<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Practice covered</th>
<th>Underdeveloped</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Refining</th>
<th>Outstanding partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sufficiency and quality of available resources</td>
<td>Essential learning resources are insufficient in quality or quantity to support student and staff numbers.</td>
<td>New staff are tasked to ensure that adequate learning resources are available and teaching departments and learning resource departments fail to coordinate activity.</td>
<td>Students who are interested are provided with access to learning resources to complete work and assignments.</td>
<td>Sufficient learning resources are available to facilitate student success and outcomes.</td>
<td>Learning resources are widely perceived as inadequate by staff and students.</td>
<td>Institutions that are well-funded and resourced need to develop learning resource departments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategically designed resources and program design</td>
<td>Learning resources are designed in accordance with the learning resources necessary, and teaching departments and learning resource departments fail to coordinate activity.</td>
<td>Students are interested in learning but are unable to access the learning resources they require, and these opportunities are not in an integrated manner.</td>
<td>Departmental staff that provide learning resources and departments that deliver teaching base occasionally over resource requirements, but not in an integrated manner.</td>
<td>Learning resources are sufficiently designed to match the needs of staff and students.</td>
<td>Learning resource management is effective.</td>
<td>There is a clear focus on improving the quantity and quality of learning resources in the teaching resource management structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional costs</td>
<td>Students may find 'value-for-money' perceptions of cost per hour unattainable.</td>
<td>Students are interested in learning but are unable to access the learning resources they require, and these opportunities are not in an integrated manner.</td>
<td>Learning resources are sufficiently designed to match the needs of staff and students.</td>
<td>Learning resource management is effective.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidden costs</td>
<td>Students are aware of the hidden costs of learning, such as financial cost to students.</td>
<td>Students are interested in learning but are unable to access the learning resources they require, and these opportunities are not in an integrated manner.</td>
<td>Learning resources are sufficiently designed to match the needs of staff and students.</td>
<td>Learning resource management is effective.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time work</td>
<td>Students are offered part-time work to support their learning.</td>
<td>Students are interested in learning but are unable to access the learning resources they require, and these opportunities are not in an integrated manner.</td>
<td>Learning resources are sufficiently designed to match the needs of staff and students.</td>
<td>Learning resource management is effective.</td>
<td>Learning resource management is effective.</td>
<td>There is a clear focus on improving the quantity and quality of learning resources in the teaching resource management structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Resource Design</td>
<td>Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility and accessibility</td>
<td>Learning resources are flexible and adaptable to the needs of students.</td>
<td>Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting students</td>
<td>Staff and management are committed to supporting students.</td>
<td>Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student engagement and partnership</td>
<td>Students are included in the planning and design of learning spaces and resources.</td>
<td>Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.</td>
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### Learning Resources Benchmarking Tool

**Principle:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

**Practice covered:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

**Underdeveloped:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

**Developing:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

**Satisfactory:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

**Refining:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

**Outstanding Partnership:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

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**Expand the horizon:** Institutions and colleagues are interested in learning but are unable to access the learning resources they require, and these opportunities are not in an integrated manner. **Resources and program design:** Learning resources are designed to support student learning.

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**Learning spaces and facilities:** Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.

**Collaborative learning spaces:** Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.

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**Learning analytics and assessment tracking:** Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.

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**Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.** Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.

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**Learning analytics and assessment tracking:** Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.

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**Learning analytics and assessment tracking:** Learning spaces are designed to support student learning.
This benchmarking tool produced by NUS aims to improve the learning resource provision on higher education courses. It can be used by course leaders, heads of administration, students' unions or course representatives to benchmark practice within higher education providers against eight principles of effective learning resource provision.

These principles have been informed through a review of recent research and policy considering learning resources, as well as through input from student union officers and the NUS Postgraduate Committee and the NUS Disabled Students' Campaign.

What are Learning Resources?

‘Learning Resources’ is a very broad term encompassing many crucial aspects of quality higher education provision. This benchmarking tool aims to cover as broad a range of activities in higher education as possible, but not all examples of practice will apply to all aspects of learning resource provision. Nonetheless, the tool aims to be applicable to the following aspects of learning resources:

- Library and written resources
- IT hardware and infrastructure
- Learning technologies and their use
- Space and facilities
- Specialist equipment, material, software and space
- Support and development for using learning resources

How to use the tool

You can use the tool at a course, departmental, faculty or whole institution level. Read each of the principles, and decide which of the boxes best describes where you think your institution is. Some of the principles have different aspects of practice associated with them; you may wish to take an average of the scores for each principle, or treat each aspect of practice separately.

Once you’ve mapped out your current level, you may wish to choose a couple of priority areas to work towards achieving the next level. The tool is a good starting point for discussions between staff and students about how you can work together to improve learning resources.

You could also share practice with other willing departments, institutions or unions, perhaps on a regional basis or by mission group. You can learn from institutions that benchmark themselves higher than yours: what good practice could you borrow and adapt? If they’ve recently made changes, what were the challenges they faced?

Things to bear in mind

- Each of the ‘outstanding’ practices involves staff and students working in partnership. This partnership needs to be meaningful in order to work, which means that both groups must listen and be willing to compromise. Have honest conversations about what is and isn’t possible.
- Make sure you are including the right people in your conversations: academic staff have control over some aspects of learning resources, whilst much control is held by professional service departments. Some practices are easily changed locally, whilst others require a more whole-institution approach.
- You may not be able to achieve “outstanding” in everything at once. Decide where best to target your resources: do you want to work hard to get one particular area to “outstanding”, or do you want to spend that time getting three or four areas up one level from their current position? Do different disciplines and departments need different solutions to improving their practice?
- You may disagree with some of the levels in the benchmarking tool – and that’s OK! The tool was created collaboratively by student officers, based on principles put together from research into what students value in terms of learning resources. This doesn’t mean it will work at every institution.

If you have any questions, please contact nss@nus.org.uk.