

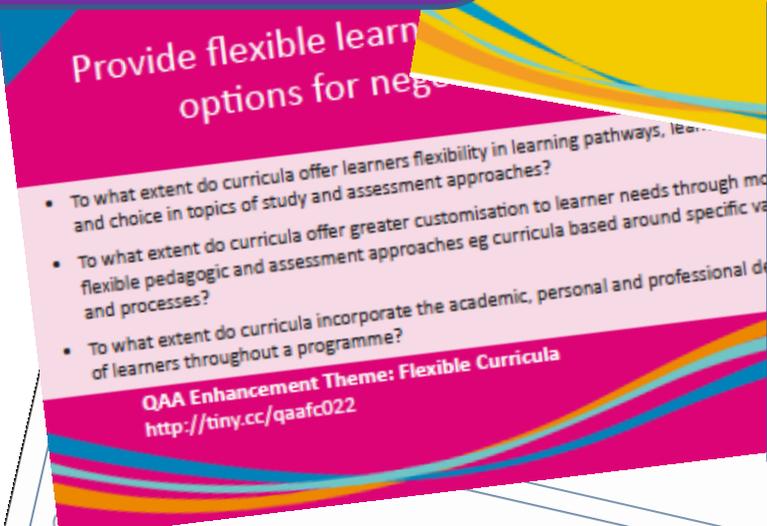
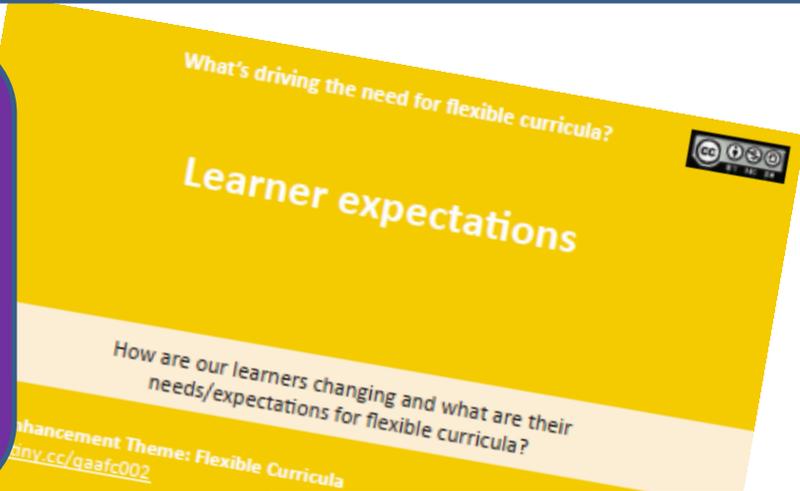


Developing and Supporting a Flexible Curriculum: Opportunities for critical reflection and enhancing practice

A 2-stage workshop process and toolkit to support programme teams in:

- (1) Reflecting on changing drivers and needs for flexible curricula;
- (2) Enhancing practice.

The toolkit is based on the University of Ulster's Viewpoints framework for curriculum enhancement (<http://wiki.ulster.ac.uk/display/VPR/Home>)



STAGE 1: REFLECT
on changing drivers and needs

- Learner expectations
- Key Government and sector drivers
- Key institutional drivers, goals and priorities
- Globalisation and internationalisation
- Employer and employer body needs and expectations
- Changes in what we teach
- Changes in how we teach
- Retention

STAGE 2: ENHANCE practice

Four dimensions of curriculum flexibility

| External engagement and partnerships | Anytime, anywhere learning | Entry, transition, progression and exit | Learning model, personalisation and learner engagement |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Key areas of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging employers and other stakeholders to customise curricula to employer and employee needs and contexts and to influence currency and relevancy of curricula. • Aligning curricula with changing sector / professional needs and contexts. | <p>Key areas of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner flexible access to technologies, training and tutors. • Using technology-enhanced learning approaches to underpin new flexible pedagogic approaches. • Learner skills and support in flexible and technology-enhanced learning. | <p>Key areas of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible learning pathways and timings e.g. entry, progression, exit. • Options for negotiated curricula and assessment. • Flexible means of accessing guidance and support throughout the learner journey including development of graduate attributes and employability. | <p>Key areas of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing flexible pedagogies using e.g. social and open learning and assessment for learning approaches. • Personalising learning to develop self-directed learners. • Using blended learning approaches on/off campus. • Learner engagement with flexible curricula design/delivery. |



Developing and Supporting a Flexible Curriculum: Opportunities for critical reflection and enhancing practice

Practice points - for enhancing current practice

1

External engagement and partnerships

- 1-1** Engage employers with design and delivery.
- 1-2** Align curricula with employer and learner needs.
- 1-3** Align curricula with sector/employer body needs and initiatives.
- 1-4** Align curricula with professional, regional, national, sector, international standards and changing contexts.
- 1-5** Engage other educational providers and stakeholders with curriculum design and delivery.

2

Anytime, anywhere learning

- 2-1** Ensure minimum equitable off-campus access to technologies for all learners.
- 2-2** Provide access to a broad range of on-campus technology enhanced learning tools for learners and staff.
- 2-3** Design curricula with a significant focus on technology-enhanced learning (TEL).
- 2-4** Design curricula specifically to exploit mobile technologies such as Tablets, SmartPhones, e-book readers, and multimedia devices.
- 2-5** Ensure a high degree of digital literacy (DL) amongst learners.
- 2-6** Provide 24-hour access to information, learning resources and support.
- 2-7** Provide flexible access to tutors, peers, mentors, experts, assessors and other relevant stakeholders involved with curricula delivery.
- 2-8** Provide specific learner guidance and support for flexible learning.

