
http://www.skill.org.uk
For general information about good practice for disabled students telephone 0800 328 5050, textphone 0800 068 2422, e-mail: info@skill.org.uk

Educational ideas related to inclusivity and accessibility www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2002/02_48.htm - '*Successful student diversity, case studies of practice in learning and teaching and widening participation*'. Nov 2002, HEFCE

Teachability: Creating an accessible curriculum for students with disabilities www.teachability.strath.ac.uk

SPACE project - a follow up to SWANDS (p.32) www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=10494 SPACE (Staff-Student Partnership for Assessment Change and Evaluation) is a project to develop and promote alternative forms of assessment as a way of facilitating a more inclusive approach to assessment.

SWANDS (South West Academic Network for Disability Support) 'SENDA Compliance in HE' contains the publication of the SWANDS Project which includes a useful and detailed checklist on assessment practice. http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=3243

Geography Discipline Network: Inclusive Curriculum Project
http://www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/icp
The GDN has published nine guides for staff supporting disabled students, including a guide for disabled students. Although targeted at geography, earth and environmental sciences subject areas, the guides are all generically useful.

TechDis
This service provides strategic and practical advice to staff working with students or developing learning technology
www.techdis.ac.uk

Teaching inclusively using technology - a techdis resource pack
www.techdis.ac.uk/getteachinginclusively

http://www.scips.worc.ac.uk/ A web based resource that provides Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study

http://www.actiononaccess.org/?p=2_6_1_1&t=TEA
This links to a list of questions on disability, inclusivity etc

http://www.open.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching/ - The Open University's site on inclusive teaching, mainly concerned with disabled students.

The TALIS project
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/international/talis
This is a national initiative on teaching and learning for international students, which aims to make a major contribution to strengthening the UK international student experience - and by extension the international horizons of all students in the UK.

The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)
http://www.ukcosa.org.uk/ is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them. UKCISA provides information, support and guidance for both students and staff.

Principle 3 - that the curriculum fosters a deep approach to learning, encouraging independence in learning

Most programmes aim to create independent learners and should therefore be able to demonstrate a progression from basic study skills through to critical analysis, reflection and problem-solving, but does the programme try to influence the students' approach to learning?

The approach to study that students use can be significantly influenced by the kind of lectures, tasks and assessments that staff design - learners take their cues from the culture and environment in which they learn. Effective learning environments that encourage more than surface learning can improve the odds that any group of students will become self-motivating and successful. Staff who are able to demonstrate their own enthusiasm for their subject are good motivators (Breen & Lindsay, 1999; see Principle 4 in this guide).

Research over recent decades (Marton and Säljö, 1979; Tait and Entwistle, 1996; Bandura 1997; Dweck, 1999) has highlighted the different ways that students in higher education approach their learning.

In general, the key approaches are:

■ Deep approaches, where the learner is driven by intrinsic curiosity and motivated by a desire to learn, engage meaningfully and master the subject.

■ Strategic approaches, where the learner's focus is on achieving good grades. These students focus attention on assessment criteria and will adopt either deep or surface approaches, or chose modules, depending on which will achieve good grades.

■ Surface (or shallow) approaches, where the intention is to achieve a pass, usually by the shortest or easiest route possible. Many of these students put insufficient effort into their workload or genuinely misunderstand requirements, thinking it is accept-able simply to recall information.

The reasons students adopt different approaches are multiple and complex, and include personal goals and motivations, prior experiences but also, significantly, the learning environment. Further research (Lieberman and Remedios, 2007) has shown that the learning environment can cause students to change their academic goals through their degree with a shift away from intrinsic interest towards an assessment orientation.

