Getting Started as a Casual Teacher/Tutor at Flinders

Produced by the
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Welcome!

Welcome to teaching at Flinders University! Casual Teachers are all staff involved in the teaching, coordination and marking of topics that are paid on a casual, hourly basis. If this applies to you, then this booklet is your first stop for information to support you in your teaching role. This booklet focuses on small group interactive sessions such as tutorials and workshops. If you demonstrate in laboratory classes, then you might prefer the Laboratory Demonstrator's Handbook which is available from the Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching website.

Teaching is a rewarding activity which is core to Flinders University's operations and values.

At Flinders, quality teaching is intended to:

- be learning-focussed;

- engage students in the development of their understanding;

- reflect the teaching context as well as the diverse needs of learners;

- be informed by research-derived knowledge of the subject being taught and the teaching methodology being employed;

- be regularly evaluated in terms of both content and delivery, leading to reflection and redevelopment;

- be planned, drawing on informed judgement derived from the teacher's knowledge and experience; and

- be designed to produce graduates with a sound comprehension of the curriculum and who have acquired the relevant Flinders Graduate Qualities.

Casual staff make up a large percentage of Flinders University teaching staff and play a significant role in preparing our students for their future careers. Casual staff are valued as key members of the teaching team and we want to help you develop your teaching skills. The staff in the Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching welcome you and are available to provide resources and guidelines on a diverse range of teaching topics. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

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Aim of this booklet

The purpose of this booklet is to outline some of the basic things that you, as a new teacher at Flinders University, need to know. There is a wide variety of already published material which will be most useful to anyone actually running tutorials. An extensive range of this literature is available for your use in the Flinders University Central Library Staff Development Collection. The limitations of size mean that this booklet will not cover much of the material that is available in more extensive publications.

What it will do is to:

- explain some of the basic things you need to know to function as a University employee;
- guide you towards a successful time as a teacher;
- identify specific resources you will find useful.

The format is designed to highlight substantive issues you may not be aware of and then draw your attention to the range of resources which will assist you to investigate these areas in greater depth. White space and an 'own record' column have been incorporated where appropriate to encourage you to write notes or keep a record of particular ideas and points which you need to know and which are specific to your School.

This booklet is guided by beliefs summed up in the following quotations:

> "Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves." (Chickering and Gamson, 1987, 3-7)

Reflect on what *you* think makes a good teacher. Think back to teachers you have had during the course of your own studies and draw on some of the skills they used to help you learn.

You may choose to make some initial notes in the space below.

Here are some of the characteristics that participants in the Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching have identified as essential characteristics for an effective teacher:

- is approachable to students
- shows a good knowledge of the theory, as well as techniques and skills
- gives clear explanations of expectations
- sets a good example for students in their preparation for the session
- acts as a role model demonstrating dispositions required for professional and academic work
- is able to link the material presented in the class with theory presented in lectures
- gives clear explanations, when asked
- marks without bias towards individuals and consistently with other markers
- provides feedback to students, including constructive criticisms and suggestions for future improvement

In essence, the primary characteristic is that *a good teacher helps students learn*. This booklet has been designed to help you with strategies and activities that can support you in engaging students in their learning.

Active student-centred learning is the preferred approach of teaching at Flinders University as outlined in Flinders policy and guiding principles:

> Flinders University seeks to foster excellence, innovation and flexibility in teaching in order to enrich the learning environment and enhance effective learning by its students. It accepts that all learning must involve a complex interplay of active and receptive processes, but teaching at Flinders is underpinned by the assumption that students should, as much as possible, be engaged as active participants in the learning process. It follows that ideas and views expressed as part of that active engagement ought to be appreciated and respected by others involved in the teaching and learning process.
>
> *A guide to the principles and policy framework for education and teaching and learning*
> (Flinders University, 2007)

This guiding principle is grounded in research and theory constructed around the current student learning theory described later.

This booklet provides some initial answers to a fundamental question:

How can I, as a member of the University's academic staff, best promote student learning?

The sections of this booklet provide some guidance towards:

- being prepared;
- understanding students and learning;
- using methods and techniques to encourage learning.

Organisational Matters

Dealing with the University system can be time consuming if you do not get everything sorted out right from the beginning. The actual organisation differs between the University, Schools and Departments – sometimes called Academic Organisational Units (AOUs) - so the following points are very general and you will need to clarify the particulars with your immediate supervisor.

Sound preparation is fundamental to success as a teacher. You may find it useful to consider exactly why you are about to start work in your particular area. Identifying your motivation can help in your preparation for the role. Thinking about why you, and not some other person, is doing this work may help you to establish your credentials and give you the confidence to begin. Some of the possible responses might be:

- an academic in the department recognised that you might be good at the work;

- you are a post-graduate student and it is part of your training/scholarship contract;

- you are motivated to help people learn the things that you have learnt and this seems a good way to get into the system.

Roles and Responsibilities of Casually Employed Academics

Student Consultations

Some schools require casual staff be available for consultations with students at specific times for a minimum of 1 hour on at least 2 separate days each week. Informal consultation may also occur before or after classes.

Meetings

You may be required to attend topic teaching team meetings. It is highly advised to participate in these meetings in order to ensure that you know what is happening with respect to the topic.

Preparing for and attending these meetings is not only informative, but also helps you identify potential problems or difficult questions you may encounter *before* the session starts! Before you meet, ensure that you have read all the relevant material and that you understand the aims of the session. Arrive at the meeting with any specific questions you have about the concepts, content and activities that will be covered in the tutorial. It is also a good idea to find out from the Topic Coordinator where the students are in their learning and what material is currently being presented in the lectures. This will help you link the material presented in the tutorial with the theory being taught. Make the most of these meetings - the better prepared you are, the more you will get out of them. These should not be meetings where all the information is being fed to you, but one in which your role is clarified and you can begin to feel part of a teaching team.

Occupational Health Safety (OHS) Responsibilities

Under the OH&WS Act, 1986, it is your responsibility to ensure that all other staff, students and visitors to your workplace are safe. Your supervisor will provide you with an OHS induction to explain your rights and responsibilities and the local OHS rules in your area.

As a teacher and supervisor of students, you are responsible to ensure that students are aware of the health and safety policies of the University. Familiarise yourself with these policies and talk to students about general health and safety issues, as well as those specific to the day's session if applicable. If you are in doubt about any health and safety issues within the laboratory, you should approach the Topic Coordinator for advice.

For further information on OHS at Flinders see http://www.flinders.edu.au/ohsw/.

For all emergencies:

- Call the AMBULANCE/POLICE/FIRE BRIGADE. Phone 000 - remember to add an extra 0 if you are calling from an internal university phone.
- Give clear, concise instructions to the operator.
- Notify University Security on ext. 12880 and give them the same information. Security will meet the emergency service and guide them to the correct location on the grounds.

Incident	Response
Evacuation	• Every classroom contains an evacuation map showing the assembly point – familiarise yourself with this. • Read evacuation instructions and identify the names and locations of fire-wardens and first-aiders – in an emergency, students will look to you for assistance. • Ensure that you understand all emergency procedures for your location. • When Alert signal sounds (Beep ...Beep...), make the room safe and prepare the class to evacuate. Await further instructions via the public announcement system or from the Warden • When evacuation signal sounds (whoop...whoop...) • Proceed via the safest route to the assembly area. **Do not use lifts.** • Assist mobility impaired people as necessary • Follow the directions of the Warden(s) • Do not re-enter the building until instructed to do so by persons in authority.
Fire	• Find the location of the nearest fire extinguishers and fire blankets • Familiarise yourself with the type of fire extinguishers available and their correct usage.
Medical emergency	• Provide an opportunity for students (in privacy – NOT in front of other students) with known medical conditions, to inform you of any procedures they may require in an emergency • Identify First Aid officers in your work area • Find the location of the nearest first-aid kit and emergency showers
Prevention	Never leave a classroom unattended and ensure that the rules are obeyed and adhered to. Eject a student who refuses to comply.

Academic Development

All staff at Flinders are encouraged and supported to improve their teaching. As a staff member, you have access to the training programs run by the Centre for Innovation in Learning & Teaching, Educational ICT, the Professional Development Unit, or your School. You can find out more about these at http://www.flinders.edu.au/staffdev/index.php/calendar/.

Casual academic employees are paid for agreed work undertaken and completed. Therefore, with your supervisor's prior agreement, you may be paid (at the OD1 rate) for attendance at Academic Development workshops provided by the University. An opportune time to discuss your training requirements with your supervisor may be when completing your employment forms, especially the Estimated Work Schedule. Schools are strongly encouraged to provide paid training for all casual staff involved in teaching. If you would like to further develop your teaching skills beyond the training proscribed by your supervisor, then, as a staff member of the University, you are welcome to attend workshops on a voluntary basis.

The Supervisor/ Casual Staff Relationship

Casual academic staff are responsible to the Head of a designated academic organisational unit (AOU) and are assigned responsibilities by the Head. Direct day-to-day duties are usually assigned by the Topic Coordinator. This relationship is set out in the Performance Management Guidelines for Casual Academic Staff (Part-Time Teachers) policy http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/PMG-CAS.html . Some of the points from this policy are:

1. Casual academic staff are expected to perform to a satisfactory standard while carrying out their responsibilities including:

- teaching in accordance with the curriculum for the topic for which they are engaged;
- attending promptly to administrative and assessment requirements of the topic;
- complying with the area's expectations with regard to student consultation.

2. The staff member will be required to undertake student evaluation of teaching (SET) whenever he/she is responsible for a semester long topic. The results of the SET will be made available to the staff member's supervisor.

3. At the end of the teaching period for which the staff member is employed, the supervisor will assess the overall performance of the staff member.

Appendix 1 contains a list of administrative and employment matters some of which you will need to clarify with your supervisor.

Working with the Topic Coordinator

To satisfy the needs of both the students and your Topic Coordinator, you must know what is expected of you. It is important that you know what you are doing before you walk into class and this often means approaching the Topic Coordinator to find out. Make sure you clarify some general points before you even get started. Use the checklist on the next page to help you focus discussion in the initial meetings.

This checklist is designed to help you in these early meetings to make sure that you not only have all the material that you require, but also that you establish what expectations the School has of you. The more information you have before, the more confident and better prepared you will be.

If you experience difficulties in your teaching, speak to your Topic Coordinator as soon as possible. It is their job to ensure that topics run smoothly and problems in class are resolved. If you experience difficulties in your relationship with the Topic Coordinator, then contact the Dean of your School.

Checklist

Topic	Possible Questions	Your Notes
Role	What is my role? How much time is expected of me?	
The course	What are the topic aims and learning outcomes? Which course(s) is this topic a part of?	
Materials	Can I have a copy of the topic handbook and any other information students have been given? Is there a teaching guide? Where do I get a copy? Are the books available or am I expected to buy my own copy?	
Training	Am I expected to attend any particular training activities provided by the University?	
Expectations	What is expected of the students? What is the expected level of understanding? What is the policy on students changing tutorial times? What is the policy on student attendance?	
Group allocation	Do students work in groups? How are students put into groups? How are students prepared for group work? Are they allocated or self-selected?	
Assessment	How is the topic assessed? How and when should students' work be submitted? Am I required to assess students' work? What are the assessment criteria for the assignments? What is the policy for granting extensions or accepting late submissions of work?	
OH&S	Are there health and safety issues associated with this topic?	

