Questions to help you think about strengthening course identity

**Course identity:** A course is owned and taught to an identifiable cohort of students by an identifiable team. i.e., the course is a visibly distinctive entity. This enhances a sense of community and social and academic belonging and connection.

Course teams can ask themselves some questions about the course...

**Pre-arrival**

* Why and how is your course different from courses at other universities? What are its unique selling points? How do you strengthen this and promote it to students externally and to graduate employers? (Identity)
* What attracts students to join your course? (Identity)

**Transition into the course**

* Does your course communication (letters, handbooks, induction material) clarify course identity and the course’s professional, social, and academic expectations? Is messaging and language consistent? (Support and Identity)
* Are there learning activities (appropriate to an overall learning outcome of the course) that you use early on to help develop course identity and sense of belonging? (Identity)

**Building a course community**

* Do you have a well-designed, consistent online space set up as a ‘home’ for the course (for example a MyBeckett course area or a MS Team), that can be used as an entry point where students can access all their online materials, regardless of which tool or platform is used beyond that point? (Identity)
* What specifically do you do to develop and strengthen a sense of course community and distinctiveness (e.g. celebrations, subject specific dissertations, distinctive learning/course social spaces, key external discipline speakers, course specific exhibitions and events)? (Identity)

**An identifiable cohort of students and an identifiable team**

* How do students see themselves as a member of the course? How are you, as a member of staff, seen by a student on a particular course? (Identity)
* Do all the staff know who else teaches on the course? How do staff work together to build the course’s identity? (Identity and Integrity)
* Are the students (and staff) proud of their course and why do you think this is? (Support and Identity)

**Academic belonging and connection**

* How do your course pedagogies and curricular activities build a sense of connection? Does your teaching encourage co-creation, participation and peer learning? (Inclusive environment, Identity and Support)
* Does the way you work with students in relation to developing constructive approaches to feedback, strengthen their sense of clarity about course expectations and build their sense of academic belonging? (Integrity, Support and Identity)
* Does every student have a named Academic Advisor? Do you have a good process for tracking students and early identification of those who may not be engaging? (Support)

For further reading on Course Identity see the associated [Talis Reading List](https://rl.talis.com/3/beckett/lists/3D90882C-BA6F-AE5F-5764-B355754DD014.html).