



# Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy 2025/26

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## Teaching and Learning Strategy 2025-26

### Vision:

Our goal at South Bank Colleges is to transform the lives of our students and apprentices so that they achieve to their maximum potential, are well prepared for their next steps, and are equipped to take a full and healthy part in society. We believe that to achieve this, teaching and learning must be the central concern and interest of the college and driven by a fully inclusive ethos, which understands who our students are.

Our student body has a distinct profile. 65% of our students and apprentices are aged 19+, with an even split between male and female students. About 80% of our 16-18 students are from Global Majority backgrounds with 20% of them identifying as white British. For our adult students, 58% are from Global Majority backgrounds. The majority of our students from Global Majority backgrounds are studying on Entry and Level 1 courses, whereas most of our white students are studying on Level 2 courses. Over a third of our 16-18 students are entitled to free school meals, and it is worth noting that a third of working aged people living in the Lambeth borough are identified as living in poverty. 54% of our 16–18-year-olds are in deprivation bands 1-3, with 41% of our adults in deprivation bands 1-3.

Our 16-19 students are far less qualified in terms of English & Maths when they start with us compared with the national average. 61% of our young students arrive with neither English nor Maths grades 9-4/A-C, compared with 30% nationally. Only 17% of 16-19 students started at the college with both English and Maths Grades 9-4, compared with 47% nationally. No college in the country has students beginning their learning with lower starting points in English and in Maths (we are ranked 124/124 colleges by Mides for starting points).

Our largest curriculum provision delivered is for ESOL, and across our mainstream provision our students and apprentices also often have significant ESOL needs.

The success of our students and apprentices on their courses with us depends on their vast array of needs being supported and addressed. It means that we have a huge social purpose in helping our cohort to shape or redesign their lives, building a place for them to belong and equipping them with the skills and confidence needed to continue learning and/or gain fruitful employment. We are in the position of really being able to help our students and apprentices change their lives – and are lucky enough to be working with the students who will benefit the most from strong teaching and learning.

Research suggests that between 7 and 21% of achievement can be attributed to the teacher<sup>1</sup> - we can make a huge difference. Research also suggests that students taught by the **most effective teachers** can gain 53% over the course of one year in terms of achievement.<sup>2</sup> It is our intention to become a college which is made up of these most effective teachers, and to deliver strong teaching and learning which works for our students as the norm.

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<sup>1</sup> Hattie (2009)

<sup>2</sup> Marzano (2003)

We see teaching as a process of learning – no teacher is ever the finished article. To become as effective as possible, we need to take some risks, try things out, reflect on our own practice, and learn from each other:

**‘The biggest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching and when students become their own teachers.’**

John Hattie (2003)

### Becoming an Anti-Racist College

As a college, we are fully committed to scrutinising our own processes and delivery of teaching and learning to ensure that we are providing learning which is inclusive, represents our students and apprentices, rejects prejudice and discrimination, gives our students a voice which is listened and responded to, and which contributes to societal change. Building on the Anti Racism workshops run in the summer of 2023, and the CPD sessions run through 2023-25, how we continue to decolonise our curriculum will remain a focus for development over 2025-26. This harmonises with the work at LSBU on closing achievement gaps and there will be opportunities to work cross institutionally on this. All of this links in with the wider agenda of the college to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the fabric of our organisational culture, and to gain the Investors in Diversity accreditation.

### Specific focus areas for 2025-26

Lesson observation, student feedback and achievement data confirm that as a college, the specific areas we need to continue to develop are:

- Progress made against starting points/achievement of high grades
- Feedback which feeds forwards (the consistent use of SBC Feedback Model)
- Employer engagement with the curriculum
- Quality of delivery and learning in IT, selected courses in Creative, Apprenticeships and T-levels (retention)

In addition, our two-college model means that we also need to continue to embed and develop the teaching and learning frameworks for each college (*Gateway to Learning* and *The 9 Elms*), including the innovative use of technology.