Support	Who can provide me with technical support during the session? How can I contact you if I have a problem?	
Room Allocations	Where are the classrooms located? Do the rooms have projectors, whiteboards (& markers) or any other equipment I need?	
Pay	What employment forms do I need to sign? How do I access the online time sheets? How do I organise to get paid? How much am I getting paid?	Keep a photocopy.
Equipment	Do I have access to: • A desk • A computer • Phone number • Internal mail box • Photocopying • Stationery If you are not the sole user, find out the other users' times and who you are sharing with. There may need to be a compromise with time and access.	
Lectures	Is there an orientation lecture? Should I attend? Am I expected to attend some or all of the lectures?	
Online learning	Is Flinders Learning Online (FLO) used actively in the topic? How much am I expected to be involved with online learning? Will I need to undertake FLO training?	

Creating a Learning Environment

Once you understand the 'system', your place in the topic and what broadly is expected of you, creating an environment to facilitate learning requires more careful planning based on an understanding of the essential ingredients of the specific learning environment.

Those ingredients are:

- people – you and the students;
- the curriculum – content, intended outcomes, assessment
- processes and interactions – learning and teaching.

Learning and teaching ideas and theory provide a framework on which you can build your specific sessions through asking important questions in the context of your particular topic and role.

In context

content

What should be learned?

assessment

How to promote learning?

Who are the students?

How to gauge learning?

learning interactions
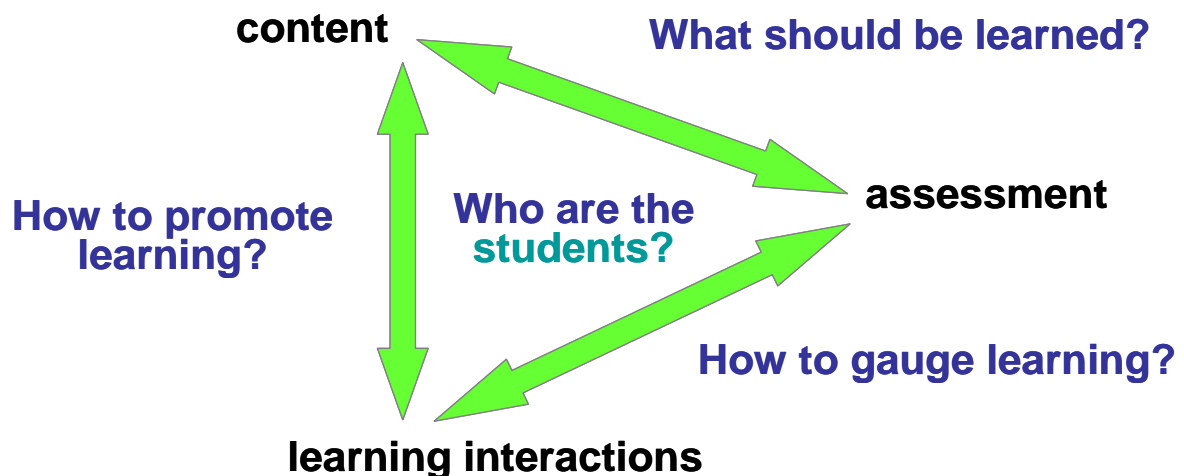
Important questions for staff in designing a learning environment

How to promote learning?

> Teaching is an activity of underrated complexity. ….. Socrates likened teaching to midwifery. Just as the midwife does not produce the baby, so the teacher does not produce the learning. Rather they both help in the delivery process.
>
> (Hinchcliff, 1997, 178)

Understanding learning and the relationship between teaching and learning is essential to the creation of an effective learning environment.

Race (2001) suggests that there are five factors that encourage learning:

Wanting to learn

Much of effective teaching is really about inspiring students to want to learn, to fan students' desire to learn.

Needing to learn

Well expressed intended learning outcomes can help to alert students to what they need to learn, and (more importantly perhaps) why they need to learn it.

Learning by doing

When students have the opportunity to practice, learn by trial and error, and through personal experience, it is more likely that they will then learn. In many ways, the art of teaching working out how to get students "doing" or engaging in active learning.

Learning from feedback

Feedback (from lecturers, fellow-students, learning resources) offers students reassurance and builds confidence when students get it right, or take the opportunity to clarify and explore further. Feedback also can correct misconceptions; and provide practices that assist in perfecting skills when necessary.

Gaining understanding

The "Ah-Ha" moment, when students gain a new level of understanding occurs when students have digested the information and transformed it into their own knowledge or understanding.

Key principles of effective learning

The key principles of effective learning presented below distil key ideas from the research literature.

> 1) **Learners need guidance and support**, and benefit from being given some basic structure from which to grow their knowledge from – having 'sign posts' pointing out key information is crucial if it is to be learned.
>
> 2) **Learning is best facilitated when students' prior knowledge is 'cued'**, so that they can begin to assimilate new information in an organised way that relates to their existing knowledge.
>
> 3**) Learning occurs through communication and social interaction**, and students should be encouraged to share, question, reflect on and challenge ideas so that their knowledge is modified and advanced.
>
> 4**) Learning is not a 'spectator sport'** and students need to act on information for it to become meaningful and integrated with their existing knowledge.
>
> 5) Deep understanding occurs **when students are able to apply their knowledge to new situations**, and this kind of learning occurs through practising with this information many times in different contexts.
>
> 6) Students learn better when they are **aware of their own learning processes**, the strategies they use, and if they continually monitor their understanding.
>
> (Biggs, 1999)

These principles are reflected by principles of good teaching practice to assist quality learning like the following:

> 1. *Engaging learners*. This includes starting from where learners are, taking into account their prior knowledge and their desires and building on their expectations.
>
> 2. *Acknowledging the learning context*.
>
> 3. *Challenging learners*.
>
> 4. *Providing practice*.
>
> (Boud and Prosser, 2002, 240)

These general principles are intended to encourage teaching practices that promote deep learning. **Deep** and **Surface** learning are two approaches to study, derived from original empirical research by Marton and Säljö (1976) and elaborated by Ramsden (1992), Biggs (1987; 1993) and Entwistle (1981), among others.

Surface

The student focuses upon the details and parts of the information in an atomistic way. There is an emphasis upon memorising individual details in the form they were related or to list the features as they were presented. This is often motivated by *extrinsic* needs, such as assessment requirements and the need to "pass". A surface approach to learning results in:

- a limited understanding of concepts
- being less able to distinguish principles from examples

- difficulties in developing a logical argument
- difficulties in recognising which ideas are key ideas
- facts being forgotten very quickly (one week).

Deep

The student looks for the overall meaning of the material and processes information in a holistic way. The students construct their own meaningful interpretation of the content by integrating it into pre-existing knowledge. This is often motivated by *intrinsic* needs, such as curiosity and interest. A deep approach to learning results in:

- the development of 'relational' responses to tasks
- long-term retention of understanding
- the ability to apply knowledge to novel situations
- the ability to generate new meaning, new paradigms
- independence in relation to learning i.e. self-directed learning.

Strategic

Strategic learning can be described as a well-organised form of Surface approach in which the motivation is to *achievement.* Students identify the assessment criteria and estimate the learning effort required to achieve a particular grade. The student chooses the most efficient and effective strategy for particular tasks.

Studies of student learning show that often the approach to learning adopted by students is strongly influenced by factors in the environment, the teaching method, and the nature of the subject, such as the type of assessment used, the workload required, feedback received, the enthusiasm of the teacher, or the amount of content to be covered in the subject. Research also shows that the learning approach adopted by students is often closely related to the quality of their learning and their academic achievement.

Teachers can influence these factors to varying degrees.

Teaching for learning

Samuelowicz and Bain (2001) classify seven orientations to teaching and learning held by university academics. The orientations fall into two distinct clusters of teaching-centered orientations and learning-centered orientations.

Teacher centered orientations	Learning centered orientations
Imparting information	Helping students develop expertise
Transmitting structured knowledge	Preventing mis-understandings
Providing and facilitating understanding	Negotiating meaning
	Encouraging knowledge creation

Academics' orientations to teaching and learning (after Samuelowicz and Bain, 2001)

Neumann, Parry and Becher (2002) present a conceptual analysis of teaching and learning activities across broadly defined disciplines or fields of disciplinary knowledge and note contrasting

patterns in both knowledge-related and socially-related aspects of teaching and learning between disciplines.

Matching the modes of teaching to approaches to learning

Each approach to teaching has strengths and weaknesses and each can be used to achieve a particular purpose. Which approach you choose to use should depend on what you want your students to learn. Generally, the intention at Flinders University is that teachers will engage in learning centred models in preference to the others. These models encourage students to be actively involved in their learning. It has been suggested that students who actively engage with the material are more likely to recall information later and be able to use that information in different contexts.

Active learning is used to involve students during the learning process. Associated with the term "learning by doing", "active learning" is often contrasted with less active forms of instruction such as lectures.

Active learning environments can include:

- formalised approaches such as Problem Based Learning (PBL)
- small group discussion
- debates
- think-pair-share activities such as students taking a minute to consider key issues raised in the previous lesson, discuss it with one or more of their peers, and report back to the whole class
- short written exercises such as the "one minute paper" which requires students to summarize the day's discussion in one minute.

Alignment of learning, teaching, outcomes and assessment

The Flinders University guidelines to assessment has as one of its fundamental underpinnings that assessment:

> "accurately reflects in scope and depth the relevant aims and learning outcomes; suit the particular assessment function; and align with the style of presentation adopted for the subject matter."
>
> A guide to the principles and policy framework for education and teaching and learning:
> ASSESSMENT
> (Flinders University, 2007)

This position reflects the concept of constructive alignment developed by John Biggs (1999). In essence, constructive alignment is based on two key ideas:

- Students construct meaning from what they do to learn.
- The teacher aligns the planned learning activities with the intended learning outcomes.

The basic premise of the whole system is that the curriculum is designed so that the learning activities and assessment tasks are aligned with the learning outcomes that are intended in the course. This means that the system is consistent.

In context of topic/session aims

content

What should be learned?
What to learn?

How to promote learning?
How to learn?

Staff & students

assessment

Intended Learning Outcomes

How to gauge learning?
How to show learning?

learning interactions
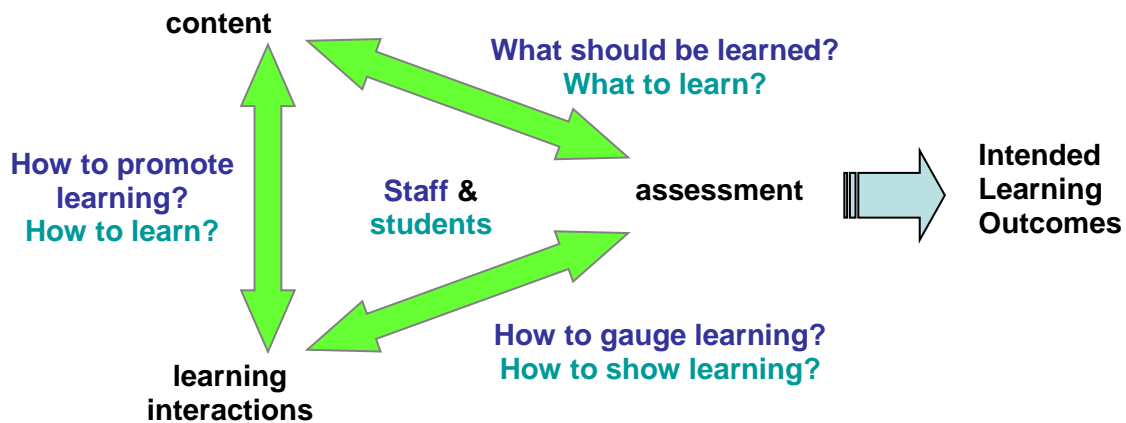
Key elements of a learning environment

Practical implications of learning centred teaching

- Set up the learning environment in a safe, non-threatening way.
- Explicitly teach learning strategies so students can begin to develop self-directed learning.
- Make the intended learning outcomes explicit.
- Students need to be active not passive in their learning experience. However, merely doing is not sufficient for learning; the learning activity must be planned, reflected upon, processed, and related to the learning outcomes.
- Encourage interaction with others.
- Use appropriate assessment practices that reward deep learning.
- Inform students in advance of the marking criteria and standards required.

