

**The University of Sheffield**  
**Faculty of Arts and Humanities**  
**Learning and Teaching Strategy 2008/09**

**A. Learning and Teaching Context**

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities has a large teaching portfolio; undergraduate numbers (3021 FTE) account for 86% of our teaching activities whilst the Faculty also has a large PGT population of 271 FTE. Individual subject areas have strong national profiles with 5 disciplines in the top 10 nationally in the 2008 NSS survey; equally strong are individuals within those Faculty discipline areas with 10 University of Sheffield Senate Award winners across the categories of collaboration, sustained excellence and rising stars, and we are one of the three Faculties to have a National Teaching Fellowship Scheme winner. The Faculty has been, and continues to be a key participant in the Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences, and has been instrumental in the development of inquiry-based pedagogy in the University. The Arts and Humanities disciplines thrive in a research-rich environment, where active researchers benefit from the stimulus of engagement with their students and students benefit from the enthusiasm of their teachers for their own research areas.

**B. Vision for Learning and Teaching**

The Arts and Humanities encourage us to seek to understand what it means to be human, helping us, and our students, to become active citizens in our various communities. We foster openness to enquiry and independence in asking and answering questions to enable all members of our academic community to make a positive impact on our disciplines. We therefore seek excellence in the quality of the experience we provide for all our students, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate; we also seek to provide a portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that reflect the diversity and the intellectual challenge of Arts and Humanities disciplines and research, and strive to support our students in achieving excellence in those fields. In so doing we recognise the importance of preparing students to participate in the world of work and the wider society which they join upon leaving as distinctive Arts and Humanities graduates.

**C. Strategic Objectives**

We will seek to

1. provide an excellent learning experience for all students, from undergraduate to research postgraduate level.
2. ensure equal access to our programmes to students from all backgrounds and ensure our curricula are inclusive.
3. ensure effective induction for students entering at undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research points.
4. support the learning of our students at key transition points along the axis from pre-HE, to undergraduate, to taught postgraduate and on to research postgraduate levels.
5. ensure our students have access to the appropriate resources to support their learning.
6. ensure our graduates have developed discipline-specific and generic skills that will fit them for their future roles in work and in society, and are able to articulate those skills.
7. strive to make our students confident users and interpreters of language, either as their focus of study, or in their academic writing.
8. provide opportunities for students to develop their enterprise skills.
9. increase our postgraduate taught numbers, and ensure that delivery of postgraduate programmes is cost-effective, making best use of our resources and strengthening our postgraduate community.

10. ensure that our postgraduate taught programmes enable us to recruit strong candidates into postgraduate research.
11. develop ways of enhancing our undergraduate programme portfolio to ensure we continue to recruit high-calibre students.
12. foster areas of cooperation between departments in the Faculty and beyond to develop interdisciplinary programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
13. exploit opportunities to deliver Faculty-wide teaching in areas of generic interest.
14. work with the wider community, both locally and regionally, to strengthen links between the disciplines in the Faculty and organisations such as schools, cultural industries, etc., and encourage students to contribute to the cultural life of the city.
15. work with professional services to ensure that the learning and teaching needs of the Faculty are met as effectively as possible.
16. ensure that administrative procedures to support learning and teaching are both effective and efficient.

#### **D. Strategic Actions to support our Strategic Objectives**

1. Target funds to support initiatives for enhancing learning and teaching across departments within the Faculty. (C1, C12)
2. Work with CILASS to embed inquiry-based learning as a distinctive element of Arts and Humanities pedagogy. (C1)
3. Carry out a Faculty-wide enhancement of feedback project. (C1)
4. Strongly encourage and support university-wide review of RTP provision, its fitness for purpose and contribution to the PGR student experience. (C1)
5. Run two departmental projects, in English and Archaeology, in collaboration with the university's Inclusive Curricula project in 2008-09, and disseminate good practice arising from them in 2009-10. (C2)
6. Carry out a Faculty review of induction processes and activities in 2009-10. (C3, C4)
7. Work with Subject Librarian, departmental library representatives and CICS to ensure learning resources support student learning needs. (C5)
8. Scope the possibilities and practicalities of Faculty-wide initiatives in 2009-10 to support and develop students' generic academic skills. (C6)
9. Target specific support and events from the Careers Service towards graduating Arts and Humanities students in 2009. (C6)
10. Build upon this activity in 2009-10 to develop more systematic awareness-raising, support of and opportunities for enhancing employability of students from level 1 onwards. (C6)
11. Work with LeTS and other professional services to develop ways of incorporating the concept of the Sheffield Graduate effectively into departmental learning and teaching, and raise awareness of its role in enhancing employability for Arts and Humanities students. (C6)
12. Develop ways of making access to The Academic Skills Hub visible to students and staff in the Faculty as a first point of call for support in academic writing and other skills. (C7)
13. Work with WRCETLE and Enterprise at Sheffield to embed enterprise in the Arts and Humanities student experience. (C8)
14. Carry out a systematic review of taught postgraduate provision. (C9, C10)
15. Target funds to support scoping of interdisciplinary learning and teaching initiatives across the Faculty and with other Faculties. (C11, C12, C13)
16. Explore the possibility of dedicated Arts & Humanities Outreach officer. (C14)
17. Monitor and periodically review QA procedures to ensure fitness for purpose. (C15, C16)