

# Course design 'think sheet'

This list of questions is intended to help course teams discuss the type of learning, teaching, assessment, feedback, technology and student support that might go in to the design of a new programme of study. It is intended to help surface issues from past programmes and to help teams to imagine how their courses may run ideally in future. By taking account of these key design decisions in advance of course creation it is hoped that course teams can both anticipate student needs and create efficiencies in workflow.

## Graduate attributes

- What are the graduate attributes of a [.....] student and how do we foster them?
- How can we develop these graduate attributes in our teaching content, in our teaching methods and in the types of activities that students undertake?
- Is there a sequence to the attributes that students should develop?
- How can students monitor their own development of skills and assess their ongoing learning needs? How can this be encouraged?

## Inclusivity

- What are the transition points in the student journey? (*i.e. where are students experiencing significant change*). How can we assist all students through these points?
- What are the threshold concepts? (*i.e. the concepts in our subject areas which are tricky for many students but which are essential for success and progression*). How can we assist all students to engage with these difficult concepts?
- Where in your curriculum do you have room to revisit material that is troublesome for specific groups of students? (*Can you design in such flexibility?*)
- Where in your module can you allocate time to engage with current issues, which are not defined on any module descriptor but are highly relevant? (*e.g. issues in the news, emerging research, policy changes*). Remember learning outcomes can be flexible enough to accommodate this.
- Where is the opportunity in the curriculum for the content and methods of teaching to be responsive to the needs of the group?

## **Academic development**

- What academic skills are needed at different points in the journey?
  - by the end of the first term?
  - by second year?
  - by placement?
  - by the start of the final year?
- How can we facilitate the development of these skills within the context of the programme?
- How can growth in academic skills be recognised and rewarded in our students?
- How can we develop independent study habits? What needs to happen at each stage of the student's journey to bring about independence?

## **Feedback and assessment**

- What are the main purposes of assessment in your course?
- What are the things that we must assess?
- What do we teach but really don't need to assess?
- What types of assessment fit with the future careers of graduates?
- What types of assessment could you draw upon?
- How can feedback on one piece of assessment feed in to the next? Can you plan this at the design stage?
- How can assessment give students from different backgrounds an equal chance of success?
- Is it possible to allow students opportunity to customise their assessment according to their interests?
- How can the curriculum be designed to alleviate assessment stress on staff?

## **Technology**

- What are the technologies and digital skills needed by our students to allow them to thrive in future?
- How can we introduce these in our teaching content, in our teaching methods and in the types of activities that students undertake?
- How can we future proof our approach to technology for the life of the programme? (*Especially given the pace of change*)