

IBCM Learning & Teaching Strategy

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the principles and practices that underpin the approach of International Business College Manchester (IBCM) to all aspects of learning and teaching and the overall development of all students that participate in our programmes.

- IBCM is an institution of further and higher learning established in 2011. Since its founding, IBCM has been committed to the values and beliefs of excellence, honour and effort. Although the primary aim of the college is to assist students in achieving their chosen learning goals, we also believe that it is important to help them develop disciplined and creative minds by building an effective learning environment that prepares learners for achievement. This is done through the provision of effective teaching that reflects the latest developments in student centred learning based on solid principles and methods and also takes into account the individual learning styles of each one of our students.
- IBCM believes therefore that it is vital that all classes study under skilled lecturers, who are able and eager to provide each student with the challenges, stimulation, instruction and guidance needed to succeed.
- Learning and teaching will take place via a variety of methods including face-to-face delivery, online and blended learning. All the principles in this policy document apply equally to all methods.
- IBCM aims to provide an inclusive environment for learning that anticipates the varied needs of students and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities through inclusive design and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary.

This document will highlight all aspects of the organisation which encourage good learning and will provide both students and tutors with specific details to assist in providing good and outstanding learning opportunities.

2.0 Scope

This strategy covers:

- all aspects of curriculum, lesson planning and lesson delivery
- student engagement and the enhancement of student learning opportunities

- all students participating in programmes at IBCM including those on Further Education, Higher Education, and professional programmes and those attending tailor made IBCM courses.
- all students attending IBCM on a face-to-face basis as well as those studying online via blended or distance learning.
- all those involved in the delivery of teaching and learning, plus those involved with the administration, organisation and oversight of educational programmes at IBCM.

3.0 Responsibilities

Board of Governors

Overall responsibility for all performance and management in meeting agreed goals and objectives, including those relating to academic standards and performance, rests with the *Board of Governors*. Specific responsibility is delegated to the:

Academic Board

The *Academic Board* is the senior academic authority at IBCM and has responsibility for decision making in matters concerning academic strategy and policies, academic standards, curriculum design and development and the organization of teaching and assessment. The *Academic Board* will also take responsibility for monitoring the overall quality of learning opportunities and of student welfare.

Principal

The *Principal* will take operational responsibility for coordination and administration of programmes offered at IBCM.

- Assisting with recruitment of appropriately qualified/experienced teaching staff
- Monitoring attendance registers and following up non-attendance
- Acting as *Welfare Manager* to offer support to students as needed
- Monitoring, directing and supporting all administrative activity at IBCM including registrations, attendance recording, data capture etc.
- Monitoring of online platforms

Quality Manager

The *Quality Manager*, will take responsibility for ensuring that all programmes meet the requirement of Awarding and regulatory bodies as well as the standards set by IBCM via the *Academic Board*.

- Monitoring of programmes (in conjunction with the *Programme Leaders*), in terms of observation of teaching & learning and documentation in terms of learner progress reviews and tutorials, as well as any other documentation required by IBCM and awarding bodies. This will take place for both face-to-face and online teaching.

- Monitoring of tutorial support offered to students across all programmes and feeding back development needs to the *Academic Board* for the purposes of providing any appropriate training/support. This will take place for both face-to-face and online teaching.
- Co-ordination of liaison with awarding bodies/external agencies with regard to required review/monitoring of assessment, learning & teaching and overall learner progress and development.

Programme Leader

- Responsible for day-to-day supervision and coordination of the programme. The *Programme Leader* may also be acting as tutor and/or assessor/internal verifier.
- Responsible for ensuring that all awarding body requirements are adhered to in terms of both delivery and administration (Schemes of Work, Lesson Plans and appropriate assessment/IQA/examination records etc).
- Responsible for ensuring that any online/blended delivery meets the requirements of the awarding body
- Responsible for ensuring that all tutors on their programme(s) are made aware of awarding body requirements and of IBCM policies and procedures with respect to learning, teaching and assessment.
- Responsible for ensuring all tutors on programme conduct regular tutorials for each topic area.
- Responsible for providing programme leader reports at the end of each academic year, giving appropriate feedback on all aspects of teaching and learning.
- Ensuring appropriate records of assessment and internal quality assurance are retained for sampling by the awarding bodies.

