

University of Manchester: Statement of Teaching Expectations

Introduction

The vast majority of colleagues deliver outstanding teaching and learning and go significantly beyond the expectations outlined in this document. This has been particularly evidenced in the ways in which colleagues have adapted teaching over the last two years and embraced the CPD opportunities to support the delivery of teaching in new ways during the COVID pandemic.

The aim of this statement is to set out the University's essential expectations of academic colleagues with responsibility for delivering teaching and student support. It is also intended to indicate the minimum standard of support colleagues can expect from the University. While we currently have a parallel Statement of Research Contribution Expectations (only recently revised and considered by Senate), there is currently no teaching equivalent in the University.

While the teaching document presented here for Senate consideration is partly modelled on that newly revised Statement of Research Contribution Expectations, we accept that the teaching version is a starting point and establishes a baseline position. In time we aim to move towards a more aspirational and ambitious document with greater emphasis on enhancement and less on compliance and assurance. However, it is important as a first stage that we provide a clear statement on the baseline standards we expect: regardless of future development of this statement, we should show our commitment to getting the basics right.

The document has to be understood as standing alongside formal People and Organisational Development (P&OD) processes and policies plus local line-management including PDR: these are necessary to address issues where those arise. It is also important to stress the availability of support for colleagues who need to develop their teaching and student support practice; who want to innovate; or who are new to teaching. This connects with ongoing work on reward and recognition for teaching colleagues through mapping different expectations at different career stages; and with provision of support and guidance through the Institute of Teaching and Learning (ITL).

The Statement rightly emphasises the roles of both the individual and the University, and includes a list of reasonable expectations of the University.

TLSG has endorsed this document, and it has been considered and endorsed by Senior Leadership Team (SLT); it was approved by Senate at its meeting of 1 June 2022. An action plan will now be developed to support the implementation of this statement, with more input from Faculties, Senate and other stakeholders as appropriate.

The University of Manchester is among the top 50 universities in the world and aims to be within the top 25. We aspire to the highest academic standards in both teaching and research. Our vision is to provide education for global leadership and an exceptional student experience where teaching makes a real difference to our students' lives and equips them to make a difference in the world. This vision will be achieved through our people: our students, and academic and professional services colleagues. As part of our learning community, every student will be supported to achieve personal growth and academic success in an environment that respects diversity, enables participation and removes barriers to learning. Our students

will develop analytical, practical and critical skills to become graduates who are intellectually curious, socially responsible, culturally aware and equipped to contribute effectively and sensitively to a fast-changing and global environment. We will inspire, motivate and raise the aspirations of learners through the enthusiasm and knowledge of our staff. Our teaching will be research-led and draw on evidence from pedagogic research in order to enhance opportunities for student learning. Our colleagues will be empathetic, creative and innovative in selecting and adapting strategies to help learners to learn and to encourage students to become more independent learners. We will support all staff to develop their teaching and professional roles and responsibilities. We will provide an environment that enables excellent teaching and the highest quality experience for staff and students.

The aim of this statement is to set out the University's expectations of academic colleagues with responsibility for delivering teaching and student support, and to make links to the relevant existing policies for reference. It is also intended to indicate the minimum standard of support colleagues can expect from the University. We recognise that the majority of colleagues perform significantly above the baseline established in this statement and already provide excellent teaching and learning. We want to support all those colleagues to continue to aspire to the highest quality teaching whatever their career stage. It is our aim to create an environment where colleagues are and feel supported to develop, experiment and improve their teaching; and to establish a culture where good teaching is valued and recognised consistently both informally and via formal mechanisms including promotion. We understand that colleagues will not necessarily contribute to all the areas of teaching and student support that are outlined in this document. Similarly, we recognise that colleagues across the University are at different stages of their career and will have different levels of teaching experience with some requiring more time to develop their skills in this area. It is important, however, that we also address recurring cases where good quality of teaching is not being delivered as this can have a negative impact, not just on the student experience but on colleagues, departments and on the reputation of the University. Where there are cases of poor quality teaching, we will offer support and development opportunities to staff. Repeated instances of poor teaching and/or a lack of willingness to engage with enhancement opportunities will be dealt with through formal line management.

This statement has been developed with reference to [Our Future](#), to our internal policies and procedures related to [probation](#), [promotion](#) and the external [UK Professional Standards Framework \(UKPSF\)](#).

