

Learning Futures: improving the student experience

Through Learning Futures, the University is making changes to the undergraduate curriculum and student experience. We are making these changes in response to feedback from staff and past students.

There are [four Learning Futures projects](#):

1. Curriculum and Assessment

- **Revised courses** – to be introduced from September 2016. The new curriculum will be more student-centred and involve students more actively in their studies.
- Balance of **different types of assessment**, so that assessment becomes a tool for student development.

2. Transforming Learning and Teaching

- A new **Learning and Teaching strategy**.
- Continuous development and a **focus on teaching skills** and qualifications for academics.
- [Students as co-creators](#) in learning, teaching, research.

3. Westminster Distinctiveness - We want our students to have a distinctive learning experience.

- **Graduate attributes** – These are embedded in our revised undergraduate curriculum. Westminster graduates will excel in these areas.
- We are developing a resource to support graduates in demonstrating the graduate attributes, putting them in the best possible position for their futures. **Look out for details of our student competition to help design the resource!**

University of Westminster graduate attributes
• Critical and creative thinkers
• Literate and effective communicator
• Entrepreneurial
• Global in outlook and engaged in communities
• Social, ethically and environmentally aware

- **Open badges** – Students will be given a digital ‘backpack’ with badges that recognise their achievements. This includes extra-curricular activities like volunteering or work experience, external short courses and subject related non-accredited learning. They are transferable and can be shared easily through social networking and to support the CV. The badge collection can be added to over time and is a way to record lifelong learning. These support students in demonstrating the graduate attributes.

- **New Westminster elective modules** – Some courses will offer students the option of choosing to study an elective module. These modules are cross-disciplinary, so you could learn about an area outside of your faculty or subject.
 - **Westminster Distinctiveness Awards (WDAs)** for extra-curricular achievements (such as work placements, volunteering). When students graduate they will take with them their [Higher Education Achievement Report \(HEAR\)](#). The HEAR serves as a formal means for the University to recognise students' achievements and participation in University life outside the formal curriculum. WDAs will be formally recognised on the HEAR. Future employers will look at this to see how well students did in their degree, but also what recognition they have had for extra-curricular activities and learning.
4. **Academic Support** – Supporting students to achieve their full potential
- Making the support we offer to students – from applicant to alumni – simple to find and easy to access
 - Skills and support for students to become lifelong learners

What students need to know

First year students

Students who started in September 2016 have received emails via the Admissions team about the changes that will affect them and their courses. In summary these are:

- In their second year of study (Level 5), they will transition from the current course structure to the new one.
- Fewer, but larger modules worth 20 credits each (changing from the current 15- or 30-credit modules).
- In a small number of cases, their course title will change. If this is the case, they will have the option to keep the previous title.

Current second and third year students

The majority of students who started their degree before 2015 will be unaffected by the curriculum changes. A minority of students, such as those who need to retrieve modules or who have taken time out from their studies will be affected. The university will contact these students to explain the changes to them.

Further information

For more information about any of the work Learning Futures is doing, please contact learning-futures@westminster.ac.uk. For details about course changes, please tell students to contact their personal tutor or course leader.