

Curriculum 2025; Inspiring Curriculum Excellence

**Creating and embedding a consistent, robust and
inclusive curriculum framework**

—

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Curriculum 2025; eight pillars of an inclusive curriculum framework

Curriculum 2025 is a curriculum enhancement team that works in collaboration with academic and professional service teams to update the Coventry University experience for our students. We are focused on developing and implementing a curriculum framework that is academically rigorous and robust, providing the setting for students to learn face-to-face, blended or online, and relevant to student's future lives and careers.

This enhanced curriculum explores the perspectives, views and needs of all learners, creating a readiness to contribute responsibly to their communities as students and citizens. The curriculum is designed and delivered with an awareness of the health and wellbeing needs of both students and staff. It is structured to allow flexible learning pathways and personalised learning to meet the individual needs of learners. Through curriculum co-creation, inclusive teaching and authentic assessment we develop, test and validate real life graduate attributes.

This section outlines the eight overarching themes of the curriculum framework.

1 The Eight Pillars of Curriculum 2025

The goal is for every course within the Coventry University Group to be able to demonstrate the following, in addition to any professional body, accreditation or course quality enhancement and monitoring requirements:

Characteristic	Description
An inclusive curriculum that facilitates a sense of belonging	The design and delivery of curriculum will provide the setting for all students, regardless of their background or personal characteristics, to reach their full potential. All students will feel part of, and contribute to, the learning community.
Decolonisation	Learning materials and experiences will engage students to understand the social and cultural underpinnings of their discipline. We encourage staff and students to think critically about how knowledge is created, by who and in whose interest.
Mental Health and Wellbeing	Course teams and the wider university group will consider the impact on mental health and wellbeing of both staff and students when designing and delivering courses. Students will be supported to learn positive mental health and wellbeing practices to take forward in their future lives and careers.
Graduate Skills	Our courses will support students to develop critical skills and competencies to operate in a rapidly changing international, cross-cultural and digital world.
Social Responsibility and Sustainability	Our courses will engage students to think critically on the impact that they can make towards the major challenges facing society, encapsulated by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.
Authentic Assessments	Assessments will be designed such that they are worthwhile, significant, and meaningful. They will provide students an opportunity to demonstrate skills that have real world application.
Flexible and Personalised Learning	Design and deliver courses so that students can move between campus and online based learning to fit in with their lives and preferences. As well as responding to their needs, learning should be designed to play to their strengths, skills and interests.
Curriculum Co-Creation	Students, employers and other relevant stakeholders will be involved as partners in the co-production of the design, delivery and ongoing evaluation of courses.

Key Performance Indicators:

Success will be measured by contributing to improvements in key course health data as identified by the Coventry University Corporate Strategy. An example is achieving equity of attainment by ensuring students across all demographic groups leave university reaching their full potential in their degree qualification.

2 Case study; BA Business Management course

2.1 Aim of the project

To create an inclusive, robust and future proofed curriculum framework in order to maximise student engagement, student experience and equity of attainment. We will achieve this by creating a sense of belonging amongst students, increase engagement with the course material, raise attainment, and increase student satisfaction as measured by a mid-module evaluation questionnaire.

2.2 What did we do?

In 2018, a bespoke team; Curriculum 2025 within Coventry University was established to work collaboratively with academics and professional support services to enhance the curriculum through teaching, learning and assessment. In September 2019, a specific module within the BA Business Management degree course was identified as a pilot to embed and evaluate a new and innovative model of curriculum delivery to achieve flexible and personalised learning. Over a three month period, the existing module material was redesigned for an online platform as well as a reconfiguration of the delivery mode. Past students who had completed the module were consulted using focus groups to gain a deeper insight into the learning preferences of students and co-create the new delivery model.

Student and graduate interns employed within the Curriculum 2025 team worked alongside the course team, learning technologists and Disruptive Media Learning Lab to create the new digital content.

The following innovative strategies were trialled within the module:

- 1 Students were given the opportunity to *personalise* their learning journey by choosing each week whether they attend the traditional face-to-face lecture, or to complete equivalent online learning activities.
- 2 The assessment for this module was a group assignment. In the previous module, students were able to self-select their groups, however there were a high proportion of groups who did not submit their assignment resulting in higher failure rates. In the new module, students were randomly allocated to groups – this was deemed to reflect more real world working environments and enable more diversity within groups – diversity and cultural awareness featured as a learning outcome for this module therefore was more aligned. Students were encouraged to address any conflict or non-engagement as part of demonstrating important graduate skills such as team work, conflict resolution and leadership, and it was also expected that the individual would take ownership for their own contribution to the team. In this discipline, having self-awareness, taking responsibility for your actions, and knowing when to seek help is very important to enable positive contributions to the business.
- 3 A reflective element was added into the group assignment task for students to reflect on their team working skills, and also evidence their individual contribution to the task.
- 4 Weekly content was focused around the assessments. Seminar sessions were re-designed to focus on an individual aspect of the assessment each week, and enabled students to apply the theory they had gained from the lecture in the seminar (working in their assignment groups).

2.3 How was the intervention evaluated?

A mid-module evaluation questionnaire was conducted with students on the module. The results of this showed an increase in both overall satisfaction and teaching satisfaction compared to the previous year.

	Overall satisfaction	Teaching satisfaction
18/19	70%	79%
19/20	65%	77%

2.4 What worked well?

Investment of time in developing online learning content that was interactive and engaging, meant that when all learning went online following the SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) pandemic, the module team were prepared and students had a much smoother transition. Students were also accustomed to learning in a blended way, which not only helped them in this module but prepared them better for the course transition too. It also helped staff get familiar with this way of working.