### Apprenticeships

As the area of college provision which requires improvement, Apprenticeships remain the key area where sustained improvement is needed, particularly in Construction where the provision has grown quickly in a short amount of time. Teaching and learning is good in class where the qualification is delivered; however, the wraparound work completed by the assessors needs improving to ensure that students are getting regular feedback and targets, that employers are involved and included in

those discussions, that tracking and monitoring of targets are robust, and that apprentices are being well prepared for their end point assessments.

### Digital Skills and Learning Behaviours

Covid taught us that we need to be agile and confident moving between face to face learning and online learning. It also changed the way we work and the skillsets necessary for employment. AI challenges our assumptions about how we work, how we learn, what is real and what can be trusted. Most of our students are living in a digitally immersed world, which would have been unthinkable 10 years ago.

As a result, induction for 2025 continues to include the Digital RARPA qualifications created to invest in our students' digital skills and knowledge as well as their learning behaviours. Vocational study programme students will complete either a Level 1 Award or a Level 2 Award in Digital Essentials or Digital Humans in their first two weeks of learning. Materials have been brought fully up to date and include units on 'Digital Security', 'Social Influencers', 'Artificial Intelligence', 'What it means to be Human in the Digital World', and 'Digital Wellbeing'. Events across the UK over the last 18 months indicate that developing critical thinking skills when exposed to Social Influencer and Social Media output is essential and our updates feel especially pertinent. Teaching for ESOL students and discrete adult programmes will select from these materials too as appropriate. We will also be working closely with LSBU on how we can support our students with their IT, digital and study skills through the use of the LRC and Digital Spine at LSBTC.

Technology will continue to be used to support learning, whether that is face-to-face, outside of the classroom or through online delivery. At LSBTC we are running '2 Days Online' for 2025-26, with two days learning delivered online to all students (not including Apprentices), including English and Maths and LDC. Online delivery will also continue to be a tool available for us to use when necessary (e.g. if a teacher needs to self-isolate) or when the teacher feels it is appropriate and effective. In addition, we are running 'One Day Switch Off', where teachers will be encouraged to go technology free in lessons, and students will be encouraged to not spend their breaks on their phones, with board games provided in the canteens. A range of online CPD is available for teachers to access, which delivers training on both the functional tools involved in delivering remotely and on online course design and pedagogy.

### Working in partnership with LSBU

As has already been mentioned, the wider LSBU family offers rich opportunities for us to explore and share how we think about our pedagogy, and the mind-sets and tools we need to develop to ensure all of our students and apprentices are achieving their best and progressing to the next stage of their education, or to employment or an apprenticeship. This collaboration takes place in various ways, including through the LSBU Learning and Teaching Conference, so that all parts of the Group can learn from each other and work together for the benefit of our students and apprentices.

## Strategic aims for Teaching & Learning at South Bank Colleges

1. To provide a high-quality education for our students and apprentices, which prepares them for successful progression to employment or within education
2. To promote a culture of shared enquiry and mutual learning amongst students, apprentices and teaching staff
3. To invest in our teaching staff by delivering high quality training, responding to need, including student and apprentice feedback

### Key themes:

**Strategic aim 1:** To provide a high-quality education for our students and apprentices, which prepares them for successful progression to employment or within education

- Providing innovative and inclusive teaching, learning and assessment, which responds to student needs and student feedback
- Developing learning behaviours as well as curriculum skills and content
- Having high expectations of all and ensuring all students feel challenged as well as supported
- Using technology as a tool to enhance and support learning
- Valuing and supporting the development of English, Maths and Digital skills across the college

**Strategic aim 2:** To promote a culture of shared enquiry and mutual learning amongst students, apprentices and teaching staff

- Changing the conversation about teaching and learning to one which is about exploring and responding to what works best for our students: seeing every teacher as a learner who is a work in progress, rather than the finished product
- Being prepared to take risks and try new things: embracing the idea as teachers and students that we do not always get things right first time and that that is how we learn
- Learning collaboratively: learning together and learning from each other, including from student feedback
- Reflecting honestly about our strengths and areas for development
- Setting meaningful targets and reviewing them

**Strategic aim 3:** To invest in our teaching staff by delivering high quality training, responding to need, including student and apprentice feedback

