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## Quality Assurance for Reform and Transformation of HEIs in Uzbekistan - QUARTZ

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# Ensuring Quality in Higher Education: Admission, monitoring, tutoring and career development

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# Strengthening Programme Flexibility & Student Progression

## Structuring a Balanced Curriculum

- Core, elective (optional), and facultative modules, as well as programme specialisations for structured yet flexible learning

## Diversifying Learning Modes

- Full-time, part-time, blended, and to enhance accessibility
- Work-based learning to integrate professional experience into academic qualifications

## Ensuring Seamless Recognition of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer

- Formal Learning
- Non-formal Learning
- Informal Learning



# Core, Elective, and Optional Components. Programme Pathways

## Core Modules

- Essential for foundational and discipline-specific learning.

## Electives (Optional Modules)

- Allow students to specialise in areas of interest.

## Facultative Modules

- Support interdisciplinary learning and skill diversification (non-compulsory, supplementary learning, no direct impact on degree completion).

## Programme Specialisations (Pathways)

- Allow students to choose a specialisation that aligns with career goals, e.g., MBA (Finance) or MBA (Sport Management), can be organised by pairing elective modules to lead to specialisation.



# Multiple Study Modes for Accessibility and Inclusion

## Full-time & Part-time

- Offers flexibility based on student needs and availability.

## Blended & Online Learning

- Incorporates digital tools for hybrid education.

## Work-Based Learning

- Internships, apprenticeships, that are incorporated as credit-bearing modules.



# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

## Definition & Purpose

- **Evidence-based** integration of previously acquired **knowledge, skills, and experience** into formal education.
- “A formal acknowledgement by a competent authority of the value of a foreign educational qualification with a view to access to educational and/or employment activities.” (Lisbon Recognition Convention retrieved from [https://ehea.info/media/ehea.info/file/Lisbon\\_Recognition\\_Convention/04/5/Lisbon\\_Recognition\\_Convention\\_579045.pdf](https://ehea.info/media/ehea.info/file/Lisbon_Recognition_Convention/04/5/Lisbon_Recognition_Convention_579045.pdf))

## Impact

- Enhances **Lifelong learning** and career mobility.
- Supports **flexible educational pathways**.
- Promotes **diversity and inclusivity** in higher education.

## Types

- **Formal** – accredited education and qualifications.
- **Non-Formal** – workplace training, professional certifications.
- **Informal** – Self-directed learning, work/life experience.



# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer cont.

## Recognition of Formal Learning

- Qualifications or periods of study for student transfer (advanced entry, credit exemption)
- Student mobility – Erasmus+ outgoing student mobility for studies or placement (including micro credentials), bilateral agreements between HEIs for Double or Joint Degree Programmes, University Alliances.

## Recognition of Experiential Learning (RPEL)

- Prior learning gained through
  - work, voluntary activities or other life experiences acquired outside of formal higher education or training systems.
  - non-accredited training courses.
- Could be evidenced through work products (reports, minutes, emails etc.), testimonies, projects, professional publications, learning logs/reflective accounts, videos, audio.
- Involves an assessment process on the part of academic staff.



# Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer: APPLICATION

- **Define Clear Parameters** – Establish **acceptable types, limits, and staff/faculty responsibilities** for RPL credit transfer.
- **Integrate into Quality Assurance Systems (QA)** – Embed RPL **criteria and assessment methods** within institutional QA frameworks, e.g., ECTS Guide, programme specifications, internal regulations and documentation for recognition.
- **Ensure Transparency** – Make RPL policies **publicly accessible** for current and prospective students, including transfer and mobility students.



