Sysco Higher Education Course Teaching and Learning Policy 2025-26

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1.0 Introduction to Higher Education Course Teaching and Learning Policy

This Higher Education Course Teaching and Learning Policy has been written in accordance with the Quality Assurance (QAA) UK Quality Code (https://www.qaa.ac.uk/) and fully adheres to the guiding principles of this document by ensuring that the courses offered are of an appropriate standard for this level of programme. This encompasses the whole student journey from beginning to end but, for the purposes of this policy in particular, refers to the environment in which students are expected to learn and develop at Sysco. The ultimate aim for student outcomes from their time on a Higher Education programme is the achievement of their qualification and progression in the sector in which they are studying.

Sysco's Higher Education Course Teaching and Learning Policy also references and aligns to the wider Sysco Teaching and Learning Strategy.

2.0 The Policy

Sysco aspires to provide outstanding Teaching Learning & Assessment that meets the identified needs of all its students.

Sysco believes that effective teaching and learning is vital in ensuring a consistently high quality of learning. It is our aim to continually improve the quality of teaching and learning which will increase student attendance, retention, achievement and success.

Sysco will offer students a tailored programme which will extend their formal learning and help them develop. Sysco will ensure students are well prepared to achieve

their programme and make positive steps towards enhancing their career aspirations. By fostering a supportive learning environment, embracing best practice, developing teaching, training staff and reviewing resources on an ongoing basis, it is hoped that Sysco will achieve outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.

This Teaching and Learning Policy supports four of Sysco's strategic aims. These are;

- To create opportunities for all to succeed.
- To challenge and stretch and upskill students.
- To provide outstanding teaching and learning that encourage high aspirations.
- To develop the knowledge and skills that are relevant at all stages of each students' programme and equip them to continue to learn throughout their lives.

The policy sets out what Sysco expects of its own staff and its subcontractors. It identifies the measures that Sysco will take both to ensure that all students benefit from a high-quality learning experience and to continuously improve its programmes.

3.0 Responsibilities

The Senior Management Team are responsible for driving up the standard of teaching, learning and assessment.

The Company has a well-established Quality Framework and Data system in place that is heavily linked to the organisation's commitment to continuous improvement. Teaching and learning is monitored through a variety of methods, the results of such activity being analysed as part of the Communication Strategy. Decisions and strategic thinking behind improvements are communicated and agreed with all delivery teams.

Managers are responsible for ensuring the successful implementation of the teaching, learning and assessment policy. These managers will ensure tutors are fully aware of the policy and are acting in line with its principles. Managers will also provide regular feedback during Senior Manager Meetings on the results of internal and external verification, staff observations, learner progress, support and curriculum development.

Managers will work with tutors to express their views on internal policies and practices and agree future planning and improvements.

The team of moderators will have particular responsibility to support the improvement and embedding of assessment. The moderator will ensure tutors are following awarding body requirements and hold improvement sessions to develop staff.

Tutors have a responsibility to deliver good and outstanding teaching, learning and assessment sessions to all students. They will provide effective guidance and support and offer additional sessions where applicable, as well as providing good feedback to students

that will enable them to improve. Tutors will evaluate their teaching methods and make improvements where necessary.

4.0 Implementation of Outstanding Teaching and Learning

4.1   Sysco recognise the need to ensure that learning is individualised, planned to meet the specific requirements of the individual student, building on their existing skills and knowledge.

4.2   Staff are required to provide a supportive, stimulating educational environment. Whilst also encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning.

4.3   Tutors will ensure that students develop the skills and knowledge that will increase their employability and improve their effectiveness in the workplace.

4.4   We will strive to ensure our tutors display up-to-date, expert knowledge in their area of delivery, utilising technology and research to ensure that teaching engages, interests and informs.

4.5   Tutors are encouraged to ensure students see the wider picture and appreciate the point and purpose of what they are studying. A simple reference to a relevant TV programme, recommended book, new manufacturing process, newspaper article, new law, useful internet site, new piece of equipment, brings the subject knowledge alive.

4.6   Staff will use effective questioning to challenge and stretch and encourage students to become critical thinkers.

4.7   Outstanding teachers will draw upon their up-to-date knowledge to offer multiple examples or explanations to help struggling students to overcome a learning block and to assimilate new learning. Independent learning that continues outside of planned learning sessions will be encouraged wherever possible.

4.8   Tutors will work with learners to ensure that they have access to assessment as required. Verbal and written feedback will be timely, informative and constructive.