How do I plan an effective learning environment?

You will need to develop an outline of what you will do. In some cases, Topic Coordinators or experienced tutors will be able to provide you with notes but, even then, it's up to you to develop a plan.

If this is your first move towards the teaching side of learning, or even if you have already had some practice, it is important to put aside time to consider your teaching and what you are trying to achieve. Your approach will be partly shaped by the topic in which you are teaching. Speaking with the other people involved in the topic will help you to look at this but it will also be most helpful to note down a set of guidelines and ensure that these are at least similar to those of the course conveners before you start.

Who are the students?

It is important that you consider the motivation and experience of the students with whom you are going to be associating. For many new students, University is a threatening experience, especially in their first few weeks. Ask yourself or other e.g. the Topic Coordinator:

- why are the students studying this topic?
- does it have practical applications in their lives?
- what do they actually want to learn
- what can you give them to help smooth their way?
- do the students actually know what their aims are?
- what do they expect of you to help them be successful?
- what do they expect of themselves?
- how might you encourage students to be active, self-motivated and independent learners?

In order for you to be prepared to begin work as a teacher you will have to check on some basic points that will ease you in to the process. Not all of these will be relevant to everyone but they will assist your familiarisation with your topic and the administrative rules around teaching your topic. The list is by no means exhaustive but represents a practical start to getting yourself organised as soon as possible.

Unsurprisingly, you will find that students talk to each other and will compare experiences. Consistency within a topic amongst the whole teaching team is something students rate very highly. A lack of consistency is frequently reported to be the cause of many management difficulties.

The strategies described in this section apply to all sites of learning. Whether you are teaching in a lecture room, a tutorial, a field trip, a laboratory or online, there are certain strategies you can use to ensure that your early contact with your students creates an environment to ensure learning takes place.

There are a few questions you might need to address before you begin to teach:

Questions about context	Your notes
Am I clear what the task is?	
Is it necessary for the students to understand any particular concepts or have any particular skills before they begin this task?	
Is there a time limit - does work need to be handed in at the end of the session or can it be completed at home?	
Is there a written set of instructions with examples already available to the students, e.g. in their topic guide?	
Is the work in itself an assessment task or is it part of the learning required to complete a separate assessment task?	
Do students need to be reminded about equipment they must bring with them to the class?	
Are there accommodations that need to be made for a student with a disability? What are they?	
Why do the students need to know this material?	
How is the material arranged? Is it a hierarchy of concepts or based around a central idea?	
How are the students to be involved in the session?	

Questions about context	Your notes
What preparation is needed from the students prior to the class?	
How will I ensure that students are grasping the set material?	
Is the emphasis on teaching concepts, facts or skills or a mix of these?	
Am I expected to cover a great deal of new material in tutorials or are tutorials an extended exploration of ideas suggested in lectures?	
How do I enable the students to have an active role in their learning?	

Planning your teaching sessions

You will need to schedule your face-to-face teaching time very carefully in order to ensure that you use the time allocated to best advantage. Use the following as a guide to help your planning

Things to do	Issues, methods and your notes
- at the beginning of your first session with the group	
Introduce yourself Establish your credentials. Let your students know why you are in a teaching position. By explaining why they should trust your knowledge, you create an atmosphere of confidence	How might you do this? What do you want the students to know about you?
Address general housekeeping and any special health and safety issues (if applicable) Particularly important in a lab or practical setting. Don't expect students to instinctively be aware of potential danger.	
Ask the students to introduce themselves There are many 'Icebreaker' activities that can be used to help students too get to know each other and to help you to get to know them.	What might be an appropriate icebreaker for the group?
Set the ground rules for participation and general behaviour in the group Develop the ground rules with students	What is acceptable behaviour and what is not?
- at the beginning of each session	
Describe the structure of the session Tell the students what you have planned for the session. Include a rough timetable. Possibly outline the plan, with suggested time to be spent, on the board or projector and invite students to add their interests and questions.	
Explain session aims Clarify them with the students and identify how you will recognise that they have been met. Discuss how they relate to the aims of the course as a whole	
Identify any misunderstandings or difficulties associated with already delivered material from lectures or previous tutorials	

Things to do	Issues, methods and your notes
Clarify terms or jargon that may be unfamiliar The topic you are tutoring in may have its own language which has been used by you, the lecturer, or in the readings.	
Clarify concepts Encourage group interaction and participation. Don't rely on students being able to remember them from previous lectures! Rather than answering directly yourself, list concepts on the board or projector and ask the students to work out, either in a large group or as a number of small groups, an explanation for the concept. Concept mapping may be a useful approach.	
Get the discussion started	
- towards the end of each session	
Ensure the material has been covered Either give a quick summary or ask students to summarise the main points. Ask the students to list the points which they think still require further discussion or remain unanswered.	Use tools like "Muddiest point" to elicit feedback from students.
- occasionally	
Identify the implicit learning that has taken place Take time out to ask students to tell you what they have learnt about group dynamics, learning, motivation, organising their own study time, etc. Explain to the students that they need to review learning processes which will develop their transferable skills. These aspects of learning are often of great interest to future employers.	

Rehearse!

Run through your planned script before the class starts – either in your head, or out loud. This exercise will determine whether you are adequately prepared to run the session and will help reduce any nervousness you might be feeling. Make sure you give yourself enough time for extra preparation if you discover that you're not quite ready. This will also allow you to identify questions that students might ask and will give you a rough idea of how long each section of the session is going to take.

If possible visit the classroom that you will be teaching in and practice moving around the room. Sit in various spots to see what the room looks like from different angles. Examine the furniture and move it if necessary.

A sense of security and confidence comes from being clear about what you are going to do – even if you change your mind after the class has started.

Strategies for Facilitating Student Learning

Getting started

The first session can be crucial to establishing a learning environment for students. One aspect of setting the environment is helping students to know who they are learning with. Lots of icebreaker activities are available to assist this process.

Icebreakers

Paired introductions

Divide the group into pairs for a few minutes to find out each others' names and backgrounds or study program. Students then introduce their partner to the main group. As a variation, in a large group, move pairs into groups of four and encourage these groups to find out about each other before introduction to the larger group. This strategy is useful for helping shy students and those who know no one else in the class and to begin to feel part of the class.

Name Plan

Using a projector or board make a name plan of where each student is sitting and encourage use of names in discussion. Halfway through the tutorial ask everyone to move and attempt to rewrite the plan without help. When you can't, ask the students to identify each other.

Name Stories

To help you remember your groups' names, ask each student to tell the story of why they were given their first name, eg:

> "I was named 'Cindy' after the little girl in the Brady Bunch."

> "My parents always liked cricket and I'm 'Don' after Don Bradman."

> "In my culture, the eldest son always receives the same name as his father."

Identify Yourself

When you speak, begin with your own name and ask students to do the same. e.g. "My name is Susi and I agree with Jane Eyre's decision to run away from Rochester because…"

For extra fun, you could ask your students to share an interesting point about themselves, e.g. "My name is Lim and I play canoe polo!"

(Ideas adapted from Bertola and Murphy, 1994)

Brief Biography

Ask students to write a 3-minute paper in class introducing themselves to you and indicating their uppermost concerns in terms of successfully completing the topic. Why not do the same yourself?

Establish Ground Rules

Rules to govern the group's behaviour are best established in the first meeting. This creates an opportunity for students to become familiar with each other and sets the tone for future meetings. Establishing grounds rules for discussing potentially sensitive issues in a classroom also promotes an environment where mutual understanding is demonstrated.

Ground rules could cover:

- politeness
- turn taking
- cooperation
- punctuality
- teamwork
- confidentiality

Teachers and students should participate in the development of the rules that will govern civil classroom discussion and active participation. Put the onus on the students for ensuring equal and fair treatment. This helps ensure that all will be committed to the rules and that they will be rules that students will adhere to.

> *Offer advice and suggestions for ground rules if there are none forthcoming.*
>
> *Ask the student group or colleagues for feedback and ratification of ground rules.*

Once you are started

Manage Incivilities

Incivilities may arise even though ground rules have been established and ratified. Incivility includes rudeness, prejudice, and neglecting the needs of individuals or groups through behaviours that cause others to feel intimidated, humiliated, degraded, undermined and/or distressed.

Deal with inappropriate behaviour early.

Trouble Shooting Common Classroom Issues

Issue	Signs	Possible Action
On-going lack of preparation	Students are clearly unprepared on more than one occasion.	Ask students why, what do they want from the tutorial, review the ground rules.
Aggressive students	A student or group of students are bad mannered and loud towards others.	Consider if the student should be talked with quietly or negotiated with by reference to ground rules in a general tutorial situation.
Late students	Frequent lateness with little or no apology to group.	Review ground rules generally to remind students of duty of care towards whole group.
Personal antipathy	Generally poor relationships between members of group.	Ask students to take time out to list best and worst things about their group and working in groups generally, review and discuss their anonymous submissions.
Exclusion of students	May be ignored by the dominant group and excluded from small group work, made fun of, harassed or ignored.	Be sensitive to these students and find ways to have them included and treated with respect.

Sexism	One gender group dominates the tutorial, putting down or ignoring the other group. Questions and comments are only made by members of one gender.	Make sure that there is equal participation by gender in the tutorial/lab. Distribute tasks equally and not according to 'male' tasks and 'female' tasks. Split up groups.

If further action is required for persistent behaviour that is unacceptable, speak to the Topic Co-ordinator or Head of Department.

Maintain a professional distance

As a member of staff you are responsible for maintaining an appropriately professional relationship with students. Personal contact with students may lead to ethical issues. Friendships, meeting for coffee, informal get-togethers often result from working with students. This type of social activity should not be totally barred but you do not want to find yourself in an awkward situation. There are University guidelines on Staff/Student Relationships (*Student Related Policies and Procedures*; also Equal Opportunity brochure), but in general, good sense should prevail.

- Be aware of the boundaries
- Avoid allowing friendships to encroach on professionalism
- Confidentiality matters. It is not a good idea to discuss other lecturers/students or teaching ethics
- Keep public/private tensions as separate as possible.

Methods and techniques to monitor and assist learning

Teaching aids and equipment

Teaching aids can be extremely useful throughout your class and their use is encouraged. Some of these include:

- Computer and projector
  - o Internet connection for material on FLO, youtube clips, databases
- Overhead projectors, overhead transparencies and markers
- Black or white boards and chalk or markers
- Handouts – particularly if there is no course manual available
- Reference material, including wall charts, posters, scientific keys & text books
- Audio-visual equipment, including slides, cassette tapes and video-clips

Make sure you use these teaching aids to their full potential by considering the following:

Question	Tip
Is the equipment available in classroom, does it work and do you know how to use it?	Check it out before students arrive.
Can the students see what you are presenting?	Make sure that the writing can be seen by those sitting at the back or at the sides of the room
Are you presenting too much information at once?	Try to limit information in presentations to half a dozen key points.

