

CAFRE Learning and Teaching Strategy 2023 - 2028

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| | CAFRE Quality Manual Index | CAFRE Website (Tick as appropriate) |
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CAFRE Learning and Teaching Strategy 2023 - 2028

Version History

| Version | Description of Changes | Date |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 2 | Update to strategy on key priorities and integration into new CAFRE policy template | February 2023 |
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1. Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy sets out CAFRE's priorities in Learning and Teaching for the period from 2023 to 2028 to ensure a high-quality learner experience. Learner satisfaction will be monitored through learner feedback and learner surveys and where possible benchmarked with similar institutions in the UK.

The College's Education Management Team (EMT) will regularly review this strategy and update it in light of changes or developments that may affect learning and teaching including :

- Changes to curricula and forms of assessment;
- Government policy (in areas such as widening participation, sustainability, and skills development);
- Legislation impacting on teaching and learning;
- External regulation, policies and guidance provided by regulatory, statutory and professional bodies (e.g., The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree -Awarding Bodies (FHEQ), the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) Ulster University (UU), City and Guilds, Council for the Curricula and Examination and Assessment (CCEA), Landex and external examiners).

EMT will agree and periodically review a **Learning and Teaching Action Plan** consistent with this strategy which will set out objectives, priorities, timescales, the bodies/persons responsible for particular activities and any resource implications.

2. Our Vision

Our vision is for the College's learning and teaching provision to be recognised as among the best in the UK in the area of agri-food education. We aim through our teaching to inspire, engage, and challenge learners and prepare them to the highest standard for work in the agri-food industry while fostering in them the desire to pursue lifelong learning.

Learning at CAFRE will be guided by the following aims to:

- Achieve the highest academic standards, experiences and outcomes in all learning and teaching activities including the use and development of digital skills, enabling learners to engage creatively and develop new and exciting ideas.
- Provide a collaborative and stimulating high quality educational learning environment for all staff and learners with access to a comprehensive range of learning materials and new technologies, to develop a culture of engagement with learning.
- Develop knowledge, skills and independence in learners which will equip them to succeed in their future careers and to continue learning throughout their lives.
- Produce graduates who will be able to adapt and respond flexibly to changing professional requirements and become future leaders in their field.
- Embrace diversity and inclusivity in the learning community as an important element of the educational experience fostering growth and development of individuals.

- Support learners in achieving their full potential both academically and in extra-curricular activity thus enhancing the outcomes for learners, society, and the economy.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement in the design and delivery of programmes, through monitoring and evaluation, and engaging with feedback received from Learners and their Representatives, External Examiners'/Verifiers Reports, Learning and Teaching Reviews, and other internal quality assurance mechanisms such as Learner Surveys.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement in learning by promoting an active learning community where students and staff collaborate to set challenging targets for achievement.

3. The Learning Environment

CAFRE will:

- Place sustainability at the centre of everything that we do.
- Provide a high-quality learning environment and equip the learners to use effective learning pedagogies coupled with high class facilities on campus, while utilising innovative technologies to achieve success.
- Provide excellent teaching facilities that allow for active and participative learning and invest in the latest teaching and learning technologies.
- Develop a staff culture that is inclusive and engages everyone in the pursuit of teaching and learning excellence, thereby integrating staff wellbeing into day-to-day practices to enhance their working lives.
- Provide Pastoral Support and opportunities to enhance learners' wellbeing thus enriching their learning.
- Monitor and track performance by the use of empirical data to include key performance indicators.

4. Teaching Excellence

Teaching Excellence amongst staff will be achieved by:

- Valuing and giving recognition to teaching and skills development through Continuing Professional development of staff.
- Encouraging, supporting, and developing staff in a structured way to be the best teachers, capable of inspiring and motivating learners.
- Fostering a culture of encouragement, innovation, mutual support and sharing;
- Ensuring programmes are current, relevant, and linked closely to industry needs.

Staff will:

- Adopt a learner centred approach and ensure active learning, using TEL approaches as appropriate, and create a wealth of diverse learning opportunities for learners.
- Reflect on their own teaching performance and skills development and strive to achieve continuous improvement.
- Involve industry and the wider CAFRE staff body to enrich the curriculum and enhance delivery;
- Support and encourage learners to become independent, reflective, lifelong learners (irrespective of the level of study undertaken) with an international/global perspective.

Learners will:

- Experience teaching which inspires them, promotes critical thinking and develops their problem-solving ability.
- Learn to work efficiently and effectively both independently and collaboratively in groups.
- Aim to achieve agreed realistic academic goals and develop medium-term plans including ambitious career aspirations.

Staff and Learners together will:

- Work in partnership in a culture of mutual trust and respect;
- Foster a sense of learning community and belonging;
- Work together to shape and develop learning opportunities.

5. Evaluating our Success

CAFRE will ensure that its provision of educational programmes is of a standard that will result in positive feedback from assessors, standard verifiers, external examiners/quality assurance, and other professional bodies.

Each year the College will undertake sample quality audits together with self-assessments for all its education programmes and monitor outcomes against the appropriate benchmarks including Satisfaction, Attendance, Retention/Attrition and Achievement. A report with an action plan to drive forward continuous improvement will be prepared by the Quality Management Team and submitted to the College's Education Management Team (EMT) for critical analysis and approval.

6. Educational and Learner Support

EMT will consider all teaching and learning issues to provide an integrated approach to enhancing the learner experience, including quality assurance arrangements.

Key work priorities over the next five years are to:

- Continue to monitor educational outcomes and ensure that adequate delivery resources are in situ; in light of impending campus redevelopment.
- Agree an institutional staff development programme for Heads of Branches, programme managers, lecturers, and instructors through branch training plans, and a Skills Matrix.
- Foster a sense of academic community and greater appreciation of teaching as a professional skill with staff actively engaging in teaching related CPD; to include pedagogy.
- Oversee curriculum changes including the introduction of new programmes in line with DAERA policies and priorities.
- Achievement of QAA accreditation for CAFRE's Higher Education provision.
- Further the holistic development of students beyond the academic curriculum.

EMT will identify areas for improvement and disseminate good practice following the annual monitoring of programmes and on an ongoing basis. In addition, it will strive to increase learner engagement and representation on Boards and Committees within CAFRE.