

Section 14



Nottingham Trent
University

Quality Handbook

**Part D: Course Design, Management and
Enhancement**

Section 14: Learning, Teaching and Professional Development Policy

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1. Purpose of NTU learning, teaching and professional development

NTU courses must provide a high-quality academic experience for all learners enabling them to develop relevant skills, knowledge, and behaviours, and to engage in personal development. This will be achieved through clear mechanisms which ensure staff are appropriately qualified, engendering a lifelong learning habit, enabling staff to respond to the changing needs of NTU and its students.

The policy should be used alongside the NTU Learning and Teaching Professional Development Requirements (2026) relating to requirements for the completion of professional development.

2. Context

- 2.1 NTU is committed to providing a high-quality academic experience for its students through the creation of a culture for learning and success on and beyond their course (OfS Condition B1). It aims to develop a sector-leading staff infrastructure with the capacity and flexibility to support a constantly evolving portfolio. Colleagues teaching and/or supporting learning must be equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver an outstanding student experience.
- 2.2 'Appropriately qualified' requires staff to have and maintain expert knowledge of the subject; appropriate teaching qualifications, training or teaching experience for the content and level; and knowledge and skills to deliver the course effectively (OfS Condition B2.4b).
- 2.3 To achieve this, staff must be supported in the development and enhancement of their professional practice, with recognition and reward for high quality teaching throughout every stage of their career.
- 2.4 In line with its institutional ambitions to ensure sustained teaching excellence, NTU takes a career-wide approach to professional development. It ensures that access to professional development in learning and teaching is both inclusive and equitable, reflecting the broader commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- 2.5 NTU prioritises active collaborative learning experiences that research has shown to have a beneficial impact upon student progression, attainment, attendance and engagement. The preferred learning and teaching pedagogies at NTU are SCALE-UP and Team Based Learning.

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3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy relates to all University academic and professional services staff including technicians who teach and/or support learning, in any form and through any media, and at all stages of their career at NTU. The policy should be read in conjunction with the NTU Learning and Teaching Professional Development Requirements (2026) which specifies colleagues’ contractual requirements.
- 3.2 This policy outlines the requirements of the University to provide sustained professional development and the expectations on staff who teach and/or support learning to engage with it. This policy relates to all forms of learning and teaching professional development; mandatory and sustained professional development opportunities.
- 3.3 Professional development is recognised in the broadest sense and includes all planned, deliberate and systematic learning leading to the acquisition and development of skills and knowledge in order to improve organisational, professional, and personal effectiveness.
- 3.4 Three key areas of professional development are identified:
 - a) Strategic areas: to enable staff to meet the requirements and expectations of University Strategy;
 - b) Operational and Professional areas: to enable staff to meet the requirements and expectations of their roles;
 - c) Individual area: to provide access to learning and teaching development opportunities to promote the development of individual professional identity through professional practice, recognition and reward.

4. Requirements

- 4.1 To ensure that the University provides a sustained high-quality learning experiences for all its students, the following professional development activities are provided for staff who teach and or support learning. These must be completed as relevant, to the role, indicated below.

Professional Development	Details	Requirement
Academic Professional Apprenticeship (APA)	A level 7 Advance HE accredited course available for academic staff. Successful completion leads to: Academic Professional Apprenticeship, PGCLTHE and Advance HE Fellowship on completion of the course. To support a high-quality student experience by meeting the B2.4ii	This course is no longer accepting new applicants.

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	requirement for appropriately qualified staff.	
Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PGCLTHE)	A level 7 Advance HE accredited course available for academic staff. Successful completion leads to: Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education and Advance HE Fellowship on completion of the course. To support a high-quality student experience by meeting the B2.4b requirement for appropriately qualified staff.	For all academic staff who teach/support learning and do not hold a PGCLTHE or its equivalent e.g. PGCAP, APA.
Designing Effective Learning, Teaching and Assessment (DELTA)	A 16-hour online, non-credit bearing offer, contextualising learning, teaching and assessment at NTU. To support a high-quality student experience by providing all teaching and/or supporting academic staff with a solid understanding of learning, teaching, and assessment in a NTU context.	Requirement for all academic staff new to teaching and/or supporting learning at NTU.
Observation of practice	To support a high-quality student experience, identifying good practice and/or developmental needs. Observations can be theme based to focus on specific areas of practice or strategies priorities. Teaching observations are a formal approach to observing learning and teaching practice and will lead to a developmental conversation between the observer and colleague observed.	All academic and professional services staff with teaching and/or supporting learning roles will engage with formal teaching observations biennially. See Appendix 1 for more detail.
	Collaborative observations are undertaken between peers and can be focused on specific themes and will lead to a developmental conversation between the observer and colleague observed.	All academic and professional services staff with teaching and/or supporting learning roles will engage with collaborative observations biennially, on alternative year to