Providing assistance

Pay attention to how each individual in the class is going and determine the strategy that best suits the situation. While some students may be comfortable asking for assistance others may not, so be prepared to actively provide it.

| Technique	Actions
Summoning	Place yourself in a visible position in the room and wait for students to request help. This strategy does not work successfully for all students, as some are uncomfortable about asking for help. You may need to take the initiative with some of the less confident students
Use a system	Approach students systematically, one by one (or group by group). This will ensure that you talk to every student in the class. This is a good way of monitoring the progress of group work.
Stay put	Set yourself up in a position where each student has to pass you at some stage during the session. This may be near a piece of equipment, or a specimen. This will enable you to talk to everyone at least once.
Watching	Wait to one side and watch to see which students need assistance. This strategy requires good observational skills. Make sure you offer your assistance in a sensitive way so that you don't look like you are singling out particular students.
Wandering	Walk around the room and randomly approach students. This is a good way to keep students on their toes and allows you to stop and ask questions about how each student is progressing.

Questioning

Questioning is a key element of small group teaching. However, some consideration needs to be made when using questioning as a positive learning tool:

Technique	Actions
Keeping the questions open-ended	An open-ended question is one where the answer is not yes or no. Open-ended questions keep the students talking for longer and in more depth. Open questions often begin with the words "what", "when", "where", "why" or "how".
Pausing	Allow students time to think about a question before responding. Count slowly to 30 to allow students time for answering
Re-phrasing	If students aren't responding, they may not understand what you are asking. Try to ask the question differently.
Directing the question in different ways	Question to group followed by volunteer response Give question, choose individual, and then receive response Choose an individual. Give question then wait for a response.
Redirecting	A useful technique to involve other learners and draw out other views. e.g., "thanks for that, now [another student's name] would you like to add something?"
Reacting	Always react in a positive way despite the response. In the case of an inadequate answer it may be necessary to clarify the question or redirect it to another student.
Probing	Probing questions help to stimulate thinking skills. For example, "why are we doing it this way?" , "what would happen if...?" , "what does this mean?" , "what are some alternatives to this?" , "what are we going to do next?" , "what are some of the problems with this?" , "what kind of evidence do you need to support that argument?", "how is x different to y?"
Including opportunities for personal narrative	This gives students the opportunity to link their new learning to prior experience. e.g. "can you tell us about a time you experienced…?" or "does anyone know someone who…?"
Asking inclusive questions	Sometimes students don't answer questions because they do not have the knowledge or cultural background to do so. When preparing your questions, try asking yourself, "Who might be excluded from asking this question?" For example, instead of asking, "What role do pubs play in society?" you could ask the more inclusive question, "In cities, where can you find social spaces?"
Distributing	Make sure the questions involve all the students if possible.
Encouraging student questions	Perhaps allow time for reflection. Respond positively to any questions that emerge.

Sharing the discussion

There are several techniques you can use to ensure that the discussion is shared among the group, rather than dominated by more confident individuals.
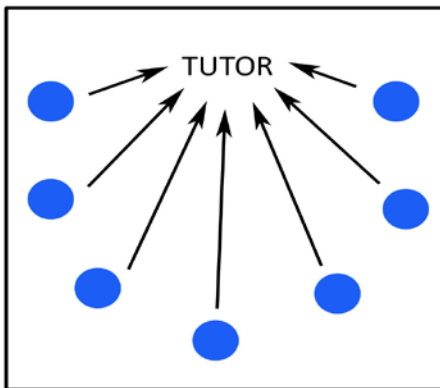
Rounds

The tutor could pose a trigger sentence such as: 'a question I would like answered next week is…'

Each student takes it in turn to offer a short comment. Can do multiple rounds
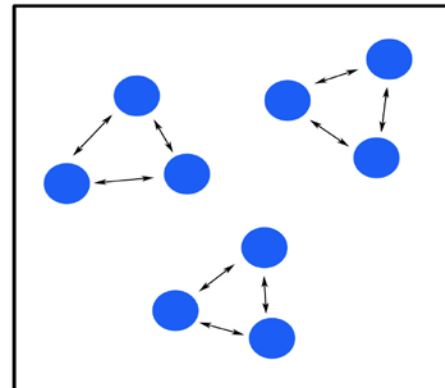
Buzz groups

Break the class into smaller groups to discuss a question or topic. Then ask that each buzz group report back to the whole group. This can be repeated and the groups can be mixed up.
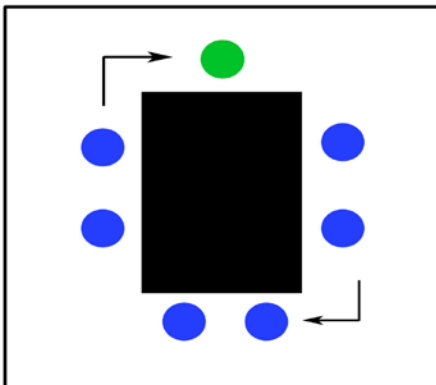
Share the Chair

The chairperson ensures fair participation

At each meeting, a different person is the chairperson
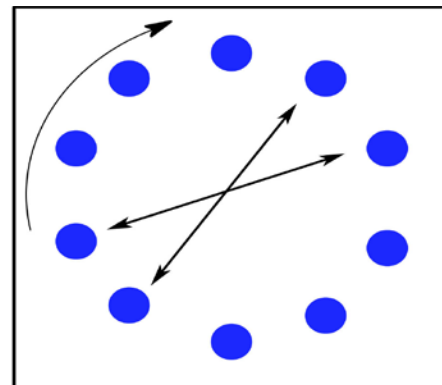
Circle interviewing

Each person takes it in turn to interview the person opposite them in the circle.

The role of interviewer and interviewee is passed around the circle until everybody has had a turn at each role

**NO STICK
NO TALKING!**

Talking stick
Native North American method for council meetings.
Group members can only speak when holding the
talking stick
The speaker passes the talking stick to the next
speaker (not necessarily the person next to them or it
becomes a round).

Written instructions

If your topic already has a set of written instructions for the relevant task, be the guinea pig and sit down and follow them through well before your first class. Do they work? If not, why not? Where do changes need to be made? If the instructions need amendment or are not operational it is tactful to discuss this problem with your Topic Coordinator before you actually change anything. You may then jointly revise the parts which are unclear and conduct a dry run with the rewritten format.

Handouts, whiteboards or projectors?

Many students feel the need to have the example there in front of them. It may be better to go through the examples on the whiteboard or projector, but be aware that many of the class will be scribbling down the answers to the example rather than working through the method with you as you go. This practice will not help them to become independent learners.

FLO – Flinders Learning Online

Flinders University aims to utilise the full range of media and educational technologies available for the educational benefit of students and expand programs offered in flexible modes. Online learning plays a major role in achieving these aims. At Flinders, we use online learning to:

- help prepare students for working in their profession
- support innovative learning design and content
- increase the range of sources of knowledge
- improve student support
- improve links with industry
- improve access (including flexibility)

Every coursework topic has a website with a minimum set of tools and content which includes topic information, access to Library resources, and communication tools such as mail and a discussion forum. This is available to provide students with a consistent set of information and access to their cohort in a flexible way. It also is intended to provide a base for the further use of technology to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

Flinders Learning Online (FLO) (http://learn.flinders.edu.au) is the technology which provides the topic website, but it also provides many other tools and staff are encouraged to use these to enhance the student learning experience. Strategies for using these (and other) tools effectively can be found at the Centre for Education Information and Communication Technologies website (http://www.flinders.edu.au/cedict/cedict_home.cfm). Staff can find further support from their Faculty based support or e-mail flo.help@flinders.edu.au .

Supporting First Year Students

The first year at university provides an opportunity to support students as they develop the skills and abilities to succeed at university as well as aiding them as they gain an understanding of what may be required of them when they enter the workplace (Lizzio, 2004). Developing these understandings is important because the changes to Higher Education Policy that have been implemented since 2009 have led to an increase in both student numbers and diversity within student populations at university (Australian Government, 2009). The increases have created a gap between the way in which university staff view and understand students; the expectations that students have of university and the first year students' academic, cultural and social experiences.

As a sessional staff member there are a number of things that you can do to help students develop a good understanding of what is expected of them at university and how university differs from their previous experiences of learning (whether that has been in the workforce, at high school, at another learning institution or elsewhere). What you can and cannot implement will depend on the way in which your sessions are set up and run, but some things most people will be able to implement include:

- Do not make any assumptions about what the students in your class know
    - They may know more than you realise or less than you realise
    - If you require them to do something tell them (even if it is something very basic like completing a lab workbook or bringing something to your session)
- Develop ways to get to know your students
    - Ask them to write a short postcard indicating their hopes and fears
    - Play Human Bingo
    - Ask them to participate in debates about the topic under discussion
- Providing a comprehensive topic outline, including assessment expectations
    - make time during the first tutorial to discuss the topic outline and assessment expectations ask the students questions about them to ensure they understand what is required of them
    - revisit assessment expectations the week before the assessment is due
- Be consistent about the feedback you provide and the way that you provide it
- Set times for students to consult with you and leave these on your office door.

Make sure you are aware of the range of services that are available to support students, what each offers and how these services can be accessed. The services include:

- Transition to University office;
- Student Learning Centre;
- Health, Counselling and Disability Services;
- OASIS - Faith, Spirit, Community;
- Tjilbruke Student Services (which is part of the Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research);
- Library; and
- Careers & Employers Liaison Centre.

Remember: The first year at University is a time of social and academic transition for most students, and their early experiences are critical to their academic success and perseverance in study.

For resources and further ideas about how you can help and support your first year students visit the "Inspiring Achievement in First Year University Students" web pages at http://www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/quality/first-year-students/first-year-students_home.cfm

Student diversity and inclusive practices

Inclusive practice should enable all class members to value each other's contributions equally and ensure that, as far as possible, all students have equal access to learning opportunities. Students are not "empty vessels" or "blank pages"; they bring years of experiences and learning with them. The more we can find out about what they already know, what they've already experienced and what they can already do, the better we can go about helping them to achieve the particular learning outcomes that characterise the elements of curriculum we're working through with them.

Diversity

This section describes some of the diversity that may exist in your classes and offers some practical tips to ensure that your classes are as inclusive as possible. For more details and further strategies and tips, visit the Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice (CDIP) web site at http://www.flinders.edu.au/CDIP

Academic Preparedness

Students enter Flinders through a wide range of pathways, not just year 12 high school. This means that you may not be able to make many assumptions about their prior knowledge. You can refer students to the Student Support Services (see below) for help with generic skills. If there are more topic-specific issues, then some strategies are:

Background knowledge probes

Students are given a list of key terms/concepts prior to the class and answer the question below for each term/concept. You as the tutor can then collect the responses at the start of the class and get an idea of what material may need to be revised during the class.

> For each of the concepts identified, indicate your level of knowledge. If you selected (c) or (d), jot down in point form, your knowledge related to the concept.
>
> Concept or Term #1 ….
> a) Have never heard of this
> b) Have heard of this, but don't really know what it means
> c) Have some idea of what this means, but not clear enough to explain
> d) Have a clear idea of what this means and can explain it

(From: Angelo and Cross, 1993)

Peer-peer teaching

In this scenario, students help each other. Sometimes high-achieving students may feel reluctant to explain material to struggling students. In this case, it may help to explain to the high-achieving students that one of the best tests of their understating is their ability to explain it to someone else. Also, communicating your expertise to others is a key professional skill which everyone needs to develop. It is also important in these situations to establish a classroom culture where everyone's self-esteem is supported and no-one is made to feel left out or left behind.

Cultural Background

Flinders University has students from many very different backgrounds. A critical influence on these students' learning capabilities will be your sensitivity to their social and cultural mores. It is important to consider that cultural differences may prevent students challenging your opinion. They may be reluctant to share their ideas, but they may also demand more time than you can give as they have 'paid' for their education. With some students, this tension can also result in an expectation of a

good result despite poor student input. When in doubt, take advice from the Topic Coordinator and try to encourage equal participation for all.

