

Program Revitalisation Project

Learning and Teaching Support Unit (LTSU)

Learning and Teaching Action Kit

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Learning and Teaching Action Kit

How to use this Learning and Teaching Action Kit

The Learning and Teaching Action Kit is designed to help academic program teams, course convenors and learning and teaching staff to navigate their way through strategic learning and teaching areas currently prioritised by the University.

Every strategic learning area is broken down into distinct learning and teaching topics, processes or supporting resources. Each of these has its own page, which includes a summary about the topic, process or resource, a description of relevant resources and a link to the relevant USQ Learning and teaching webpage.

The Learning and Teaching Action Kit can be used as a strategic learning and teaching resource for:

- program teams wishing to make changes to program curricula
- academic staff wishing to make changes to their course(s)
- learning and teaching staff working in consultation with program teams or academic staff to renew program and course curricula.

If you have any questions about the Learning and Teaching Action Kit, please contact your Learning and Teaching Support Unit (LTSU) faculty representative for further information and support. <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/ltsu/default.htm>

Other support services and resources

Learning and Teaching Support Unit (LTSU)

- [Learning and teaching website](#)
- [Program Revitalisation Project overview](#)

Library

- [Information for staff and researchers](#)

Distance and e-Learning Centre (DeC)

- [Contact us](#)
- [Integrated Content Environment \(ICE\) System](#)

Course and curriculum mapping

Learning and teaching design guide

The learning and teaching design guide uses the new course specification format as a means of helping staff navigate their way through a fundamental consideration of learning and teaching design: Constructive Alignment.

Constructive alignment is a concept used to express the requirement for teachers to align course learning objectives, course materials, teaching methods, and assessment (Biggs 2003¹). In other words, students are more likely to successfully and authentically learn the course objectives if the teaching of disciplinary knowledge, class activities and assessment are targeted directly towards those objectives.

The learning and teaching design guide streamlines the process of checking various components of the course, including teaching topics and activities, assessment and learning objectives. It is designed to generate the least possible amount of work for academic staff. A lot of sections will be automatically populated from the course specification.

The ultimate aim of this Learning and Teaching Design Guide is to function as a design tool for academic staff to use, either by themselves or in consultation with their learning and teaching faculty representative, and as a means of checking ideas about learning activities, teaching and assessment.

The Learning and Teaching Design Guide also provides links to both the Assessment Checklist and Course Writing Guide which provide more detail on assessment and course writing and production, respectively.

The Learning and Teaching Design Guide can also be used for staff engaged in either course or program review processes.

Currently under construction

Assessment

Assessment is used in higher education to:

- encourage learning
- provide feedback on learning and teaching to both the learner and the teacher
- document competency and skill development
- allow learners to be graded or ranked
- validate certification and license procedures for professional practice

¹ Biggs, J. (2003). Teaching for Quality Learning at University. 2nd edn, Maidenhead, UK, Open University Press.

- allow benchmarks to be established for standards (Broadfoot and Black, 2004²).

All assessment is aligned to the course objectives, so that all objectives are assessed on each offer of the course. University of Southern Queensland (USQ) uses criterion-referenced assessment only (refer to USQ assessment policy section 5.6). This means that all students are graded on the basis of their work alone, not by reference to how other students have performed. Criteria are dimensions or characteristics of a given assessment task and are usually accompanied by a standard or level of achievement required for each grade. Assessment or grading criteria are linked closely with the course objectives. For example, when marking an essay a key criterion that reflects the course learning objective of good written communication might be ‘appropriate structure’.

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit provides the following resources to help you design a course assessment plan and its accompanying assessment tasks.

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/infoflyers.htm>

- About exams
- Basic principles for improving assessment
- Criterion referenced assessment
- Developing good assignments
- Moderation of assessments
- Teaching to avoid plagiarism

Checklist

- [Assessment checklist](#)

Exemplars

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/exemplars/assessex/default.htm>

- Assessment exemplars

Video resources

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/vsarchive/default.htm>

- Visiting scholar - Merrilyn Goos – criterion-referenced assessment
- Visiting scholar - Geoff Crisp – on-line assessment

2 Broadfoot P. and Black P. (2004). Redefining assessment? The first ten years of assessment in education. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, vol 11, issue 1, pp7-26.

Other resources

- Key online resources on assessment including discipline specific resources
<http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/assess.htm>

USQ graduate qualities and skills

When we refer to ‘graduate qualities’ we are referring to broad vision statements that describe types of student learning that go beyond knowledge-based outcomes. Graduate qualities statements are typically provided at a discipline or program level.

