Learning and Teaching Spaces Strategy

Vision

"We aim to be responsive and sector-leading in the creative use of our spaces to inspire and deliver an outstanding learning and teaching experience."

Mission

- We ensure our Learning and Teaching Spaces Strategy is in dialogue with the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy and the Estates' vision to enable the smooth transformation required by our overall vision

- We raise awareness around issues of space and learning and teaching to open up communication across and between different staff and student communities

- We gather information about new technologies, diverse methods of teaching and learning, and contemporary educational approaches in higher education to make recommendations for improvements to the University's estate

- We make sure staff and students have a chance to express their expectations or share their concerns to inform directly the programmes of work in Estates, Timetabling and Information Services Group

- We make sure students and staff have the best possible information on available physical and digital estate and are aware how they can use it for formal/informal learning and teaching

- We provide spaces, and information about them, that inspire staff and students to try different approaches to learning and teaching

- We continuously review our services to ensure all processes involved, from timetabling to new builds, reflect current and future needs.

Values

Our strategy is unpinned by core values:

- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Flexibility
- Responsiveness
- Accessibility
- Shared responsibility

Focus Areas and Strategic Goals

Pedagogy

- Learning and teaching should drive the development and use of space
- Spaces should support the overall staff and student learning and teaching experience and the achievement of learning outcomes

  - Spaces should align with learning and teaching needs; this requires constant and iterative engagement with all those who use, develop and maintain our estate
  - Spaces should support flexible access to learning materials
  - We should all share responsibility for maximising use of estate to develop innovative learning and teaching practices and to ensure evidence is brought to the fore
  - We need to think beyond existing metrics of success based on capacity and usage towards a more holistic range of measures of outcomes and satisfaction.

Engagement

- There should be closer engagement with staff and students regarding learning and teaching spaces and their use

- We need to connect our requirements to available spaces, now and for the future, to enable the prioritising of learning and teaching requirements through better communication of what different spaces can support
- Our thinking should hold the 'student at the centre' to understand how they currently engage and would want to engage with our formal and informal learning and teaching spaces.

Accessibility

- Spaces should promote equality and diversity
- Spaces should be easy to find, use and navigate
- Spaces should be inclusive of different learning and teaching styles and needs

    - There should be equality of experience across staff, students, Schools and programmes
    - Spaces should support the learning and teaching experience of both online and on-campus participants
    - Spaces should be inclusive and welcoming to all
    - Spaces should be intuitive to use for everyone whichever space they are in

Infrastructure

- Spaces should be adaptable and used with agility
- Spaces should provide and support a range of digital and physical technologies to enable learning and teaching activity

    - We should develop common standards across spaces and ensure support is available at point of need
    - Spaces should be well cared for to ensure comfort and support interaction
    - Spaces need to be adaptable to changing requirements of learning and teaching at point of use and in strategic developments
    - Spaces should promote staff student interaction beyond formal teaching
    - We need to use spaces creatively, including unused spaces, outdoor spaces, impromptu use of space, to support flexibility required to meet changing need.

Communities

- Spaces should create a sense of belonging

  - We need to support multiple communities, within and across Schools, programmes and campuses, creating spaces held in common as well as specialised spaces
  - Students and staff should feel welcomes in our learning and teaching spaces, formal and informal, and be able to access different spaces with ease
  - We need to balance issues of adjacency, including with informal study spaces, the need for specialist spaces, with creative use of all spaces for learning and teaching
  - We should work with Schools to build a sense of belonging within and beyond School locations
  - We need to promote a shared approach to caring for and about our learning and teaching spaces and their role in building a sense of belonging and multiple communities and connections

Estates Committee approved 20 March 2019

University Executive approved 19 March 2019