# Programme Specification and Formal Approval

**The approval and updating of the Programme specification should be integrated into the internal QA provisions.**

## **Core elements of Programme Specification:**

- General Information
  - Teaching/Awarding Institution
  - Final Award and Programme Title
  - Programme Director (Head of Department)
  - Mode of Study, Normal Duration, and Period of Candidature, Language of study
  - Subject Benchmark Statements, Professional Bodies Accreditations
  - Date of Production





## Programme Specification cont.

- Admission criteria
- Aims of the programme – broad and general, defining overall purpose
- Qualification description – aligned with HEI strategic goals and NQF
- Learning outcomes
- Credits and award requirements
- Programme structure and features, curriculum units (modules)
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods
- Module delivery and assessment timetable (generic)
- Student commitments
- Ethics and guidance on unfair practices in student work
- Progression, employment and transfer opportunities
- Academic support



# Ensuring a Structured Student Lifecycle (SSL)

Institutions must apply consistent, transparent, and published regulations across all stages of the student journey, including cover **admission, recognition of prior learning, academic progression, and final certification.**

## Why It Matters?

- Supports student success and institutional integrity.
- Ensures fair access, mobility, and qualification recognition across institutions and countries.
- Aligns with international agreements (e.g., Lisbon Recognition Convention) for coherent recognition policies.



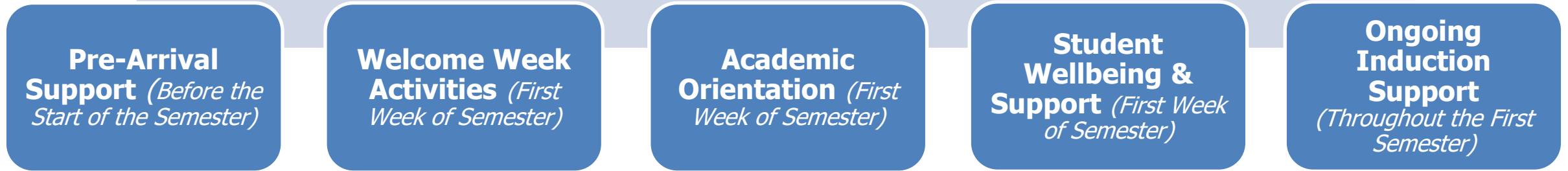
# SSL: Admission - Fair & Transparent Access

## Transparent Admission & Entry Policies

- Admission criteria should be clear, publicly available, and consistently applied.
- Equal access for all applicants to maintain fairness and institutional credibility.
- Accommodation to diverse application needs, including support for international applicants, applicants with disabilities, transfer students, students applying with RPL.
- Proper communication channels with applicants and prospective students



# SSL: Student Induction & Orientation



**Pre-Arrival Support** *(Before the Start of the Semester)*

**Welcome Week Activities** *(First Week of Semester)*

**Academic Orientation** *(First Week of Semester)*

**Student Wellbeing & Support** *(First Week of Semester)*

**Ongoing Induction Support** *(Throughout the First Semester)*

- Access to online orientation materials (videos, handbooks, FAQs).
- Virtual Q&A sessions with faculty and student mentors.
- Completion of introductory academic skills modules.

- University Introduction: Overview of mission, values, and academic culture.
- Campus & Facilities Tour: Library, IT services, student support centres, career offices.
- Meet Your Faculty: Introduction to department heads, tutors, and key academic staff.
- Social Integration: Ice-breaking activities, student clubs, networking events.

- Understanding Programme Structure: Modules, credits, assessments, and progression pathways.
- Academic Integrity & Expectations: Plagiarism policies, research ethics, referencing guidelines.
- Learning Support Services: Study skills workshops, tutoring, language support.

- Overview of counselling services.
- Guidance on financial aid, housing, and student welfare programmes.
- Safety briefing and emergency contact procedures.
- Student Career Services for internship and placements.
- Erasmus+ mobility opportunities.

- Regular check-ins with academic advisors or personal tutors.
- Peer mentoring programmes for continued support.
- Mid-semester review session to address challenges and feedback.



# SSL: Monitoring Student Progression

Institutions should implement robust mechanisms to monitor and support student progress.

## Regular Monitoring and Reporting

- **Early Risk Identification:** Weekly or monthly attendance tracking to detect at-risk students.
- **Performance Reviews:** Continuous academic evaluations (e.g., mid-term progress reports, formative assessments).
- **Engagement Analytics:** Tracking student participation in online platforms, discussion forums, and coursework.

## Proactive Support Mechanisms

- **Advisory meetings:** One-on-one or group mentoring sessions every month with academic advisors.
- **Data-driven alerts:** Systems that flag at-risk students (declining grades, low attendance, disengagement).
- **Student feedback surveys:** Regular check-ins on learning experience, workload, and support needs.

