

The Taught Degrees Framework: Academic and Professional Services Collaboration

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- As holder of a Gold award in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework and THE University of the Year for 2014-15, Edge Hill University has a longstanding and strategic commitment to providing teaching and learning of the highest standard for all students
- Since gaining Degree Awarding Powers and University title in 2006 we have seen significant growth in numbers encompassing students from a wide range of geographical, social and educational backgrounds - at the same time, we take seriously our commitment to deliver an inclusive learning experience in which all students are supported to succeed irrespective of their individual backgrounds and entry qualifications

The Taught Degrees Framework (TDF)

- **2016-17:** pan-University Project Group convened to review and overhaul pre-existing frameworks for undergraduate and masters degrees - replacement would be a single unified architecture presented as a 'student journey' from induction to completion (and beyond)
- Project represented the continuation of established Institutional culture and practice in which academic departments and professional services work in close partnership with each other and with students to assure and enhance the quality of learning opportunities – no additional funding was sought or required
- New Framework to comprise 5 '**lenses**' to provide the principal internal reference point for programme design, approval and review...



TDF 'Lenses'

- ***Induction and Transition*** - including transition to higher education and support for in-programme progression between academic levels of study
- ***Learning, Teaching and Assessment*** - including use of learning technologies and development of students' 'assessment literacy'
- ***Graduate Attributes, Employability and Work-Related/Work-Based Learning*** – including development of subject-related practical and key transferable skills
- ***Education for Personal Development and Enhancement*** - academic and pastoral support, and careers education, information and guidance
- ***Global Citizenship*** - locating all curriculum design in the context of social, cultural and ethical dimensions and values, globalisation and technological development



TDF 'Lenses' (contd)

- Lenses would be supported by enabling guidance framed around a series of High Order Questions that 'provide the catalyst for excellence in programme design based on academic dialogue that encourages experimentation, stimulates innovation and delivers genuine transformation for students'
- Guidance should be **enabling** in that it provides direction and support for course designers to address key challenges around learning and teaching, and student support...
- ... but also **constraining**, in so far as the questions need to be visibly addressed and responded to in any new curriculum development

TDF Project - Planning and execution

- Individual workstreams led by expert practitioners tasked to research relevant scholarship and evidence-based practice to develop supporting advice and guidance for each lens - student participation through Edge Hill's Students' Union generated valuable user perspective
- University approval of the TDF in January 2017 followed by a further nine months of activity by the Centre for Learning and Teaching to populate an online resource bank and deliver professional development and awareness-raising activities to support full implementation from the beginning of academic year 2017-18

TDF resources - DEMONSTRATION

- Searchable online repository [\(wiki\)](#) hosts published articles, practical resources and exemplars associated with each lens
- Interactive [weblog](#) fosters cross-department conversations and enables staff to interact with each other to showcase and share their own practice
- Related professional development and conference programme, supported by University Learning and Teaching Fellows, provides additional opportunities for staff knowledge exchange, mentoring and support

TDF Project - Impact

Institutional validation reports from 2017-18 demonstrate how engagement with the TDF has enabled exploration of key themes and identification of good practice – **examples** include:

- Extended induction focussing on support for students with non-traditional qualifications or from low participation backgrounds, and dedicated ‘transition days’ supporting progression between different years/ levels of study
- Personal Tutor training including guidance and support for staff engaging with students presenting with mental health issues
- Advances in Simulation Learning, including use of immersive technologies and Virtual Reality

TDF Project – Impact (contd)

- Academic resilience training for students, co-delivered with the University's Counselling Service
- Opportunities and support for student participation in staff-led research projects and submitting for journal publication
- Identification of students as 'digital leaders' to support other students and staff in engaging with new digital learning technologies

TDF Project – Impact (contd)

- Institutional validation process within which the TDF is embedded was peer reviewed by QAA in 2017 and identified as good and innovative practice in curriculum design and approval
- TDF is central to academic staff development including PgCert in HE teaching and UK Professional Standards Framework accreditation
- NSS scores for 2018 exceeded the UK average for Teaching on my Course, Learning Opportunities, Assessment and Feedback, Academic Support and Learning Resources
- The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2018 named Edge Hill as University of the Year for Student Retention, one of the key drivers for the TDF project

TDF - Evaluation and further development

- Shared development by faculties and services has fostered increased visibility and ownership of the TDF across the Institution
- Lenses have proven capable of being adapted and applied to all types of new programme development, e.g. Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
- Engagement with the lenses has also stimulated re-evaluation and revision of Institution-level standards and codes of practice for personal tutoring, Technology Enhanced Learning including VLE, and placement learning
- New resources added on an ongoing basis and lenses are periodically reviewed and updated based on staff-student feedback and research, e.g. by University Learning and Teaching Fellows, in line with developing L&T agendas

Any questions?

Thanks very much for your attention!