Lecturers

- Ensuring that they understand all aspects of the programme that they are teaching including all requirements for teaching and assessment
- Preparing Schemes of Work for their topic and preparing lesson plans for each specific lesson
- Ensuring the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning at the appropriate level for the programme being studied
- Ensuring that their lessons are differentiated to address the individual needs of Students
- Ensuring efficient delivery of any online/blended learning in line with awarding body requirements

- Ensuring the assessment methods selected are appropriate for the intended learning outcomes, type and level of work
- Ensuring all assessment materials are designed to allow students to achieve higher grades where appropriate
- Ensuring that regular tutorial/support sessions are provided for each individual student and that any requests/identified support needs are followed up/referred as appropriate
- Recording lesson attendance and participation of each student and identifying areas where intervention is required

4.0 Curriculum

IBCM provides a curriculum, approved by the *Academic Board*, which:

- Meets statutory and Awarding Body requirements
- Is prepared at the appropriate level for each programme, in line with the relevant external frameworks and standards
- Is both challenging and relevant
- Meets the needs of all students and helps them develop to their full potential
- Is delivered in a safe, positive learning environment; and
- Prepares students to be responsible, active workers and citizens.

Curriculum alignment

In order to ensure overall coherence in the planning, design and delivery of programmes, it is necessary to be cognisant of the learning and other objectives of provision at the college at all times.

- Design and delivery of higher education programmes in partnership with a degree awarding body should take into account that learning outcomes at all levels within the programme are aligned with external indicators of standards such as the FHEQ, Subject and Qualification Benchmark Statements and other professional standards. Programme Specification of each programme should clearly indicate how the learning outcomes are in alignment with the college objectives and the UK Quality Code.
- Delivery of further and higher education programmes in partnership with awarding bodies (e.g. Pearson/SQA technical and vocational programmes) should ensure that learning outcomes are aligned with relevant external awarding bodies programme specifications and standards.
- Study aims and objectives should clearly relate to those of the college and there should be congruence between the themes of the strategic plans and departmental aims and objectives.

- Module learning outcomes should link clearly to the programme learning outcomes.
- Learning and teaching strategies and planning of individual delivery sessions (e.g. lectures, tutorials, workshops etc.) must clearly reflect the module learning outcomes. Assessment, marking and feedback should also be linked to module learning outcomes.
- Curriculum design and delivery should take into account the needs of students with disabilities, and ways in which diversity can be reflected and celebrated.

5.0 Preparation for Teaching

5.1 Access to teaching

All lessons are to be accessible for all students and reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure that no student is disadvantaged or unable to access either physical resources or the teaching itself (whether face-to-face lessons at IBCM or online lessons delivered remotely) see *Policy on Reasonable Adjustments*.

Lecturers should also consider the potential needs of students with disabilities, including those with disabilities that might not be visible. This could include those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia and other neurodivergent conditions. Neurodiverse students may interpret, interact with, and experience the world in unique or non-neurotypical ways. Making learning accessible is a key challenge in education environments and alternative approaches may be sometimes needed to embrace neurodiversity.

These can include:

- creating a psychologically safe environment within the classroom e.g. considering how requests for answers or responses might be received, understanding need for breaks and changes in content and pace
- diversifying the teaching style e.g. to reflect ways in which different learners engage with learning and assessment
- recognising individual strengths in students e.g. some people with autistic traits can show great strengths in detail, people with ASD can sometimes see links and patterns in a better way than neurotypical persons, and can problem solve in a different, but equally effective way

5.2 Schemes of Work

- Schemes of Work, approved by the *Programme Leader*, are to be provided for each module prior to the start of delivery. All Schemes of Work will be stored within the appropriate course folder (some sample Schemes of Work templates are provided by Awarding Bodies and can be used as a guideline only when available)

- Schemes of Work will indicate the method of delivery and adapted as necessary for blended/online tuition
- Schemes of Work must be reviewed regularly by *Lecturers/ Programme Leaders* and always prior to the module being taught. Feedback from the *Annual Programme Leader Review* will also inform the review as will any changes to specifications from the Awarding Bodies.