USQ has developed a policy called ‘The Qualities of a USQ Graduate’ identifying five overarching qualities that typify graduates of this university. They are:

1. **Discipline expertise** - the level of knowledge, skills and emerging expertise required for USQ graduates to commence practice in their chosen discipline
2. **Professional practice** - a sound knowledge and understanding of the professional and contextual responsibilities appropriate for their practice
3. **Global citizenship** - the ability, through their understanding and valuing of difference and diversity, to live and work in culturally diverse communities
4. **Scholarship** - the capability to make a scholarly contribution in their workplace and in the wider community
5. **Lifelong learning** - the information literacy and independent learning skills required to pursue personal and professional development throughout life.

The level and mix of qualities may vary according to the discipline or program focus and will be developed through the teaching and assessment of the following skills:

- ethical research and enquiry
- problem solving
- academic and professional literacy
- written and oral communication
- interpersonal skills
- teamwork
- cultural literacy
- management, planning and organisational skills
- creativity, initiative and enterprise.

Graduate skills are aligned with course assessment. They are expressed as learning outcomes on course specifications and as criteria on assessment criteria sheets and marking rubrics. Students will be offered opportunities outside of their program to develop graduate qualities and skills, including the USQ Phoenix Award and employability or careers activities.

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/infoflyers.htm>

- Developing USQ graduate qualities and skills

Templates

- USQ qualities and skills – customisation, mapping and alignment template
- Developing graduate qualities and skills at different levels across undergraduate programs and disciplines

Videos

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/vsarchive/default.htm>

- Graduate attributes and skills - Curtin University of Technology
- Visiting scholar Assoc Professor Joe Luca, Director, Graduate School, Edith Cowan University

Other resources

- Key online resources on Graduate Qualities and Skills
<http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/gradatt.htm>

Course writing guide

The **Course Writing Guide** is designed to help you compile your course materials based on some guiding general principles. If you find you have not addressed a particular element please review to ensure you do not need to include that element.

This form will allow you to:

- tick-off each element you have included (checkbox on right)
- access examples - these may include, word documents, PDF files, Breeze presentations and/or web links
- access a hint about what the element is used for (hold cursor over 'HINT' button on the far right)
- print or save this document for later reference (located at bottom of checklist)
- reset the fields if you would like to use this for multiple courses (located at bottom of checklist).

To help you use this guide please refer to the course specification for your course. You may also like to visit the [course preparation resources](http://www.usq.edu.au/extrafiles/ltsu/IDchecklist/index.htm) page on the DeC website.

<http://www.usq.edu.au/extrafiles/ltsu/IDchecklist/index.htm>

Post evaluation

At USQ, post-evaluation is a systematic process of gathering evidence, reporting results, reviewing for actions, and responding to students on their feedback of the learning environments and experiences. Student feedback informs course and teaching reviews, accreditation and improvements, professional development, and the university's quality assurance process.

The standard University evaluation processes can be supplemented by the use of:

- other evaluation methods of student learning, for example, focus groups or assessment reflection pieces
- peer review of teaching and course materials
- qualitative analysis of student comments from the standard University evaluation process and other evaluation methods.

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit provides the following resources to help staff plan and implement evaluation processes.

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/infoflyers.htm>

- Evaluation of learning and teaching
- Closing the loop on student feedback
- Course experience questionnaire (CEQ)
- LTSU support for post-evaluation

Other resources

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/eval/default.htm>

- Post-evaluation on-line toolkit
- Key online resources on evaluation

Flexible and open learning

Flexible learning

As a distance educator, Flexible Learning is a guiding principle in the USQ Policy on Learning and Teaching (Refer to [University Calendar Section 7.5](#))

USQ now uses the concept of fleximode, to articulate its aim of extending the learning and teaching practices and online resources, traditionally applied in distance mode only, to all students. This adoption of fleximode now includes minimum service delivery standards for all USQ courses.

Flexible learning means that all students have the right to receive a comparable learning experience regardless of their mode of study, location, gender, race or ethnicity. However, flexible learning can also present the possibility of offering students choices in what to learn, how to learn, how their learning is assessed and where and when the learning occurs.

