

2024/2025

Planning Assumptions and Key Messages for Teaching Teams

Introduced to guide planning during the pandemic, the development of Planning Assumptions and Key Messages to Teaching Teams has continued as a tool to frame and support the preparation and delivery of learning and teaching.

The Key Messages and Planning Assumptions for AY24/25 draw on the previous year. This year, key developments being amplified include the importance of assessment and feedback planning and communication; the use of a new Marks and Grades system; and amplifies inclusive practice and student voice. Continued emphasis is placed on inspiring globally connected learning and supporting collaboration across course and programme teams.

The Key Messages and Planning Assumptions are complimented by a suite of resources to support School and Teaching Team preparations:

- Get Set for AY24-25 SharePoint page, integrating key messages and links to resources and key information for Teaching Teams
- Checklists to support course and programme preparation.
- School and 'open' Roadshows
- A 'Get Set for AY24/25' Fair on campus and online to support teaching teams and build a sense of community at start of the year.

UCLT approved these assumptions at its meeting on 5 June 2024/25 and noted the School / Directorate collaboration required to schedule effective teaching team support in advance of AY24-25.

Preparing for AY24-25

Planning Assumptions and Key Messages for Teaching Teams

Creating a vibrant and supportive learning community is key to student success. Teaching teams are asked to ensure campus teaching is a rich and rewarding experience for students and for staff and to make effective use of digital resources and virtual learning spaces to support student learning and connect our community.

To support planning and enhancement of activity for AY24-25 the guidance below was approved by the University Committee for Learning and Teaching (5 June 2024). This will inform planning through AY24-25.

- Additional school-specific guidance and support will be available from your School Leadership Team.
- Key links and guidance to support preparation is provided on the [Get Set for AY24-25 SharePoint site](#).

Core Objectives Academic Year 2024/25

- To enable students to effectively engage with their studies and participate in the University community alongside their peers, making full use of the breadth of opportunities available on our campuses and in our virtual learning environment.
- To provide inspiring learning opportunities to enable students to develop the Heriot Watt *Global Changemaker* Graduate Attributes: Purpose-driven | Creative | Globally-Connected | Professional.
- To ensure our campuses are vibrant spaces for collaboration and learning for staff and students.
- To support students and staff to connect as a global learning community.
- To ensure identical academic standards and appropriate diversity of learning experiences across our global learning community.
- To ensure student engagement and partnership in all aspects of University life.

Planning Assumptions for AY24/25

Learning and Teaching Delivery

- The University will follow the published academic calendar for academic year 2024/25.
 - Teaching teams should note changes to the assessment diet for AY24-25.
 - There will continue to be a Consolidation Week in Week 6 of each semester.
- The teaching model will be Globally Connected Learning.
- All courses have a strong digital base on the VLE and make use of the appropriate University template, providing at least core information such as course handbooks, syllabi, live session times and assessment information via the VLE (Canvas / Connectus).
- Courses effectively blend on-campus, online and / or work-based provision as appropriate to context.
 - Campus-based programmes will all offer a suite of engaging on-campus learning events.
 - A dedicated programme of wholly online provision will be offered as a planned and distinct offer (e.g. HW Online).
- Students are expected to engage with the full suite of learning opportunities offered by their programme of study, both on campus and in the virtual learning environment.
- Students enrolled in on-campus programmes are expected to attend on campus teaching, learning, and assessment sessions and take advantage of the opportunities provided by campus life.
- A programme of academic induction and longitudinal study support will be offered for all years to ensure that learners can fully and effectively engage with Heriot-Watt study.
- Students will be supported to understand the concepts of academic integrity, and academic good practice, with the University's Academic Integrity module embedded in each year of study.

- Teaching teams should communicate clearly to students whether use of artificial intelligence is permitted on their course / programme, in line with University guidance.
- Teaching teams should consider, and communicate to students, how recording of teaching and learning events will be used in the course of study, in line with University policy.

Assessment Design

- Teaching teams are encouraged to continue to review and enhance assessment design to support student learning, following the University's Assessment for Learning principles.
- Assessments may take place in a range of formats, as appropriate to programme and course learning outcomes, making use of approved platforms for assessment.
- Assessment and feedback details for the semester should be clearly communicated to students via the VLE by Week 0 of the semester.

Inclusive and Accessible Practice

- Teaching teams should ensure equity and inclusion by design.
- Reasonable adjustments and enhanced support for students with specific needs is required and will follow established University processes.

Student Voice and Communications

- Teaching Teams will invite and respond to student feedback on courses and programmes to inform continuous enhancement of learning experience and foster culture of partnership.
- Information about relevant University policies and practice, course and programme expectations will be clearly and consistently communicated to students.

Timetabling and Workload

- Timetabling will encompass live on-campus, online, and dual-mode sessions, ensuring appropriate allocation of time and learning spaces as appropriate to programme context.
- School L&T leadership will ensure courses offer an appropriate suite of learning events.
- Staff workloads to be managed proactively by Schools and Directorates within standard University HR guidelines.

Key Developments in Education Administration for 2024/25

- GCMS should be up to date by Week 0 of each semester, including (but not limited to) assessment information, course team details, syllabus and learning outcomes. This will inform assessment support, timetabling, marks & grades administration, and award processes.
- For AY24-25 the University is using a new system for entering marks, generating board documentation, performing marks analyses, handling course assessment boards, and updating marks and grades. This replaces the MOLI system.
- Academic unit Canvas sites will support programme and discipline community building and host key information such as programme handbooks and induction resources.
- Arrangements regarding personal tutoring and student advisors are being finalised and further information will be provided in due course.]
- Electronic Resource lists will be rolled out through Canvas course sites during AY24-25. This will support access to relevant information for students on essential and recommended reading for each course.