## Institutional Interventions

- **Flexible learning pathways:** Alternative routes for students requiring extra academic support.
- **Faculty collaboration:** Coordinated efforts between academic staff, student affairs, and career services to enhance support systems.



# SSL: Facilitating Mobility & Recognition

- Recognition of qualifications and learning periods is key to student mobility.
- Ensures a coherent recognition in cooperation with national and international QA agencies (EU context ENIC/NARIC centres), and international partners.



# ENIC-NARIC NETWORKS

**ENIC** (European Network of Information Centres)

**NARIC** (National Academic Recognition Information Centres in the EU)

What they do: <a href="https://www.enic-naric.net">https://www.enic-naric.net</a>	Key Functions	Who can use ENIC/NARIC Services
Oversee and facilitate fair, consistent and transparent recognition of academic qualifications across countries	Recognition of Foreign Qualifications operating under the principles of the <i>Lisbon Recognition Convention</i>	Students seeking degree recognition abroad.
	Support for Academic Mobility & Student Transfers	Universities evaluating international student applications.
	Cooperation with Governments & Universities	Government agencies ensuring compliance with education agreements.
		Employers verifying foreign academic credentials.



# SSL: Certification & Graduation

## Ensuring Qualification Transparency and Recognition Beyond Graduation

Upon graduation, students must receive clear, standardised documentation that verifies their qualifications:

- Degree Award (Diploma)
- Certificate of Completion
- Diploma Supplement (DS)\*

The graduation documents should provide detailed information about the qualification, including:

- Learning outcomes achieved
- Qualification level and academic content
- Status of the awarded degree within the national and international education system (including referencing in DS to International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)\*\*)

\*Detailed information and a template for a *European Diploma Supplement* can be found on the EUROPASS website:

\*\**ISCED 2011* and *ISCED Fields of Education and Training 2013* details also available at [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=International\\_Standard\\_Classification\\_of\\_Education\\_\(ISCED\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED))





# SSL: Transparency of Regulations

## HEIs should published their regulations pertinent to all phases of the Student Lifecycle:

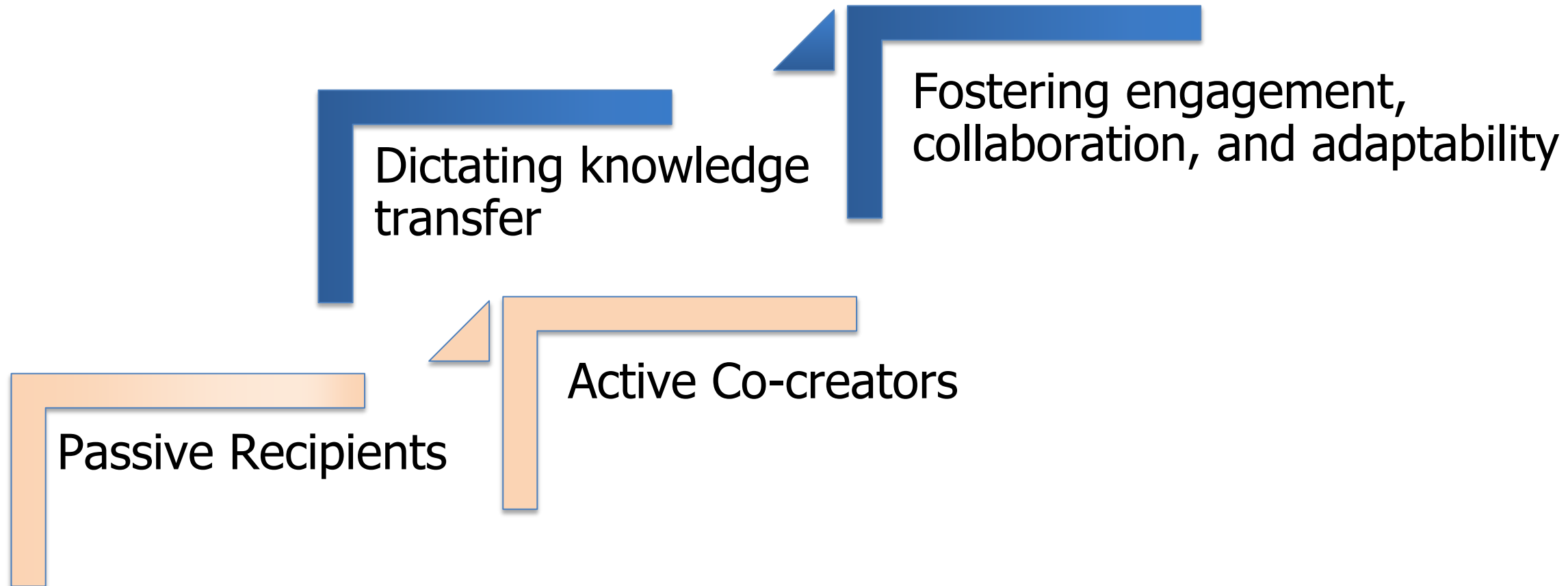
- on the University website
- in the Programme Handbooks