Flexibility in learning and teaching practice can be interpreted broadly according to the following:

- flexible curriculum design, including flexible assessment schemes, negotiated curricula, different assessment types and teaching that addresses different learning styles
- flexible delivery, including distance or on-line mode, on-campus mode, intensive mode or any other mode of delivery that accounts for competing challenges faced by students today.

Flexibility can also apply to other aspects of university processes which affect the student learning journey, such as admissions, equity issues and faculty organisation.

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit supports teams wishing to address issues of flexibility in their program or discipline curricula, or in the delivery or program or discipline curricula through the following:

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/howtoflyers.htm> for Information Flyers on:

- designing learning,
- facilitating and supporting learning, and
- improving teaching

Video

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/vsarchive/default.htm>

- Presentation of Fleximode by Professor Alan Smith

Other resources

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/flex.htm>

Vertical integration

Embedding academic skills

Academic skills are those skills that allow students to be successful in their studies. Many of these skills sit on a continuum with graduate skills, which will allow our students to be successful employees and citizens.

Academic skills can be grouped in a variety of ways, but include:

- communication skills
- working with others
- assessment skills
- academic numeracy
- critical analysis/problem solving
- reflective/self monitoring skills
- managing university
- study management

Information literacy is another important skill for success.

Academic skill development in your teaching

Student academic skills can be developed in a variety of ways. The most effective way is through explicit development of your teaching linked with assessment. This development does not have to mean extra work for you, rather is designed to build student success and build towards the development of some graduate qualities.

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/infoflyers.htm>

- Using Academic Learning Support (ALS) in your teaching

USQ exemplars of good practice

<p>Communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaffolded assessment in the tertiary preparation programme • Developing the written communication skills of maths students • Innovative, interactive communication • Building communication skills in pharmacology • Peering into a supportive learning future 	<p>Various academic skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing academic skills • Integrating essential skills • Scaffolding and embedding with Jill • Building academic skills and encouraging critical thinking
<p>Critical thinking and reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imbuing students with higher order thinking skills of analysis and critique • Encouraging critical thinking • Hands-on experience and higher order skills • Lyn's teamwork and reflective portfolios 	<p>Information literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiki for beginners • Evaluating sources

Video resources

- Visiting scholar Dr John Willison: Research Skills Development (RSD) framework and examples for academic skills development, seminar, interview and online resources
Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/vsarchive/default.htm>
- Templates for communication skill development (essay structure, grammar and style, oral presentations, paragraphs, question analysis, reading at university, referencing, report writing)

Resources for students

The Learning Centre (<http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/default.htm>) provides a suite of online and face-to-face resources, which you can refer students to or incorporate in your teaching. Especially useful are:

- Quick tips flyers (<http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/tips.htm>)
- Online resources (<http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/alsonline/default.htm>)

Contact LTSU academic skills staff in each faculty.
(<http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/ltsu/contact+.htm>)

See: <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/embedacad.htm>

Embedding indigenous perspectives at USQ

Embedding Indigenous perspectives may include the following:

- teaching Indigenous students in culturally appropriate ways
- ‘both ways’ education in which non-Indigenous students study Indigenous knowledge and, through a meeting of these knowledge systems, facilitate their professional practice in Indigenous communities. Refer to http://livingknowledge.anu.edu.au/html/educators/07_bothways.htm
- weaving references to Indigenous perspectives throughout a course or a program. For example, provide students with statistical tables of Indigenous health or education outcomes, then provide them with questions that interrogate the statistical data
- ensuring that discipline-specific Indigenous perspectives are included in the curriculum. For example, surveyors will need an understanding of Indigenous land rights
- developing Indigenous-specific courses or programs.

Embedding Indigenous perspectives in your discipline or program provides students with the opportunity to develop intercultural skills which allows them to graduate with the quality of global citizenship.

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit supports program teams to embed Indigenous perspectives in their program or discipline through the following:

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/infoflyers.htm>

- Embedding Indigenous perspectives at USQ
- Indigenous Protocols

Video resources

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/vsarchive/default.htm>

- Visiting scholar Phillip Falk powerpoint presentation and interview
- Visiting scholars Wendy Nolan and Rob Ranzijn seminar
- Interview with Ms Louise Alexander (Education Queensland), and Ms Rhonda Hagan (USQ)

Blog

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/blogarc.htm>

- Embedding Indigenous perspectives

Other resources

- Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/indig/default.htm>
- Darling Downs South West Queensland Region - [Regional Indigenous Education – The Learning Place](#)

Internationalisation of USQ curricula

USQ aims to adopt a rigorous and ongoing university-wide process to internationalise the curriculum. This aim is reflected in USQ Graduate Qualities and Skills Policy by the quality of global citizenship.