4.9   Evidence submitted for assessment will be checked via plagiarism software to ensure it is students' own work, whilst feedback will include detail on improving skills in order for them to achieve the assessment criteria of the qualification.

4.10 Students will be treated fairly and in line with their individual needs. Their health, safety and well-being are constant priorities for all our staff.

5.0 Continuous Improvement

5.1   Our objective is to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through robust and rigorous observation and verification processes. These will highlight and enable Sysco to share best practice, which can be communicated to all staff, facilitating prompt intervention where the standard of teaching, learning or assessment needs improvement.

5.2 All staff are required to evaluate their own teaching and learning and improve sessions to ensure students remain engaged.

5.3 Standardisation of teaching, learning and assessment occurs on a regular basis, ensuring good practice is shared and issues identified and remedied.

5.4 Student attendance will be analysed and where required improvements will be made.

5.5 The company gather regular student feedback, in a variety of different formats, which is used to improve its performance.

6.0 Observation

Sysco have a robust OTLA process which is used effectively to increase achievement, retention and continuously improve our provision. All observations are completed by experienced members of the Quality Team to ensure they are independent. Common themes, strengths and weaknesses are identified with training/support provided and good practice shared.

6.1 Completed observation records are reviewed regularly by the Quality Team and pertinent details are summarised within an online tracker to support the identification of common themes, strengths, weaknesses and review progress with identified actions. This in turn is added to the quarterly performance management data. The logging of the completed observations allows analysis and tracking of grades. Data is produced and shared during the Senior Management and Continuous Improvement meetings.

6.2 Observers provide detailed feedback to tutors and agree actions and support required to continuously improve performance and delivery. Feedback is also provided directly to managers and are discussed with their staff during monthly 1-to-1s.

6.3 Moderation meetings take place to review the quality of completed observations, the process followed and to identify any required improvements. This has led to key changes to paperwork and increased the quality of the observation process.

6.4 Records are kept for at least 3 years and grading forms part of the appraisal to support their professional development by identifying development needs.

6.5 A yearly cycle of observations is produced by the Quality Team and is not shared with delivery teams to ensure that all observations are unannounced and provide an accurate reflection of our internal and sub-contracted provision.

6.6 All experienced and existing Sysco delivery staff can expect as a minimum requirement to receive two formal graded observations a year. The Quality Team monitor that all parts of the learner journey are observed and evaluated, however the main focus is teaching, learning & assessment.

6.7 All new staff (whether qualified or not), can expect to have a minimum of three graded observations a year to support their development and ensure they fully understand our systems, procedures and paperwork requirements.

6.8 Where observations are graded as a 3 or 4, support and training must be provided, and the staff member must be re-observed within a 4-week period.

6.9 Observers undertake observations in a way that minimises disruption to learning, teaching and assessment. They do not take part in lessons however, when suitable opportunities arise, observers may talk informally with learners or examine their work.

6.10 Observers may stay for the whole or part of a lesson and will spend enough time in lessons to enable them to make valid judgements on the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. Observations of small groups or 1-to-1 sessions will take full account of potential sensitivities.

6.11 The outcomes of the observation and an overall grade will be notified to the tutor. If the whole session has been observed, the feedback and grading will be issued straight away; with part learning sessions observations the tutor will receive feedback and grading within 24 hours. Where actions of improvement are identified, this must be recorded within the attached Action Plan. It is expected that all action plans will be signed off within a two-month period unless a grade 3 or 4 is awarded. In this instance grade 3 action plans must be re-observed within a 4-week period and grade 4 actions must be re-observed within a 2-week period.

7.0 Promoting Professional Development and CPD

The company will continue to review and continuously improve the ways it engages with staff to support development.

7.1 Sysco will ensure an effective induction process is provided to all staff to ensure they are given a thorough and positive start within the organisation.

7.2 Produce an annual staff development plan, feeding in identified training requirements from the appraisal.

7.3 Promote the professional development of staff to enable the identification and sharing of best practice in teaching and learning.

7.4 Review staff teaching and learning methods through the staff observation, verification process and monitoring data. Themes and results will be communicated and shared at standardisation meetings for improvement agreement and actioning. Direct feedback will be provided during Staff 1-to-1 meetings.

7.5 Review staff performance regularly to establish support.

8.0 Further Reading

For any further information that may be required in terms of Teaching & Learning, please refer to Sysco's Teaching and Learning Strategy.