To achieve these aims, we will:

- Acknowledge, support and reward the variety of teaching, learning and assessment practices that underpin student learning;
- Foster dynamic approaches to inclusive teaching and learning through creativity, innovation and continuous development in diverse academic and/or professional settings;
- Support the initial and continuing professional development of colleagues engaged in teaching and supporting learning and facilitate individuals in gaining formal recognition for the quality of their teaching;
- Promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion in line with the University's [Access and Participation Plan \(APP\)](#);
- Promote the University's [Social Responsibility](#) agenda through our teaching;
- Actively seek out student feedback, act on this, and include students as partners in learning.

Statement of Teaching Expectations

A: Expected Teaching and Learning Performance Levels for staff:

We expect all academic colleagues whose duties include teaching, learning and student support to contribute positively to establish the highest possible quality of inclusive teaching and learning, to be reflective about their own teaching, student learning and assessment and to contribute positively to student experience.

Teaching performance is one of four areas of academic contribution which is considered in recruitment, probation and promotion decisions. The other three areas are research; knowledge transfer and external engagement; and service and leadership. The balance of contribution across these four areas varies according to the type of academic contract held ('research and teaching', 'teaching' or 'research') and is detailed in [academic probation and promotion policies and procedures](#).

Contribution to teaching, alongside other activities, is discussed and supported through probation, mentoring and annual Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs), and is monitored and managed by Heads of School and Departments/Divisions in collaboration with School and Faculty leaders in Teaching, Learning and Student Experience.

The University's expectations of individuals responsible for teaching and supporting student learning, cover a variety of responsibilities. Individuals are expected to be able to demonstrate success in the following teaching expectations, as relevant to their role:

1. **Teaching:** Colleagues should be able to achieve inclusive and effective teaching¹ and related support in respect of allocated teaching duties. Colleagues with teaching responsibilities will exhibit strong subject knowledge and use this, as appropriate, to develop/contribute to and deliver a well-structured, effective and sector-leading curriculum in their course units through a variety of appropriate teaching methods. Colleagues will be expected to seek out and act upon relevant student feedback (and, where appropriate, work in partnership with students) to enhance their teaching. Teaching must be planned and implemented in accordance with the approved Unit Specification.
2. **Learning Materials:** Colleagues should contribute to an effective and inclusive learning environment in which students can succeed through the provision of accessible² high-quality materials for synchronous and asynchronous learning as appropriate for their discipline (e.g., presentations, handouts, videos, blogs, interactive materials, digital resources, reading lists etc.).
3. **Assessment & Feedback:** Colleagues must be effective in setting³ and marking inclusive assessment to deliver student progress and contribute to learning. They must ensure that disabled students registered with DASS receive adjustments detailed in their University Support Plan. Colleagues must deliver quality and timely feedback to students in line with the [Policy on Feedback to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students](#), that is as personal as possible to the individual student and enables them to reflect on their skills and performance regardless of background, identity, personal characteristics or ability on entry. Assessments and feedback must be delivered in line with the requirements of the [University's Assessment Framework](#).

¹ For example: lectures, seminars, tutorials, problem-classes, lab-classes, academic supervisions, including online and flexible delivery

² [Accessible Teaching Content](#)

³ Including ensuring that assessment tasks are aligned to the ILOs for a programme/course unit.

4. **Academic Advising:** Academic Advisors must deliver the University's objectives for [academic advising](#), in line with University policy. Through academic advising colleagues will set high expectations that motivate and support diverse learners. Colleagues should be aware of the range of expertise within Schools, departments, and the broader University from which they can seek advice and to which students can be referred. Academic Advisers must undertake induction and refresher training.
5. **Student Supervision:** Academic supervision of dissertations/projects and other large independent assessment tasks should support students to develop as independent learners and impart specialised knowledge and expertise in an appropriate way. Supervision must include opportunities for reflection, timely feedback and reviewing of student achievement/progress.
6. **Student Support:** Colleagues must make themselves available for consultation with students through appropriate means and offer reasonable and timely availability of consultation times for students. Colleagues should follow local practice and guidance in this as appropriate. If colleagues need to change these arrangements, they should ensure students are informed. Colleagues should inform students about the best way to contact them and also to inform them when they will not be contactable, for example, during their absence from the university. Interactions with students must be professional and tailored to meet individual student needs in a sensitive manner, with the aim of guiding their [personalised learning experience](#), addressing their concerns, supporting their wellbeing and ensuring they feel valued. Colleagues must ensure that they read and implement University Support Plans for disabled students registered with DASS and [contact DASS](#) if they have queries on these.
7. **Student Experience:** Colleagues must take collective, cooperative and proactive responsibility for improving the student experience through addressing student and peer review feedback, engaging with programme improvement activities and undertaking training (see Career Development and Training). This includes constructive engagement with appropriate committees and student partnership activities.
8. **Collegial Service, and Leadership:** Professional Services and Academic colleagues must work in partnership to support the delivery of teaching, learning and student experience. Colleagues must ensure that the administrative tasks involving their own teaching (including, but not limited to, responses to requests for exam questions, moderation, updated course unit outlines, attendance monitoring etc.) are timely, conducted professionally, demonstrating effective planning and organisation so that other colleagues are not put under unnecessary pressure and students are supported in their learning. Classes must start on time. Demonstrators/TAs must be briefed and supported appropriately to deliver their taught content.
9. **Career Development and Training:** Colleagues should annually reflect on their teaching and continually strive to improve. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an annual expectation and colleagues should demonstrate a commitment to enhancing their professional skills development and training, for example through formal and informal training in their department/school or faculty (e.g. Teaching and Learning Away Days, eLearning Training Sessions), participation in national and international networks, the sharing of good practice or self-directed development of skills, participation in Institute of Teaching and Learning events, gaining the appropriate level of [Advance HE Fellowship](#) (e.g. through the [LEAP programme](#)) or other formal qualifications such as the [PGCert in HE](#).