The process of internationalising USQ curricula includes the integration of global perspectives and intercultural skills into the design, development and evaluation of programs and disciplines. For example, an internationalised curriculum could include:

- comparative studies that provide global reference points for disciplinary or professional knowledge
- teaching and assessing students' understanding of international and intercultural issues that are relevant to their professions
- using intercultural communication strategies as part of our own teaching practice
- teaching and assessing students' intercultural communication skills.

Internationalisation is linked to the following project areas:

- Graduate qualities and skills
- Post evaluation and evaluation of programs and courses
- Benchmarking

The Learning and Teaching Support Unit supports programs or disciplines to design and implement any aspect of internationalising curricula through the following:

Information flyers

Refer to <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/learnres/infoflyers.htm>

- Internationalisation of USQ programs
- The Bologna process: implications for USQ programs and practice
- Strategies for managing an inter-cultural classroom

Workshops

Intercultural training - [Managing your intercultural classroom](#)

Other resources

Internationalisation of the curriculum and resources
<http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/topics/internat.htm>

Academic professional development

Tailored professional development opportunities

Each year the Learning and Teaching Support Unit (LTSU) provides a suite of up to eight workshops associated with learning and teaching. These are called Tailored Professional Development (TPD) workshops and faculties can choose to have LTSU offer a number of workshops from this suite in their faculty. Each workshop is designed to complement and provide additional resources for the eight Foundation courses being offered as ongoing professional development for academic staff at all levels. Each workshop is discipline-specific and tailored to meet the specific needs of each faculty or department. Current workshops include:

Assessment as a tool for learning

This workshop is an overview of designing an assessment plan, types of assessment, using criterion-referenced assessment and the conditions for effective feedback.

Effective Communities of Practice (CoP)

A workshop that looks at how CoPs provide a defined time and 'space' to create a learning community around certain themes or practices as a means of building personal and professional knowledge and expertise, and make effective use of a peer support network.

Evaluation of learning and teaching

A workshop which informs academic staff of the internal process established for the regular monitoring and improvement of all key aspects of the University's course and program offerings, and how these processes can be used both as a means of improving learning and teaching, and as evidence for promotion or awards.

Supporting graduate qualities and skills

A workshop to develop resources, recommended professional development support and implementation processes which support academic staff and program teams to customise, map and align graduate qualities at the program or discipline level.

Crossing cultures

This workshop has been developed to assist with an understanding of the history of Indigenous Australia and the impact this has on contemporary Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Intercultural skills in teaching

This workshop provides practical strategies to deal with cross-cultural issues in your teaching practice. It will also enable the University to develop programs that are international in both course content and pedagogical approach, with links to the USQ graduate quality of global citizenship.

Flexible learning

This workshop covers how learning can be improved and promoted with online tools and techniques.

Experiential & problem based learning

This workshop aims to provide a sound grounding for using experiential learning, as well as how to use problem based learning to stimulate autonomous learning, which allows students to take control of their learning and take ownership of the material.

Learning and teaching for diversity

A workshop that looks at alternative approaches that can be adopted when dealing with different types of classes, including learning in small groups, managing large groups, and introducing inclusive teaching for all levels of ability and diversities.

Embedding academic skills

Students enter university from a range educational backgrounds and experiences. This workshop investigates what skills students need for success throughout their university study. Activities focus on to integrate academic skills into courses in a way that makes them relevant to students and provides a scaffolded pathway to the development of such skills with links to development of graduate qualities and skills.

Communities of Practice (CoP)

CoP are groups of people who share a passion for something that they know how to do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better. CoPs provide an opportunity to create a learning community around an area of interest or practice, to share and develop practice and build personal and professional knowledge and expertise.

A CoP creates a defined 'space' to share knowledge about a specific area of interest or practice, which enables members to address the practical problems encountered in that practice. Other activities include:

- negotiating what it means to be part of that community

- developing resources and building a unique community identity.

These activities have tended to be sidelined as workplace demands increasingly impinge on academic time, hence the need for CoPs.

Communities of practice at USQ

The USQ Communities of Practice website - <http://www.usq.edu.au/cops/default.htm>

Faculty of Arts website - <http://www.usq.edu.au/cops/usqproject/arts.htm>

Faculty of Business website - <http://www.usq.edu.au/cops/usqproject/business.htm>

