

# HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

## Enhanced Learning and Teaching Using Technology: An Institutional Strategy

### *Aims of the Strategy*

1. The aims are:
  - to enhance the diversity and quality of student learning experiences;
  - to encourage, facilitate and support the use of innovative technology for teaching, learning and research; &
  - to guide and inform investment and deployment of resources and infrastructure for e-Learning.

### *Scope of the Strategy*

2. This strategy promotes e-Learning as a pedagogical driven initiative to enhance the face-to-face learning experience of students in the University. This document outlines the plans and directions of the University's flexible, digitally supported, learning opportunities for all students and staff. The strategy defines the University's vision for supporting and developing the existing and future digitally supported learning and assessment opportunities. This strategy, while its primary focus is on learning, will touch on most aspects of students' experience in the University.

### *Definition*

3. A simple definition of e-Learning by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) <sup>[1]</sup> is: "Learning facilitated, supported and enhanced through the use of information and communications technology". In this document, we will use interchangeably e-Learning and enhanced learning and teaching using technology.

### *Practice of Using Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning in our University*

4. Academics in our University have been engaging in the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning. There is much innovative and pioneering work among our colleagues. Examples of such work can be found at the Department of Government and International Studies (GIS), Language Centre (LC), School of Business (BUS), Department of Geography (GEOG), and Department of Education Studies (EDUC) with the integration of the outcome-based learning criteria using technology enhanced and web-based learning and teaching in the GIS; the use of advanced technology to enrich the web-surfing experience of department's website in the Department of Finance and Decision Sciences (FDS), the use of web-based learning techniques in the LC, the awareness and integration of anti-plagiarism software as part of the curriculum in English writing assessments conducted by the LC, and using the e-Learning platform for assessment in the EDUC. This list is by no means exhaustive. There have been much feedback from students who studied under the enhanced teaching and learning using technology, and based on such feedback, there was further innovation in the University in its use of technology to enhance the teaching and learning. There is also some sharing of experience among academic staff in their use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.
5. It is well recognized that in different disciplines, technology is used differently to enhance teaching and learning. For example, in many disciplines particularly in humanities and social sciences, learning is accomplished through discussions, spontaneous or guided, on particular topics, as a result of reading, discussions, and reflection on the various opinions formed, and further discussions. Thus, there is a need for the provision of collaborative communities to facilitate such communications. On the other hand, for some disciplines, particularly science and some aspects of social sciences, it might be possible to provide a programmed learning environment, e.g. the conduct of an experiment, and then to facilitate the discussion of the observation, and the results obtained. This exerts pressure on the provision of technology for the teaching and learning to satisfy differing demand of functionalities. In many instances, the demand could only be satisfied by a combination of existing and emerging technologies.
6. The formulation of the strategies contained in this document intends to capitalize on such experience in the University in the past few years, and to enthuse the institution to adopt where appropriate the use of technology to enhance the learning and teaching, and to galvanise support from the appropriate University supporting services.

## ***Benefits of Learning Technology: Summary of Evidence***

7. The evidence listed below is based on our own experience and largely confirmed by some of the surveys which the Higher Education Funding Council for English (HEFCE) and other institutions have conducted among the English higher education institutions.
- **Transformative potential of technology** – We found that there is evidence to support that students expect a University to have the necessary infrastructure and technology to support a good learning and teaching environment. It is also found that students are using many software, e.g. social networking. Our experience in the past few years is consonant with the statement that was made in [2]. “It is clear that technology is used for a variety of purposes: (e)-assessment, (e)-portfolios, podcasting, blogs and wikis were all highlighted as tools supporting learning and teaching”
  - **Changing student needs and expectations** – There is evidence that students are using technology in engaging in learning with their own equipment. A considerable number of students in the University have their own hardware. Our experience is largely confirmed by the following statement in [2] “However, there is an opportunity for institutions to engage further with technologies with the intention of supporting learners in building knowledge collaboratively and engaging in social learning”. There is evidence that learners would use their own devices in institutional context, and to personalise institutional services to meet their own requirements <sup>[2]</sup>. Staff would require support to help them engage with learners with such expectations.
  - **A developing role for higher education in the workplace** – There is evidence that higher education institutions will play a significant role in providing high-level skills for the information economy, and to equip learners as workers and citizens in an information society <sup>[2]</sup>.
8. The behaviour of students in Hong Kong are broadly the same as those in the UK in their sophistication of use, and in their enthusiasm in engaging with technology as part of a learning environment. Thus the University would have a unique place to play in helping students understand, comprehend, and discriminate the information obtained and to explore them for the road ahead to become citizens of the information economy.

