

TRANSFORMING LIVES: UNIVERSITY OF SUFFOLK STRATEGY FOR LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

2023–2030

Transforming lives
through education,
research,
knowledge exchange,
innovation and
entrepreneurship



**University
of Suffolk**

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INTRODUCTION

At the University of Suffolk we believe in the transformative power of higher education, and that it should be accessible, drive social equality and mobility and act as a catalyst for change. Our Vision and Strategy 2020-2030 sets out our ambition to be recognised as an empowering force for individual and community growth and development. We are proud of our diverse student body, coming from different socio-economic backgrounds, religions identities, abilities.

This strategy sets our commitment to:

- Personalised, active and independent experiences for all learners,
- Research informed and employer engaged learning and teaching,
- Inclusive and collaborative curriculum and delivery,
- Digitally enabled education,
- Championing teaching excellence.

OUR LEARNING AND TEACHING PRINCIPLES

- To provide progressive, innovative learning experiences which support our students to develop through a guided, negotiated and independent model, developing confidence as effective and reflective life-long learner.
 - To nurture inclusive learning communities which promote a sense of belonging.
 - To ensure our courses respond to local and regional employment needs, meet industry standards and lead to professional accreditation wherever possible.
 - To provide practice-based work experiences inside and outside of the University.
 - To ensure our learning community is well connected, inspiring and dynamic.
 - To ensure our staff are professional and academic experts, supported to continue their own development as high quality, innovative and resilient educators.
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TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH EDUCATION

Our Learning and Teaching Strategy positions us as a national leader in innovative and transformative education, focused on developing **work ready and confident graduates** who are **socially conscious** and **values-driven**, equipped with the **skills and knowledge** to make a **positive contribution to society**.

We have developed a national reputation for innovation, through our **Block and Blend** design which **puts students at the heart of an empowering and compassionate academic experience**. Students studying on a Block and Blend designed programme will typically study one module at a time over a period of five weeks, rather than 3 modules consecutively over the period of 12 weeks. During the module our students will participate in learning and teaching activities on campus. They will also complete additional learning through media-rich activities delivered through our online learning environment, Brightspace. These activities on campus, and online may be completed independently and / or as groups. Learning and understanding is tested through these activities, before an assessment of the learning is completed, typically at the end of the module.

In taking this approach, we can support our students to develop confidence as learners with regular feedback on their progress. It is often possible for students to better manage their time and manage their studies alongside other aspects of their lives.

WORK AND CAREER-READY GRADUATES

The University of Suffolk has an established record of supporting students to progress on to further higher study or work following the completion of their degree. Whenever possible, we ensure our courses meet industry standards and enable professional accreditation alongside the award of a degree. We have worked with businesses and organisations in our region to develop the University of Suffolk Graduate Attributes, which all of our students will have the opportunity to develop as part of their studies.

We ensure that our students have the opportunity to:

- Access specialist support from our Careers, Employability and Enterprise team to develop these attributes.
 - Monitor their progress and complete independent activities through online tools and platforms.
 - Engage in internships, apply for micro-grants and take optional placement years while studying with us.
 - Have tangible ways of demonstrating their skills to potential employers.
 - Develop self-awareness and resilience.
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OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Personalised Active and Independent Learning

At the University of Suffolk, we are committed to providing a learning environment and experience which supports and encourages all of our students to become active, engaged and independent learners, with the skills and confidence to flourish and achieve their best. We will:

- Ensure our students are equipped to study at the University by providing clear information, guidance and support before they join our community.
 - Provide our students with a connected support network, including Personal Academic Coaching, and specialist advisors to enable our students to engage, develop as independent learners and take a lead through their academic journey.
 - Design current, innovative and inclusive programmes which recognise the diversity of our students and enable students to collaborate as partners in their learning.
 - Enable our students to apply their learning in work settings and / or environments which support their personal goals and aspirations.
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Research Informed and employer engaged learning and teaching

At the University of Suffolk, we design courses and learning experiences which are research informed and prepare our graduates as confident, values driven, socially aware global citizens. We encourage students to challenge accepted ideas and reconstruct knowledge, developing a curiosity which will serve them as lifelong learners. In designing and delivering our courses we:

- Work with students, alumni, employers, and practitioners to ensure that content and assessment is real-world and authentic, enabling students to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for a future workforce.
 - Provide opportunities for students to engage with peers, staff, and employers/practitioners/community groups/charitable organisations to conduct small scale, collaborative 'real world' research, further enhancing graduate employability and community impact.
 - Encourage courses to adopt industry standards and/or offer accreditation and certification by professional bodies where they exist.
 - Embed a range of employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial focused activities which enable our students to apply their learning in work settings and/or environments which support their personal goals and aspirations.
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Inclusive and collaborative

At the University of Suffolk, we are proud of our leading approaches to learning and teaching, and are committed to ongoing evolution of our methods, ensuring that they continue to empower our students to navigate challenges and realise their potential. Our block and blend pedagogy has been designed to support students through focused learning. Learning is intentionally designed as blended, meaning that it intentionally brings together a range of learning experiences as appropriate for each module, and which can be personalised by each student. In developing an inclusive and collaborative learning experience we:

- Design and evaluate our courses with our students as partners.
 - Work to 'liberate' our curriculum, delivery, assessment and environment from all bias and barriers to learning.
 - Ensure that our students are able to identify with their learning and consider how they can apply their learning and effect change and transformation in their communities.
 - Celebrate the diversity and talent of each of our students and staff so that they feel valued as part of our community.
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Digitally enabled

At the University of Suffolk, we understand digital as an enabler, facilitating learning, research, employment, and entrepreneurship across global communities. We have worked with global digital providers to design programmes, and work to ensure that all of our students can benefit from a high quality, digitally enabled learning environment, and have access to the technology needed for success. To achieve this, we:

- Define digital learning, teaching and assessment as a blended experience, using a range of innovative platforms and tools which connect learning across all learning environments including campus , placement and home.
 - Support our students and staff to develop skills and knowledge so that they are confident, capable, safe and secure in digital landscapes.
 - Enrich our learning through specialist labs, studios, simulation and real-world technologies.
 - Provide learning environments and spaces which connect learners, educators, employers and practitioners fostering collaboration through and beyond programmes of study.
 - Provide access to resources designed to mitigate digital poverty.
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Championing teaching excellence

At the University of Suffolk, we are committed to providing each of our students with an excellent academic and social experience. The teaching we provide is innovative, and of a consistently high quality. We want all of our students to succeed and achieve to the best of their potential. In our work to sustain teaching excellence, we:

- Nurture our staff, and support them to flourish as excellent teachers, through a range of development opportunities and sector-based recognition.
- Empower our course teams to think differently, to be creative, and reflect this in consistently excellent learning experiences for our students.
- Evaluate the impact of our work, on our students, our communities, and our region.



HOW WE MEASURE OUR SUCCESS

Key Performance Indicators

It is an important aspect of our learning teaching and assessment strategy to collate and evaluate data in a number of different arenas to effectively monitor success indicators. KPIs are challenging and relate to student satisfaction and experience, teaching excellence and quality of provision, staff engagement and our access and participation agenda.

KPI	Success Indicator	2021/22	2030
NSS (%)	Satisfaction with teaching on my course	84	93
	Satisfaction with assessment and feedback	79	87
	Satisfaction with academic support	79	87
Staff Engagement	Student voice	73	80
	% academic contracted staff with HEA Fellowship	56	90
	Continuation	85	94
	Completion ¹	78	86
	Achievement	70	77
	Outcomes	82	90
Teaching Excellence (%)	Achievement of HEA Fellowship	46	75

¹ Completion is 2020/21