Students will be encouraged to adopt surface approaches to learning where workload pressures are high, so information on assignments given out late, bunching of assessment deadlines or a tightly packed curriculum will not help. Information, advice and guidance needs to be managed effectively. Good feedback is essential in helping students understand what is required of them; all programmes should have a feedback strategy. It is worth considering how formative feedback can be planned in to the curriculum, e.g. using peer or group work as feedback, or personal response clickers, or involving students in a discussion of assessment criteria. For further information on feedback see the feedback strategy guide - www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/88206.htm and further information section.

In general, people work better if they feel they are in control of their situation. Can students be encouraged to take control of their learning so that they will believe that appropriate strategies and task-focused efforts will produce better results? Is the balance correct between taught content and opportunity for choice or independent learning? Are initiative, persistence, reading and effort encouraged or sufficiently rewarded? Enquiry-led activities can help students see the value of initiative and persistence.

WoW seeks to enhance student employability skills by enabling students to become more aware of their own skill development. Does the programme team need to do anything differently to take into account development of employability and WoW, or is it just a case of making what is done already explicit? Independent learning and greater student autonomy offer opportunities for students to practise personal planning and organisation, as well as problem-solving and showing evidence of initiative and creative thinking. How will students be encouraged to reflect on development of these skills where they are deeply embedded in the programme?

Questions that could be used in discussion with the programme team:

- Consider how assessment influences a student's approach to learning. Is success encouraged through recall of information for example? Does bunching of assessment deadlines raise workload levels to encourage surface learning?
- Does the mode of delivery and assessment of learning encourage students to adopt deep approaches?
- Is the nature of assessment different at level 3 to level 1? Do the assignments prompt complex thinking, such as integrating concepts, applying learning, constructing arguments and hypothesising?
- How are students prepared for the development of learning? Are they prepared for critical thinking? Are there sufficient opportunities in the curriculum to foster initiative and creativity to practise and demonstrate personal-planning and problem-solving skills?
- How does the programme encourage and place value on independent enquiry?
- Does the programme encourage student involvement, for example through enquiry-based work, work placements, student discussion of assessment criteria?

- Is there sufficient emphasis on demonstrating linkages and progression between modules on the programme? How do we encourage students to express these links?
- Have we considered the role of technology in fostering discussion and feedback: e.g. through the wide range of Blackboard tools?
- How is formative feedback provided?

Checklist
Has the programme team discussed:

- teaching methods in terms of their ability to develop learning
- assessment in terms of its ability to develop learning
- students' workload and assessment sequencing
- a feedback strategy
- how learning technologies can be embedded to improve learning
- linkages between modules
- opportunities for independent and enquiry-led learning.

For further information/guidance on:

Assessment *Effective Practice in Assessment* - the 'blue book', September 2008
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84069.htm

Feedback -
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/88206.htm

Problem based learning -
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84050.htm

or contact LDU -
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/81297.htm
or e-mail learningdevelopment@ljmu.ac.uk

Want to know more

Bandura, A. (1986) Self-efficacy: *The exercise of control,* New York, Freeman

Breen, R. and Lindsay, R. (1999) *Academic research and student motivation,* Studies in Higher Education, 24 (1), pp75-93.

Brown S, Armstrong S. and Thompson G (1998) *Motivating Students* SEDA, Kogan Page.

Dweck, C. S. (1999) *Self-theories: their role in motivation, personality and development,* Philadelphia, Psychology Press www.hvlc.org.uk/ace/aifl/docs/C1/Reading_notes_on_Self-theories.pdf notes on Dweck's book from Jo Tait of the Open University.

Graham Gibbs and Claire Simpson (2004) *Does your assessment support your students' learning?* Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, 1.

Honey, P. (2003) *How to become a more effective learner*, Peter Honey publications.

Lieberman, D.A. and Remedios, R. (2007) *Do undergraduates' motives for studying change as they progress through their degrees?* British Journal of Educational Psychology, 77, pp 379–396.

Marton, F. and Säljö, R. (1976) *On qualitative differences in learning I: Outcome & Process,* British Journal of Educational Psychology, 46, pp4-11.