## ***Strategic Priorities***

9. The strategic priorities have a clear focus on enhancing excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. Underpinning this vision are the five broad priorities as shown below:
- Enhancement for technical infrastructure and technical support
  - Enhancement for efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional processes to support objectives and boost benefits in all other areas
  - Design, delivery and maintenance of effective teaching and learning
  - Support for research-based or enquiry-based learning
  - Enhancement for excellence in research and scholarship of teaching

## ***Implementation of the Strategy***

10. Details of the implementation based on seven dimensions can be found in the **Appendix**.

## ***References***

- [1] *HEFCE strategy for e-learning. Higher Education Funding Council for England, Joint Information Systems Committee, Higher Education Academy, March 2005.*
- [2] *Enhancing learning and teaching through the use of technology: A revised approach to HEFCE's strategy for e-learning. Higher Education Funding Council for England. March 2009.*

e-Learning Task Force

24 May 2010

*(Last edited by e-Learning Committee in January 2014)*

**Implementation of the Strategy**

Implementation of the strategy based on seven dimensions:

Activity Areas	Suggested Actions
1) Infrastructure & inter-adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The infrastructure of the University is sufficient to support increasing and more varied demands of students and staff. Students will be engaged in <u>both classroom-based and location independent learning</u> with high quality electronic learning and teaching resources, e.g. those created through the use of video and audio streaming technologies.</li> <li>• The University will support the use of a <u>standardised learning technology platform</u>. This will be augmented by other programmes or platforms, e.g. wikis, blogs, through the use of the portal software.</li> <li>• The University will take an informed approach to adoption and implementation of standards in support <u>system interoperability and coherence</u> with good technology investments to find the right balance of commercially developed, open source and bespoke solutions.</li> <li>• <u>Long term storage and preservation</u> of learning modules and objects are considered to ensure that they are available to others where appropriate. Content resources will be managed in an integrated way, allowing effective exploitation of the University’s assets for learning, teaching and research.</li> </ul>
2) Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Institutional quality processes</u> are in place for appropriate approval, monitoring, and support to ensure the quality and standards of provision delivered in whole or in part via e-Learning. The processes are agile enough to respond quickly to learners’ and employers’ needs and streamlined to reduce administrative burden.</li> <li>• <u>Enhancements through the use of technology</u> are taken into account in quality assurance arrangements. Institutional strategies (e.g. for learning, teaching, assessment, widening participation, learning spaces, information management and human resources, etc.) shall take into considerations the potential enhancements through technology.</li> <li>• The University will make every effort to ensure in the dissemination of learning objects that <u>copyright, intellectual property rights, and licensing issues</u> are fully observed.</li> <li>• A <u>commitment</u> to maintain the networks and community of practice across the University to develop, share, and embed e-Learning practice.</li> <li>• <u>Effective mechanisms for regular evaluations</u> on learners’ experiences including learning with technology. Good practice shall be disseminated in the University, and internationally through presentation in conferences.</li> </ul>

*Footnote: Items 1) and 2) pertain to university-wide activity areas without suggestion for specific beneficiaries.*