Birthplace

Not all diversity is clearly visible. You need to bear in mind that Australia is a multicultural society and appearances can be misleading. Sensitivity to the diverse range of backgrounds will be helped if at the initial tutorial you are able to draw out some key points about the students' origins.

Language

When dealing with a diverse group of students it is vital to know how well they understand English. While there are set English comprehension standards for admission to the University, the reality is the University makes quite different demands than that of a test. A student with only basic English language skills, will have to listen carefully and spend more time preparing than many other students. They will also need more time in class discussions to formulate their response so the pace of the discussion needs to allow for this.

A key way to enhance language skills is to use the language! Many students from non-English speaking backgrounds share accommodation with people of the same linguistic background. This means that one of their few opportunities to engage in prolonged conversation in English and improve their skills is in tutorials. So keep the whole class talking as much as possible.

Physical restrictions

Flinders University is not an easy place to get around. There are lifts in most buildings but slopes are often steep and getting to lectures and tutorials may require extra time and effort for some students. You should be aware of access routes too and if necessary make appropriate accommodations.

There may be a deaf or blind student in your class. Generally, the Topic Coordinator will be aware of these students but you may find yourself with a guide dog or a sign language interpreter in your tutorial group. Remember, the student has the same rights as all your students, so be sensitive to their needs, and fully incorporate them into the group's activities.

It is important to remind students in their first class to discuss any difficulties related to access or physical restriction with the Topic Coordinator as early as possible.

Socio-economic sensitivity

The students studying at Flinders come from a wide range of backgrounds. Students themselves do not always appreciate this diversity. In conducting the tutorial, try to use examples which cannot be construed as being gender or racially oriented, ageist, socio-economic or class generalisations, etc. If you set a positive example in this, students should develop a greater awareness of their own biases. Talk about it to the students and seek their opinions about diversity.

Age, experience and year level

About half of the students at Flinders are not recent school leavers. In your group you may have students across a wide range of ages. Their motivation and life experiences will be extremely varied. Their contribution to the group will be similarly varied. If the mature-aged students have not been in a formal learning situation for a while, their self-esteem may be fragile. They may approach learning with some fear as their past learning experiences may have been negative.

Experience has shown that insensitivity can flow in both directions in a group of diverse age range. The younger cohort may feel, and overtly express, resentment towards older people taking University places or attempting to dominate the conversation. Older class members may not acknowledge the quite different, but equally valid, learning path and experiences that the school leavers have taken.

Inclusive practice

Demystify the culture of the Academy

Universities often have a distinct culture of their own. This can be difficult to get to know for a person who is new to the environment. Students are often discovering new processes and expectations which may be implicit in your opinion. These apply equally to students breaking into the culture of the University as first year students and to those coming from different countries.

- Explain and clarify academic expectations and standards (to students) regarding written work in the Australian university context
- Outline behavioural and language expectations
- Clarify the format and purpose of the particular session type you are teaching and the type of participation expected
- Explain the written topic outlines, objectives and outcomes provided
- Teach appropriate citing, referencing and how to avoid plagiarism
- Provide relevant information and resource sessions if necessary
- Make your marking scheme quite clear. Let students know the expectations on communicating information and ideas and on language accuracy. Sometimes students can be anxious about being penalised for poor English expression.

Communication

Academic forms of expression and administrative terms can be quite foreign to many students. International, Indigenous and Australian students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds may need to be introduced to academic English and administrative terminology to help them operate effectively at the university.

- Explain discipline, faculty, departmental or University-specific concepts and terms without ambiguity
- Technical language in particular disciplines can be complex to understand for people with language backgrounds other than English. Introduce technical terms that are vital to learning early in the course. Involve students in creating a chart of definitions that includes translations in languages appropriate to your staff and/or student groups
- Translating certain concepts can be difficult – what may seem clear to you may not translate into a comparable concept in another culture
- Make use of language resources specific to different language groups/cultures to increase inclusiveness for students from those cultures
- Avoid complicated, long sentences when speaking and be careful with culturally specific humour, sarcasm, and irony
- If using Australian colloquial expressions such as 'she'll be right', explain them and/or provide a handout, and invite questions for clarification
- Speak at a comfortable listening speed and volume
- Use pauses to establish a pace of speaking that supports understanding
- Face people when speaking
- Support spoken information with written material (on the board, online, brochures, information sheets, handouts etc)
- Recognise that people who are using English as their second or third language can experience frustration and isolation from not being able to express themselves fully in English. It can also cause frustration for the listener who may experience difficulty understanding.
- Resist pretending to understand. If you don't understand, say that you don't and ask the speaker to repeat what they said.

Utilising the diverse experiences and perspectives of people as a resource

People are more willing to share when you take an active role and the learning is mutual. All students need to feel valued and respected by not just the teacher but also their fellow students.

- Start a conversation, asking students where they have travelled, lived, about the 'typical' work or study week in their cultures, and what their expectations, roles, and experiences have been
- Offer people from diverse cultural communities an opportunity to talk informally

Take responsibility for familiarising yourself with diverse cultures. Do not expect people from other backgrounds to always educate you about their culture, history, or to explain racism or sexism to you. Remember, it may be painful for some people to talk about their histories and cultures (e.g. Australia's Indigenous Stolen Generations).

Dealing with difficult situations

A number of difficult situations, theoretically unrelated to learning, will intervene at times during most programs. Some of them are likely to be personal in nature and there may be a policy in your department not to become involved. However, you are likely to be the students' first point of contact and they may well come to you for advice. It is to be hoped that you will not have to deal with all of the issues listed below, but you might well need to be aware of them and know who can assist you to deal with them.

There are predictable and unpredictable problems which you may have to deal with at any time. Some may be to do with other work you are undertaking, some may be to do with your personal situation, whilst others will be of a more practical nature. In all circumstances don't be afraid to ask. As chief trouble-shooter in the group, you need to be aware of likely problems and move towards a strategy that prevents the problem outweighing the usefulness of the class.

Situation	Immediate Solution	How to Avoid the Situation
Door to teaching room is locked	Tell the students to wait. Go and ask your departmental Admin Assistant to help you urgently. Ring Security (1 2880)	Get there early. Find out who has keys to rooms and their phone number in case you need them.
Someone else is teaching in your timetabled teaching room	Find out if the other person is timetabled into the room. If not, explain you are timetabled into the room and ask them to go elsewhere. If yes, ask the admin assistant to find out if there is an empty room.	Know who is in charge of room scheduling in your unit.
Fire alarm goes off during class	Never assume it is just a drill. Follow the appropriate procedures for the alarm signal. Follow the fire marshal's instructions.	Know the alarm system and what each signal means. Get marshalling areas map from Admin Assistant and display.
Projector bulb blows or doesn't work	Look in adjacent rooms. There may not be classes in progress, so borrow one. **Don't forget to return it.** Use the whiteboard instead.	Arrive early Know where you can get a spare bulb
You don't know the answer	Learn how to cope with not knowing the answer. **Admit you don't know.** Don't try to pretend you do or to make up an answer 'on the fly'. Students will know. Find it. Or even better, help them find it. Turn it over to the students; "What do you think?" Cover it in the next class.	Do preparation, read background materials. Ask for a full course outline, lecture material, readings, and assessment details.
You run out of time in class	Offer a brief summary of what has been missed and what they need to read. Briefly cover the material you missed in the next class.	Plan carefully. Allocate time for administration, opening summary, discussion, student activities, feedback, etc. Follow your plan. Keep your eye on the clock.

Casual teaching staff who have participated in the Casual teaching program frequently report the kinds of problems described below. Fortunately, they can also offer some solutions as to how they managed to get themselves out of it!

Situation	Action
Freedom of Information (FOI) requests	While you are taking tutorials it is likely that you will be keeping records of the students in your groups. It is important that those records should be as honest and unbiased as possible. Nevertheless, be professional in your writing. Students may obtain legal access to these notes.
Student has a grievance	Listen carefully. Refer them to the Topic Coordinator or Head of Department as appropriate.
Student complains about another staff member	Don't get involved. Tell them to explain the problem to the teacher involved. Then, if they need to take it further, they should contact the Department Head, or Course Coordinator
Student wants an extension	Follow departmental policy. You need to be fair to all students and considerate of their difficulties. Find out who is responsible for giving extensions and under what circumstances they are given.
Student complains about the marks you have given	Refer them to the assessment criteria which you mark to. Ask them to demonstrate to you where in the assignment they meet the various assessment criteria. You can show them the policy on requesting a remark (Item 16 at http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/student/assessment2.html). Remind them that if they have a remark they might get a *lower* mark. Know the department policy on disputes about marking. Keep records of your marking.
Student displays distressed/disturbed behaviour	Recommend in a calm, firm manner that the person seeks support: "You seem to be quite upset at the moment. I think it would be a really good idea for you to talk to ……………..(someone at the Counselling Service etc)". Call the Counselling Service on 12118 in office hours or email a counsellor direct in office hours. If the person is angry/agitated and you feel threatened, move slowly to a safer position. Call a colleague to witness and support. Leave the area immediately if you feel seriously threatened and call Security on 12880.

Assessing Learning

Part of your time as a casual teacher will be spent assessing student learning. This may be through formal assessment tasks, marking tutorial papers, essays, practicals etc. or through less formal assessment and feedback in tutorials, etc. Other forms of assessment may include tutorial attendance or participation. Assessment is of great concern to students and assessors. It can have significant repercussions for students, for example, in gaining scholarships. It is critical to their career paths and may influence choices available to students in the future. It is also important to the University in relation to maintaining academic standards.

Assessment and learning

As one output from a national project on assessment practice noted:

> Assessment is a central element in the overall quality of teaching and learning in higher education. Well designed assessment sets clear expectations, establishes a reasonable workload (one that does not push students into rote reproductive approaches to study), and provides opportunities for students to self-monitor, rehearse, practise and receive feedback. Assessment is an integral component of a coherent educational experience.
>
> The ideas and strategies in the Assessing Student Learning resources support three interrelated objectives for quality in student assessment in higher education.
>
> 1. assessment that guides and encourages effective approaches to learning;
> 2. assessment that validly and reliably measures expected learning outcomes, in particular the higher-order learning that characterises higher education; and
> 3. assessment and grading that defines and protects academic standards.
>
> The relationship between assessment practices and the overall quality of teaching and learning is often underestimated, yet assessment requirements and the clarity of assessment criteria and standards significantly influence the effectiveness of student learning. Carefully designed assessment contributes directly to the way students approach their study and therefore contributes indirectly, but powerfully, to the quality of their learning.
>
> (Excerpt from James et al., 2002)

The design of formal assessment is most likely out of your direct control. You may be marking work that has been set by others. You may be using feedback processes that have already been laid down. However, you have a responsibility to the students to ensure you and they clearly understand the criteria used in the assessment process <u>before</u> they begin the task, not <u>after</u> you have assessed it.

Aims, learning outcomes and assessment

In light of the ideas behind constructive alignment, it is important to understand the aims and anticipated learning outcomes of each topic. You will measure students achievement of outcomes through assessment and your success in supporting students achieve will be in turn measured through evaluation processes.

Flinders policy requires all topic aims and outcomes to be publicly available via the topic information available on FLO and on the web. It also requires that aims and learning outcomes are linked firmly to assessment and feedback. Periodically returning to these aims will help you make classes a memorable and valuable learning experience for students and will help you evaluate your progress as a teacher.

Aims

An aim statement gives a broad view of what the topic is intended to do, e.g.:

- To introduce the concept of statistical thinking and to develop student's capabilities to use statistical thinking and methodology to improve processes.
- To provide students with culturally relevant techniques for the systematic preservation of the voices, images and memories of Maori people.
- To develop an awareness of the issues, terminology, methods and techniques involved in the study of human behaviour.

