

# Learning and Teaching Policy Development



This document specifies the principles of the development of Learning and Teaching policies at Heriot-Watt University. It sets out the objectives of policy development and provides a step-by-step guide on how to develop a policy.

The University Committee for Learning and Teaching (UCLT) operates with the delegated authority of the Senate to develop the policies in the following areas:

- learning and teaching;
- academic quality enhancement frameworks for taught programmes of study;
- the development of the academic attributes of students, and the academic practice and learner support skills of staff and students;
- the development of approaches for effective sharing of best practice in learning and teaching.

In practice, the UCLT delegates development of policies to the Student Learning Experience Committee (SLEC).

The University Committee for Quality and Standards (UCLT) operates with the delegated authority of the Senate to develop the policies in the following areas:

- the University's Quality Assurance Framework;
- academic and other entry requirements and the recognition of prior learning;
- conditions of registration, periods of registration, and changes of registration;
- assessments, examinations, feedback, and progression;
- the appointment of internal and external examiners;
- the granting of awards resulting from taught programmes of study;
- the deprivation and revocation of awards resulting from programmes of study.

In this document, the term "learning and teaching policy" is used as a generic term to refer to all of the policies relating to taught provision developed by either the UCLT or the UCQS.

This step-by-step [Guide to Learning and Teaching Policy Development](#) and the accompanying [Framework for Developing Learning and Teaching Policy](#) are also available on the front page of the Learning and Teaching Policy Bank:

<https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/policy-bank.htm>

The [Learning and Teaching Policy Bank](#) provides an alphabetical list of all policies, procedures and guidelines.

## Principles

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Policies are normally reviewed every 5 years	Policies are normally reviewed every 5 years. They can also be reviewed on a need basis (external/internal), or according to the priority list agreed by either the University Committee for Quality and Standards (UCQS) or the Student Learning Experience Committee (SLEC) in conjunction with the University Committee for Learning and Teaching (UCLT). The Senate may also determine the schedule of review of learning and teaching policies.
Policies are accessible	Policies are published on the <a href="#">Learning and Teaching Policy Bank</a> so that requirements and expectations of learning and teaching are clear and transparent. The Policy Bank will be promoted to staff and students within staff induction materials, in VISION, the Portal and in programme handbooks.
Changes will be communicated	Colleagues will be advised by email of changes to policies. Academic Quality will provide colleagues with a summary list of new and revised policies at the end of each academic year. Colleagues will also be notified of planned reviews at the start of each academic year. Briefing sessions may be arranged to provide additional information and guidance.
Policy development will enhance learning and teaching	Staff and students are encouraged to participate in policy development and to review and reflect on policies in practice. By doing this colleagues actively improve the quality of our learning and teaching. Policies are developed and reviewed within the University's <a href="#">Framework for Developing Learning and Teaching Policy</a> .

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# Guide to Policy Development

## What are the objectives?

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Develop a new or revised policy	Write a new policy or revise an existing policy either within the 5-year review cycle or due to an identified external or internal need.
Carry out a consultation	Collaborate and consult with those who will be affected by the change and who have expertise, in particular, of the policy in practice. Consult across Schools, across campuses and include academic as well as professional services staff (both in Schools and in Professional Services Directorates)
Seek Committee approval	Recommendations should be made to either UCLT (by SLEC) or UCQS for endorsement of the new or revised policy, so the drafting group should try to submit to the next scheduled meeting. Thereafter, the UCLT or the UCQS will recommend approval of the policy to the Senate.
Communicate and implement	Publicise the change widely (eg Staff News; the Portal or through Annual Updates on New/Revised Policies) and provide support post- implementation.

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## How to develop a policy

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### Before you start

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| Make the case    | Make the case to SLEC or UCQS, as appropriate. State the purpose of the policy, the need for change, the nature of the changes, the scope of consultation, any operational aspects and the resource implications (including dependencies such as IT development or training). |
| Agree the detail | SLEC or UCQS will consider the case and recommend who should be involved in drafting, usually at least one SLEC or UCQS member and colleagues with relevant expertise, including the policy 'owner' (person from the area with functional responsibility).                    |
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### Before the 1<sup>st</sup> draft

Consult with students and colleagues at all University campuses:

- contact targeted individuals or groups with expertise
- add the policy to relevant Committee agendas
- ensure that operational aspects (eg procedures, guidelines, systems developments) are scrutinised and agreed
- ensure that all modes and locations of delivery are considered
- hold focus groups or workshops if there is a need for discussion
- provide feedback to contributors, eg. next version of the document or summary of next stages of development

Use and Make Reference to Internal Requirements

- review the Expectations and Principles of the relevant section of HWU's own [Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes](#) (known as the "Multi Code")
- include any other relevant internal reference points
- add a statement to the following effect: "This policy has been developed with reference to the University's Code of Practice for the Management of Multi-Location, Multi-Mode Programmes, specifically Part ... *(to specify which of 4 parts of the Code was reference)*"

Use and Make Reference to External Requirements

- review the [Expectations, Core and Common Practices, and Advice and Guidance of the UK Quality Code](#) against the proposed policy and include relevant references in the draft policy document
  - include any other relevant external reference points
  - add a statement to the following effect: "This policy has been developed with reference to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the Advice and Guides of the Theme on ...*(to specify)*"
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Seek approval

Submit the policy to SLEC or UCQS for a recommendation:

- meet the deadline for papers to next meeting
- include the cover and policy document
- SLEC recommends endorsement to UCLT
- UCLT or UCQS recommends approval to Senate

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#### After approval

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Prepare supporting documents

Procedures, a briefing paper and any related forms (Equality and Privacy Impact Assessment – EIA/PIA), templates etc. should be prepared. These should be submitted to SLEC/UCLT or UCQS before implementation.

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Communicate and Implement

The policy owner arranges for the policy to be added to the Learning and Teaching Policy Bank, emailed to SLEC/UCLT or UCQS for wider distribution, emailed to those involved in the consultation and included in a list of new and reviewed policies produced by Academic Quality.

Implementation also rests with the owner, who will address operational issues and amend supporting documents if required.

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After implementation

In some cases a review 1-year post-implementation will be carried out so that the policy can be refined to address, eg unforeseen operational issues.

Staff and students are encouraged to reflect on and raise concerns about policies at any time.

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## Supporting Documents

Document templates:	SLEC cover sheet UCLT cover sheet UCQS cover sheet Policy Template Briefing Paper – samples (Quality and Learning & Teaching) Equality Impact Assessment and Privacy Impact Assessment Template
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## Useful Links

Committee Structure for Learning and Teaching:	<a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/lt-reporting-structure.pdf">https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/lt-reporting-structure.pdf</a>
Learning and Teaching Policy Bank:	<a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/policy-bank.htm">https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/policy-bank.htm</a>
Learning and Teaching Enhancement Forum (Scotland, Dubai, Malaysia)	<a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/ltf-tor.pdf">https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/docs/ltf-tor.pdf</a>
QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education:	<a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code</a>
Student Learning Experience Committee:	<a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/student-learning/student-learning-experience-committee.htm">https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/student-learning/student-learning-experience-committee.htm</a>
University Committee for Learning and Teaching	<a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/university-committee-learning-teaching.htm">https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/learning-teaching/university-committee-learning-teaching.htm</a>
University Committee for Quality and Standards	<a href="https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/qa/quality-standards-committee.htm">https://www.hw.ac.uk/services/academic-registry/quality/qa/quality-standards-committee.htm</a>

## Further Information

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## Version History

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