Activity Areas	Beneficiaries (T) Teachers & teaching (S) Students & learning (R) Research & scholarship of teaching (C) Curriculum	Suggested Actions
3) Pedagogy, curriculum design & development	(T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers to access a wide range of tools and high quality resources to support teaching and engage students</li> <li>e-Assessment technologies to support innovative practices, e.g. just in time assessment and peer review</li> </ul>
	(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology to help identify learners with specific aptitudes or needs</li> <li>Students to develop digital and learning literacy throughout the studies</li> <li>Plagiarism detection and awareness software to assist students in building up a habit of reflection and understanding in their readings</li> </ul>
	(R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated technologies for teaching and research to support scholarship across the University</li> </ul>
	(C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative use of technology for learning supported by curriculum design process</li> <li>Technology to enhance responsiveness and flexibility of curriculum offerings</li> <li>Effective use of information and information systems to support curriculum planning</li> </ul>
	(S) & (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced technology which promotes interaction to support communities of learning and research</li> </ul>
4) Learning resources	(T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers to access relevant learning resources, with support for resources adaptation, integration and enhancement</li> </ul>
	(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students to access information, support, expertise and guidance, and communications with each other, whenever and wherever studying</li> <li>Students to access personalised services within institutional environments, and use personal tools to suit individual needs</li> </ul>
	(R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extensive use of tools for scholarly communications, e.g. for feedback, collaborative research and peer review</li> <li>*Collaborations in subject communities to produce high-quality and re-usable learning resources</li> </ul>
	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuity across learning, teaching, research and administration to support end-to-end information services</li> </ul>
<p>* There are many good resources contained in e-Learning platforms (either as open source or commercial add-on). Teachers are thus encouraged to ascertain if there is a need to produce their own high quality electronic materials, before embarking on one.</p>		

Activity Areas	Beneficiaries (T) Teachers & teaching (S) Students & learning (R) Research & scholarship of teaching (C) Curriculum	Suggested Actions
5) Life-long learning processes & practices	(T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers to make use of innovative technology to enhance their own learning and facilitate the students life-long learning</li> </ul>
	(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students to record, access, reflect on and present achievements in ways appropriate to a variety of situations</li> <li>Effective use of assistive and personal technologies to support students with diverse needs and aptitudes</li> <li>Student to access information online to make informed choices about programmes of study, including choices about how and where to access learning</li> <li>Technology to help students connect formal study with other aspects of life and work</li> <li>Integrated information systems to support students in transition or studying overseas on exchange</li> </ul>
6) Strategic management, human resources & capacity development	(T)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for all staff to develop and practise skills for enhancing learning through the use of technology</li> <li>Staff skills for technology-enhanced learning recognised in their roles and responsibilities</li> <li>Technology used across departmental boundaries to make more efficient the administrative and information management processes</li> </ul>
	(T) & (S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective use of staff and student time through appropriate technical interventions</li> <li>Continued training and support for staff and students to ensure the most effective use of resources to support teaching and learning through the Office of Information Technology (ITO), Library and CHTL</li> </ul>
7) Research for sustainability	(R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University to encourage more subject specific research into e-Learning and its pedagogy through various funding initiatives, for example, the Teaching Development Grants (TDG)</li> </ul>
	(T) & (R)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active involvement of staff with scholarship of teaching and innovation in using technology for learning and teaching</li> </ul>
	(T) & (S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active participation of learners and staff involved in teaching in strategic decisions about technology in learning</li> </ul>
	(T) & (R) & (C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff to access research, evidence and scholarship to inform curriculum development and research-based teaching</li> </ul>

## Action Plan

Item	Responsible Office
Strategic Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching Development Grant (TDG) to support e-Learning</li> <li>• Funding for development of engaging pedagogies with e-Learning</li> <li>• Funding for enhancement of e-Learning infrastructure</li> </ul>	VPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning technologists to enhance the use of technologies in learning and teaching and to facilitate more learner-centric approaches</li> </ul>	CHTL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An appropriate infrastructure in place to support technology enhanced learning</li> </ul>	ITO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate digital resources available to support e-Learning</li> </ul>	LIB Faculties/Schools LC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of the University’s central administration systems, e.g. Student Information System, and Personnel System to streamline the administration of e-Learning centrally to allow automatic propagation of teaching and tutorial assignment information in the e-Learning platform</li> </ul>	AR ITO PERS LIB CHTL

### Acronyms

AR	Academic Registry
CHTL	Centre for Holistic Teaching and Learning
ITO	Office of Information Technology
LC	Language Centre
LIB	Library
PERS	Personnel Office
VPA	Vice-President (Academic)