Often the aim is elaborated in more specific objectives for the topic. Each objective should be distinct and have significance in its own right, providing reference points for detailed design of content, delivery, learning experiences and assessment.

Example topic objectives [following from the first aim statement example above]:

The objectives of the topic are:

- to introduce the concepts and statistical models behind quality and process improvement
- to examine statistical process control procedures and the evaluation of control chart performance and statistical design of charts
- to develop a working knowledge of specific applications including control of high quality processes, statistical intervals, multivariate process control

Learning Outcomes

 "Learning Outcomes" are statements of the attributes and capabilities that a student should have achieved on successful completion of the topic. They provide the reference point for assessing student progress and designing assessment strategies and methods. Learning outcomes also provide signposts towards appropriate content. Learning outcomes are helpful for

- working out at what level we are to pitch our teaching
- mapping the curriculum we teach in terms of the things students will be able to do to demonstrate to us that their learning has been successful
- working out the standards that we will apply when we measure students' achievements using our various assessment instruments and processes

Learning outcomes give students a clear indication of

- what they should be aiming for to demonstrate that their learning has indeed been successful.
- what they should be learning,
- how they should prepare to prove their learning to us through assessed coursework and exams.

An example of learning outcomes is provided below

On completion of this paper the student should be able to:

- *describe the role within business/industry of statistical thinking; methods for problem solving and process improvement, and understanding and quantifying variation*
- *collect data for a specified purpose and recognize the limitations of existing data*
- *graphically analyze data using basic tools*
- *recognize situations when more advanced techniques are needed*
- *derive appropriate, actionable conclusions from data analyses*
- *use statistical thinking and methods in industry*

The intended capabilities of a successful student are stated with some precision-

- ability to identify, and contextualise concepts to the 'real world'
- collection, interpretation and use of data
- ability to recognize the limitations of particular methods
- with all the above brought together in an applied setting for purposeful application

Making students aware of learning outcomes

- Start each of your classes with a statement of the particular intended learning outcomes relating to the session;
- Return to the outcomes at the end of the session and review with the class how far progress has been made towards students being able to demonstrate their achievement of them;
- Acknowledge that there will be aspects of the achievement of the outcomes that will depend on students doing follow-up work on the session.

Assessment

Assessment then needs to focus on encouraging learning and measuring progress towards intended learning outcomes.

topic/session aims provide the frame

Influence

content

What should be learned?
What to learn?

How to promote learning?
How to learn?

Staff & students

assessment

Intended Learning Outcomes

How to gauge learning?
How to show learning?

learning interactions

Influence
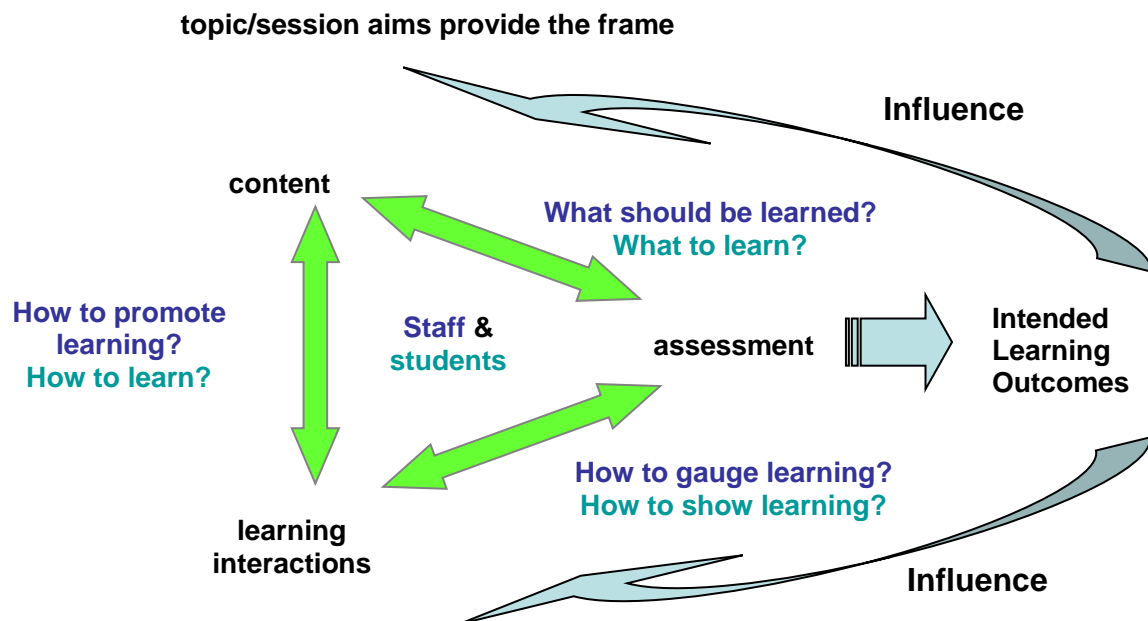
Aims, outcomes and assessment: key inter-relationships

Flinders Guiding Principles and Policies

Assessment will be an integral part of the learning process, encouraging the development of critical and creative abilities. The University recognises the importance of both the evaluative (summative) and developmental (formative) functions of its assessment processes and the need to make a clear distinction between them. Accordingly, care will be taken to ensure that the need to grade students operates alongside the important educative role that assessment can perform in both indicating to students the kinds of intellectual engagement desired, and in providing feedback on their performance. The role to be performed by individual assessment tasks will be made clear to students from the outset.

Assessment at Flinders University will treat students equitably and consistently, but will also make reasonable provision for students from non-English speaking backgrounds and for students with a disability, impairment or medical condition. Special attention will be given when professional experience placements are incorporated into assessment processes.

Guide to the principles and policy framework for education and teaching and learning:
ASSESSMENT
(Flinders University, 2007)

A fundamental principle regarding assessment of student work at Flinders University is that assessment will be fair, rigorous and transparent.

Statement of Assessment Methods (SAM)

A SAM is a negotiated contract between teachers and students outlining topic assessment expectations. The information contained in the SAM includes:

- the topic aims and learning outcomes;
- information on expected student workload;
- the criteria for successful completion of the topic;
- in the case of professional experience topics, information on: the location of placements; supervisory arrangements; duties to be undertaken; codes of behaviour and industry regulations and requirements; assessment and reporting; health or other preliminary checks required by the placement provider; provisions for inability to meet health or other required checks; provisions in the event of unsatisfactory performance either by the student or the placement provider; and any other requirements or conditions relating to the placement;
- the scheduling of assessment deadlines, the penalties to be applied if those deadlines are not met and the period of time within which work is normally returned to students;
- the format of each form of assessment;
- if optional forms of assessment are permitted, details of the options offered;
- the weighting of each piece of assessable work towards the final grade in the topic;
- any special requirements concerning particular parts of the topic, for example if a student must achieve a certain minimum level of competence in both the theoretical and practical parts, or any attendance requirements which are applicable;
- whether each assessment exercise is redeemable and, if so, how and under what circumstances it may be redeemed, including whether redemption is possible through resubmission and the maximum mark obtainable through resubmission; and what criteria and procedures apply for supplementary assessment in the topic;
- what, if any, scaling procedures will be used in the marking of assessment exercises and in the determination of the final grade for the topic;
- how students with disabilities may apply for variations to assessment and teaching methods;

- how, and under what circumstances, individual students may apply for special consideration in the topic;
- whether electronic text matching software is to be used, and if so, how it will be used.

SAMs have to be made available to students no later than the first week of semester in a written format. SAMs are negotiated contracts and should be discussed at the first tutorial. Feedback any results from the discussion to the Topic Coordinator as students may request a variation to the assessment methods to be used in the topic. The variation should be negotiated with the Topic Coordinator. If at least one third of the students enrolled in the topic seek a variation, and if this variation is refused by the Topic Coordinator, the students may appeal to the Faculty Board against the refusal.

The mechanics of marking and grading

You will need to check with the Topic Coordinator what the expectations are of you with regards to assessment. The following checklist offers a set of questions you might like to clarify before you begin the assessment task.

Tasks	Questions	Notes
Time spent on marking	What amount of time am I expected to spend on particular assessment tasks?	
Payment	How much marking is included in your payment?	
Return time	What are the expected completion dates for submission of marks?	
Recording marks	Where are marks recorded? Are they recorded as percentages, as a letter value, as a proportion of the overall mark?	
Marking schedules	Does the department/AOU use a standard marking schedule for essays, posters, reports etc? Do I have to create my own checklist? Can you provide me with marking criteria and explain the marking scale?	
Grades	Is there a particular department convention or tradition to using grading rubrics, or to allocation of a range of grades? Do I take marks off for poor spelling, grammar or referencing methods?	

Tasks	Questions	Notes
Feedback	Is there any convention regarding the amount or style of feedback to be given to students regarding their assessment?	
Extensions	What is the policy for granting extensions? Are there penalties for late submission of work? Who can grant extensions?	
Team Marking	Are marks moderated between markers or double-marked? Will I need to attend any team marking meetings and, if so, how will I be paid for this?	
Resubmission	Can students appeal or have assignments remarked?	
Academic Integrity	How do I deal with suspected plagiarism?	
Returning assignments	How do assignments get returned to students?	
Participation grade	What are the students expected to have done? What criteria are used for participation?	

If you have not been provided one, it is a good idea to draw up a mark sheet indicating how you will grade the assignment. You may need to take into account factors such as structure, presentation, style, spelling, grammar and referencing methods, as well as content. Returning a filled-in mark sheet with each assignment makes it clear to students how marks have been allocated and provides feedback on sections that require improvement.

Once you have established the marking criteria, there are a couple of ways you can go about marking. Many markers spend time reading several assignments before they start allocating marks. This method gives you a feel for the range of work you will be marking and helps identify great reports from good ones. Some markers read all the assignments and after placing them in a provisional order, allocate the final marks. Either way, it is best to have a look back through the assignments after you have finished to check that your grading system has been fair. If in doubt, approach the Topic Coordinator and ask for advice.

Assessment suggestions

Before you start

- Re-read the task set, noting main expectations
- Discuss these expectations with other markers and those who have designed the task
- Make a list of likely references you would expect students to use
- Obtain adequate copies of the required mark sheets
- Clarify topic policy on lateness and re-submission with the topic convener
- Determine whether any students have made arrangements for a variation in assessment.

Getting on with it

- Your method will depend on the size and nature of the task
- Read through a selection of the students' work to get a feel for the way the question has been answered
- Using your proforma or checklist as a guide, go through each paper and give it a grade;
- Avoid correcting every error in presentation, spelling, etc. Choose perhaps three points or one paragraph and deal with these in detail in your feedback
- An A4 typed page of generic feedback, briefly describing the characteristics of papers that achieved each grade, can provide clarification of misconceptions in relation to their peers' submissions

Explanations of variance in grading students' work

Research has found that a number of factors undermine academics' ability to accurately and consistently assess and grade students' assignments. They include:

- the quality of the hand writing and other graphic features of the students' texts
- the readability of the students' papers
- the quality of the introductory paragraph
- the quality of the other students' work that the assessor has just read
- what assessors already know about the student who has submitted the work
- academics' own personality traits, for example, their desire to be liked by students
- gender differences, cultural differences, language use, disability (eg. dyslexia)
- the degree of knowledge and experience in teaching, learning and assessment
- the amount of time available to devote to the task of assessment

It is important to remind yourself that many of these are only surface features and that it is student LEARNING that you are assessing.