## Essential Information should include:

- RPL Regulations
- Student Support Services
- Appeals, Complaints and Academic Regulations
- Induction
- Fees, scholarships, and student loans (if applicable)
- Accommodation
- Learning Centre Services
- Student Representatives, Student Union, Student Charter
- Progression and Transfer Opportunities
- Health and Safety

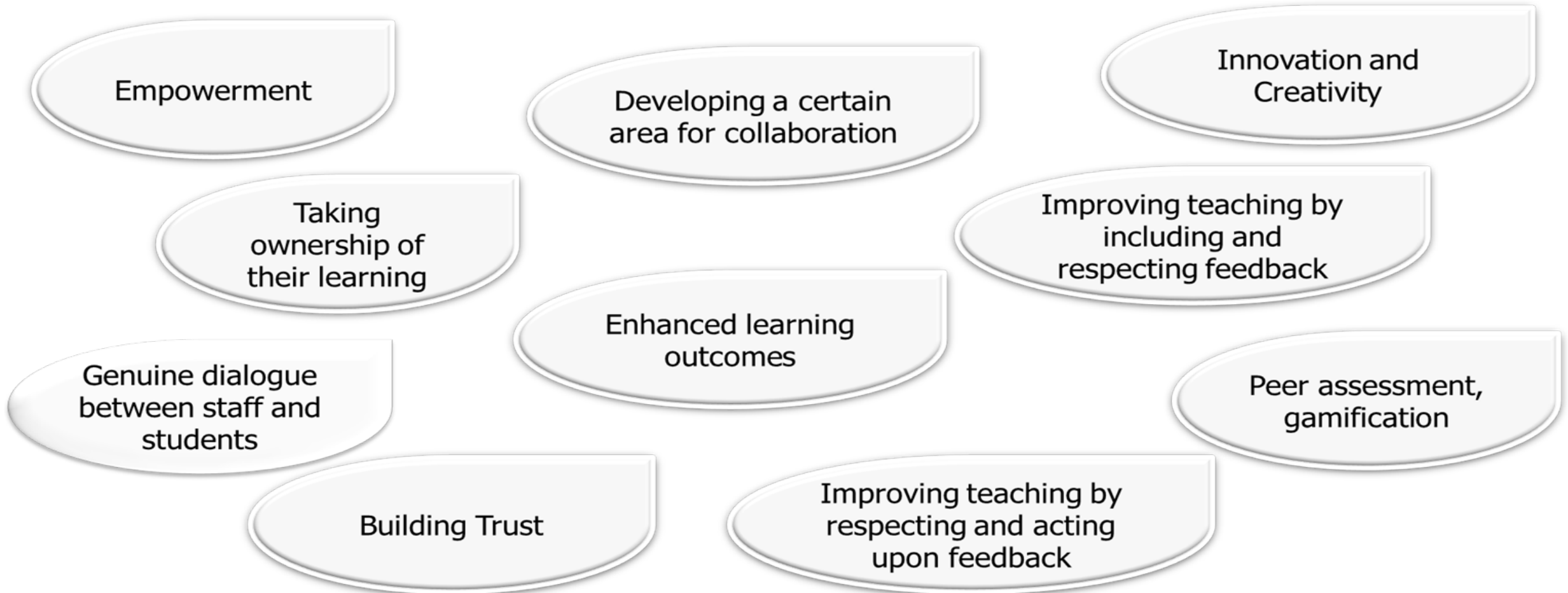


# Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment





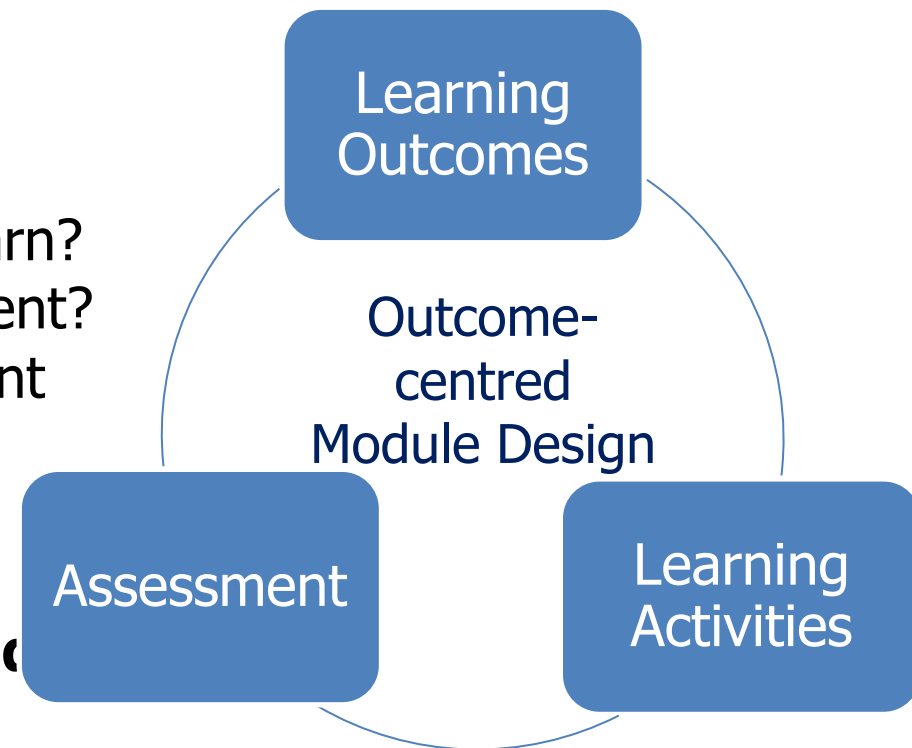
# Student Involvement, Engagement, Partnership and Co-creation





# Constructive Alignment. Outcome-centred Module Design

- What are the specific **learning outcomes** students should achieve?
- How can these outcomes be clearly **communicated** to students?
- What are the **core concepts and skills** students need to learn?
- What is the **most logical sequence** for presenting this content?
- What **assessment strategies** will accurately measure student attainment of the outcomes?
- How does the module align with **accreditation and institutional requirements**?
- How can we ensure that all components work **cohesively and sustainably** to support student success?





## Expanding to a Student-centred Approach

- What do students **already know**, and how does this shape their engagement?
- How **do students best learn**, considering diverse backgrounds and different styles of learning?
- What **active learning strategies** will deepen understanding?
- How can **assessments foster engagement** and critical thinking?
- How can students **take ownership of their learning**?
- What opportunities allow students to **apply knowledge in real-world contexts**?
- How can **feedback enhance** learning and reflection?



# Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment (SLTA): Key Principles

## Flexibility & Inclusion

- Addresses diverse student needs with adaptable learning paths.

## Varied Teaching Approaches

- Uses multiple delivery strategies and , including online, blended, and experiential learning.

## Autonomy & Responsibility

- Encourages students to take charge of their own learning with teacher guidance.

## Respect & Support

- Fosters a strong learner-teacher relationship.

## Student Feedback for Continuous Improvement

- Regular opportunities for students to provide feedback on teaching methods, assessments, and module structure.



