



Senate

Paper Title	Education Principles 2021-2022
Outcome requested	Senate is asked to note the report
Points for Senate members to note and further information	<p>The Education principles for 2021/22 were developed over the course of Semester B with input from staff and students. The principles give broad guidance to inform planning within Schools/Institutes and Faculties. They were shared with all staff by email in April.</p> <p>The principles set out plans for mixed mode education in 2021/22, which combines on campus and online education and draws on the benefits offered by each mode.</p> <p>Alongside the education principles, a programme of training and support is being put in place to support staff with pedagogy and technology ahead of the start of the 2021/22 (and, where required, for Semester C of 2020/21).</p>
Questions for Senate to consider	N/A
Regulatory/statutory reference points	N/A
Strategy and risk	Relates to the Education and Student Experience aspects of Strategy 2030, and associated risks
Reporting/ consideration route for the paper	For Senate only
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Email to staff - Education principles for academic year 2021-2022

Dear colleague,

It was always our intention, as outlined in our [University Strategy](#), to move towards a mixed model of education. Our aim is to combine the best of online and in-person pedagogies: to respond to students' preference to learn at their own pace, and deploy the best learning technologies to support each student to succeed while also making the most of in-person education in seminars and small-group teaching. This approach encompasses the idea of the flipped classroom, where students come together in person to discuss material they have had time to digest, and also of active problem and enquiry-based learning approaches.

As a result of the pandemic we had to move, in a very short period of time, to wholly online education. The pace and efficiency with which colleagues translated their educational practices online was incredible. We employed experts in the field to help us, and crucially also used student input and feedback to improve our practices. We saw first-hand the advantages of particularly large-scale teaching online. We also saw that the technology could help with equity in the learning environment – students who would not normally have spoken up previously found it easier with the chat functions online to ask questions, engage and make the education experience greater for all.

It was not all easy however. Some students struggled without appropriate equipment or quiet places to study. Everyone, staff and students, struggled without frequent, varied human contact. Many students yearned to learn together, and to speak to and be with each other and members of staff in person. We were reminded that learning is a social activity.

In Spring/Summer 2020 we invested heavily to make our campuses Covid-secure, and in Autumn 2020 we restarted some in-person education, limited in nature owing to the Government guidance in place at the time. We learned quickly what sort of educational activities students valued, that was allowed within the Government guidelines. As some students still could not return from overseas owing to travel restrictions, and others could not attend in person for health or other reasons, all these in-person activities were primarily enhancement activities. This meant they were optional and therefore students unable to attend them were still able to complete their courses online.

After a difficult winter, which saw the return to wholly online education for the majority of students, we are slowly now emerging from the cloud of coronavirus in the UK. The road ahead however is bumpy: vaccination programmes, while going well in the UK, are proceeding at different rates across the world, and new Covid-19 variants, with the possible potential to make vaccines less effective, keep emerging.

As we plan for the next academic year we must respond to students' hunger for on campus educational activities, and ensure that in every programme there is some on campus education for students to enjoy, combined with online learning. On campus education, depending on the subject area, is likely to be a mix of seminars, small-group teaching, practical sessions and laboratory work. Lectures and large-group teaching will largely be online. We must plan for the possibility of continued international travel restrictions; any student who cannot join us at the start of the Semester should be able to follow their course online.

We also need to plan to accommodate some possible ongoing restrictions, such as the need to maintain social distancing. We are currently timetabling for 1m+ social distancing, and we will flex this in response to government restrictions in place at the time. We will also be ready to flex the

amount of on campus activities we offer, should, for example, new variants emerge and national restrictions increase.

We are planning to extend the teaching day, to run from 8am to 8pm. This will increase our capacity and will accommodate staff and student availability. We recognise that teaching early, or late, may suit some colleagues and not be possible for others, and Schools and Institutes will have some flexibility in how they use the extended hours. It is not expected that any one individual will teach or study for longer than they do normally.

We are working through the Deans for Education, Schools and Institutes to understand how these plans can be delivered for each programme. We will adapt as needed in response to feedback, and we must also continue to be ready to flex in response to changing government restrictions.

These last 12 months have been incredibly difficult for all of us. We would like to finish by sincerely thanking everyone for their amazing hard work and commitment to supporting our Queen Mary community of staff and students.

Best wishes,

Professor Colin Bailey, President and Principal
Professor Stephanie Marshall, Vice-Principal (Education)
Professor Stefan Krummaker, Deputy Vice-Principal (Education)
Professor Tony Michael, Deputy Vice-Principal (Education)



Email to students - Update on your educational experience for next academic year

Dear student,

The last 12 months have been incredibly difficult for all of us, and every one of you has shown extraordinary resilience in dealing with everything that has been thrown at you as a result of Covid-19. In the UK, we are slowly emerging from the Covid-19 cloud: the vaccination programme is going well, and we are progressing along the roadmap out of the restrictions. On our campuses, where we have invested heavily to make all our facilities Covid-secure, more staff and students are returning, and more [social and sporting activities](#) are available for you. We are all collectively breathing a sigh of relief as some level of normality returns.

The road out of Covid-19 is, however, unlikely to be smooth. Across the world, vaccination programmes are proceeding at different rates. Some of our overseas students are currently unable to travel to the UK, and unfortunately some international travel restrictions are likely to be in place for some time. In addition, there is the continued threat of new variants, and the possibility of some of those making vaccines less effective, which may lead to some restrictions being imposed again.

We always planned, in our [University Strategy](#), to use the very best of different educational methods – both online and in-person - to make your student learning experience the best it can be, and

support every one of you to succeed. Last year, we had to flip to online education in a heartbeat. We were very grateful to you for working with us, and feeding back on what worked, and what didn't, through Student-Staff Liaison Committees and the Students' Union to help continually improve our online educational provision. We learned a huge amount through that process.

Looking forward to next year, we want to use the best of what we have learned about online learning, and we also want to respond to students' hunger for as much on campus in-person educational activity as possible. We are looking at extending the teaching day, to accommodate staff and student availability and to increase our capacity for on campus teaching. Not all programmes will make use of the extended hours, and no student will be expected to study for longer each day than they have previously. We are working with Schools and Institutes to understand how these plans work in each programme's context, and to timetable for Semester A. We will continue to reassess our plans in response to student and staff feedback. We must also be ready to flex where we need to in response to the national and international pandemic restrictions.

In the next few weeks, your School or Institute will be writing to you with more detail about what Semester A will look like for you. Be reassured that, as long as government guidance at the time permits, all programmes will include some on-campus education. This will be augmented by the best of what we have learned about the use of online technologies. In addition, if you are overseas and are worried about your ability to travel to the UK in September, please also be reassured that you will, for the majority of programmes*, be able to follow your programme online for Semester A. If you have any questions, once you have received information about what they mean for you, in the first instance do please ask your Advisor.

Your University experience is of course far more than just your learning. We are working hard, with our Students' Union, to ensure you can enjoy as many social and sporting activities as possible, within government guidance, for the rest of this academic year and next. Do keep checking the [events and activities calendar](#): activities are added all the time.

Do keep looking after yourselves and each other, and, if you are facing assessments shortly we wish you the very best of luck. Make sure you look after yourselves while you study, and make some time to rest, relax and socialise.

Best wishes,

Professor Colin Bailey, President and Principal
Professor Stephanie Marshall, Vice-Principal (Education)



*If you are on a clinical programme such as medicine or dentistry, where on-campus teaching is an integral part of the course, please look out for follow up communications from your Institute about what this means for you.