Pascarella, E.T. and Terenzini, P.T. (2005). *How college affects students (Vol 2):* A third decade of research. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Tait, H. and Entwistle, N.J. (1996) *Identifying students at risk through ineffective study strategies.* Higher Education, 31, pp 99-118.

Assessment and learning http://www.open.ac.uk/fast/ The Formative Assessment in Science Teaching (FAST) project was designed to change assessment so as to support student learning more effectively.

Enquiry based learning - http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/learningteaching/goodpracticeresources/enquirybasedlearning/
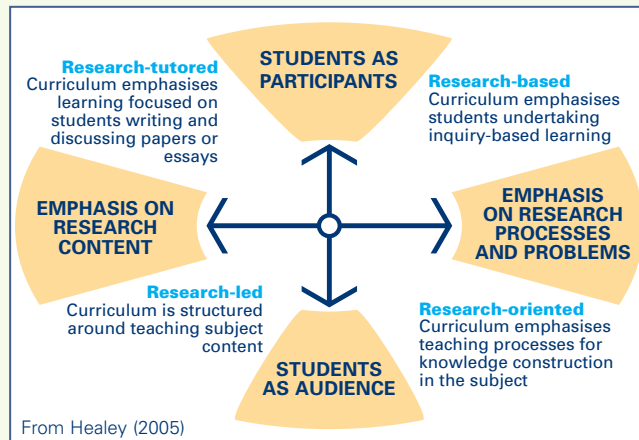
Principle 4 - the curriculum is based upon/has links to research and scholarship

Many academic staff regard teaching and research/scholarly activity as inseparable yet there is little evidence to suggest that the links between teaching and research are managed or promoted (Jenkins, 2004). However studies of student perceptions show that when staff research is incorporated into teaching, students then perceive their courses as up-to-date and are more likely to regard the staff as enthusiastic about their teaching (Breen and Lindsay, 2002). Nevertheless current knowledge is not seen as an acceptable substitution for poor teaching. Therefore in designing and reviewing the curriculum it may be worth considering how the opportunity can be used to strengthen links between research, teaching and research informed teaching. The curriculum, including the assessment, could be developed in ways that support the research process in the discipline, progressively developing research skills and understanding of knowledge construction processes. The team could consider emphasising the employability aspects of research so that all students can see benefits of a research-based approach.

Research can interface with the curriculum in various modes of activity:

- Current and emerging knowledge and theory
- Development of research skills (project design, data collection, analysis techniques)
- Development of critical thinking (knowledge as an evolving process, ethics, interpretation and critical evaluation, argument construction)

STUDENTS AS PARTICIPANTS

Research-tutored
Curriculum emphasises learning focused on students writing and discussing papers or essays

Research-based
Curriculum emphasises students undertaking inquiry-based learning

EMPHASIS ON RESEARCH CONTENT

EMPHASIS ON RESEARCH PROCESSES AND PROBLEMS

Research-led
Curriculum is structured around teaching subject content

Research-oriented
Curriculum emphasises teaching processes for knowledge construction in the subject

STUDENTS AS AUDIENCE

From Healey (2005)

The main question that needs to be addressed is: 'Where are research skills and understandings presented in the programme? Are they apparent in the programme outcomes, the delivery and assessment?'

Further questions that could be addressed by the programme team to ensure that research and scholarly activity are reflected in the curriculum include:

- Is student exposure to current ideas and the research culture in the subject presumed or managed?
- Is there a strategy to ensure 'cutting edge' developments in the subject are embedded across the programme?
- What's the team's understanding or concept of research based learning?
- How do research skills interface with employability and World of Work skills?
- How does the School disseminate, and programmes use, staff research?

- If there are no/few research active staff how does the programme provide access to research?
- How does the team ensure that the team is up-to-date with research developments?
- Can the team show how they draw upon research, scholarship or professional activity in their teaching?
- What research methods, skills, ethics are taught and practised?
- When should researching skills be introduced into the curriculum?
- Is there a clearly identifiable pathway of research skill development through the programme?
- How is plagiarism prevented in research based work?