- Learning about learning: using research (and being researchers) to help us design and structure our curriculum and lessons
- Modelling pedagogy through CPD
- Personalising CPD so that it is meaningful for teachers and has an impact on the experience of the students
- Creating reflective practitioners who can talk to our students and apprentices about learning
- Measuring the impact of CPD on confidence, competence, and learning

## **EPIC**

When placing the learner at the centre of the learning experience at South Bank Colleges, we are guided by the EPIC teaching standards. This model is relevant to the classroom and the management of the curriculum, which helps shape the classroom experience, and while it is this area which remains the remit of this document, it should also be acknowledged that the EPIC model applies to the wider life of the college that each student and apprentice is a part of, and in a sense ‘travels through’, on their journey from application to progression. They are also relevant to the teaching body, since teaching itself is a process of learning, which demands a dynamic and reflective approach. And – in turn – they should inform management decisions, which determine the working practices and culture of South Bank Colleges as a community which learns and develops together. The EPIC model is as follows:

## **ENGAGE**

Every lesson should:

- Plan for the different needs of students and apprentices
- Communicate specific learning objectives, which connect the bigger picture to the smaller picture of learning
- Start strongly and warmly in a way which engages all students and apprentices
- Set or refer to personal targets
- Use a variety of activities, which give students time to process new learning and connect it to previous learning

## **PROGRESS**

Every student and apprentice should:

- Make progress against their starting point and individual targets each lesson
- Be assessed for learning
- Develop wider skills or knowledge
- Receive individual feedback that helps them improve

## **INSPIRE**

Every teacher should:

- Teach beyond the grading criteria
- Use stimulating teaching materials, which represent the students and apprentices in the class
- Create an aspirational culture of learning
- Relate lessons to a relevant vocational context and future progression
- Develop students' curiosity around the subject matter

## **CHALLENGE**

Every lesson should:

- Develop students' and apprentices' independence and thinking skills
- Challenge preconceptions and prejudices
- Extend learning beyond the classroom
- Build higher order thinking skills
- Encourage learners to exceed expectation

It is important that as a teaching body we share an understanding of what good and outstanding teaching, learning and assessment looks and feels like. The EPIC standards illustrate this and can be seen on pages 7 & 8:

# SBC EPIC T&L STANDARDS 2025/26

<p><b>E</b></p> <p>Engage</p>	<p><b>Every lesson should:</b></p> <p>Plan for the different needs of students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students' starting points are known and planned for: class profile is used; adaptive teaching strategies embedded</li> <li>Adaptive teaching strategies: choice; group work; support materials; targets set; variety of activity; questions asked; scaffolding used</li> <li>Students are known well, both as people and in terms of the data, and this is used to inform planning (e.g. organisation of group work; seating arrangements; choice of activity)</li> </ul>
	<p>Communicate specific learning objectives, which connect the bigger picture to the smaller picture of learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning objectives displayed: use of Blooms' verbs; skills based; clear; used to map out the lesson &amp; returned to during lesson</li> <li>Links are made between the learning objectives ('small picture') and the 'bigger picture': how they are transferable between units, and relevant for employability, developing wider skills and playing a full role in society</li> <li>Students can explain what they are learning and why</li> </ul>
	<p>Start strongly and warmly in a way which engages all students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students feel like they have really missed something if they arrive late: starts of lessons are given real value</li> <li>Starters are used when appropriate; previous learning is recapped; students are warmed up for new learning</li> <li>E-quizzes such as Kahoot; Quizizz; Forms; Wordwall; Mentimeter (and AI) used when appropriate</li> <li>A sense of community is established, with routines established and embedded and Knock &amp; Wait used</li> </ul>
	<p>Set or refer to personal targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students know what they are expected to achieve in each lesson and are ready to learn (e.g. bags on floor, phones away)</li> <li>Students participate in their own target setting and assessment of the progress made</li> <li>Students understand how their targets in each lesson contribute to the longer-term journey &amp; goal of learning</li> </ul>
	<p>Use a variety of activities, which give students time to process new learning and connect it to previous learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure of session enables a sense of journey / progression: the different parts of the lesson hang together</li> <li>Students know why they are learning what they are learning and how it connects to previous learning</li> <li>Students are working hard: at least as hard as the teacher and often harder – they are actively learning</li> <li>Tasks/activities are built into session, which enable students to apply, explore, adapt, connect and think... (Blooms' verbs)</li> <li>Individual, paired, small group, whole class work as well as classroom layout (where flexible) are planned effectively</li> <li>A culture where technology is seen as a natural part of learning is established</li> </ul>
<p><b>P</b></p> <p>Progress</p>	<p><b>Every student should:</b></p> <p>Make progress against their starting point</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is evidence of regular assessment, target setting &amp; tracking</li> <li>Students know how and when they will be assessed</li> <li>Regular reflection on progress: as a class and as individuals, modelling growth mindset</li> <li>Peer and self-assessment are used effectively when appropriate</li> </ul>
	<p>Be assessed for learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning is checked within lessons (e.g. listening, observing, questioning); tasks and explanations are reshaped in response</li> <li>Assessment criteria is shared with students: student friendly vocab; criteria understood by students</li> <li>Good practice / model work shared with students: analysed; reflected on; discussed</li> <li>Self-assessment &amp; peer assessment is used and is constructive; specific; supportive</li> </ul>
	<p>Develop wider skills or knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English &amp; Maths are embedded within sessions where appropriate – signposted for students</li> <li>Students can explain the importance of English and maths within their main programme</li> <li>Students are learning the digital skills needed to participate in and contribute to society, including the ethical use of AI</li> <li>Students are learning the digital skills and knowledge which can enhance learning, and know how to protect their own digital wellbeing and safety</li> <li>Broader employability skills are signposted, developed and valued (teamwork, setting targets, evaluating work)</li> </ul>

