

Academic Briefing No. 1

July 2020

Welcome to the first issue of 'Academic Briefing' from the Academic Office.

We are all on a steep learning curve as we adapt to teaching and supporting our students remotely and look forward to delivering blended programmes from September. As academics, continuous development of our practice is part of our mind-set. Change at this speed however is probably the biggest challenge we will face in our professional lives. Never before has the metaphor about 'rebuilding the aeroplane in mid-flight' been more apt!

As we do so, it is vital that everyone has access to the best information, guidance, training and support Study Group can provide. The purpose of this 'Academic Briefing' is to alert all academic colleagues in centres and colleges to changes in academic policies and guidance and all the different sources of support available to them as they continue to develop their practice for different modes of delivery over the coming weeks and months.

Key updates for this first briefing are:

- A new '[Quality Framework for Learning, Teaching and Assessment](#)' huddle site has been established. The framework consists of both a 'first point of reference' summary and all the principles, policies, guidance and development resources linked to from this page that guide the day to day practices of academic staff in Study Group centres and colleges in the UK and Europe.
- All programmes and modules for 2020-21 will be subject to a 'light-touch' re-approval process culminating in an approval event at the end of August. For more information, contact your Head of Centre or Academic Lead.
- The establishment by the Academic Office of key guiding principles and core practices that underpin good teaching practice in a blended learning context. These are set out in the document: '[Designing and delivering for a blended approach: Learning, Teaching and Assessment 2020-21](#)'. This should form the basis for reflection and self-evaluation of your own practice in this academic year and a key benchmark by which module, programme, centre and provider level practice will be evaluated for academic cycle 2020-21.
- To enable academic teams to quickly ensure their practice and VLE presence aligns with the framework set out in the principles and expectations paper for September 2020 the Academic Office have provided a module design '[checklist](#)'. Your academic lead has attended a number of training events where the checklist has been explained and should therefore be your first point of contact if you have any questions about how best to reflect the principles and expectations in your module learning, teaching and assessment strategy.
- Further training and support provided by the Academic Office for tutors and centres as they prepare for delivering blended programmes in September is set out in the '[Training Menu](#)'.
- To keep abreast of developments, including learning and development opportunities, please join the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Group on Workplace at <https://studygroup.workplace.com/groups/260728441956549/> if you haven't done so already.
- For learning technology tips, advice and to share your successes and good practice join the Workplace Global Learning Technology Group at <https://studygroup.workplace.com/groups/1811136035875134/>
- Open Learn provide two excellent introductory online course for those new to online teaching: '[Take Your Teaching Online](#)' and '[Developing a Sense of Belonging in Online Learning](#)'.