3

Entry, transition, progression and exit

- 3-1** Provide flexible learning pathways including options for negotiated curricula.
- 3-2** Provide flexible learning pathways including options for negotiated curricula - additional considerations relating to work-based learning contexts.
- 3-3** Provide flexibility in programme timing and progression.
- 3-4** Provide flexible learning pathways through RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning), articulation and credit transfer.
- 3-5** Provide pre-entry information and guidance.
- 3-6** Provide pre-entry support.
- 3-7** Provide integrated flexible induction.
- 3-8** Provide effective support for learner progression and retention.
- 3-9** Develop graduate attributes and employability skills to prepare learners for working and learning in employment.

4

Learning model, personalisation and learner engagement

- 4-1** Provide flexibility in campus-based teaching via technology-enhanced learning (TEL) techniques.
- 4-2** Personalise learning activities with an aim to create autonomous self-directed learners.
- 4-3** Design social and informal learning activities which exploit online media and support a range of pedagogies.
- 4-4** Adopt open approaches to exploit the knowledge and experience of others and facilitate learner choice.
- 4-5** Design curricula to emphasise assessment for learning to develop learners capable of self-review.
- 4-6** Continually engage in educational innovation, change and research in flexible curricula as part of quality enhancement and assurance.
- 4-7** Adopt flexible, transparent and business-like approaches to programme design, development, review and validation.
- 4-8** Implement protocols of engagement for learners and tutors to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, codes and policies.

Stage 1: REFLECT on Drivers and Needs for Flexible Curricula

Viewpoints "Drivers and Needs" Cards



Front

Back

A0 worksheet

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Reflecting on Drivers and Needs for Flexible Curricula ✓</p> <p>2 Enhancing practice for Flexible Curricula</p> | |
| <p>Overall objectives</p> | |
| <p>Priority</p> <p>Place cards here</p> <p>1 ✓</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> | |
| <p>Commentary</p> | |
| <p>Priority</p> <p>Place cards here</p> <p>1</p> <p>2 ✓</p> <p>3</p> | |
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| <p>Commentary</p> | |
| <p>Priority</p> <p>Place cards here</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> | |
| <p>Commentary</p> | |

1. Tick which stage you are undertaking.
2. Write your overall objectives for this activity on the A0 worksheet e.g. *to review and enhance flexible curriculum provision on a specific programme.*
3. As a group, choose which cards you want to focus on and place them front-up on the A0 worksheet - and categorise them into different priorities.
4. Scan the QR code to access further info online.
5. Turn the cards over to show possible different drivers and needs to consider.
6. On each card, tick those considerations that are important drivers and needs to consider (you could also prioritise these individual considerations).
7. As a group, discuss all the ticked considerations and write commentary to clarify why these are important considerations.
8. Capture the final worksheet using e.g. a digital camera.

“Practice points” Cards

Front

Back



3-1 Good practice in entry, transition, progression and exit should.

Provide flexible learning pathways including options for negotiated curricula

- To what extent do curricula offer learners flexibility in learning pathways, learning approaches and choice in topics of study and assessment approaches?
- To what extent do curricula offer greater customisation to learner needs through more flexible pedagogic and assessment approaches eg curricula based around specific values and processes?
- To what extent do curricula incorporate the academic, personal and professional development of learners throughout a programme?

QAA Enhancement Theme: Flexible Curricula
<http://tiny.cc/qaafc022>



Provide flexible learning pathways including options for negotiated curricula

- Curricula are based around specific values and processes rather than specific content and activities, allowing learning to be customised to suit learner and learner cohort needs.
- Programmes provide choice about topics of study, orientation (eg theoretical, practical, vocational) and learning pathways to defined learning outcomes.
- Approaches such as inquiry-based learning, coaching and reflective practice form core elements of negotiated curricula design.
- Cross-institutional frameworks are adopted (eg repurposing modules from other faculties, departments, courses) to maximise use of modules of learning.
- Highly modular curricula are designed which can be flexibly recombined to suit the personal needs and interests of learners ('pick and mix' approach).
- PDP (Personalised Development Planning) is a key element of programmes for each learner.
- E-Portfolios are used by learners, tutors and mentors to support academic, professional and personal development.
- Assessment criteria and methods are negotiable with flexibility in completion routes.

QAA Enhancement Theme: Flexible Curricula
 Based on the Viewpoints model: <http://wiki.uster.ac.uk/display/FPR/home>



A0 worksheet

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>① Reflecting on Drivers and Needs for Flexible Curricula</p> <p>② Enhancing practice for Flexible Curricula ✓</p> | |
| <p>Overall objectives</p> | |
| <p>Priority</p> <p>① ✓</p> <p>②</p> <p>③</p> | <p>Place cards here</p>  |
| <p>Commentary</p> | |
| <p>Priority</p> <p>①</p> <p>② ✓</p> <p>③</p> | <p>Place cards here</p>  |
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4. Scan the QR code to access further info online.
5. Turn the cards over to show possible different detailed practice points to consider.
6. On each card, tick those practice points that you wish to address for enhancing practice (you could also prioritise these individual considerations).
7. As a group, discuss all the ticked considerations and write commentary to clarify why these are important together with details of how to take them forward.
8. Capture the final worksheet using e.g. a digital camera.