

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2024 – 2027

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Contents

1	Background and Scope	3
2	Aims and Objectives.....	3
3	Objectives of the LTA Strategy.....	4
3.1	Learning and Teaching.....	4
3.2	Assessments	5
4	Key features of the LTA Strategy.....	5
4.1	Effective course and lesson planning ensure high standards of learning and teaching are provided in all campuses and programmes	6
4.2	Becoming an independent learner empowers learners beyond the classroom.....	6
4.3	Active learning with inclusive engagement and participation of all students.....	6
4.4	Development of academic writing and speaking skills	7
4.5	Application of higher-order critical thinking skills to subject knowledge.....	7
5	Teaching Faculty.....	7
6	Lesson Observations	7
7	Boards and Committees.....	8
8	New Programme Development	8

1 Background and Scope

At LCK Academy (LCKA), education is viewed as a means of empowerment, eradicating self-doubt and hardship. The Learning, Teaching & Assessment (LTA) Strategy aims to empower the disadvantaged and underrepresented by harnessing the entrepreneurial talent within the community. The LTA Strategy sets out how LCKA will carry out its mission, vision and achieve its aim:

LCKA Mission

To serve the community with high-quality education, giving people knowledge, skills and confidence they need to develop a culture of entrepreneurship and help grow the local and national economy.

LCKA Vision

To become a leading provider of education and training, building confidence and removing barriers, by harnessing entrepreneurial talent within the community.

LCKA Aim

To provide an excellent education and transformative experience for our students (LCKA Strategic Plan).

The LTA Strategy covers all aspects of LTA from assessing applicants during enrolment to determine if they meet the entry criteria for a course, up to their final graduation and beyond.

The LTA Strategy is aligned to the Academy's Strategic Plan (2024-29), the OfS conditions of registration (B1 – B5) and the levels and qualification descriptors in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). The LTA Strategy informs many policies, procedures and activities at the Academy, particularly the Lesson Observation Policy, Continuous Professional Development Policy and the Assessment Policy.

2 Aims and Objectives

In line with the Academy's Strategic Plan, the LTA Strategy aims to:

1. Empower students from all backgrounds to transform their lives, especially non-traditional students from low participation areas in the UK.
2. Ensure learning, teaching and assessment lead to excellence in academic achievement through the provision of high-quality education by experienced and qualified academic staff.
3. Ensure learning, teaching and assessment enhance successful graduate outcomes through the development of employability competencies that will support local, national, and international businesses and economies.

4. Provide a personalised supportive learning experience throughout all programmes of study.
5. Help students to become business leaders and entrepreneurs with innovative thinking, knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in the real business world.

3 Objectives of the LTA Strategy

The LTA Strategy includes the following objectives:

3.1 Learning and Teaching

- To ensure that all applicants and existing students are provided with up to date and accurate material information and guidance about the Academy's academic programmes and other opportunities available to them.
- To ensure that non-traditional students from low participation areas are provided with high-quality blended learning courses, which include online and in-person classes, in order to widen participation.
- To ensure that students are provided with equitable learning experiences and standards of education throughout the student journey.
- To ensure the learning environment and resources for learning, teaching and assessment are of a high quality.
- To provide a well-resourced and well-managed virtual learning environment for all programmes.
- To provide teaching faculty that is experienced and qualified, including some with real-world industry experience.
- To ensure that teaching faculty complete adequate continuous professional development (CPD).
- To ensure that all academic programmes provide students with opportunities to attain credit-bearing learning outcomes that meet the standards and quality of the national qualifications' framework.
- To ensure students with disclosed special needs or disabilities are given the same opportunities for academic and career success as other students.
- To provide individualised learning and support through personal tutoring and additional support services that meet individual student needs (See the Student Support Policy).
- To ensure that LTA incorporates opportunities for students to set up, and run their own businesses, especially through the LCKA Business Incubation Hub (BI).
- To ensure that students have structured progression routes to further academic study.
- To ensure that the internal annual monitoring review includes robust evaluation of learning teaching and assessment at the Academy through course quality reviews that are steered and monitored by effective Boards and Committees.

3.2 Assessments

- To ensure that assessments meet the requirements of partner organisations, awarding organisations and the Framework for Higher Education.
- To ensure all assessments in all LCKA locations are conducted to the same standards expected of UK Providers according to national benchmark statements and the framework for higher education.
- To ensure that assessments meet the learning needs of students including their development of employability competencies.
- To ensure that all students receive equal access to support, preparations for assessments and feedback on formative and summative assessments within three weeks of submission.
- To make reasonable adjustments to assessments where possible in order to allow students with disabilities or special needs to be equitably assessed.
- To ensure there is a varied range of assessment types to meet the interests, preferences and abilities of all students as much as possible.
- To ensure that students have opportunities to exceed the threshold levels that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.
- To ensure that assessment feedback and marking is constructive and developmental for all students.

Please refer to the LCKA Assessment Policy for more details on assessments.