Questions that could be used in discussion by the programme team regarding student experiences of research:

- How are students made aware of staff / departmental research expertise?
- Where are research methods and skills developed throughout the curriculum, for example, data collection, analysis and interpretation, critical thinking and argument construction?
- Do students get sufficient opportunity to experience research-led learning, for example, independent enquiry-led learning (projects / dissertations), working with real research data and potential opportunities to work alongside research staff on live research projects?
- How does students' experience of research contribute to the development of Graduate and World of Work skills? (e.g. project management, initiative, creative thinking).
- Is good quality student research recognised and rewarded? Are there opportunities to disseminate and raise awareness of student research outputs, for example, project seminars or student research journals?

Further questions for discussion that address the student experience at a departmental level include:

- Does the department host research seminars or guest speakers?
- Can students participate? How do students engage in them - can they be linked to the curriculum?
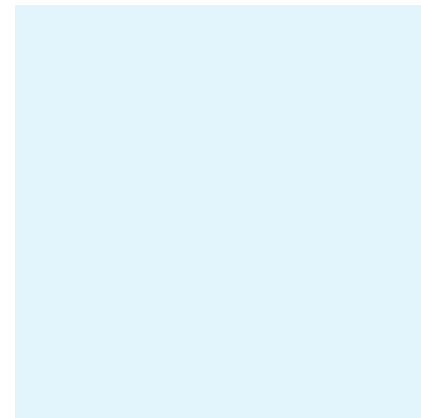
✔ Checklist
Has the programme team discussed:

- how research/scholarship feeds into this programme

- whether to alter the curriculum in any way in order to encourage the link between teaching and research/scholarship

- staff development needs - technical and support staff as well as teaching staff

- booklists, journals, e resources

- research informed teaching initiatives

- the facilitation of the student experience of research at programme and departmental levels

For further information/guidance on: Linking teaching and research/scholarship - contact LDU, www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/81297.htm

Want to know more?

Practical Guides

Linking teaching and research in disciplines and departments, Jenkins, A. Healey, M. and Zetter. R. (2007) York, The Higher Education Academy
This guide offers suggestions as to how disciplinary communities and departments can strengthen the good practice that already exists. Contains many case studies and department policy and practice suggestions.
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/ourwork/teachingandresearch/LinkingTeachingandResearchAcademypublications/

Research

A guide to the research evidence on teaching-research relations
Jenkins, A. (2004) York, The Higher Education Academy. This guide provides an overview of research evidence on the relationships between research and teaching and focuses on how discipline-based research impacts on teaching practice and student learning.
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/ourwork/teachingandresearch/LinkingTeachingandResearchAcademypublications/

Breen, R. and Lindsay, R. (2002) *Different disciplines require different motivation for student success, Research in Higher Education,* 43 (6), pp693-725.

Healey, M. (2005) Linking research and teaching: exploring disciplinary spaces and the role of inquiry-based learning, in Barnett, R. (Ed) *Reshaping the University: new relationships between research, scholarship and teaching*, p 30-42. Maidenhead, McGraw-Hill

Resource websites

Learning Development Unit
pages on Teaching-Research links:
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/88239.htm

LJMU Blackboard site 'Research informed teaching': In addition to the resources on the Learning & Teaching website a Blackboard site has been created to house a greater range of resources and case studies. To access this resource log into Blackboard: http://blackboard.ljmu.ac.uk/, click onto the 'Community' tab at the top, and type in 'Research informed teaching' into the 'Organisation Search' box. Then click 'Go' and the site should appear. When it does, click 'Enroll'.