	Receive individual feedback that helps them improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written feedback &amp; targets: tracked; SMART; owned by the students, focused on the task not the student</li> <li>Meaningful verbal feedback in sessions: how to close the gap between current and desired performance is clear</li> <li>Students are given time to read and process feedback (and act on it immediately when appropriate)</li> <li>Students can explain what they need to do as a result of feedback – ‘I now need to...’</li> </ul>
I Inspire	<b>Every teacher should:</b> Teach beyond the grading criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning objectives are appropriate &amp; challenging (not capped at a particular level because of unit criteria)</li> <li>Opportunities are taken to develop and extend thinking (e.g. through questioning; metacognition)</li> <li>No student finds the lesson too easy</li> </ul>
	Use stimulating teaching materials, which represent the students in the class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content and materials are designed to represent the diverse make-up of our students and their histories</li> <li>Materials are up to date and draw on contexts which students will find interesting</li> <li>Resources are chosen which expand students’ horizons/cultural capital</li> <li>Resources are well presented and accessible for all students</li> </ul>
	Create an aspirational culture of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets are designed to help students move forward with purpose</li> <li>Students are encouraged to believe they will definitely make progress if they work hard</li> <li>Students are ambitious for themselves and their peers, supporting and contributing to the learning of others</li> </ul>
	Relate lessons to a relevant vocational context and future progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links are made between the learning objectives and how they are transferable between units and for employability</li> <li>Briefs are designed with employer input where possible</li> <li>Speakers / video clips relating to the workplace are used where appropriate</li> </ul>
	Develop students’ curiosity around the subject matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts of lessons ignite students’ interest</li> <li>Students are challenged, surprised and encouraged to reflect</li> <li>Subject matter is made relevant to students and connected to what they already know</li> </ul>
C Challenge	<b>Every lesson should:</b> Develop students’ independence and thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students feel challenged, regardless of starting point</li> <li>The learning behaviours needed to be an independent learner are valued, have been embedded, and are returned to</li> <li>Opportunities to continue learning independently are provided and clearly signposted</li> <li>Students are working at least as hard as the teacher</li> </ul>
	Challenge preconceptions and prejudices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lessons are warm and inclusive; all students feel valued and known</li> <li>Racism, misogyny, homophobia &amp; disablism (etc.) are challenged – by teachers and students</li> <li>Empathy and mutual respect are evident within the culture established; students behave &amp; listen well</li> <li>Inclusive language is used, including recognising students’ preferred pronouns</li> </ul>
	Extend learning beyond the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are taught the skills needed to learn independently</li> <li>Opportunities to continue learning independently, including using technology, are provided and clearly signposted</li> <li>Students are encouraged to enrich their learning beyond the curriculum &amp; to enjoy learning for learning’s sake</li> </ul>
	Build higher order thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>‘How’, ‘why’ &amp; ‘what if’ questions are used well to challenge and develop thinking</li> <li>Students are evaluating, problem-solving, generating new ideas, synthesising information and reflecting on their learning</li> <li>Making mistakes is seen as an essential part of learning</li> <li>Students question and challenge each other &amp; the teacher</li> <li>Metacognitive thinking is embedded within learning</li> </ul>

