Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy

KAPLAN

Our purpose

The Kaplan Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (TLA) supports our purpose, which is to make a difference to every learner, and inspire them to succeed.

It promotes a shared understanding among staff, learners and other stakeholders of how we intend to deliver on that commitment by outlining our approach to teaching, supporting students, course design and maintaining quality.

Inspiring every learner to succeed

We believe that everyone - regardless of ethnic origin, age, gender, sexuality, educational background, religious beliefs or disability, should be given the opportunity and support to reach their goals.

All new learners are introduced to the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The Kaplan learner

We pride ourselves on the overall experience a Kaplan learner will enjoy, inspiring them to succeed not only in terms of their academic journey, but also with regard to their longer-term career aspirations.

This inspiration comes from a genuine passion for the subject matter and a collective enthusiasm from everyone within Kaplan in wanting to see our learners do well. We want them to develop as individuals, be able to think for themselves, be well prepared for the next stage in their careers, and add real value to employers in the workplace.

1. Our approach

The TLA strategy is influenced by a number of key factors. Some will remain relatively stable such as our evidenced-based approach and delivery channels. Others, however, are dynamic and change as new technologies emerge, employers demand different levels of expertise, and our understanding of how people learn evolves.

1.1 Curriculum and course design

In designing our curriculum, we ask questions such as:

- What are the future knowledge, skills and behaviours for accountants, auditors and relationship banking managers?

- What attributes will our learners need to be actively engaged members of society?

- What skills and support will our learners need to have as they advance in their careers?

The professional bodies syllabi and apprenticeship standards provide a base from which Kaplan can set out the aims for its programme of education and training - the curriculum.
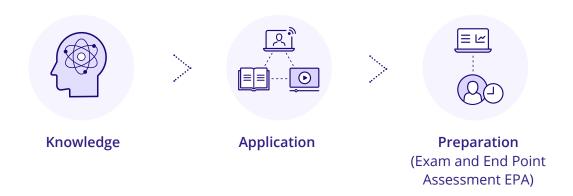
It's designed to provide both apprenticeship learners (AL) and qualification only learners (QOL) with the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours necessary to succeed in their chosen careers.

Evidence-based approach

Kaplan follows an evidenced-based approach, using data and empirically derived published research wherever possible to inform both pedagogy and course design.

The approach has also helped shape the way in which content is structured, drawing a distinction between declarative knowledge and its application, to help identify and clarify the most applicable pedagogical activity.

Kaplan's three phased approach:

Knowledge   **Application**   **Preparation**
(Exam and End Point
Assessment EPA)

1.2 Delivery channels and learning environments

Delivery channels

Kaplan offers learners a choice as to how they would like to study. The four delivery channels are outlined below.

Each has a key focus. For example, classroom requires learners to physically attend, but all methods now use technology in some way to support learning.

The four delivery channels

Classroom learning - synchronous, scheduled, face to face

Live online (LOL) - synchronous, scheduled, online

Distance learning - asynchronous, flexible, remote

OnDemand - asynchronous, flexible, online

Blended learning

The traditional definition of a blended course is one that includes face to face delivery with some aspects online. However, a new type of blend has emerged - the purely online blend. This is a combination of live synchronous delivery with asynchronous content.

Learning environments

Kaplan delivers content in a variety of different learning environments comprising of physical, online, social and work-based. With such a broad range of delivery channels it has been necessary to change our pedagogical approach to make the best use of technology.

1.3 Teaching principles and pedagogy

Teaching principles

Our teaching aims to inspire, challenge and develop a sense of curiosity in the learner, whilst at the same time encouraging them to take greater ownership of their learning, avoiding being passive recipients of knowledge. Our approach to teaching and learning at Kaplan is largely channel agnostic and is informed by the following principles:

- ✔ Tutor expertise
- ✔ Personalisation
- ✔ Formal and Informal learning

Pedagogy

This section describes some of the most common methods of teaching we use to deliver the curriculum. The list is not exhaustive and excludes some of our evidence-based methods which we have explained in other documents and presentations. These would include spaced practice, interleaving, retrieval practice, concrete examples, elaboration and dual coding.

 Other examples are:

- ✅ Direct Instruction
- ✅ Differentiation
- ✅ Use of technology
- ✅ Multi-Sensory learning
- ✅ Collaborative learning
- ✅ Experiential learning
- ✅ Relating theory and practice

1.4 Assessment

Assessment both influences and directs our approach to teaching and learning. Our different types of assessment are summarised below.

Initial assessment

Also referred to as pre-assessment or diagnostic assessment. Initial assessments are conducted prior to instruction or intervention to establish a baseline from which individual learner growth can be measured.

Formative assessment

The use of formative assessment provides immediate feedback to our learners in order to facilitate the learning process.

Summative assessment

Kaplan has several different types of summative assessment, these include results from internal tests, the final exam and EPA.

2. Impact

In this section we explore how we keep track of our performance to ensure we deliver on agreed targets and measure impact.

2.1 Relationship with employers and professional bodies

Professional bodies, EPAO and client feedback

A key priority for Kaplan is to ensure our learners enjoy high levels of employability. As a prerequisite we want them to progress in the workplace with the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours most valued by employers.

The professional bodies and End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAO) consider us a key stakeholder and we engage with them in a variety of ways. For example, through attending conferences and review meetings to consider how we are performing against others within the industry.