Undergraduate research journals: Increasing numbers of university departments are disseminating excellent undergraduate research through electronic journals. The following website provides links to examples:
www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/90200.htm

Reinvention Centre: The Reinvention Centre is a national centre for excellence in the area of undergraduate research and strategies for linking teaching and research. The Centre website contains many resources and ideas:
www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/research/cetl/

Educati*on-line*

An open database for education research hosted by Leeds University, and produced by the British Education Index office, Education on-line provides a forum for researchers to publish early versions of ongoing work, containing conference papers, full texts and electronic texts.
See: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/index.html

Principle 5 - that the curriculum is based on feedback, evaluation and review

Curriculum development should be based on student feedback and evaluative information. Programme review should be a continuous, active and responsive process that encourages critical reflection and improvement for both the programme team and the students. Development in this area should be detailed each year in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for action and consideration by the programme team. The involvement of students, through Boards of Studies, is an important factor in programme evaluation and development. There should also be evidence of continuing development and review, not just as part of the annual monitoring and review process. The AMR should be seen as part of continual development. The AMR uses performance indicators which have been based on the LJMU Strategic Plan. Programme teams are expected to evaluate the data, provided by the *WebHub*, to explore trends and to discuss whether any changes to teaching, learning and assessment are required.

In planning and reviewing programmes, programme leaders should ensure that programme teams identify their key sources of evaluative information. These might include, for example:

- entry statistics
- progression and retention rates
- analysis of career paths of graduates
- external examiner reports
- The National Student Survey or other national surveys
- LJMU student surveys
- other, more local, student feedback, provided in student councils and Boards of Studies or module evaluations
- annual monitoring reports
- benchmark statements
- guidance from professional bodies.

In particular, programme teams should be able to detail how such sources of evaluative material are continually monitored, fed into the development of the programme and how this has impacted upon student learning.

Programme teams should be able to provide evidence of evaluation and review of learning and teaching practice. This could take the form of:

- programme team development, for example, through developmental away days
- attendance at learning and teaching conferences
- papers given at learning and teaching conferences
- individual professional development planning to improve teaching and learning processes (evidence of use of the PDPR system to develop learning and teaching)
- evidence from local peer review processes and how this feeds into improving learning and teaching practices in the programme team
- evidence of research or scholarly activity in the area of learning and teaching which impacts on the student experience.

The programme can encourage the collection of informal feedback as well as using institutional and external feedback. For example, students could be asked to summarise key points of a session, individually or in groups, orally or on paper, providing instant feedback. Peer review could be another way of obtaining feedback or new ideas about the programme. Staff should be encouraged to be reflective, to monitor their own effectiveness and to share ideas and practice with the programme team. Evaluation should therefore be a continuous, active and responsive process that encourages critical reflection and improvement for both the programme team and the students.

In summary

Has the programme team:

- indicated a continuing strategy for using feedback in the evaluation and review of the programme?

- identified key sources of feedback information?

- shown evidence of evaluation and review of such information leading to development of learning and teaching practices?

- designed into the programme opportunities for feedback and evaluation?

- shown engagement of the programme team in School/Faculty, LJMU and external learning and teaching development opportunities?

For further information/guidance on:

The *WebHub* http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/planning/ or contact Academic Planning and Information.

Programme evaluation and review contact the Quality Support Team www.ljmu.ac.uk/quality for help with procedures or the Academic Enhancement Managers www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/81297.htm for help with content.

Want to know more?

Quality Assurance Agency - http://www.qaa.ac.uk

LJMU's Quality Support Team - http:// www.ljmu.ac.uk/quality

Programme Validation and Review information - http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/78381.htm

Annual Monitoring and Programme Self Assessment information - http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/66925.htm

A well-designed curriculum takes account of intake, outputs and the market

Identifying the characteristics of prospective learners is a fundamental first stage in programme design. Programme teams need to be aware of their likely students and consider how the curriculum is going to attract such students. A good starting point is to check the background of existing students / prospective students.

