



Enquiry-based learning

Learning is driven by a process of enquiry that promotes engagement with research. Staff act as facilitators, supporting and encouraging students as they take ownership of their learning and shape the nature and direction of their research. There is an emphasis on group work that provides a resource for the development of discipline-based and generic skills.



'Open-box' modules

An open-box module is one in which most of the outcomes are negotiable and, therefore, the published learning outcomes are few and generic. The final year dissertation or project module is an example. Open-box modules may be introduced in earlier years and may be considered particularly valuable in combined programmes, promoting engagement across discipline boundaries.



Negotiation

Students may have the opportunity to choose from a range of optional modules or, within a module, they may be able to choose from a range of topics set for assessment. Other opportunities for negotiation may include weighting and timing of tasks, and the assessment criteria. Involvement in these processes encourages reflection and increases student ownership of their work.



'Real-life' learning situations

Where students undertake placement or a comparable learning opportunity, it enriches the learning experience, provides a platform for the application and development of skills and offers a perspective that informs student engagement with their discipline and contextualises their learning for life after graduation.



Novel approaches to learning

This might involve students in role-playing in delivering a seminar presentation and is an effective means of engaging students with their learning in the early stages of their undergraduate programme. It makes learning enjoyable and encourages students to be creative and consider imaginative ways in which they might present material.



Assessment that focuses on process

Ideally, assessment is integrated within the learning and functions as a means of encouraging the development of good learning habits. The assessment of process, which involves formative and summative dimensions, focuses on work in progress, including library- or lab-based tasks, research exercises, outlines, and progress reports. Self, peer and tutor evaluation informs ongoing development.



Use of debates

A valuable collaborative learning exercise in which groups of students take opposing positions in focused discussion of an issue. It develops skills in presentation, questioning, explaining, defending and challenging views, and team-working. The entire process is managed by the students (including the election of a Chair) with staff in a monitoring and facilitative role.



Beyond the discipline

We often encourage students to push the boundaries and extend their learning beyond the perceived parameters of their discipline. Engagement with perspectives beyond the discipline enables students to work on a larger canvas and make connexions that provide a platform for further exploration. This can lead to innovative outcomes that feed back into, and create new possibilities within, the discipline.



Collaborative learning

Collaborative learning may involve students working in pairs or in small groups, sharing ideas and benefiting from an interactive process that provides support for and encourages individual as well as collective initiative. Very importantly, students involved in a group endeavour are learning together and developing skills as team players.



Good assessment and feedback practice should:

Add your own principle

Priority:

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