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		the formal teaching observation. See supplement TBC for more detail.
TILT Professional Recognition Scheme (PRS) - Fellowship	Professional recognition of academic staff teaching and/or supporting learning, aligned to the Advance HE Professional Standards Framework (2023). NTU is accredited by Advance HE to award across all four Descriptors: Associate Fellowship, Fellowship, Senior Fellowship, and Principal Fellowship. Where there is uncertainty regarding the most appropriate route, the decision will be made by the Academic and Professional Practice team.	Experiential route to Advance HE Fellowship. This is not available for colleagues on, or eligible for, the PGCLTHE. The category of the Fellowship recognition required depends on the role (see NTU Learning and Teaching Professional Development Requirements 2026).
TILT Readiness to Teach (RtT)	An intensive, three-day in-person, non-credit bearing offer for staff new to teaching and/or supporting learning. To support a high-quality student experience by providing a sound knowledge of the principles and practice of learning, teaching, assessment and feedback in a HE context.	Requirement for all academic and professional services staff who are new to teaching and/or supporting learning or have fewer than three years full time experience and are not currently on the PGCLTHE.
Sustained Professional Development	To support a high-quality student experience by ensuring that colleagues enhance skills and knowledge in learning and teaching in HE. The nature of sustained professional development will vary with role.	All academic and professional services staff who are teaching and/or supporting learning must engage in a minimum of ten hours professional development related to learning and teaching annually. This forms part of the Staff Development Activities (SDA).

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Teaching Observations

- 4.2 The purpose of teaching observations is to provide a developmental conversation about specific areas of learning and teaching. It prioritises **development** over judgement and positions observation as a collaborative, reflective activity. The teaching observation process aims to:
- Enhance the quality of teaching and/or support of learning through reflective practice and professional development.
 - Support staff through constructive, developmental feedback.
 - Promote the identification and dissemination of effective teaching practice.
 - Provide evidence to inform professional development, performance review, and professional recognition e.g., Advance HE Fellowship.
- 4.3 The requirements for teaching observations include a:
- Formal observation undertaken biennially.
 - Collaborative peer-based observation in the intervening years.
- 4.4 Formal observations contribute to ongoing quality assurance of NTU courses. For information about the mandatory requirements associated with teaching observations, see section 1 of the NTU Learning and Teaching Professional Development Requirements (2026).
- 4.5 Collaborative observations as professional development are required biennially, as a minimum. Further observations may be initiated as part of the following course review process. They may also be instigated by colleagues who wish to engage in a discussion with a peer about an aspect of their practice. Collaborative observations are to be conducted in a context-appropriate manner, reflecting the variation in which learning takes place e.g. lectures, seminars, other classroom activities, workshops, laboratory practice, supervision, NOW learning room, or field trips. For more information about the collaborative observation process, see supplement TBC for guidance.
- 4.6 Outcomes of teaching observations and collaborative observations may be used to inform development of individuals or teams. They can also identify and subsequently share good practice, which could be used as supporting evidence for recognition or award e.g. PGCLTHE, Advance HE Fellowship, VC Award for Excellence in Teaching or to raise the profile to support a nomination for National Teaching Fellowship Scheme or Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence.
- 4.7 Each School will be responsible for maintaining a schedule for biennial teaching observation and for recording and reporting that this requirement has been fulfilled via School Academic Standards and Quality Committee. Deputy Deans will agree key areas of focus for Teaching Observations annually, reflecting strategic priorities e.g. from NSS/PTES results, course review process.

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Staff Development Activities

- 4.8 The University has expectations that staff who teach and/or support learning will engage with sustained professional development as part of their staff development activities at all stages of their career, relevant to their role and development needs. This is self-managed, in line with objectives.
- 4.9 All staff are required to engage annually with a minimum of ten hours of sustained professional development relating to teaching and/or supporting learning.
- 4.10 In addition to the mandatory requirements listed in section 4, other opportunities are offered to colleagues. See appendix 2 for details of these.

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5. Appendix 1: Formal Teaching Observation Process

This appendix sets out the biennial requirement of a formal teaching observation to ensure quality assurance and identification of development opportunities. Whilst teaching observations are part of a formal process, they are still intended to be supportive and developmental. Guidance on Collaborative Peer observations can be found in Supplement *(to be added)*.

Responsibilities

Observees are responsible for:

- Participating in the observation process and identifying suitable development opportunities with their line manager.
- Engaging with the pre- and post-observation process.
- Sharing their session plan, any supporting materials, and providing access to the NOW learning room prior to the observation.
- Undertaking any development, or sharing of good practice, as determined with the observer in conjunction with their line manager.
- Discussing the outcomes as part of the appraisal process, alongside other evidence of teaching practice/quality.

Observers are responsible for:

- Scheduling and undertaking teaching observations.
- Recording that these observations have taken place.
- Liaising with observees and ensuring that outcomes and development needs are identified and recorded.
- Agreeing with the individual any support or development needs that arise.
- Ensuring that promotion of good practice, as appropriate.
- Supporting developmental needs, as identified.