- entry qualifications and other entry statistics

- previous education - FE college, access, state school, overseas

- first time into HE?

- gender balance

- inclusivity of students and applicants

Are current students and those on the new/revised programme likely to:

- be working?

- be unfamiliar with particular aspects of the programme/not familiar with expected pre-requisite knowledge?

- be familiar with, and have access to the latest communications technology?

- have reasonable study skills?

- have realistic expectations of HE?

- know what career they are aiming for?

Inputs and the market

Widening participation is a key element of both LJMU's and the Government's agenda. Is this programme aiming to attract new types of students? How? Is there any shared provision with FE colleges/other partners or flexible modes of study? Is the programme specifically vocational/professional? If a programme is designed to fulfil professional body requirements can it also demonstrate a wider appeal? Targeting new groups means that consideration must be given to supporting such students, both academically and beyond the curriculum too. It is worth considering induction and diagnostic activities as part of the programme and looking at if and how on-going support can be provided within the curriculum. Programme teams need to consider how they can contribute to student support in its widest sense.

A business case has to be made which provides justification for a new programme. Therefore programme teams should consider involving employers and marketing in discussions as well as checking what competitor institutions are doing. The business case should cover market analysis, planning projections and include a risk analysis and costs of resource requirements. Particular attention must be paid to the requirements for learner support resources, including any needs for site licences for computer software and for off campus support. When proposing a new programme the programme team must use the process management interface. Access and guidance to the interface is available via the following: http://www.planningpmi.ljmu.ac.uk/.

All new programme proposals must receive planning approval within the faculty from the Director of School/Centre and the Dean of Faculty. The Dean is then responsible for obtaining final confirmation of approval from the Programme Planning and Development Committee (PPDC). Programme teams must be able to demonstrate that there is a market for the proposal and that risks can be managed. Contact Academic Planning and Information, www.ljmu.ac.uk/planning/index.htm for further information.

For new full time undergraduate programmes PPDC approval should normally be secured at least 11 months before the planned start date for the programme. For postgraduate programmes, the PPDC would expect to receive the proposal at least one year before the start date. For new Certificates of Professional Development (CPDs) programmes different procedures are applicable, details can be found in the CPD Guidance material. www.ljmu.ac.uk/Quality/91139.htm

Outputs

Similarly the team needs to be aware of the career destinations of its students and, preferably, to hold long term as well as short term information. Does the information correlate to what the team thinks it is providing? Can the team anticipate what effect the changes they are making are going to have on graduate destinations? Graduate destinations are a key programme indicator used by the Government and by potential applicants. The WoW initiative is all about giving students a 'value added' higher education experience so that LJMU students have the opportunity to develop a competitive edge in the graduate market. Undergraduate programme teams are developing WoW with its emphasis on employability and work related learning as a core characteristic of the programme. If the programme is not related to a specific professional area the team should be able to demonstrate that it still develops generic skills and 'employability'. Work related learning and careers work should be integrated into the curriculum. Timely and effective career management skills integrated into the programme can

raise aspirations and increase motivation as students can see clearly the relevance of the activity. Such work may help reduce graduate under-employment. Careers work is not just about writing CVs or learning specific professional skills it is about students being able to identify their own strengths, weaknesses and values. Researching information and action planning are important aspects of careers related work. Much of this type of activity is similar to PDP and skills development. Programme teams should consider how best to integrate such 'non subject specific' activities in an efficient and effective manner. Could a tutorial or skills module be used or an integrated project, case study or work placement? What opportunities are there for students to gain work related experience? Are projects based on real life scenarios; can employers be invited to develop and assess case studies and presentations, to provide short placements etc? Are there opportunities to learn from work outside the University, beyond a work placement? It is a LJMU requirement that under-graduate programmes of 240 credits or more must provide some kind of work-related learning.

"*We will look to business to be more active partners with our universities. Employers should fully engage in the funding and design of university programmes, the sponsorship of students and offering work placements*". Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, November 2009.