Informal classroom assessment strategies

Informal assessment is a further useful technique which allows you to monitor your tutorial groups learning process and to amend your teaching to improve the students learning.

Gauging students' progress is important. While the University and the students require a formal assessment of both the students' and the teachers' work you may also want to review your tutorial teaching in a less formal way. How do you know the students have 'learnt' what was required in the tutorials? Can you gauge their progress from their expression, body language, preparedness for the tutorial etc? The more tutorials you do the more familiar you will become. As you progress

through the topic material you will clearly enjoy some tutorials more than others. You are also likely to find that some groups work better than others. Group dynamics play a major role in this.

There are, however, strategies you might like to try to improve any problems you perceive. Some quick ideas to test progress in a non-threatening way include:

- have students write a one minute paper in class by answering the following questions.
  - o What was the most useful, meaningful, or intriguing thing you learned during this session?
  - o What question(s) remain uppermost in your mind as we end this session?

- ask each student what was the main idea of the tutorial
- ask students to write down anonymously what were the five most important points discussed today
- ask students to identify two interesting ideas and how they might apply these to 'real life' 'every day' situations
- help students review and evaluate the quality of their lecture notes, lab notes or fieldwork notes

Feedback

Adequate feedback is fundamental to marking. If the student is going to learn from the assessment activity they must read and act upon what you have written and respond accordingly in their next piece of work. Students regard the feedback they get from lecturers and tutors as "expert witness" feedback. They take more notice of it.

Feedback needs to:

- be prompt
- give a clear indication of how work can be improved
- be user friendly for both the marker and the student making efficient use of both parties time
- allow students to adapt and adjust their learning strategies
- support learning, so students know how to improve their performance
- focus on mastery not effort or time spent
- lead students to being capable of assessing their own work

All students need to receive adequate feedback, not only those who did not do so well. Students who do well need to know why they achieved a higher mark and what else is needed to enhance their performance. They need to understand how they achieved the grade they have.

At its best, feedback

- guides both teachers and students
- focuses around the course and topic learning outcomes
- guides students to become their own critics
- accounts for a developmental approach for achievement in a discipline
- provides a learning experience for students
- is timely
- elicits a response from students and demands some form of consequence

Strategies for giving feedback

- Write (handwritten) comments on students' essays, reports etc;

- Provide face-to-face feedback, where you discuss students' work with them, individually or in small group tutorials.
- Use word processors to compose "statement banks", from which you can draw often-needed feedback explanations from a collection of frequently used comments which apply to the work of many students, and stitch these comments together to make a composite feedback message to individual students.
- Send electronic feedback directly to students you mark, or at least compose the message (best not to send it too early, they might have done on page five what you've just accused them of not having done on page three!). The message could be sent via FLO or email.
- Build an overall general collection of feedback comments to the class as a whole, based on common errors and frequent difficulties, post this on FLO which each student can view, and then email individual students only with particular additional feedback they need.
- Use assignment return sheets, where the feedback agenda has already been prepared (for example based on the intended learning outcomes associated with the assignment), enabling you to map your feedback comments to students more systematically.
- Use a "class report" on a task set to a large group of students, covering all the most important mistakes and misunderstandings, and adding minimal individual feedback to students, addressing aspects of their work not embraced by the general report.
- Use model answers: these can show students a lot of detail which can be self-explanatory to them, allowing them to compare the model answers with their own work and see what they've missed out or got wrong.
- Give large-group feedback in a lecture, allowing you to cover all the most important points you need to make, and also allowing students to see how their own work compares with that of their fellow-students.
- Use the "track changes – insert comments" facilities in word-processing packages to edit students' electronically-submitted essays and reports, so they can see in colour the comments you've made on their work at the click of a mouse on their own screens. This is particularly useful for electronically submitted assignments which are returned via FLO.
- Attach an audio commentary to the student's assignment. Some software products enable you to do this and the assignment can then be returned to the student on FLO.
- Create your own checklist, a proforma on which you mark the relevant points for attention.
- Hand out an A4 sheet to the entire class with examples of appropriate responses, examples of some misconceptions with some explanations about why they were not correct, and resources for follow-up study to correct the misconception.
- Instruct students to conduct self-evaluation of their work before submission to check that particular areas or issues have been covered. Students could then refine work as necessary.
- Encourage students to request the nature of feedback in a request form. You can then provide the specific feedback in a particular format or addresses particular issues. Ideally this should be an element of formative assessment as it would have little value if this was at the end of a particular topic.

Mind your language!

You'll probably remember how daunted you may have been by thoughtless or unduly negative feedback on your work when you were a student. Damaging students' motivation is not the best way to get them to improve. It's therefore useful to remind yourself how strong some words and phrases can be when viewed by students as critical comments not just on their work, but on their very being. Some words and phrases to avoid include:
- failed - for obvious reasons
- useless - a very demeaning adjective

- disastrous - seems irredeemable!
- error - somehow this comes across more punitively than "mistake" or "slip"
- failed to grasp the basic point - probably the most insulting feedback message imaginable
- the word "grasp" is particularly demeaning somehow

It's worth saying once more that written (word-processed, printed) feedback is now regarded as important evidence of the quality of your teaching. Remember to make the feedback humane, useful and helpful to students. Also remember to link your feedback consciously to the assessment criteria and to students' achievement of the related learning outcomes. That way you're not only covering your back in the context of external scrutiny of your professional practice, you're also reinforcing to students that the assessment criteria and learning outcomes are useful to them as indicators of where the goalposts are, and the standards to aim for.

The 'sandwich' method of feedback may be a useful rule to follow. In this case, the negative news is sandwiched in between two constructive statements. For example, "You have done this bit well because ... There were some issues with the section on… These were… The way to improve this section would be…"

Face-to-face feedback to groups of students

This is less private, but can be less daunting to students when the feedback to most of the group is similar. Students can then learn usefully from each other's mistakes, and also from the things that others did well. When giving such feedback to groups, however, we have to be careful not to embarrass students in front of their peers - especially if they know each other very well.

Academic Integrity

The University regards academic integrity as a very serious matter but you will need to draw students' attention to this, as they may never have heard of it before. To help you in teaching and supporting students learn about academic integrity, a website has been developed at http://www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/quality/aims/index.cfm

Staff are responsible for:
- being aware of the policies and procedures in relation to academic integrity; providing examples of good academic practice by appropriately acknowledging the work of others in their teaching and research;
- familiarising themselves with the information provided on the Academic Integrity Management component of the University web site;
- providing clear instructions to ensure students are aware of common conventions in relation to expectations of academic integrity, as well as the specific requirements of the disciplines;
- determining whether electronic text matching software is to be used, and if so, complying with the Protocols for the Use of Electronic Text Matching Software (*n.b. Topic Coordinator to decide*);
- providing students with appropriate guidance, learning activities and feedback on academic integrity;
- communicating to students the assessment methods and expectations relating to academic integrity;
- communicating to students the acceptable level of working together and how their work will be individually or jointly assessed;
- designing assessment tasks that minimise the potential for breaches of academic integrity.

As a teacher, you are most likely to be confronted by breaches in academic integrity in the form of essay or tutorial paper plagiarism. Graders may also need to be aware of students inappropriately 'sharing' experiment results. If you notice unintentional breaches, use it as a learning opportunity for the student.

How to notice breaches in academic integrity

- Inconsistencies in writing style within a piece of written work.
- Inconsistent formatting in a document.
- Language that seems inappropriate for the student's year level.
- Noticeable repetition from one student paper to another.
- Lack of quotation marks or correct referencing.
- Recognition by you of un-cited material read previously in tutorials.
- Generally poor referencing technique.

Developing academic integrity

- Clearly explain what academic integrity is and why it is considered important. For example, suggest to the students that they would not want their research copied without acknowledgement.
- Discuss the ways to avoid plagiarism with students before they begin writing
  - What should be cited and when?
  - How to paraphrase

- o Encourage the students to use this process:
  - Read and make notes
  - Put the original material away
  - Work from their notes rather than from the original sources
- Insist that students complete the FLO topic ACINT001_a - Academic Integrity at Flinders. This site aims to help students at Flinders to find out more about academic integrity and how to maintain it. It is available to every Flinders staff and student via their topic list on FLO.
- Draw students' attention to *Making the Grade* (Hay et al., 2006) and other suitable publications. There are also resources in the Student Learning Centre and on its website.

Taking action

Despite all your attempts to prevent it occurring it is clear that most assessors will face some degree of plagiarism. The University has a clear set of processes to be followed if a breach in academic integrity is considered to have occurred. They are illustrated in the diagram available from http://www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/quality/aims/info-for-staff/policy-into-practice.cfm

Should you suspect a breach in academic integrity, you will need to adhere to the full policy. This is available as clause 4 of the Policy on Academic Integrity at http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/student/assessment1.html. Your first step will be to notify the Topic Coordinator of a suspected breach of academic integrity.

Evaluating Learning

Evaluating learning: Flinders Guiding Principles and Policy

Flinders University policy requires teaching and topics be reviewed and evaluated to develop teaching practices and improvements in the teaching and learning environment, while also identifying minimum requirements and a consistent framework. It uses a number of different tools within which student evaluation and peer evaluation of teaching may be used.

The following diagram illustrates the quality cycle used at Flinders University to help you reflect on your teaching to find out what areas of teaching you are doing well and what areas you can improve upon.
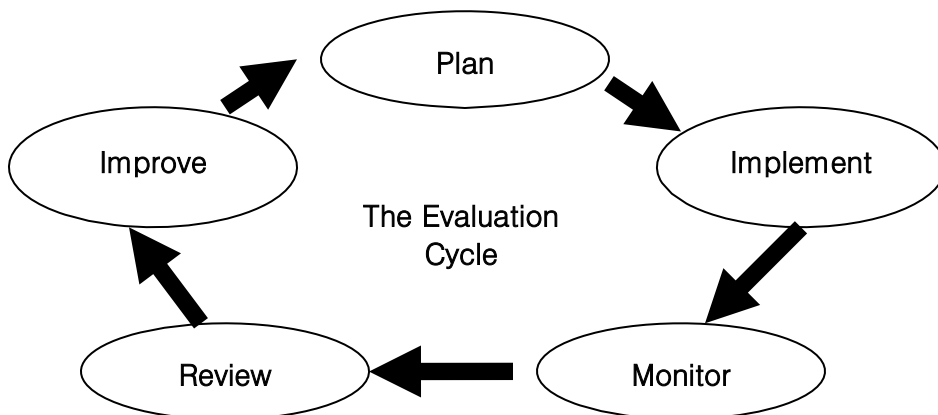
The Enterprise Agreement requires you to participate a formal process using the Performance Management Guidelines for Casual Academic Staff (Part-Time Teachers) available at http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/PMG-CAS.html . This may include using the Student Evaluation of Teaching instrument. This will be used as a data set during your performance review with your supervisor, along with information gathered using other strategies.

Evaluation methods and instruments

Informal evaluation methods are often used to gather information from students quickly and can be used to gather information for formative evaluation so you can adjust your teaching to meet your students needs while you are still working with them. Formal instruments such as the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) forms are frequently used summatively when you can no longer improve practices as a direct response to feedback.

Decide what the purpose of your evaluation will be and choose the appropriate method and instrument for the purpose.

Teaching journal

Use this to develop a record of what happened during your teaching experience. A journal record is always more credible than memory. This exercise will also be a good introduction to the later development of a teaching portfolio. You may well be asked for an opinion from the Topic Coordinator at a review meeting or if the topic is being revised. Things you could include are:

- the topic outline
- number of students in each group
- if there was too much/too little material to cover
- method used to conduct particular tutorials e.g. small groups, written response

- your own estimation about how the individual tutorials worked
- skills you think students learnt or reviewed e.g. analysis, summary, group leadership
- how you might tackle this particular topic next time
- student comments.