4 Key features of the LTA Strategy

The LCKA Academy LTA Strategy includes five key features:

- Effective course and lesson planning ensure high standards of learning and teaching are provided in all campuses and programmes
- Becoming an independent learner empowers learners beyond the classroom
- Active learning with inclusive engagement and participation of all students
- Development of academic writing and speaking skills
- Application of higher-order critical thinking skills to subject knowledge

4.1 Effective course and lesson planning ensure high standards of learning and teaching are provided in all campuses and programmes

The Academy believes that good planning is crucial for the alignment of lessons to learning objectives and assessment tasks. Tutors are expected to work closely with other Tutors and Module/Unit leaders in order to create standardised plans for learning and teaching course content. Faculty must use standard templates for Assignment Briefs and Schemes of Work with integrated formative and summative assessment points approved by the Programme Leader. Tutors must create lesson plans with clear instructions on how lessons will be delivered and what resources will be used for their lessons. See the Lesson Observation Policy for the Lesson Plan template.

4.2 Becoming an independent learner empowers learners beyond the classroom

The Academy expects students to develop the ability to learn and improve themselves independently of their Tutor as soon as possible. Tutors are expected to promote independence in every lesson by encouraging students to find information and solve problems using their own initiative. Tutors use teaching methods that require students to work out how to carry out tasks for themselves and access the resources they need without help. The Academy encourages Tutors to employ inductive guided discovery teaching methods rather than being overly dependent on deductive learning or rote learning.

4.3 Active learning with inclusive engagement and participation of all students

A range of teaching methods are employed by tutors that facilitate active learning and inclusive engagement and participation including:

- Ensuring that students learn through social interaction on collaborative projects and tasks.
- Ensuring there is a variety of interaction that includes students talking to other students and not just to the tutor in class.
- Making best use of any innovative teaching methods and technology including VLE video conferencing software for blended learning and smart boards.
- Making sure that student progress is acknowledged, praised and rewarded to motivate students.
- Ensuring that tutor talking time (TTT) is monitored and controlled so that students have opportunities to communicate in class.

4.4 Development of academic writing and speaking skills

The Academy understands that communication skills are essential in the workplace, particularly for students who are intending to have business management roles. Therefore, learning, teaching and assessment will ensure that students develop their academic and professional writing and speaking skills as much as possible through regular classroom activities, additional academic English and study skills workshops and assessment tasks that require demonstration of real-world communication skills.

4.5 Application of higher-order critical thinking skills to subject knowledge

The LTA Strategy is informed by Blooms Taxonomy, which distinguishes between lower order thinking skills of remembering, understanding and applying to the higher order thinking skills of analysing, evaluating and creating. LCK Academy aims to ensure that students who graduate have the ability to critically analyse and evaluate their subject matter and to create their own opinions, suggestions and recommendations through reasoned reflection of their analysis and evaluation. Students learn to apply theories to real-world scenarios, carry out research, challenge assumptions and open up their own lines of enquiry.

5 Teaching Faculty

The Academy ensures that all teaching faculty have appropriate qualifications, teaching experience and industry experience where possible. All tutors are required to have a teaching qualification or must be working towards one. Tutors are also expected to participate in a minimum of 20 hours of continuous professional development (CPD) per annum, which includes in-house training as well as any external training that tutors may require. Tutors are also encouraged and supported to join professional bodies such as the HEA Fellowship. The Academy HR Manager keeps a log of all CPD activity, which is informed by lesson observations, annual staff appraisals and their respective staff development plans.

6 Lesson Observations

New Tutors are given micro-observations during the interview process and student feedback is taken before the tutor is recruited. New Tutors are given a 45-minute observation within their first three months of teaching. All tutors have at least one formal lesson observation every academic year. Tutors may have more lesson observations and will be given a second observation soon after the first one if any issues are identified. The criteria used for assessing the quality of lessons during lesson observations are directly aligned to the five key elements of the learning teaching and assessment strategy described above. See the Lesson Observation Policy for more details including templates for lesson planning and feedback on observed lessons.

7 Boards and Committees

The LTA Strategy underpins the functions of the following Boards and Committees that are responsible for the planning, delivery, monitoring, and review of Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA):

- The Academic Quality Board (AQB) provides oversight of all higher education and the student experience at the Academy, with clear focus on the standards and quality of learning, teaching and assessment.
- The Admissions Committee reports to the Academic Quality Board on student admissions including assessment of student's ability to meet the required academic entry requirements before being admitted onto a course.
- The Programmes Committee (PC) reports quarterly to the Academic Quality Board (AQB) on the learning teaching and assessment of each programme including the implementation of LCKA's LTA Strategy.
- The Assessment Board reports to the Academic Quality Board and is responsible for ensuring examinations and assessment procedures follow the Academy's assessment policy, awarding organisation regulations and any other regulations that may govern assessments.
- The Student Council reports to the AQB on the student experience including student satisfaction with the Academy's learning, teaching and assessment strategy, processes and practices.

8 New Programme Development

Before any new academic programme can be approved by the Academic Quality Board at the Academy it must meet the following criteria as part of an overall process of due diligence.

- Is the design and content of the programme aligned to the Academy's Strategic Plan?
- Is the design and content of the programme aligned to the Academy's LTA Strategy?
- Is there a need for the provision in the location under consideration?
- Does the programme draw from the Academy's existing strengths?
- Does it meet with local enterprise priorities?
- Does it align with the academic needs and appeal of target students?
- Does the design and content of the programme help students develop key employability competencies?
- Does it empower the LCKA target demographic?