QAA Code of Practice, section 8 - *Career education, information and guidance* (Sept 2001), currently being updated, revised version expected in 2010.

QAA Code of Practice, section 9 - *Work based and placement learning* (Sept 2007) www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/default.asp

WoW - http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/wow/

✔ Checklist
Has the programme team:

- demonstrated a need for the programme
- completed a business case
- liaised with Corporate Communications
- discussed the likely characteristics of the target intake
- discussed 'widening participation'
- integrated employability and work related learning
- considered the QAA Code of Practice on work based and placement learning, where relevant
- considered professional body requirements, where relevant.

For further information/guidance on:

Widening Participation - http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/studentrecruitment/index.htm
contact Student Recruitment and Widening Access

Work related learning - contact LDU, e-mail: learningdevelopment@ljmu.ac.uk

Careers
Employability } contact the Graduate Development Centre www.ljmu.ac.uk/gdc/ and LDU

Market research, marketing and recruitment } contact Marketing, www.ljmu.ac.uk/marketing

Making a business case - contact Academic Planning and Information, www.ljmu.ac.uk/planning/index.htm

Want to know more?

Subject employability profiles, list of subject related 'employability' projects and links to other resources from the HE Academy - www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/employability/links

www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/research/ widening participation research and evaluation

Widening participation - national HE policy http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/

A study of the assessment of wicked competences Knight P. and Page A. (2007) Open University 'Wicked' competences are those which are hard to define and assess. They are the competences (often skills and other complex achievements) that graduate employers say they value.
www.open.ac.uk/pbpl/activities/details/detail.php?itemId=460a62435af49

Graduate Prospects is a comprehensive careers website for higher education students.
www.prospects.ac.uk/cms/ShowPage/Home_page/Main_menu___Research/p!ejFacic

Latest graduate salary and job market information from the Higher Education Careers Services Unit (HECSU). www.prospects.ac.uk and search for:

- Labour market information
- Student employability
- Reports and projects

www.agcas.org.uk/ AGCAS is the professional association for higher education careers advisers and its website has many useful links to employability resources and reports.

Work based learning for education professionals, an education network with projects, resources and publications www.wlecentre.ac.uk/cms/index.php

A well-designed curriculum takes account of the learning environment/resources/staffing

How will the learning environment – the likely classrooms, laboratories, the timetable etc affect the design and delivery of the programme? How can the team make best use of the available resources?

Are there opportunities for students to mix, to work together on problems/tasks, to network electronically, to use a wide range of resources? LJMU's institutional virtual learning environment (VLE), Blackboard, enables students to access materials on, or off site, and has the potential to enhance learning. Are there examples of using technology effectively in the curriculum that have been disseminated? The use of technology can help students learn at their own pace and can provide opportunities to interact with curriculum material and with each other in ways that may be not possible, or in which they have been unwilling to participate in more traditional teaching. The use of interactive packages, assessment quizzes, on line discussions, wikis, podcasts, Second Life, Facebook, voice e mail etc could be discussed.

Does the programme team have access to technical and support staff who could help staff use technology? Is there a co-ordinated approach to technology enhanced learning from disseminating new learning technology activities to liaising with Library and Student Support (L&SS) and the Learning Development Unit to arrange the implementation of any new technological developments and to keep up to date with enhancements to existing technology?

The 'Help' tab in Blackboard has links to resources about the use of technology to enhance learning. There is a demonstration module, *How to add magic to your module,* which includes elements of Blackboard functionality and other learning technologies. Programme teams should therefore, consider how technology is used in order to enhance learning.

What difference will technology make to assessment processes and how will the changes impact upon the curriculum?

- **E-submission of coursework**
  There are some assessments that are very suited to electronic submission and feedback. Other types may not be so suited. Programme teams could consider how e submission and e-feedback are likely to change the nature of assessment tasks.