# SLTA: Adaptable Learning Paths: from foundational instruction to hands-on applications and self-directed learning.

## Foundational Learning: Lectures & Directed Study

- **Formal Lectures:** Provide a structured overview of core subject material, establishing a **knowledge foundation**.
- **Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs):** Platforms (e.g., Moodle) **extend learning beyond the classroom** with recorded lectures, resources, and supplementary materials.
- **Directed Reading:** Reinforces subject knowledge with curated academic resources.

## Interactive & Collaborative Learning

- **Tutorials:** Clarify misconceptions, reinforce lecture content, and encourage peer discussions.
- **Case Studies:** Engage students in **real-world problem-solving**, requiring critical analysis and research.
- **Problem-Based Learning (PBL):** Encourages self-directed learning, teamwork, and practical application of knowledge.
- **Seminars:** Develop students' **presentation, communication, and problem-solving** skills through discussion-based learning.

## Practical & Applied Learning

- **Practical Workshops:** Offer **hands-on experience**, helping students refine their skills with structured academic support.
- **Industry Experts & Guest Lectures:** Bridge academic learning with **real-world industry practices**.
- **Simulations & Lab Work:** Provide experiential learning through **virtual or in-person lab settings, technical exercises, and scenario-based applications**.
- **Fieldwork:** Engages students in applying theoretical knowledge in **authentic real-world settings**.

## Self-Paced & Digital Learning

- **Online Discussion Forums & Digital Tools:** Facilitate **collaborative learning and peer interaction** in a flexible, accessible format.
- **Self-Paced Project-Based Learning:** Encourages **independent application of skills**, allowing students to **progress at their own pace** while meeting structured milestones.





# SLTA Example: Group Tasks

## Purpose & Benefits

**Enhances Collaboration:** Encourages teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills.

**Develops Critical Thinking:** Promotes peer learning and diverse perspectives.

**Prepares for Real-World Challenges:** Simulates workplace dynamics and cooperative projects.

## Strategies to Ensure Fair Participation

**Clear Roles & Responsibilities:** Assign defined tasks to each member to ensure accountability.

**Regular Progress Check-Ins:** Schedule meetings or instructor check-ins to monitor engagement.

**Weighted Contribution Grading:** Allocate grades based on individual efforts alongside group outcomes.

**Use of Collaboration Tools:** Encourage shared workspaces (e.g., Google Docs) for transparency.

**Peer & Self-Assessment:** Implement peer evaluations or [group reflective reports](#) to track contributions and prevent freeriding.





# SLTA Example: Flipped Teaching and Student-Led Workshops

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Flipped Teaching</b>	<b><u>Student-Led Workshops</u></b>
<b>Pre-Class Preparation</b>	Students review materials before class	Students research and prepare materials for presentation
<b>In-Class Role</b>	Students apply knowledge through guided activities	Students take charge of teaching and discussion
<b>Instructor's Role</b>	Facilitator, guiding discussions	Supportive mentor, providing feedback
<b>Main Focus</b>	Application and problem-solving	Leadership, facilitation, and knowledge sharing



# SLTA Example: Peer-to-Peer Assessment

**Peer assessment** can be used as a structured evaluation method where students **review and provide feedback** on each other's work based on **predefined criteria**.

## **Benefits:**

**For Students:** Enhances **critical thinking, self-reflection, and evaluative skills** while promoting **active engagement** in learning.

**For the Institution:** Encourages **student autonomy, collaborative learning, and accountability** in coursework.

**For Academic Development:** Reinforces **constructive feedback skills** and prepares students for **teamwork and evaluation processes in professional settings**.



# SLTA Example: Encouraging Cross-Cultural Understanding

- Promotes cultural awareness and reduces stereotypes through collaborative learning.
- Uses team-based projects, discussions, and case studies to explore cultural perspectives.
- Encourages critical reflection and problem-solving in diverse contexts.