We took a collaborative approach to the development and implementation of the online learning content. For example, student interns were employed to create content which allowed a co-creation aspect to ensure the material was engaging and relevant. Student focus groups were carried out with students who had experience of this module. This provided valuable data to inform the approach to the curricula design of the module.

In previous years, the course team were needing to teach each lecture twice due to limited lecture room capacity therefore two rooms were needing to be booked to accommodate the number of students on the course (>300) however variations in attendance meant that lecture theatres were not always fully capacitated. By offering students choice to attend face-to-face lecturers, or to complete online learning equivalent activities, lecturers were able to monitor sign up to lectures beforehand and monitor capacity accordingly and encouraged students to take ownership of their learning. This resulted in the need for sessions to be delivered only once and therefore maximised staff resources to enable them to spend time support students or develop online content.

2.5 What were the challenges or obstacles?

In March 2020, the Covid pandemic had reached the UK and a national lockdown was announced. This meant that the University campus was closed with just a week notice, and learning had to continue online with immediate effect. This was an unpredictable and unforeseen circumstance, and require both staff and students to quickly adapt to a new way of teaching and learning. Although this was a challenge, it also created resilience for the module and enabled a much smoother transition for students.

3 Outputs

3.1 Infographics

A set of 8 infographics were co-developed with Curriculum 2025 student/ graduate interns who were employed as part of the project. The purpose of the infographics was to produce a visually appealing, quick reference guide to outline the key points relating to each theme. The sections of the infographic were divided up into three categories; *What is it? Why is it important? How do we embed it into practice?*

The design of the infographics was carried out using a specialist software for designing infographics, known as Canva pro. The infographics are A4 sized and were designed as stand-alone articles in their own right, or to be used as a collection of infographics to capture all 8 themes.

3.2 Podcasts

A series of curriculum 2025 podcasts were recorded and shared. The first podcast was recorded in response to the Covid pandemic in March 2020, where it became apparent that students from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds were disproportionately impacted by the quarantine rules imposed by the government across the UK. The podcast was recorded, hosted and produced by Stacey Jones (Associate Professor, Curriculum 2025), and guests featured Dr Gurnam Singh (Associate Professor, Equity of Attainment) and student intern (also a BAME student) Tahereh Riahi.

Click this link to listen to the podcast: www.youtube.com/watch?v=89NmCn4ImGk&feature=youtu.be

The second podcast in this three part series was focused around authentic assessment. In amongst the widespread literature and case studies on authentic assessment we wanted to add to the discussion by providing a conversation and open discussion surrounding its meaning, importance and implementation. Facilitated by Curriculum 2025 intern Hannah Reay-Jones the podcast explored authentic assessment from the perspective of curriculum design and academic development, as well as from the perspective of the student. In order to achieve a dynamic conversation, guests included, Oliver Wood, Faculty Curriculum Lead Curriculum 2025, Mojtaba Ammari-Allahyari, Academic Development Coventry University, Daisy Younger and Holly Rodgers, Curriculum 2025 interns.

[Podcast 1: What is Authentic Assessment](#)

[Podcast 2: Student Experience](#)

[Podcast 3: Challenges](#)

3.3 Supporting Black, Asian and minority ethnic students during Covid-19 resource

A supporting document was produced and shared internally within Coventry University and externally with the Office for Students. The purpose of the document was to summarise and highlight the key barriers and issues faced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic students during the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact on their ability to engage with academic studies. The resource was aimed at academics in response to the rapid shift to online teaching. Produced in response to Covid-19 pandemic, April 2020 in collaboration from Curriculum

2025, Kate Howell, Dr Gurnam Singh and Dr Richard Hillier from Coventry University.

3.4 Webinars/ videos

A series of webinars were delivered to staff online throughout March – October 2020, facilitated by the Curriculum 2025 team. The aim of the webinars is to raise awareness amongst staff of the importance of each of the themes, to enhance the student experience and raise equity of attainment. The construction of the webinars was collaborative, bringing together experts and teams across the university in order to take a joined up approach to embedding the 8 principles into the curriculum. Further webinars are planned for 2020-21 academic year delivery including 'personalised and flexible learning', 'creating an inclusive curriculum and sense of belonging' and 'decolonising the curriculum'.

1 Webinar on Sustainable Development Goals (2020)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-o3CRxpH-k&t=922s



webinar SDGs April 20

2 **Webinar on Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Curriculum. (2020).**
www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYQs8Hloh-k



4 Financial report

The project was awarded £1000 grant from advance HE to produce the material described above. We have provided a financial breakdown of the spending below.

The aim was to co-creation resources and outputs with stakeholders including students, academic and support staff. Student interns were recruited to support the development of resources. The interns were closely supported and guided by Assistant Professors and Associate Professors within the Curriculum 2025 team. The costings for the student interns only has been outlined below:

4.4.1 Student/ graduate interns

8 x Interns @ £13.77* per hour (*cost to the team, which includes fee to employment agency).

Interns have worked approximately 40 hours supporting the development of resources for the pilot of the BA Business Management course.

Interns supported the development of infographics – approximately 25 hours

Interns supported the podcast series – approximately 10 hours

Interns supported the webinar series – approximately 2 hours

Total spend: £1060.00

5 Appendices

Appendix 1 – document produced for supporting students during the Covid pandemic.



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