5.3 Lesson Planning

- The lecturer will maintain a file that will contain a copy of the lesson plan for each session. Lesson plans will identify the aims and objectives/learning outcomes of each session together with reflections on the lesson which can be used to inform future delivery. Lesson plans are also to be stored on the relevant folder on the shared drive.
- Lesson plans also to be reviewed prior to teaching the same module again and revised as appropriate to take into account the nature of the group and the individual student's learning styles/abilities.
- Planning should take into account knowledge of students' abilities, prior attainment and learning styles as well as subject requirements
- For online/blended learning, lecturers will ensure they are familiar with all equipment to be used as well as the learning platforms and that equipment used is fit for purpose in advance of the lessons taking place

6.0 Quality standards in Teaching and Learning

6.1 Teaching Practice

- All teaching and learning approaches adopted will be flexible, diverse and appropriate to the skills and needs of individual students, taking into account equality of opportunity.
- Lecturers appointed will have both occupational competence and current knowledge about the subject they are teaching.
- A variety of teaching and learning methods will be incorporated into lessons
- Lecturers will be actively engaged with students throughout lessons
- Lecturers will use a range of skill including:
 - providing engaging starters;
 - explaining logically and clearly;
 - proceeding in small steps at an appropriate pace;

- demonstrating or using interesting examples and encouraging active participation;
 - using a wide variety of types of questions;
 - providing opportunities for practising different learning styles;
 - providing supportive formative assessment and appropriate feedback which gives the student opportunity to improve their work.
 - setting out clear objectives and summing up at the end of lessons to indicate how objectives have been met
- Learning activities will be designed to enable students to secure the planned learning objectives.
 - Learning objectives will be reviewed and summarised at the end of the lesson.
 - A range of teaching strategies, linked to learning objectives, will be used to improve student performance/learning
 - All required content as specified by the Awarding Body will be covered during the lessons, to enable students to meet the Learning Outcomes/Assessment Criteria of their chosen qualification (assignment based or examination).
 - Engagement of students, not control, will underpin the design of activities.
 - Lecturers will use a variety of teaching methods, individual and group work which meet the learning objectives, and address different learning styles.
 - Lecturers will participate in observation of their teaching practice and complete appropriate documentation accordingly
 - Lecturers will provide students with opportunities to work with others – including pair/group activities. For online learners this may include setting up group networking sessions and online activities.

6.2 Assessment/Assignment/Work

- In order to enable students to develop their independent learning and time management skills, assignments and/or examinations are set to ascertain whether students have achieved the planned learning (internally or externally set as required by the programme/Awarding Body). Lecturers provide students with the opportunity to develop these skills, across all modules.
- Students will be given an appropriate amount of time to complete each assignment or prepare for their examination and will be issued with a timetable/Assessment Plan showing all appropriate dates.
- All assignments are to be prepared by lecturers by the start of each term and produced/prepared in line with relevant awarding body requirements/guidelines.
- To ensure rigour in assessments all students are required to confirm authenticity at submission. Details regarding the policy for academic misconduct are outlined in the *Assignment Submission Procedures*, and the *Student Disciplinary Policy*.

6.3 Resources

- The best resources support high quality teaching and learning. Resources at IBCM include a wide selection of paper, audio, visual or web-based resources. Each lecturer, in their subject area, has a responsibility for their teaching and learning resources.
- Lecturers have the responsibility to develop high quality resources to support their teaching and learning. The care, maintenance and sharing of resources is a fundamental aspect of College work for all staff.
- Resources for all programmes, including online and blended delivery, should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they continue to be current and fit for purpose. Provision should include alignment with strategic growth and scalability planning, and enhancements to improve overall experience for staff and students. Recent and planned enhancements include:
 - access to an online library of around 1 million books, including specialist technical and business collections
 - hard copies of key texts books and journals, as identified within programme specifications or specifically by lecturers, are available for reference on campus.
 - a wider range of more general texts and reference material is available through mandatory student membership at Manchester Central Library
 - updates are being made to the current VLE and all staff and students will be provided with access to a Google based VLE from January 2023. The IBCM VLE will integrate with the following functions
 - Content management
 - Curriculum and assessment
 - Learner engagement
 - Administration of learner information
 - Communication tools
 - Collaboration tools
 - Real-time (live) teaching