Colleagues are expected to enhance their practice in teaching, assessment and student

support via peer review⁴, the PDR process in line with University policy, other reviews as appropriate and feedback from students, line managers, and peers. Colleagues should be able to communicate and reflect on their teaching achievements, highlighting both their approach and impact and should be able to evidence training taken to help them support students and themselves.

10. **Professional accountability:** Colleagues must engage with University, Faculty and School reporting and accountability processes and must comply with all policies and procedures including, but not limited to, those specifically related to [teaching, learning and student support](#) and [dignity at work and study](#).

⁴ We are currently developing a new peer review process

B: University Support for Staff Teaching at the University of Manchester

The University strives to provide an intellectual and physical environment that supports academic excellence, including in teaching, learning and student experience. Providing our students with an excellent teaching, learning and student experience is a collective institutional responsibility. Our academics can expect the following to facilitate the achievement of expectations around teaching.

1. **University Investment in the Estate and People:** The University will invest to provide a teaching environment and the delivery of effective services commensurate with our ambitions to be a global top 25 ranked institution. The teaching environment includes investment in our physical⁵ and digital estate, library resources, technology and infrastructure and in its people (academic and professional services) to ensure the provision of efficient, responsive and effective support to colleagues. The university will provide opportunities for colleagues to enhance their teaching through internal and external CPD activities where those activities meet the strategic priorities of the school/University.
2. **Workload:** Colleagues can expect their Head of School (or nominee), to ensure that there is a fair distribution of workload among staff and that workload allocation is transparent. Workload Allocation/Contribution Models will be used to ensure that the distribution of workload enables colleagues to carry out their responsibilities to a high standard and provides opportunities for personal development. We recognise that many colleagues feel a strong commitment towards their work and student success but there should be no expectation for colleagues to work long hours or to respond to student requests out of hours.
3. **Guidance on the expected standard of teaching performance:** Colleagues can expect their Head of School (or nominee), to provide clear guidance on the expected standards for all academic responsibilities within their discipline area, including teaching and student support.
4. **Professional Support:** Colleagues can expect the University to provide professional support to enable colleagues to deliver teaching of the highest standards. Academic colleagues will not be expected to provide specialist pastoral support for students. This will be provided by Professional Services colleagues based in the Directorate of Student Experience (e.g. counselling, disability support etc).
5. **Training, mentoring, support and review of their teaching:** Colleagues can expect to receive effective advice, mentoring, training and support in relation to their individual teaching performance in order to promote the highest quality of teaching and learning. Where poor performance is identified, colleagues will be given support to improve performance with a clear and agreed action plan.
6. **Reward and Recognition:** The University will ensure that processes for recognising and rewarding teaching performance, identifying good quality teaching, student learning support and associated achievement are in place for all colleagues with teaching in their contract. Cases for reward and promotion will be assessed against transparent, clear and consistent criteria. Excellence in teaching will be recognised through the promotions process.
7. **Fair application of Teaching Expectations:** The University is committed to maintaining and implementing exemplary standards of fair treatment, equality, and diversity in all our policies.

⁵ Including, where appropriate, our off-campus clinical environment

Full account will be taken of the University's People and OD policies in the interpretation and application of teaching expectations. These will help ensure that teaching expectations are managed in a way that is fair to all colleagues and takes account of individual circumstances.

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Document control box

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