It is through these close relationships and the work undertaken by the Talent Coaches that we are able to continually gather feedback on our performance.

2.2 Performance, progression and engagement

Data informs much of what we do, but for it to be effective it needs to be organised. We structure our metrics following the same steps the learner goes through.

- Firstly, engagement. If the learner is not engaged, they cannot learn
- Secondly, progression. This is a key measure as to the effectiveness of learning
- Lastly, performance. We assess how well they did at the end of their period of study

Performance

KPI data is reviewed at monthly meetings where variances from targets are considered. For those not performing, actions are taken to get them back on track.

The following are some of the most important KPIs included in the monthly KPI document relating to teaching, learning and assessment.

- Net promoter score (NPS)
- Quality of learning resources
- Teaching quality (ability to explain concepts)
- Pass rate and EPA results

Progression

One of the areas most impacted by the pandemic has been progression. Progression for Apprenticeship Learners (AL) is monitored closely by the Talent Coaches in line with agreed targets set with the learner and employer. During the course, the tutor is able to track learner progression using data from MyKaplan.

Tracking progression for Qualification Only Learners (QOL) is far more nuanced, with many learners not providing us with all the information needed as to their longer term academic and career goals.

Engagement

Engagement is the precursor of learning and we are beginning to look more closely at this and how it might be improved. Especially as we now have more data, the result of a larger proportion of online learners.

2.3 External surveys, reports and the user experience team (UX)

In addition to the internal surveys and questionnaires, periodically we engage a third party to provide insight as to learner views on specific topics. Our UX team use a variety of different research methodologies in order to understand our current and potential learners better. These would include remote and in person research, phone interviews and surveys.

3. Maintaining quality

Kaplan is committed to the continual development of all our employees who make possible the programmes we offer. The details below provide an insight largely focussed on the academic team, which includes Faculty, Content Specialists, Academic Support, IDD and Talent Coaches.

3.1 Recruitment and selection

Selecting people to join Kaplan is an important part of our quality control. Recruitment of new Tutors is often, but not exclusively, taken from a pool of past learners. This is largely because they will be suitably qualified and have recently experienced what its like to be a student.

Our Instructional Design and Development (IDD) team comes from a variety of different sources: recruitment agencies, LinkedIn and the Kaplan jobsite.

All staff go through a three-part interview process:

• Initial informal semi-structured conversation

• Skills based task

• A structured panel interview

• 3.2 Staff development

Whilst individuals are recruited with the necessary qualifications, knowledge, and experience, that expertise needs to be maintained by continual development.

Below are some of the opportunities Kaplan provides.

Faculty

The Kaplan Tutor Academy (KTA) is a centre of excellence and provides faculty with the necessary resources and courses to make continual learning and development as easy as possible. From the moment a tutor joins they follow a development timeline supported by their KTA mentor. The KTA is made up of some of our most passionate Tutors who are devoted to professional development.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) - Most of our Tutors belong to a professional body that requires them to keep technically up to date. An annual CPD return is submitted by way of evidence.

Talent coach

New Talent Coaches undertake an intensive four-week Talent Coach Academy (TCA) programme as a key part of their induction. They learn about the theory of coaching apprentices, providing feedback and assessment as well as a comprehensive induction into the company.

Continuing Professional Development - Once Talent Coaches have completed their Academy programme, they join an ongoing CPD programme, after which it will be self-managed CPD or CPD as recommended by their line manager or quality coach.

Recognising success

At Kaplan we like to celebrate success and recognise those who stand out in terms of excellence and/or long service. In addition to our Gift of Knowledge (GOK) scheme we support the following:

- Tutor nominations
- Long service awards at 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 years
- Kaplan Way awards

3.3 Course design, learning materials and marking

Course design

Course design starts with a review of the observations and recommendations found within the Education Strategy to ensure any developments are in line with longer term plans. Our evidence-based philosophy then helps us develop programmes that are robust and instructionally strong.

Learning Materials

Teaching, learning and assessment materials go through an internal quality assurance process. Our Content Specialists are an important part of this because of their involvement in the production of the paper based and online learning materials. They are not only technical experts, but highly experienced in terms of content authoring. Before materials are ready to publish, they will go through a number of technical as well as non-technical checks such as an 'eye of the student review'. Quality continues to be monitored after the materials have been published by reviewing feedback from learners, tutors and those that buy our materials on the open market.

Marking

Kaplan has a structured approach to assessing learner performance by providing feedback to "close the gap" between desired and actual performance. This is an essential component in improving learning. However, it will fail to be effective if the quality of marking is poor.

Our Logistics and Academic Support teams are responsible for monitoring the quality of internal marking as well as dealing with the recruitment and training of markers.

3.4 Quality standards

Observation programme

Kaplan has a robust system for observing teaching, learning and assessment. We have a two-stage approach consisting of direct (formal) observations and peer (informal) observations. Targets are set and monitored as part of the overall quality control of faculty.

Talent Coaches are regularly observed by Quality Coaches who provide feedback on review meetings, documents and project reports with a corresponding grading scheme that forms part of the management KPI reports.

Complaints and Appeals

Complaints and appeals policies can be found within the terms and conditions and policies sections on the website.

External accreditation

Kaplan takes part in a series of external benchmarking exercises including QAA, OFSTED, Matrix and quality assurance visits by the professional bodies.

Please note, this is an abridged version of our full Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy that provides more detailed guidance on many of the areas outlined in this document.