## Example



# SLTA Example: Engaging In-Class Activities Assessment to Encourage Active Participation

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Criteria for evaluating student in-class performance</b>
<b>0</b>	✓ Absent
<b>1 - 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Present, not participating</li> <li>✓ Attempts at responding to a question but does not demonstrate adequate knowledge</li> <li>✓ Hardly ever gets involved in class discussion and activities</li> </ul>
<b>3 - 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Shows only basic preparation</li> <li>✓ No sufficient evidence of facts interpretation or analysis</li> <li>✓ Very little contribution to discussion with a little evidence of factual knowledge and understanding</li> </ul>
<b>6 - 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Well prepared</li> <li>✓ Interpretations of information are based on analysis of facts, determining relationships between constituent parts</li> <li>✓ Contributes frequently to discussion, engages in arguments by discussing opposing ideas</li> </ul>
<b>9 - 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Demonstrates excellent performance, relating interpretations to course material</li> <li>✓ Evaluates information intelligibly, based on criteria and standards - coming to convincing conclusions which takes the discussion further</li> <li>✓ Contributes significantly to the cooperative argument-building, demonstrates very active involvement and creative approach</li> </ul>



# SSLTA Example: Building Skills Through Small Tasks

## Why it Matters

- Helps students develop skills gradually.
- Encourages continuous learning and engagement.
- Provides both formative feedback and final assessment.

## How It Works

- Portfolio Approach: Students complete small tasks that add up over time.
- Step-by-Step Learning: Each task builds on previous ones.
- Balanced Assessment: Mix of ongoing feedback and final evaluation.

## Benefits

- Tracks progress effectively.
- Encourages reflection and deeper learning.
- Reduces stress from one-time exams.



# SSLTA: Ensure Consistent, Fair, Transparent, and Relevant Assessment

## Key Principles

**Fairness & Consistency:** Assessments are applied equally to all students, following established procedures.

**Transparency:** Assessment criteria, marking schemes, and methods are published and explained in advance.

**Relevance:** Assessment aligns with **module level, cognitive demand, and university marking criteria.**

**Quality Assurance:** Ensures assessments support **student progression and future careers.**



# SSLTA: Incorporate Diagnostic, Formative, and Summative Assessment

## 1. Diagnostic Assessment

- **Purpose:** Identifies prior knowledge, strengths, and areas for improvement.
- **Examples:** Pre-course quizzes, skills audits, self-assessments.

## 2. Formative Assessment

- **Purpose:** Provides feedback during learning to guide improvement.
- **Examples:** Draft submissions, peer reviews, in-class exercises.

## 3. Summative Assessment

- **Purpose:** Evaluates the achieved learning outcomes.
- **Examples:** Final exams and coursework, major projects, dissertations.



# SSLTA: Best Practices for Effective Assessment

## Clear & Aligned Criteria

- **Assessment tasks should reflect learning outcomes and be appropriate for the level of study. Marking criteria must align with university and departmental standards.**

## Robust Quality Assurance

- **Multiple Examiners: Where possible, assessments should be reviewed by more than one examiner.**
- **Training for Assessors: Faculty should receive support in developing fair and effective assessment methods.**
- **Consideration for Mitigating Circumstances: Policies should account for special student needs.**

## Transparent Feedback & Appeals Process

- **Feedback: Regular, structured feedback linked to academic progress.**
- **Communication: How student requests and complaints have been actioned.**
- **Appeals Mechanism: A clear process for students to contest grades in a structured manner.**





# SSLTA: Ensuring Transparency – Making Assessment Information Available

## Publishing Assessment Guidelines

- Provide students **with clear assessment criteria** and expectations.
- **Share** marking rubrics, deadlines, and weightings in advance.

## Access to Feedback & Appeals

- Outline how students will **receive feedback** and opportunities for improvement.
- Ensure a structured **grade appeal process** is available.

## Clear Communication Channels

- Use **learning management systems** to publish assessment details.
- Hold **Q&A sessions** to clarify expectations and procedures.



# SSLTA: Monitoring and Enhancement

## Key Evaluation Methods

**Student Feedback:** Collected through module evaluations, course rep discussions, and surveys.

**Lecturer Self-Evaluation:** Reflection on teaching effectiveness, student participation, and assessment strategies.

**Performance Metrics:** Analysing student performance data, attendance rates, and engagement levels.

**Ongoing Curriculum Enhancement:** Adjustments based on **learning outcomes, student needs, and teaching innovations.**

Example



# Sustaining Quality: Assurance and Continuous Improvement





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