- **Students will access marks on line**
  Students are likely to expect not just marks but individual feedback sent to them electronically too. How will this affect marking and moderation?

- **Using technology for assessment**
  and assessment related activities

  For example, different learning technology tools can be used to support student self and peer assessment, student self-reflection and PDP activities, groupwork, online examinations and plagiarism deterrence or detection. Existing tools continue to be augmented and new tools emerge overtime. Programme teams should seek advice from local and institutional support services to optimise opportunities.

  e-mail: learningdevelopment@ljmu.ac.uk

✔ Checklist
Has the programme team:

- discussed resource and staffing needs and fed information into the business plan

- considered a policy on technology enhanced learning

- involved L&SS, CIS, GDC, LDU and the other service teams in discussions.

For further information/guidance on:

Business plan and resources - contact Academic Planning and Information
http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/planning/index.htm
Learning technologies - contact LDU
e-mail: learningdevelopment@ljmu.ac.uk

Want to know more?

Enhancing learning through technology
The HE Academy aims to support and develop work in enhancing learning through the use of technology in UK higher education.
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/teachingandlearning/learningandtechnology/

The Association for Learning Technology
(ALT) is an educational organisation which seeks to bring together all those with an interest in the use of learning technology in higher and further education. LJMU is an institutional member and university staff are thus entitled to discounts at ALT workshops and conferences. http://www.alt.ac.uk/

The Joint Information Systems Committee
(JISC) is funded by the UKHE and FE funding bodies to provide world-class leadership in the innovative use of ICT to support education and research.
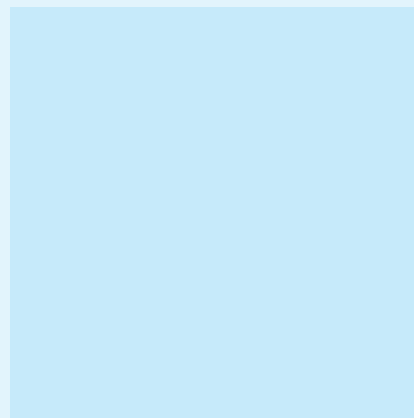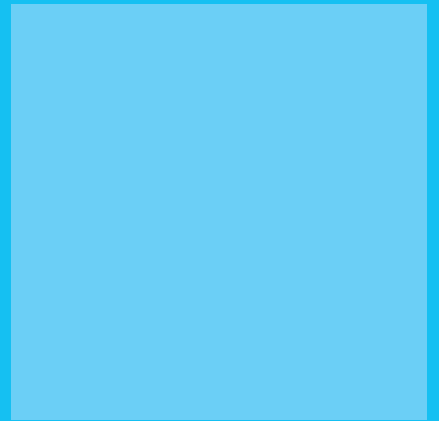http://www.jisc.ac.uk/

Guide Summary

When designing or re-designing a programme
the programme team should:

- Develop outline ideas - justify demand

- Evaluate past performance, get feedback

- Get together programme team to discuss aims and purpose

- Consider resourcing

- Get outline approval via Academic Planning and Information

- Conform to LJMU regulations

- Work within the National Qualifications Framework

- Work within the QAA Code of Practice

- Work within LJMU's Strategic Plan

- Discuss and agree a programme specification

- Be aware of relevant benchmark statements and any other
  relevant professional body regulations or applicable national policy

- Be aware of and plan accordingly for the background knowledge
  and skills of the students

- Be inclusive and accessible

- Ensure that knowledge and skills outlined in the programme
  specification are obtainable by students

- Implemented '*Effective Practice in Assessment*', the blue book

- Know what documentation is required

- Complete relevant processes

- Evaluate.

For further information about this guide or any of the areas it covers contact LDU or search the
learning and teaching website - http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/ or use the resources database
of the Higher Education Academy - enter key words to search for papers and project reports on
a large number of educational topics. http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/

dream

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achieve