6.4 Marking /Assessment

- All students will have their work assessed/marked in such a way that it is likely to improve their learning, develop their self-confidence, raise self-esteem and provide clear opportunities for improvement of their work and further progression.
- Assessment/marking is to be undertaken in accordance with the Assessment Plan and formative assessment will be provided where required and matched against learning outcomes, thus enabling the learner to make the necessary progress. (See *IBCM Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance Strategy*)

6.5 Teaching observations

- The Observation of Teaching at IBCM underpins Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Lecturers. It is used to review and further develop the quality of teaching at the College. All Lecturing staff will be observed at least once each year. The results from the observation will feed into the annual appraisals and to the planned IBCM CPD activity schedule. Subsequent observations/appraisals will then monitor development that has taken place. Observations will be undertaken for both face-to-face and online delivery.
- Student feedback and reports on student progress/achievement are also used to identify further training and review the overall quality of Teaching and Learning at IBCM.
- In addition IBCM promotes voluntary peer observation, where all staff are able to observe each other in turn as a formative exercise for both parties.
- Feedback from external organisations is also used to inform future direction and identify improvements in the approach to learning and teaching at IBCM.

7.0 Student Engagement and the enhancement of the student learning experience

The QAA UK Quality Code (2018) states in its “Expectations for Quality” core practices that:

“The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience”

“The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes”

IBCM is committed to active engagement of its students to ensure that all aspects of their experience within the college is positive, both academically and personally. Although our primary aim is to assist students to achieve their chosen learning goals, we also believe it is important to help them develop disciplined and creative minds by building an effective and supportive learning environment to prepare them for achievement.

7.1 Student support

- IBCM has a Student Support Framework which details the actual and planned services that are provided for students before and during their time at the college. This includes the help that is provided in administrative activities, welfare and career planning.
- Day-to-day pastoral support is provided by lecturers and programme leaders and students are given opportunity to provide feedback on a regular basis both informally

and at formal review sessions. A designated member of staff is responsible for welfare.

- Advice and guidance for applicants and students with disabilities is provided at various stages in the student lifecycle. This includes arranging reasonable adjustments and providing support on applying for Disability Support Allowance (DSA).

7.2 Policies and procedures

- As well as policies which outline the quality standards expected in teaching, learning and assessment, there is a range of policies and procedures which outline specific support for students in relation to both academic and personal issues.
- Students are provided with a comprehensive induction at the start of their programme where they will be provided with information regarding key policies and procedures, they will also be given information on all aspects of college life, health and safety information and information about the local area to help them to make the most of their student experience.
- The Initial Assessment process will ensure that students individual needs are captured and an *Individual Learning Plan* provided for them tailored to their specific requirements and learning objectives.

7.3 Student Involvement

- Students will be advised at their induction on all the ways in which their involvement is actively encouraged at IBCM.
- Students can discuss their aims and goals and ensure that IBCM is advised of any specific requirements that they may have, at the beginning of their programme.
- One-to-one support can be provided, as needed, to assist students with any specific issues that they may have. This can be face-to-face or online as required.
- IBCM encourages regular, informal feedback through an “Open Door Policy” from Management and staff, enabling student concerns to be discussed at the earliest opportunity, confidentially if required.
- IBCM also has a *Welfare Office* (shared with Berlitz Manchester) available to assist with any personal matters which students may need support with.
- Formal feedback is sought through *Tutorials* which take place on a regular basis from each tutor for each subject taught. We recognise that:
 - Personal tutorial support and guidance is essential to success
 - Tutorial support is essential to the management of learner performance
 - Tutorial support is essential to managing learner attendance, retention, achievement and progression
 - Tutorial support places the learner at the centre of the learning experience

