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Introduction

This document provides a Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy covering all of MIE's education provision. It is intended to set a challenging standard for MIE's provision and remains a working document. It may be updated at any time in the light of future experience and consultations.

MIE success rests on its long-term commitment to aligning its teaching, learning and assessment practice to the needs of each entry cohort.

This strategy aims to provide:

   - Study programmes for students that reflect best practice in relation to ensuring programme design, selection, and pedagogy.

   - High teaching quality as acknowledged by students, external examiners, and professional bodies.

   - A stimulating learning environment tailored to diverse needs.

   - Technology that supports effective and flexible learning in a digital society.

   - Strong and effective assessment practices that include a range of methods to promote learning.

- Development of independent and resilient students with high aspirations.

- Monitoring of standards through retention and satisfaction data.

This strategy aims to provide:

1. Study programmes for students that reflect best practice in relation to: ensuring that programme design / selection and pedagogy are appropriate to the level and nature of the award and provide for effective progression through the stages of the award
2. Tutors who are knowledgeable in their subject(s), passionate about their teaching, who make use of appropriate professional development to maintain the currency of their subject knowledge and pedagogy, and who act as co-scholars with students. Faculty must engage in continuous professional development (CPD) in teaching, learning, and assessment strategies, explicitly linking their teaching to the best available evidence.
3. High teaching quality as acknowledged by our students, external examiners and verifiers, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies;
4. A stimulating learning environment that meets the needs of students and prepares them for progression in education and/or in employment.
5. The embedding of technology that supports students' experiences, develops digital literacy skills in both staff and students, and enables effective, flexible learning and working in a digital society.
6. Learning and teaching that reflects students' approaches to learning;
7. Strong and effective assessment practices that include a range of assessment methods, enable students to learn and develop, and that effectively measure learner achievement and inform their further learning;
8. The development of independent and resilient students with high aspirations for their achievements.
9. The monitoring of standards by the use of retention and student satisfaction data;
10. Outstanding teaching and learning infrastructure, including support for students from staff and online. As a foundational step, we will establish clear and well-defined academic contracts that outline professional expectations and support a robust academic framework.

It is underpinned by the following themes:

1. Diverse students learn in different ways throughout their programme of study and within individual teaching sessions. There is no such thing as a homogenous learner group. Our students are individuals with varied personal abilities and needs. They have varied educational and cultural backgrounds. Our learning teaching practice should acknowledge this heterogeneity through the provision of a variety of learning experiences. Engaging our students in learning both in timetabled sessions and online is an essential part of facilitating their success. In addition to a stimulating classroom environment, we need to enable students to continue learning outside of the classroom through directed activity, continued support, learning packages and through technology-enhanced learning, in the workplace, on campus and using our virtual learning environment.
2. Assessments must be robust , appropriate to the subject, and to the academic level of the year group. They must test understanding and create opportunities for learning. Assessment is the primary means of measuring learner achievement. Assessment practice should test and acknowledge students' achievement of stated learning outcomes. At the same time, it should also provide feedback to students that will inform and assist their future learning.

3. Curriculum design and delivery addresses key employability and transferrable skills. The acquisition of transferrable and employability skills is fundamental to our students' success. We will endeavour to equip students to succeed in their chosen area of Osteopathy.

4. Teaching, learning and assessment methods are appropriate, balanced, effective and engaging.
    - Effective curriculum selection and/or design takes account of the whole programme a learner is studying. To the extent to which it is within our control, we will ensure that the teaching and assessment across the whole of each programme utilise an appropriate mixture of methods that will enable students to achieve their learning outcomes and demonstrate their achievement effectively.

    - Teaching, learning and assessment methods used within all settings, whether in the work place, in classroom delivery, support tutorials and workshops, will be engaging and suit the need of all students. An educational environment will be provided in which students feel empowered to lead in their own learning and, as a consequence, develop wider skills such as resilience and independence.

    - Robust initial assessments will be used where appropriate to inform staff of students' starting points and individual needs and facilitate the planning and delivery of sessions that provide appropriate levels of stretch and challenge.

5. The learning needs of students with disabilities or other protected characteristics will be accommodated appropriately within teaching, learning and assessment.

 6. We will provide an outstanding teaching and learning infrastructure, including support for students from staff and online . Students' prior experience and preparation for study environment will vary. For some, study will be a recent experience, for others their most recent study may be in the distant past or have been undertaken in a different cultural environment. We need to help all our students understand and prepare for the rigours and expectations of their chosen subject and level of study. We can achieve this by:

    - Embedding an understanding of academic, information and digital literacies within and alongside a learner's programme of study.
    - Embedding an appreciation of experience gained from previous study and new study expectations.
    - Embedding and supporting employability and the capacity evaluate career opportunities.
    - Providing opportunities for students to learn, revise and revisit key learning through online means.
    - Providing high quality library resources and spaces.
    - Providing high specification audio-visual and media classroom equipment for campus based delivery that underpins a wide range of teaching approaches.