Clearly, you will probably not record this information for every group particularly if you are teaching multiple groups the same tutorial material, but it is valuable to have some idea of what went well and what did not.

3-2-1 Student Evaluation

You might want to use this easy tool to gauge how you are going. Don't forget to discuss the feedback with the students after you have processed it – review is a two-way street!

Simply hand out a blank piece of paper and ask students to suggest

- **Three** things that they **like** about the topic so far
- **Two** things that they **hate** about the topic so far
- **One** thing that they would like to see **changed**

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET)

SETs are pre-developed questionnaires completed by the students towards the end of the topic teaching period. While they generally include a series of standard questions, Topic Coordinators or teachers can add in other questions. The contributions from the students are anonymous and the results returned only to the individuals concerned and their supervisors.

If you have taken time at the beginning of your topic teaching period to discuss aims and objectives, and also student and teacher expectations, it is a good idea to spend some time revisiting these early ideas towards the end of the semester and before the SET takes place. Remember, students may be completing multiple SETs within a short period of time. A reminder of your joint goals for the topic is therefore useful in assisting students to respond thoughtfully.

SETs can be a useful tool in revising topic content, teaching methods, what worked, and why, and are also becoming more important for job applications, promotions etc.

Peer Review

Essentially, peer review is an intentional process of gathering information and evidence about the effectiveness of the teaching/learning process from your colleagues. Ideally it is an open and collegial dialogue conducted over a period of time rather than a one-off visit.

Peers offer the capacity to critically review and improve and enhance teaching. Peers are a valuable source of formative feedback on whether intentions are achieved in lectures and through the design of assessment. http://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/t4l/evaluate/peer.php - top#top

What can peers evaluate?

Peers are worthy commentators on:
- philosophy and approach to teaching
- presentation skills
- group work and facilitation skills
- course materials and resources
- assessment methods
- curriculum design, development and evaluation

- appropriateness of aims, objectives and content
- coordination and organisation
- familiarity and adherence to policies and regulations
- teaching outcomeshttp://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/t4l/evaluate/peer.php - top#top

A peer review should result in a report that also provides place for your response about what you intend to do as a result of the review.

Visit http://www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/quality/evaluation/peer-review/processes.cfm for suggested processes for engaging in a peer review process.

The Evaluation process

Remember that a survey or questionnaire is nothing more than a mechanism to gather the data. True evaluation occurs when you analyse the data. The following process describes how you can make sense of the feedback you have received, either via an informal process or in a formal SET report. Regardless of what instrument you decide to use, the standard reflection and evaluation process would incorporate the following steps.

1. **administer** instrument
2. **summarise** results
3. **analyse** the data by concentrating on issues raised
4. make **decisions** about changing – or justifying why not to change – some of your practices
5. **share** the results with your students

Administer

- When conducting student evaluation surveys, it is prudent to leave the room when students are completing the instrument. This prevents any undue pressures and influences.
- Student comments on the 3rd or 4th week into semester are most valuable as you have the opportunity to report back and also make changes while you students are still around.

Summarise

- If you elect to use a SET form, you will receive an electronic summary report of the quantitative data 4 – 6 weeks after you have submitted the questionnaires. You will only receive SET open ended responses after the exam period.
- If conducting informal surveys, use a summary grid for student comments similar to the following table.

Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Factors Outside of my Control	Suggestions for Improvement

- Arrange the most significant statements under the most appropriate heading as you read through the feedback.
- Keep a rough tally of the number of times similar comments appear
- You might wish to conduct the above exercise with the open-ended responses on the SETs, although it will be too late to report back to your students or adjust your teaching to accommodate their feedback as you will only receive the response at the end of the semester after the exam period.

Analysing evaluation data and deciding on changes

- Pay attention to open-ended responses. This is often the best and richest feedback you will receive.
- Don't allow the negative comments to dominate your thinking. While it is difficult, don't take negative response personally. Remember that they are, after all, only opinions.
- Factors which are outside of your control will surface. This involves comments like "I hate having to get up for this class at 8 am" or "the classroom is too far away from my previous class".
- The tally of the number of students making the comments is important. For example, if 1 out of 30 students mentions that you are the worst tutor they have ever had, it may indicate that there is a problem with this student, not with your teaching. While it may be difficult to overlook these comments, look for the trends and patterns. Don't focus on the stray comment.
- Items that are in the negative and positive comments columns should be ones that you can do something about. If there are negative comments about the complexity of the program, it may be because you are preparing them for an exam or because you have pitched the classes at a level higher than they are capable of achieving. You may need to explore your expectations of them further. This is why it is important to conduct formative evaluation early in the piece so you can make adjustments to your program while you are teaching
- When examining the *Suggestions for Improvement*, divide these into the following 3 categories: suggestions that might work; suggestions that cannot be implemented and "funnies". Criticism about your clothes often creeps into this last category.

Sharing results

Most students believe that teachers never look at their feedback, let alone acknowledge them to the entire class. Teachers who are recognized as being "excellent" by theirs students regularly respond to their feedback. The more you share, the more likely students are to give you valuable feedback the next time.

- Summarise statements regarding factors that are outside of your control, and share with the class. This indicates to the class that you are sympathetic to their concerns. Move onto issues that you can influence.
- In your report back, you can mention the "funnies", casually and in a context that can be seen to be humorous, not confrontational. An example of a suggestion that might work is "hold the quiz at the beginning of the class so I know what to focus on during class" while the suggestion to "change the air conditioning" may not be possible.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Checklist of organisational activities

	Activity	Suggested Actions
Time	When are your classes and where?	Keep a record.
Forms	Notification of casual academic employment. Taxation Declaration form.	Completion by you. Signature of employer. Send to Budget & Payroll. Keep a photocopy. Send to Budget & Payroll.
Money	Check rate to be paid for tutorials, repeat tutorials and marking.	Note the relevant rates. You will need to keep records of your hours and enter timesheets electronically using the Employee Self Service.
Security		Security phones are located all over the University. If you are locked in or out, phone security (12880)
Space and facilities	Do you have access to: A desk A computer Phone number Internal mail box Email address	If you are not the sole user, find out the other users' times and who you are sharing with. There may need to be a compromise with time and access. What access do you have to facilities in your AOU, e.g. photocopying?
Transport	Car parking Buses and Loop Bus	You can buy a semester or yearly permit, or buy a daily ticket. Details are available at http://www.flinders.edu.au/studentinfo/public_transport.html
Stationery	What do you need? Can you obtain items yourself?	Often the School Manager will be able to help you with these matters. Other teachers may also know the relevant procedure.
Occupational Health Safety and Welfare (OH&WS)	Under the OH&WS Act, 1986, it's your a responsibility to ensure that all other staff, students and visitors to your workplace are safe. Do you know your local safety rules including building evacuation procedures, assembly points and first aid procedures?	Your supervisor will provide you with an OHS induction to explain your rights and responsibilities and the local OHS rules in your area. Ask your supervisor, fire warden or first aid officer or look on the OHS website.
Internet access/ FLO password	You will automatically receive an email address when you are put onto the payroll system. The default password for staff is the last four characters of your payroll number followed by four characters of your birth date	

	Activity	Suggested Actions
	in the form dam (day, day, month, and month).	
Library & ID Card	Once you have accepted your appointment and completed the necessary paperwork Payroll Services will generate a payroll number for you (usually a six-digit number). Take this to the ID Cards Counter in the library to obtain your ID card.	
Library Orientation	Sign up for library orientation tour.	
Subject Librarian	Go in and visit your subject librarian. Make yourself known.	
Computer Laboratories	Find the labs, and clarify who has access to them and when, and who do you contact if you have a problem with equipment in a lab.	

Appendix 2: Terms and Abbreviations

Universities have their own languages. The users may not know that they are speaking their language and the words and acronyms used will be different depending on which Faculty, School or Department (there are three of those words) you are working in. Some of the terminology used within the University to define degree structure and topics is listed online at:

http://www.flinders.edu.au/calendar/vol2/glossary.html

You may find it useful to look at some of the relevant definitions.

In addition listed below are some terms and abbreviations that you may hear in conversation at any time.

AOU	Academic Organisational Unit – usually a School
Assoc/Prof	Associate Professor
Course	A collection of topics, a study programme
DLO	Disability Liaison Officer
EFTSU	Equivalent Full Time Student Unit
EOU	Equal Opportunity Unit
EHL	Faculty of Education, Humanities & Law
FDAA	Faculty Disability Academic Advisor
FLO	Flinders Learning Online
FOI	Freedom of Information
FSO	Faculty Services Office
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
IT	Information Technology
NESB	Person from a non–English speaking background
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
PTI	Part Time Instructor
SAM	Statement of assessment methods
Casual Teacher	Casually employed teacher, usually tutor or lab demonstrator
SSN	Social Sciences North
SSS	Social Sciences South
Topic	A subject
VC	Vice-Chancellor

Appendix 3a: Example of Grading Standards for Writing in Seminar Portfolios

HD & D   (1) Responds fully to the assignment; (2) Expresses its purpose clearly and persuasively; (3) Is directed toward and meets the needs of a defined audience; (4) Begins and ends effectively; (5) Provides adequate supporting arguments, evidence, examples, and details; (6) Is well-organised and unified; (7) Uses appropriate, direct language; (8) Correctly acknowledges and documents sources; (9) Is free of errors in grammar, punctuation, word choice, spelling, and format; and, (10) Maintains a level of excellence throughout, and shows originality and creativity in realising (1) through (7).

Credit   Realises (1) through (9) fully and completely – and demonstrates overall excellence – but shows little or no originality or creativity

Pass   Fails to realise some elements of (1) through (9) adequately – and contains several, relatively serious errors or flaws, or many minor ones. A "D" paper often looks and reads like a first or second draft.

Fail   Fails to realise several elements of (1) through (9) adequately and contains many serious errors or flaws, and usually many minor ones as well. An "F" paper usually looks and reads like a zero draft.

(From: Angelo and Cross, 1993)

Appendix 3b: Sample Assessment Rubric: Writing Assessment Form

	Beginning or incomplete	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary
Organisation- Structural Development of the Idea	No evidence of structure or organisation.	Some logical organisation; organisation of ideas not fully developed.	Paragraph development present but not perfected.	Writer demonstrates logical and subtle sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs; transitions are used to enhance organization.
Reference List	Absent or done in the correct format with many errors. Includes less than 3 major references (e.g. journal articles, books). Includes substandard website(s). (Periodicals available on-line are not considered internet sites.)	Done in the correct format with some errors. Includes 3-5 major references (e.g. journal articles, books). Includes substandard website(s). (Periodicals available on-line are not considered internet sites.)	Done in the correct format with few errors. Includes approximately 5 major references (e.g. journal articles, books. Periodicals available on-line are not considered internet).	Done in the correct format with no errors. Includes more than 5 major and relevant references which are key to the field (e.g. journal articles, books. Periodicals available on-line are not considered internet sites).
Spelling, grammar, sentence structure	Frequent grammar and/or spelling errors, writing style is rough and immature	Occasional grammar/spelling errors, generally readable with some rough spots in writing style	Less than 3 grammar/spelling errors, mature, readable style	All grammar/spelling correct and very well-written

Modified from http://www.scribd.com/doc/42742031/Science-Rubrics

Resources

Useful Websites

Cultural Diversity & Inclusive Practices Toolkit
http://www.flinders.edu.au/CDIP

Teaching & Learning at Flinders
http://www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/

Staff Development Opportunities at Flinders
http://www.flinders.edu.au/staffdev

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