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Welcome back!

Even though we are only a few months into 2022 we have already been presented with a number of challenges, and opportunities, for making change through developing learning and teaching. Some of these may come through our own development, but also on those areas where we are teaching knowledge within our subjects, through the input we have with students, current and alumni. I have communicated before about the importance of us all having 'time to pause', to reflect on learning and teaching, thinking where our research may fit into these developments, and importantly the central role of students in this. Such considerations are all particularly significant when I think of the projects I am working on as Dean of LALT, and those within the institution.

There is a clear timeliness of our focus on the Institutional Strategy for the next 5 years. Leading on the Teaching & Learning and Student Experience strand has offered us the chance to have our say through the consultation days (held on 13th/14th January). It was great to see such engagement and participation in all the sessions, with comments and ideas provided in the chat, along with suggestions made through the Padlets. It was also a pleasure to start to work through some of the qualitative data collected, and make some initial reflections upon trends, themes and areas which were highlighted as important to you all as a community.

We have the opportunity to build our strategy, to make those links between research, teaching and professional practice, to debate and deliberate what makes the University of Lincoln what we are as a University – where do we sit alongside other institutions and what are the key elements which have been embedded in establishing our reputation in Higher Education? In essence, what is our USP in relation to learning & teaching and student experience?

We already know we continue to place students at the core of our learning, we hold student engagement and experience as key in the development of our community. We see students as partners, where we have a role to play in supporting them and helping them build their shared experiences. Through support, both in teaching and learning in the curriculum and also extra-curricular opportunities, we place value in enabling our students to graduate with the skills to develop their own paths – ensuring their exposure to holistic and well-rounded experiences while at the University of Lincoln.

We also place value on the level of inclusivity and diversity we have shown in our community – highlighting the benefits we can get from learning from others, collectively sharing good practice, where relationships can be strengthened, and we can be adaptable and forward looking in our planning.

It's an exciting time. One where planning and development are focused upon *how* we can be progressive, *where* we can stand out from others, and offers us all a chance to have a voice in the future developments of the University!

Teaching & Learning and Student Experience Strategy:

A significant focus over the last few months has been leading on the planning and design for the Teaching & Learning Strategy consultation days, developed with the support of DVC, DoEs and the Teaching & Learning Strategy Oversight Working Group, chaired by Liz Mossop. The Working Group consists of colleagues who have leading roles in teaching and learning across the University, including SDoTL, DoEs, CDAQS, Senior Tutors, Technicians, SU, University Librarians and Digital Education. Key themes were developed for the focused discussions/debates, such as flexible learning, employability, student engagement, assessment design, the Students Union and inclusive learning, each with themed sessions and short presentations. Specific sessions to hear more from the community were termed as *Speakers Corner* for both staff and students.

The consultation ran over two days in January (13th from 12pm-5pm and 14th from 9am-2pm) synchronously on Teams, with recorded presentations being hosted online for accessibility and those unable to attend, enabling opportunities for 'catch up'. Feedback on each session was organised through specific Padlets, which were kept open for one week following the presentations for participants to add their comments. Padlets and presentation recordings can be accessed and viewed on the LALT Resources hub [here](#).

Next steps

The Working Group is now developing plans across these key themes, in line with the institutional strands from the Strategy, and those arising from the Vice Chancellor's recent Town Hall meetings. Through the Strategy Oversight Working Group further consultation will continue through the SDoTL at a School level, as well as with the SU and Student Engagement Lead forums to further engage and embed the student voice in the Strategy.

Manifesto projects:

Developing student engagement – Student as Producer

Student as Producer (SAP) has been developed over the last 11 years, through the design and delivery of teaching and learning, across all disciplines and at all cohort levels. As a model at the University of Lincoln, it has an established legacy which has been fully embedded. It is however timely that this focus, as shown in my manifesto, is being developed through the Teaching & Learning and Student Experience strategy, as one way to reform our approaches to student engagement for the future.

We know that SAP addresses the apparent disjuncture between teaching and research, striving to provide a supportive community for academics and students through research-engaged teaching and opportunities for participation and collaboration between staff and students.

The reform of SAP continues with themes collated from the Teaching & Learning strategy session on Student Engagement, with comments being evaluated to design a progressive and forward looking form of student engagement for Lincoln. As a model, this may take some principles from the original SAP model, but further seeks to look to the future for student engagement and fill the gaps that exist in the student experience.