7. What students do outside, or alongside formal study is recognised and valued as making a key contribution to their learning. Students bring much to their study, including experience gained prior to entry or learning through concurrent activities. Prior learning and workplace experience can be acknowledged and, where this is permitted by the awarding body, credit can be granted through approved recognition of prior learning (RPL) processes. Alongside this, students' extra-curricular activity, including volunteering and other paid employment, are part of the broader curriculum and can contribute to academic success, enhance the learning experience and help achieve the employability skills required for employment.

8. We share and respond to best practice in learning, teaching and assessment that is appropriate to the subject discipline, academic level and nature of our programmes.

We will foster a MIE-wide culture that supports and challenges staff and students to engage with innovative ideas and practices, to evaluate their effectiveness and to share best-practice to colleagues across MIE.

9. Students and staff engage with education for sustainable development.

We will help students 'develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge to make informed decisions for the benefit of themselves and others, now and in the future, and to act upon these decisions.' (UNESCO, 2010) This is a key preparation of our students for a global outlook, including their employability and ability to cope with the challenges of the future.

10. We will provide reflective mechanisms to improve the quality of our provision. MIE is committed to continuous enhancement of the learner learning experience so that it remains of the highest quality. We will take active steps to ensure that staff, students, employers and other stakeholders reflect on the quality and standards of our programmes. We will provide formal deliberative processes by which these reflections can influence the quality of our provision.

Strategies

We have developed strategies to help us to deliver our ambitions. These are set out below under seven headings, each of which has an aim and a number of strategies that support the aim.

Developing Teaching and Facilitating Learning
 Aim: To develop the highest standards of teaching and learning in all our teaching staff across our provision.

 Strategies
- Professionalisation of Faculty: Tutors who are knowledgeable in their subject(s), passionate about their teaching, who make use of appropriate professional development to maintain the currency of their subject knowledge and pedagogy, and who act as co-scholars with students. Faculty must engage in continuous professional development (CPD) in teaching, learning, and assessment strategies, explicitly linking their teaching to the best available evidence.

- Flexibility in Staff Deployment: Flexibly deploy teaching staff with appropriate experience and academic and/or professional qualifications where the average level of formal qualifications held by staff teaching on programmes is normally at least one level higher in the National Qualifications Framework than that of the module(s) being taught. This will include completing Phase 1 objectives such as implementing academic contracts systematically.
- Mentoring and Peer-Review Systems: Ensure that our staff understand their key role in promoting the learner experience and have access to professional development opportunities to develop and enhance their roles. This will include establishing mentoring and peer-review systems to support continuous improvement in teaching practices and foster a collaborative learning environment.

Improving Assessment and Feedback Practice

Aim: To develop the highest standards of assessment and feedback practice that supports all delivery modes, including taught courses, distance learning, work-based learning and off campus delivery.

Strategies:

- Ensure that students are briefed on assessment methods and criteria before embarking on their programme of study.
- Ensure that programme design includes opportunities for self-assessment and receiving formative feedback to assist students with preparation for their summative assessments. We will also review feedback processes to provide students with timely and consistent feedback.
- Ensure that assessment moderation processes provide clear, consistent and transparent procedures to students, external examiners and verifiers, and other stakeholders.
- Encourage students to engage in self-assessment and peer-assessment activities to build their capacity for reflection and independent learning..
- Set, record and monitor relevant targets for students and specify actions needed to achieve those targets.

Supporting and Engaging Students

Aim: To support and engage our diverse learner population in preparation for and throughout their programme of study and actively assist them into employment or further study.

Strategies:

- Provide effective induction programmes that assist students to make the most of their academic life and learning opportunities. These will acknowledge the mode and length of study, location and the learner's academic background, and focus particularly on the early part of students' study and how to make the most of learning opportunities.
- Ensure that inclusion of academic skills (including literacy, numeracy and other study skills) occurs throughout the lifetime of a learner's programme of study.

- Design the early part of a programme of study to include processes that diagnose learner learning support needs, integrate appropriate study and academic skills and provide early formative feedback.
- Where possible, provide students with appropriate credit for prior learning experiences.
- Provide online and/or face-to-face tutorial support, including coverage of academic matters, numeracy and digital literacies, that are fit for purpose and visible to students and tutors.
- Provide effective language skills support to enable international students to make the most of their academic life and learning opportunities.
- Embed an ethos of education for sustainability, which will feature throughout a student's study and support processes.
- Continue to work in partnership with our students to improve communication and feedback locally and across MIE.

Using Technology-Enhanced Learning

Aim: We will invest in, develop and fully utilise learning technologies and infrastructure to support and enhance learning and teaching within and beyond the classroom. These digital technologies will enhance innovation in the learner experience support and our sustainability agenda.