The process

1. Annually, line managers identify staff to participate in teaching observations, ensuring all staff are observed in line with the Teaching Observation requirements (section 5). This information must be collated by the Learning and Teaching Manager, or similar role, and submitted to SASQC.
2. Observers ensure that they have attended a teaching observation development session.
3. Pre-observation meeting is held prior to the identified observation session.
4. Observation conducted.
5. Post-observation meeting (with observer feedback to the line manager, where appropriate, if not the observer).
6. Annually, SASQC receives and considers an overview of key teaching strengths and developmental needs.

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The Teaching Observation comprises four steps, all of which must be completed to meet the biennial requirement.

Step One: Pre Observation – form to be completed by the observer following a conversation with the observee.

Observer	
Observee	
School/Department	
Date and time of observation (if asynchronous, record the date and time of delivery)	
Type of session observed e.g. Lecture, workshop, labs and mode of delivery (online or face to face)	
Module code	
Date and time of post-observation meeting	
Agreed area of focus e.g. informed by strategic priorities and student characteristics (i.e. Success for All beneficiary groups)	

Step Two: Teaching Observation

Narrative (in session) - Notes to aid completion of Step Three.

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Step Three: Post session to inform professional conversation.

Session and resource design e.g. creates an intellectually challenging and stimulating learning environment, adopts a scholarly approach to the subject, provides opportunities for students to actively engage in the session.

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Student engagement e.g. empathetic with students, engages and encourages, guides their learning, developing student confidence

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Communication e.g. is an engaging presenter, is enthusiastic about the subject and what is taught, can translate complex and difficult concepts to students

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Learning environment e.g. effective NOW learning room and use of appropriate learning technologies.

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Feedback on agreed areas of focus/priorities

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Part Four: Summary of professional conversation.

Summary of strengths

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Areas for development

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Development goal to be included in appraisal Y/N – state goal below.

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Conclusions

Observer comments including any further action needed on, and outcomes of the observation.

Signed (Observer)
Date

Observee comments

Signed (Observee)
Date

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6. Appendix 2: Sustained Professional Development

A differentiated Professional Development offer is available to support staff to develop a well-rounded approach to their professional development, informed by their context and developmental needs.

Professional development is offered by Schools, NTU Professional Services, the sector and individual disciplines. Sustained professional development supports a high-quality student experience by meeting the B2.4b requirement for appropriately qualified staff and supports professional recognition of teaching and/or supporting learning.

Activity	Overview
Collaborative peer-based observation	Engaging in collaborative peer observations support reflection and enhancement of learning and teaching practice. These are co-ordinated within schools.
Discipline specific events for learning and teaching.	Discipline specific networks and professional bodies.
Designing Effective Learning, Teaching and Assessment (DELTA) See Table in 4.1 for details	A 16-hour online, non-credit bearing offer, contextualising learning, teaching, and assessment in an NTU context.
Educational Development Learning and Teaching Professional Development including: • Assessment and Feedback • Curriculum Design • Decolonising Curricula • Impact and Evaluation • Personal Tutoring • SCALE-UP • Student Engagement and Transition • Success for All • Team Based Learning Bespoke Learning and Teaching Professional Development	To support Success for All at NTU through the development of transformative learning experiences that removes barriers, enhances potential and supports every student to succeed. Bookable via Thrive at NTU Bespoke sessions to support course teams and small groups in enhancing the learning and teaching experience for students at NTU. academicdevelopment@ntu.ac.uk
Library and Learning Resources	The Academic Engagement team provide a range of Learning and Teaching Events
TILT Course Leader Induction	A short in person induction for new or aspiring course leaders. Contact: TILT@ntu.ac.uk
TILT Events	University-wide events that bring together colleagues who teach and/or support learning to network and share effective practice.

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	• Annual Learning and Teaching Conference • Course Leader Conference • TILT events
TILT Professional Recognition Scheme (PRS) See Table in 4.1 for details	Staff may choose to engage with the PRS beyond their contractual requirements.
TILT Quality in Practice Designed to support the embedding of quality in academic practice	A diagnostic and dialogic solutions-based approach to ensure effective implementation of policy, such as: behaviour/classroom management; course review; course design; teaching observation. Contact: TILT@ntu.ac.uk
Scholarship Career Development Resource: Your Scholarship Career Development at NTU	Supports development of all career stages of scholarship at NTU irrespective of pathway.
School based learning and teaching events	See School details for relevant information.
Sector specific events for learning and teaching	<i>For example:</i> QAA offer events associated with learning, teaching and quality: QAA member events Advance HE provide resources, training and events to support high quality learning and teaching: Advance HE Teaching and Learning SEDA is the professional association for staff and educational developers in the UK. It promotes ideas and innovation across the educational development community: Seda - Staff and Educational Development Association
UKAT Personal Tutoring NTU is committed to support academic staff with personal tutoring responsibilities by being a member of the UKAT and by supporting colleagues in achieving their professional recognition.	The UKAT Professional Recognition, aligned with the UKAT Professional Framework for Academic Advising and Personal Tutoring supports the continuing professional development of staff engaged in academic and pastoral advising or tutoring of students. Contact: AcademicDevelopment@ntu.ac.uk

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Policy owner
CADQ

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