

## Principles to guide the vanguard courses

### Assessment

- 1. Progression and excellence:** Separate elements of assessment should determine a student's fitness to progress, and their achievement of excellence. (These elements might be within the same piece of assessment.) Students should receive feedback on their performance with respect to both of these criteria.
- 2. Self Assessment:** This should occur at suitable points during the course as a routine, rather than extraordinary, element of the assessment structure. Self-assessments should take place after the students have covered the material that relates to a particular learning outcome, so that they can assess their attainment of the learning outcome.
- 3. Assessment and the curriculum:** Formal assessment should reinforce good study habits. Assessments should be structured to ensure that students engage with all parts of the curriculum, and cannot avoid areas with a 'question-spotting' approach.

### Modes of Learning

- 1. Empowerment of the students** The students should feel that they are responsible for their own learning, taking decisions about how they learn. Where alternative modes of study are available, we should in general not regard a student's decision not to participate in one mode as a sign of lack of engagement. Nevertheless, where participation in one mode of study is required to attain a learning outcome (e.g. laboratory practical) the students should be required to participate. Detailed guidance will be provided to students to ensure it is made clear which elements it is compulsory to attend.
- 2. Interactive/group working** Students should be encouraged to work in groups, and supported in this. Students are likely to particularly require guidance in the Semester 1 of their first year.

### Student Support

- 1. The "professional student"** As this style of learning is different from the students' experience at secondary school, and in other university courses, they will need to be educated in this new style of learning, by a suitable induction process, and receive appropriate support during their studies. Staff will provide an encouraging environment for students as they commence vanguard courses, with the expectation that less support will be required as students start to take responsibility for their own learning. They will need to be aware of our expectations of them, and to have an understanding of learning as a process.
- 2. Pastoral care** We need to aim for a supportive environment, but one that puts the responsibility for seeking support firmly on the students. The activities of individual students may be monitored, but this information should be fed to the students to allow them to decide themselves whether they should change their participation. They should not be contacted by DoSs if they do not attend academic activities. Of course, we must remain alert for evidence of serious pastoral problems.