
Research and Scholarly Activity Policy

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy sets out our approach to the enhancement, development and support of research and scholarship for all staff at City of Bristol College.

1.2 The aim of the policy is to promote a scholarly culture where staff are demonstrating contemporary and current teaching, learning and assessment practices. It is a commitment to a learning environment in which scholarly activity and reflective practice are firmly embedded for students' benefit.

1.3 We define scholarship as an activity or activities with the potential to:

- create or affirm knowledge and/or expertise of a subject or discipline
- create and pursue new knowledge to enhance teaching and learning
- develop curricula through advancing knowledge in the subject area
- raise awareness amongst students of research, enabling them to challenge research and making them research active
- enhance the student experience by providing a scholarly environment, thus enabling the achievement of the best outcomes possible and increasing employability
- enhance the reputation of the college and contribute to retaining a TEF award
- Raise the national profile of Higher Education in a Further Education setting

1.4 Activities should be designed to have demonstrable impact on the student learning experience and the College academic and professional community, through research led and research informed learning, teaching and assessment.

2. Research and Scholarly Activity

2.1 Appendix A shows a continuum of activities ranging from research in its purest sense to activity that supports the pedagogic effectiveness of academic staff. The list is not exhaustive.

2.2 In order to be classed as scholarly activity, it must be shared with peers, disseminated across the institution and possibly beyond and used to enhance the student experience." (King and Widdowson, 2010, 3)

2.3 These activities go beyond Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or training and promote a deeper understanding of the subject matter or the knowledge creation process, either to the individual and/or to a wider audience.

2.4 All research activity within the college must be conducted with the approval from the Research and Scholarly Activity Group and in line with the Research Ethics Policy.

3. Engagement in activities

3.1 The College is committed to supporting this policy through the provision and/or utilisation of resources, finances, facilities and staff time. The College annually reviews and agrees staff development budgets within each area of the College as well as a central budget that supports staff development for the whole college.

3.2 It is the responsibility of all staff and managers involved in the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment to promote scholarly activity and professional reflective practice. Managers are responsible for leading and supporting opportunities for staff to engage with scholarly activities.

3.3 The Learning and Development Coaches will provide mentoring, support and champion scholarly activity. Staff are encouraged to engage with the coaching team either through requesting mentoring support, other support, giving feedback or participating in the scholarly and development opportunities they provide.

3.4 Teaching staff are responsible for engaging with this policy in a way that directly helps to support their personal development as well as the enhancement of their teaching, course development and improvement and/or support they give to students.

3.5 The College will support collaborative working opportunities with our University partners, subcontractors or other educational institutions in the pursuit and development of scholarly work.

4. Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF)

4.1 The College currently has a Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework award. This provides students with an indication of the quality of teaching, learning and graduate outcomes at City of Bristol College. The Office for Students are currently developing proposals for a new TEF scheme and their provisional timeline is that submissions will be by summer 2022 and awards announced in early 2023. Our current award is extended to 2023.

5. Research and Scholarship Development Scheme

5.1 Funding, time or resources may be sought to enable formal academic research or scholarly activity provided it meets the criteria as set in the application process (see Appendix A). A proposal may be submitted by an individual or by a group of individuals and will be considered by the Research and Scholarly Activity Group, chaired by the Assistant Principal FE & HE.

5.2 The activity does not need to be limited to focusing on pedagogy (how to improve the way teaching is delivered), but can also focus on a specific subject or discipline. The activity may be focused on academic updating or pushing forward the academic boundaries of a subject. It can also be more industrially focused, updating on the latest activities in a particular industry/sector or on employability skills within that sector.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

6.1 Managers will review research and scholarship with individuals on a regular basis through 1-1s and appraisals.

6.2 Student surveys

6.3 Research and scholarly activity will be a key feature in departmental self-assessments and quality improvement plans where there are HE programmes being delivered.

6.4 Any research and scholarly activity will be discussed within quality review meetings.

6.5 Research and scholarly activity will be clearly linked to the Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code and the Teaching Excellence Framework.

6.6 Staff wishing to apply for a HE Fellowship to include details of their research and scholarly activity.

6.7. Feedback from University partners

6.7 Self evaluation at department and college level

7. Reporting and dissemination

7.1 Staff must be able to demonstrate that any scholarly activity they undertake, where support is sought from the College to enable them to do it, must relate to the College's commitment to enhance teaching and learning and the student experience.

7.2 The College encourages staff to disseminate their research and scholarly activity internally and externally at conferences and symposia. The College provides a number of routes for staff to disseminate the outcomes of their projects internally:

- Annual staff CPD events
- Annual research and scholarship publication
- Staff meetings
- HE Conference
- Reading Groups
- Through approved social media channels
- College website
- Written paper with academic rigour applied with recommendations for implementation
- Curriculum enhancement / development

7.3 In addition, staff are encouraged to disseminate their research to student groups and external audiences. Other opportunities involve writing for external publications, articles in peer-reviewed journals (printed and online), books and chapters in books.

8. Impact of Previous Projects

- Work based learning which promotes the development of industry current skillset
- Developing partnerships with local and national employers
- Research presented at AoC Conferences
- Student peer review of staff work
- Enhancement of staff subject discipline knowledge
- Engaging students as active co-producers of learning
- Peer to peer discussion of topical articles informed by changes in teaching practice

Linked Policies

Appraisal Policy

Observation of Learning Policy

Research Ethics Policy

Review Frequency

Three years

Lead Officer

Teaching and Learning Manager

Senior Manager Responsible

Assistant Principal for HE & FE