

Education principles

The University's education philosophy includes promoting teaching excellence within a blended learning paradigm underpinned by a resource-rich environment. This approach is based on the following education principles.

- **Encouraging contact between students and lecturers:** Learning arises out of connections and interaction between students and lecturers/ tutors, among students, and between students and ideas (which might arise in interactions or in learning resources). Contact is thus essential to building relationships between lecturers and students, and motivating students. Contact may be in face-to-face learning spaces, or through distance education print materials, but should also be online through the use of discussion forums and other tools in clickUP.
- **Inviting engagement:** Lecturers should promote active intellectual engagement and engaged learning appropriate to the stage and level of the student. Interaction with lecturers, tutors, fellow students, etc. should be on substantive and academically challenging issues. Time on task is ensured through a blend of contact, assignments, online engagement, research, etc. so that students spend the amount of time (notional hours related to credit value of the module) needed to achieve the stated outcomes.
- **Extending knowledge:** Teaching is aimed at helping students to achieve the outcomes of academic programmes through
 - mediating and communicating discipline- and field-specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, based on intellectually-credible curricula that are responsive to emerging local, national and international perspectives. Such mediation includes the concepts and theories of the discipline; skills in using the materials, tools and/ or technology central to the discipline; the perspectives, values and methods of the discipline; the present and future needs of society and the economy, and the evaluation of all of these. Provision should be made for prompt and continual feedback;
 - achieving generic learning outcomes, e.g. the literacy and numeracy skills required for academic discourse, communication and writing, problem solving, team work, research, self-directed learning and the ability to handle information (where appropriate, with the aid of technology).
- **Nurturing complexity and critical thinking (deep knowledge):** Teaching should promote the use of higher-order thinking skills, e.g. the ability to engage actively and critically with ideas and current debates, synthesize, reflect on learning and apply principles to new problems and situations (the transfer of learning). It should develop analytical problem-solving skills; encourage students to think creatively and holistically; develop intellectual and cultural curiosity; encourage students to challenge assumptions, existing knowledge and beliefs, and to embrace new thinking.
- **Building connections:** Learning involves a process of making meaningful connections between sources of information. Teaching should promote the ability to see connections, particularly between threshold concepts and other ideas, to enable deep understanding. Teaching should enable students to connect theory and practice so that they can act on their knowledge appropriately in specific situations.
- **Transforming views and inspiring change:** Learning involves conceptual change and the transformation of knowledge into something meaningful for the individual. Teaching should develop a student's capacity to learn continually in a rapidly changing knowledge and technology environment through communicating high expectations and developing students as self-directed learners. Clearly formulated outcomes result in a sense of common purpose.
- **Encouraging reflective thinking:** Teaching should afford students opportunities to reflect critically on what they have learnt, what impact it has had on their perspectives and how it should influence their future behaviour. Deep reflection leads to transformative learning and meta-cognitive awareness.
- **Providing appropriate learning support:**
 - Teaching practices are characterized by a variety of teaching strategies, methods and approaches, which establish particular environments in which learning is supported.
 - All teaching practices, in contact and distance modes, should use appropriate combinations of resources to support learning; e.g. lectures, tutorials and practicals; academic information and library services; well designed, outcomes-based study materials; technology-based learning platforms; administrative services, etc. – all of which create the University's resource-rich learning environment.
- **Respecting diversity:** Teaching acknowledges and actively engages diverse values, beliefs, talents, backgrounds, thinking and learning preferences, needs (including special needs), goals and educational experiences.
- **Creating empowering learning experiences and environments:** Disciplinary knowledge is balanced with pedagogical knowledge. Educational theories and best practices underlie good teaching practices. Cross-functional teams lead to the design of authentic learning experiences in appropriate environments that encourage students to become motivated, independent learners with a life-long, self-directed attitude to learning.