Strategies:
- Actively encourage contemporary methods of delivery specifically focused on technology.
- Ensure that we have the necessary base level of IT capability to use all our online systems and to ensure that the users of specific online systems are adequately trained to make the best use of them. We will ensure that we provide comprehensive training and support to show staff how to exploit digital resources and content and embed this into their teaching practice.
- Regularly upgrade and update our learner and staff computing facilities to provide access to appropriate hardware and software.
- Invest in creating technology-rich teaching rooms and learning spaces that enhance learner learning and integrate with materials in the VLE.
- Use technology to support and enhance the learner learning experience and make it integral to the course design and delivery
- Make teaching-generated media available to all students through our VLE, our website and/or on their mobile devices and using a range of delivery methods.
- Implement minimum standards for VLE content.
- All support delivery will be reviewed regularly to identify where the use of assistive technology can be a longer term addition to "individual support" and where support can be tapered to promote students independence, wherever applicable.

Scholarship and Applied Research

Aim: To cultivate an appropriately scholarly, practice-led and research-informed environment for our staff and students.

Strategies:

- Maintain an active Research and Scholarship Committee with access to dedicated funding to deploy in support of staff and student research and scholarly activity.
- Develop learning communities of staff that bring together their subject and pedagogic interests and expertise so as to share and disseminate knowledge and share best practice.
- Continue to inform our curricula through research, professional and scholarly activity in a deliberate and systematic manner.
- Enable students to have the opportunity to undertake enquiry-based and research-orientated activity appropriate to their programmes of study.
- Celebrate students' success through the creation of opportunities for students to disseminate and publish research-orientated and other scholarly outputs arising from their study.
- Celebrate research students' successes through the creation of opportunities to disseminate and publish research.

Curriculum Selection, Design and Development

Aim: To provide and maintain curricula that aid learner retention and progression, embrace our employability and sustainability ambitions and ultimately lead to learner success. The quality of our curricula and hence, the learner learning experience, is informed by use of qualitative and quantitative data.

Strategies:
- Use quantitative and qualitative data to review and monitor standards in learning, teaching and assessment in programme monitoring. Retention, satisfaction and achievement data will be used to set standards.
- Give close scrutiny, via approval events for: the appropriateness of programme; The provision made for students' development throughout the programme; and The appropriateness of stated learning, teaching and assessment methods,
- Identify and share best practice in learning and teaching as it relates to distance learning and online facilitation. We will provide coaching and mentoring for staff undertaking this practice for the first time.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate support and learning materials.
- Embed, communicate and monitor Recognition of Prior Learning processes within course design and delivery.
- Ensure that we are producing students equipped with skills for the employment marketplace.

Ensure that our assessment practices address the issues of sustainable development.

Deliberative Processes

Aim: To ensure that our formal deliberative structures and processes reflect on the quality and standards of our programmes and provide mechanisms by which this reflection informs and enhances future provision.
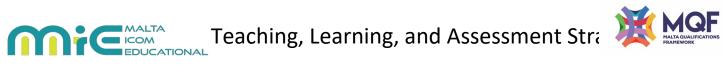
Strategies:

- Embed the use of use of internal and external reference points[1], in all relevant deliberative processes.
- Establish, maintain, monitor and review the academic standards of MIE awards,
- Ensure that programme reviews and action plans are informed by the views of students, external examiners or verifiers, and of other stakeholders where relevant.
- Ensure that MIE maintains fit-for-purpose structure of formal deliberative committees from programme to institutional level. Ensure that all these committees have learner representation and that there is external academic involvement in.
- Engage with key stakeholders (including employers) regarding programme design and/or ongoing development.
- Seek learner feedback through the use of timely and appropriate mechanisms in all programmes, with transparent and accountable responses.
- Ensure that a systematic awareness of learner feedback, learner performance, academic standards and external reference points informs the process of reflection, planning, implementation, enhancement and evaluation.
- Identify actions necessary to bring about continual improvement to teaching, learning opportunities, assessment, learner support, engagement and enhancement.
- Encourage staff participation in work with colleagues in other institutions, in external examining, and in membership of participation in and engagement with relevant professional, statutory and/or regulatory bodies.
- Encourage staff and learner engagement with discipline-specific and pedagogical research communities and activities.
- Encourage change and innovation.

Phased implementation plan 2024-28

Phase	Focus Areas	Key Actions	Timeline
Phase 1	Develop academic infrastructure and professionalise faculty	1. Establish academic contracts 2. Launch comprehensive CPD programs 3. Invest in teaching	End academic year 24-25 End academic year 24-25

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[1] Appendix 91.Referencing the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF/EHEA)

		resources	End academic year 24-25
Phase 2	Enhance teaching practices and integrate evidence-based approaches	1. Embed evidence-based teaching practices 2. Introduce mentoring and peer-review systems 3. Enhance digital teaching tools	End academic year 25-26 End academic year 24-25 End academic year 26-27
Phase 3	Evaluate and refine strategy implementation based on outcomes	1. Conduct periodic reviews 2. Adjust infrastructure and policies as needed 3. Report outcomes to stakeholders	End academic year 26-27