	Encourage learners to exceed expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High expectations are apparent, through the language used by teacher &amp; students; the tasks set; the questions asked</li><li>• Not accepting 'good enough'- aiming for 'even better'</li><li>• Pace: purposeful; no wasted time; no drifting</li><li>• Students are encouraged to be ambitious and resourceful</li></ul>
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## Roles and Responsibilities

### **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):**

- Provide a clear strategic direction and set KPI targets
- Promote a whole college ethos of high expectations
- Provide resources and personnel within the constraints of college budget
- Define staff role and responsibility and hold them effectively to account for outcomes
- Report to Trustees with timely information and levels of performance

### **Director of Teaching and Learning:**

- Plan strategically in response to the needs of teaching staff and students, and feedback from our own quality mechanisms and external bodies
- Ensure the delivery of high quality CPD, both online and face-to-face
- Manage the performance of the Teaching and Learning Team in developing teaching skills of colleagues to a high standard
- Measure the impact of CPD on teaching staff and students
- Report regularly on participation and impact of CPD and T&L events
- Continue to develop pedagogical knowledge and keep up to date on the latest research into learning, culture, and effective CPD

### **Lead Teaching & Learning Coach:**

- Coordinate the new teacher induction process
- Work with the Teaching & Learning Coaches in developing CPD sessions
- Plan and deliver high quality training for teaching staff
- Coach staff 1-1, including for Unseen Observation
- Support the delivery of the Level 5 Cert Ed
- Share good practice with colleagues
- Keep updated on pedagogy and digital tools
- Continue to develop as a teacher and as a professional

### **Teaching & Learning and Digital Learning Coaches (TLCs and DLCs):**

- Plan and deliver high quality training for teaching staff
- Coach staff 1-1, including for Unseen Observation
- Mentor new staff as part of the new staff induction process
- Support 2 curriculum teams in developing practice, including student focus groups, facilitating sharing of good practice and CPD informed by data (student survey, achievement & predicted achievement)

- Share good practice with colleagues and lead on action research
- Keep updated on pedagogy and digital tools
- Continue to develop as a teacher and as a professional

**Directors and Curriculum Heads will:**

- Lead and motivate teaching teams to use the teaching standards within their practice
- Support students in developing high quality skills for them to progress successfully to employment, further training and/or education, including English & Maths
- Run learning walks and observations in line with the SBC process
- Promote an ethos of high expectations and positive messages in the curriculum area including English, maths, and work experience.
- Respond to student voice and implement appropriate actions to improve the student experience
- Ensure that schemes of work and lessons are planned and sequenced, considering how students learn
- Request CPD and/or 1-1 coaching for their teams / individuals within teams when needed
- Model the mind-set that all teachers can develop and continue learning, regardless of experience (for example, when observing lessons)

**Teachers will:**

- Ensure that learning is inclusive and fosters a culture of mutual respect
- Plan learning in response to the needs of students' starting points
- Promote positive attitudes towards English, Maths and Digital Skills with students
- Use the teaching standards as a framework for planning, delivering and assessing learning
- Model the ethos of life-long learning
- Reflect on the learning of their students and adapt practice where needed
- Ask for support from the T&L team when needed
- Commit to reflecting on, developing and updating their practice

**Students and apprentices will:**

- Attend all lessons ready to learn
- Respect all members of the class and treat others with kindness and empathy
- Contribute to the learning that takes place in lessons
- Reflect on their own learning and what they need to do to develop further
- Use the opportunities available outside of lessons to learn independently
- Ask for help when needed

