



Title: **Strategy, policy & quality assurance protocols**

Transition(s) the practice supports: This theme will be of benefit to students at all levels who undertake blended or fully-online distance learning. In terms of the transitions map, it is indirectly relevant to students transitioning through their studies but perhaps is more relevant in relation to how the university and its staff are transitioning towards blended learning.

Abstract: This area of inquiry will focus on relevant strategy, policy and quality assurance protocols as they relate to blended learning at the University of Glasgow. There is an increasing recognition among university staff that while the institution's strategies, policies and protocols encourage knowledge of – and compliance with – best practice, such documents may stifle rather than stimulate the innovation necessary to design and implement opportunities for blended learning. This area will therefore examine examples from the perspectives of various stakeholders, in order to develop recommendations to ensure that strategy, policy and protocols are congruent and sufficiently flexible to encourage innovation in blended learning.

Description: The University has recently made substantial strategic investments in the development of online courses – blended and fully online. One of these investments seeks to facilitate the development of new online distance Masters courses and the transformation of existing face-to-face courses into a blended or fully online format (see theme 3). In its first year, the initiative has raised a number of issues for the university. These include:

- the relative inflexibility of the course approvals process, which has evolved to support and ensure quality assurance for traditional campus-based courses
- copyright of materials incorporated into blended learning – for internal-facing courses as well as outward-facing public courses such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- a recognised need to review the university's strategic aims to ensure fitness for purpose in taking the university forward in its blended learning provision

Work will be undertaken to review course approvals processes to maintain quality assurance while enabling and encouraging innovation in learning, teaching and assessment generally. We have recently produced copyright guidelines to accompany a recently implemented lecture recording policy; there are similarities with copyright issues in blended learning but these need to be further surfaced, particularly in relation to outward-facing public courses. The university's strategies for teaching and learning, e-learning and internationalisation are currently being reviewed by the Senior Management Group, through extensive consultation exercises. This Transitions theme will involve working closely with SMG to ensure that blended learning developments are aligned with and enabled by QA processes, policies and strategies.

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