- All tutors will therefore schedule tutorials into their timetable and keep accurate and timely records of these sessions. Any identified needs will be taken forward to the *Programme Lead/Welfare Manager/MD* as appropriate.
- *Programme Leaders* and/or the *Academic/Quality manager* will also undertake termly *Learner Progress Reviews* which involve a two-way conversation to provide feedback to the learner on their progress and gain their feedback *from* them in respect of their experience studying at IBCM. This feedback also informs the *Annual Programme Leader Review* which is used to feed into management decisions on programme changes and improvements. These reviews are scheduled into the annual calendar.
- When suitable numbers of student permit, a student forum will be set up and a student representative elected.
- Focus groups may also be put together for specific projects and issues
- All students are provided with student surveys to record their feedback on their programme. These student surveys also feed into the *Annual Programme Leader Review*.
- The *Feedback and Complaints* procedure details informal and formal feedback mechanisms and the *Assessment Appeals* procedure outlines the process to follow if learners have any issue with assessment decisions

7.4 Quality assurance and enhancement

Quality assurance and enhancement relate to what is done within the day-to-day college life, such as good teaching and improvements to help students. Quality assurance and enhancement help the college know what is happening and where it needs to provide support to help staff make improvements or introduce innovations. This is necessary to demonstrate externally that what we do meets national and international expectations. The College maps its standards against the requirements of the UK Quality Code (higher education programmes) and awarding body regulations (further education programmes) to ensure that required standards are maintained throughout all activities. To further support quality assurance and enhancement:

- regular staff meetings take place to discuss and review all aspects of programme delivery
- programmes of observation, support and CPD for in place for all staff
- standardisation activities ensure quality in all assessment practice
- a range of support mechanisms in place as outlined above (welfare support, tutorials and reviews, one-to-one as needed) along with the “Open Door Policy” from management and staff.
- a full range of policies and procedures exist which outline quality standards and how these must be maintained

- small class sizes ensure a tailored approach to learning, with support needs identified quickly and responded to.
- options for blended and online delivery for some programmes and to adapt to changing circumstances by moving tuition online when required (for example during Covid-19)
- one-to-one support with students is provided as required

7.5 Quality Control

- The *Managing Director* has overall responsibility for ensuring that quality in the organisation, across all areas, is continuously reviewed and improved and that appropriate external validation is maintained year on year. The *Quality Manager* will support this on a day-to-day basis.

7.6 Staff Development

- IBCM provides regular staff development for all staff, with the purpose of promoting excellence in teaching and learning as well as ensuring that they are fully trained in other relevant areas such as health and safety. This can only be achieved by providing lecturers with the required skills and knowledge and ensuring that they are equipped to provide dynamic learning experiences that engage the learner and promote independent learning and skills development.
- IBCM is committed to ensuring that staff will complete the required CPD to retain their professional status and to ensure that their knowledge remains current and up to date. A CPD flowchart identifies the process for appraisals, observations and development opportunities.
- A schedule for training and appraisals will be prepared at the start of each year by the *Managing Director* with assistance from the *Academic and Quality Manager*.
- A staff CPD activity will take place annually, covering areas identified by staff during the observation/appraisal process
- All staff can approach their line manager/MD in request of any specific development opportunities pertinent to their role
- Lecturers will be expected to attend relevant professional meetings such as awarding body training activities or conferences and any relevant industry events, so as to remain aware of current practice and to enhance their ability to teach the current industrial trends and processes.

7.7 External contribution to the enhancement of the student learning experience

- IBCM seeks and welcomes external participation and contribution in their quality assurance and enhancement activities.

- Standards verification visits and academic management reviews take place as required by the Awarding Body; all feedback is cascaded through regular staff meetings
- Membership of relevant professional bodies enables teaching staff to keep knowledge current and relevant for delivery to students
- Opportunities for external evaluation, for example by the QAA, are viewed as positive opportunities for dialogue and interaction. All audits and inspections enable the college to receive feedback and recommendations for improvements to its services.

8.0 Reference Points

The following policy and procedure documents support the information in this policy:

- *IBCM Feedback and Complaints Policy and procedures*
- *IBCM Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Strategy*
- *IBCM Initial Assessment Policy*
- *IBCM Assignment Submission Procedures*
- *IBCM Assessment Appeals policy and procedures*
- *IBCM Disciplinary Policy*
- *IBCM Student Welfare Policy*
- *IBCM Staff Development Framework*
- *Student Handbook*

These policies & procedures can be found at [IBCM Policies & Procedures](#).

9.0 Version History

Version	1.1
Originator	Academic and Quality Manager
Effective from	1 st October 2022
Approved by	IBCM Board of Governors
Date Approved	30 th September 2022