

3.2 TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND STRATEGY FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

3.2.1 Teaching philosophy

In the modern, ever-changing business environment, theoretical foundations are essential for students to make informed judgements since a theoretical foundation enables graduates to cope with and manage change effectively. For this reason, theory will form a major foundation of the Master of Science in Financial Management and Control.

However, theoretical foundation per se is not a panacea for effective learning. The application of theory brings together complex theoretical perspectives and how they relate to the real world. Equally, black box solutions to complex scenarios will not be presented at the expense of intuition.

The learning environment will challenge students to raise issues of theory and how it relates to the real world. This requires an empathetic learning environment and this is created, inter alia, by varying the delivery of course content. Equally, it is important to adjust the teaching methodology to accommodate students from different backgrounds.

An empathetic learning environment is enhanced by working and acting on student feedback and by recognising that effective teaching is not a passive experience but a joint participation. Close monitoring and evaluation of classes is an important aspect of generating empathy. There are many different types of students with different learning styles and it should be possible to accommodate all of them. This is often achieved by class problem solving and discussion. Generating trust and being fair to students is critical to creating empathy.

3.2.2 Criteria for an effective teaching strategy

Hibernia College's perceptive teaching philosophy forms the foundation for a coherent teaching strategy that promotes effective teaching and evaluation.

The college uses five criteria to plan effective teaching strategies:

1. **Enhancing student learning by creating a student-centred learning environment** – please see section 2 for a description of this environment from the student's perspective
2. **Achieving excellence in teaching in content and course material** – please see section 8.1 for a description of the course development process
3. **Using effective evaluation strategies including student feedback** – please see section 11 for details of the evaluation and review strategy
4. **Using effective teaching, learning and assessment methodologies (and changes to teaching practices where**

necessary) – please see section 5 for details of the assessment strategy

5. **A practice of reflection and modification of teaching practices including reflective commentaries on course design and teaching strategies and a matrix of effective teaching incorporating core teaching competencies** – Hibernia College has an extensive e-moderator training programme including a selection of online tutorials

3.2.3 Fostering improvements to learning

The teaching strategy fosters effective student learning by:

- Providing ready access to all course material
- Providing student learning flexibility and enhancing their ability to work on their own to practice relevant skills, i.e. computational and conceptual
- Student learning is organised which fosters greater structure
- An active learning approach to modules
- Providing succinct and detailed student feedback

3.2.4 Impact of overall teaching strategy

The overall impact of the programme’s teaching strategy is:

- Greater active student involvement
- A provision of what is needed and required for student learning
- A plan that assists students identify the outcomes of their learning
- A more empathetic learning environment

Tabular summary of how the outlined teaching strategy results in effective learning

Core competency	Effective teaching	Evidence
Organisation for student learning	The goals of each teaching episode are matched with appropriate readings, assessment tasks and other resources. Each teaching episode is linked thematically with the central theme of value creation across modules.	The organisation of the course is designed with the idea of linking the courses together. All electronic resources are presented in a way that advances student understanding. For example, Excel for each episode, web links for each episode, video clips, online quizzing.
Communication	Clear explanations and all presentations have structure. Real world	The presentation of the material is professional and structured.

	<p>examples are presented via case study material. Students are asked appropriate questions and respect is given to all answers. Good listening skills are required on the part of the moderator. Tutorials are designed to capture student interest.</p>	<p>Empathy is generated by providing banks of conceptual, mathematical MCMs. Tutorial sessions are used to get feedback and opinions on the course. Any issues with students are dealt with immediately. Students are encouraged to raise issues of concern to them about the course.</p>
Active learning	<p>Questions and problems require active student participation to investigate some topics in detail. Discussion on the content with their peers.</p>	<p>Examples are the case studies used in the Business Strategy and Corporate Governance and Business Ethics modules. All six credit modules will require project work. Much of this work will be presented to the class for discussion and feedback.</p>
Identifying and catering for learning difficulties	<p>Interview process for selected students</p>	<p>Learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, will be catered for. Individual support will be provided where necessary, via tutorials, for students.</p>
Identify the intended learning outcomes of each teaching episode	<p>Examination papers and other assessment criteria will reflect the subject syllabus in proportion. Assessment tasks are clearly communicated to students. Conceptual understanding and not simply the reproduction of facts will be the focus of assessments.</p>	<p>Each question on the examination paper is paired off with the appropriate section on the syllabus. If a particular section on the examination paper has a higher weighting, students will be informed of this and the assessment will reflect this. Project content, submission dates and marking schemes are clearly communicated to students.</p>
Provide feedback to students	<p>Feedback will indicate to students where they have been successful</p>	<p>Project marking scheme will be detailed and succinct.</p>

	and where they have not met the necessary requirements.	
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3.6 PROPOSED PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

3.6.1 Required student effort

Hibernia College runs award programmes on a modular basis. Courses within award programmes are called modules. Students progress towards an award by passing individual modules.

Each 6-credit course runs for 16 calendar weeks:

Course content	wks
Induction week	1
Lesson weeks	12
Reading weeks	2
Exam week	1
TOTAL	16

In general, each lesson week consists of the following student study time.

Lesson content	hrs
Content (incl. core text and practice items)	3
Tutorial contact	1
Private study	6
TOTAL	10

Since there are 12 lesson weeks in a 6 credit course module and 6 lesson weeks in a 3 credit course module, it can be seen that 1 credit is equivalent to 2 lesson weeks.

In addition, there are 2 reading weeks, which usually occur in the middle of the trimester and between the end of the lesson weeks and the exam week. Students have the opportunity to revise and catch up on reading material.

Thus, each 6-credit course requires:

1. TWELVE (Lesson weeks) x 10 hours of student study time = 120 hours
2. TWO (Reading weeks) x 10 hours of student study time = 20 hours

Therefore, the notional total number of hours of student effort for a 60 credit Master's award is 10 x 140 hours = 1400 hours.

For a detailed table of STUDENT CONTACT HOURS for each course module

please see Appendix 5.