External Teaching and Learning Network

Progress had been made on the development of the collaborative Regional Teaching and Learning Community Network. This forum will launch at a Roundtable event held at the Festival of Teaching at De Montfort University in March 2022.

The aim for the first meeting is to expand this conversation with like-minded peers in Regional Institutions and discuss the reciprocal benefits which can arise from such events. The wider remit of the roundtable is to formalise a collective showcasing of success and best practice in Teaching and Learning; discuss future collaborative initiatives and projects and learn from each other on lessons learnt and future pedagogic research. The first meeting is set to be online but there are plans for in-person meetings in the future.

Reforming / expanding of student opportunities:

Teaching and Support panels

The Teaching Panels were developed in the academic year 20/21 and ran with six panels (with 12 staff proposals considered by 39 students in total). The panels highlighted the importance and impact of sharing and showcasing of good practice, bringing together students and staff. The panels are open for both Academic and Professional Service teams to engage with students, who provided feedback on new initiatives and proposals on teaching, learning and student experience.

The return of this opportunity for 2022/23 has been developed through work between LALT and the SU. The name has been revised to include wider elements of support and student experience, and the academic part of the panel is being led by two Student Engagement Leads Dr Luke Turnock (CoSS) and Neil Holden (CoS). The new panel dates are to be announced soon.

Wider projects:

Development of Intercultural Awareness

With the anticipated increase in International cohorts (October 2021 and February 2022) additional support for staff has been provided through Intercultural Awareness workshops. These workshops were developed with Mark F Smith (DoE CoSS) and delivered, with content provided by Dr Ian Pownall (Associate Professor International Pedagogy), Alison Raby (LIBS Senior Tutor) and Xiaotong Zhu (Research Fellow in LHERI). The workshops were promoted to, and accessible for all staff who currently have a role in supporting international cohorts, with specific relevance for those with little or no experience of teaching international students. By furthering the progress made through the International Recruitment Challenges meeting group, chaired by DVC Simon Parkes, a framework for intercultural competency and awareness training were completed in January (with 6 workshops delivered to 88 members of staff).

Workshops were designed to ensure relevant levels of preparation were ready for the February intake for staff, with additional workshops developed specifically for Senior Tutors, taking a 'train the trainer' approach to disseminate with personal tutors in their Schools.

The workshops have been supported with online resources, both staff and student facing, with links to Learning at Lincoln guidance, Student Life, Students Union, and Careers & Employability. These can be accessed on the lalt.lincoln.ac.uk website [here](#) – which includes recorded videos and a repository of resources and literature.

The next steps for this project will include more workshops for staff which will run later in the year, and a continuous approach to extending and updating the resources hosted on the LALT website. Further developments are being designed to enhance the support for student cohorts, especially for those Schools anticipating an increase in International cohorts in February 2022.

LALT updates:

[HEA Recognition \(HEAR\)](#)

Resources to support applicants and reviewers have been significantly improved alongside a review of training for staff. The reviewer base has now increased to 80 colleagues, and we have seen a continual improvement in the quality of submissions when staff have engaged with us.

We have completely overhauled the resources for the HEAR scheme, with support materials being re-written with exemplars for D2 and D3 which provide guidance, and a new approach adopted for training sessions for reviewers.

All resources are live on the [Resources Hub](#) via the Portal. We are still keen, despite encouraging take up, to continue to increase our reviewer base and urge colleagues at D2 or above to consider becoming a reviewer.

[National Student Survey \(NSS\)](#)

NSS 2022 launched on 7th February and has seen a welcome return to being face-to-face, housed in the tipi, with the student-designed t-shirt giveaway brought back to help drive participation.

[Introduction of a PGcHE for academic staff and professional service staff who teach](#)

This recently validated programme represents the institutional commitment to the development of staff and the drive for excellence in the teaching and the student experience. The PgCert HE has been designed to meet these needs for University of Lincoln staff who are new to teaching in Higher Education with the first cohort beginning in September 2022.

Full details can of the programme can be found on the LALT Resources Hub [here](#)

[New Starters \(HR\) Landing Site](#)

LALT has created a new academic starter landing page which captures everything staff need to know to get started. This is hosted on HRs Academic & Research Staff hub as this is the most likely site staff will visit for support information. The wider hub content can be accessed [here](#) (which hosts useful information for all academic staff) and the new academic starter page can be found [here](#). We will continue host a face-to-face induction to dovetail to the above and complement the Lincoln Welcome.

Dr Kate Strudwick, Dean of LALT