Transnational Teaching

A Guide to Teaching and Coordinating in Offshore Programs
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1. Introduction

ECU has established partnerships with many educational institutions to conduct courses and programs offshore. Currently we have offshore programs running in countries like China, India, Kenya, Singapore and Sri Lanka. Effective coordination of our offshore programs is an essential task, since it enables us to develop and project a quality product and image to our partners offshore. It will also ensure comparable standards of teaching, learning and assessment are established and maintained in all locations offering ECU awards.

This handbook is intended as a guide for ECU staff who teach or coordinate offshore units in partner institutions. It describes the roles and responsibilities of coordinating units offshore, explains the process of moderating assessments and looks at some considerations when travelling and teaching offshore. It is intended to enable ECU staff teaching or coordinating units to enhance the delivery of their units and ensure comparability of standards across delivery sites.

2. Getting Organised

a.- Finding out about the Teaching

Staff who will be teaching offshore are usually notified by the Head of School (HOS), at least 4 weeks ahead of the commencement of the teaching period. The initial notification will usually inform you of:

- the unit(s) you will be teaching;
- the location where the unit is being offered;
- the duration of the teaching period;
- the staff member at the offshore campus working with you; and
- the ECU International (ECUI) Partnerships Officer who will liaise between you and the offshore partner.

b.- Preparing the Course

Blackboard site

You need to prepare a Blackboard site for the offshore students that is a version of the Blackboard site you will be using for the on-campus students. You need to ensure there is equivalence in the materials that you provide for both cohorts.

Once your Blackboard site has been established and is ready to be accessed by the offshore students you must inform the ECUI Partnerships Officer.

CD Materials

In the rare case where there is no Blackboard site, you will need to prepare a CD with the course materials which will be sent to your partner offshore teacher by the ECUI Partnerships Officer. You need to create the CD and pass it to the ECUI Partnerships Officer, 4 weeks ahead of the commencement of teaching. It should contain the following information:

- the unit plan, which includes the unit outline, schedule, assessment descriptions, assessment marking criteria;
- the PowerPoint slides;
- the Workshop Notes;
- readings for the students; and
- any other materials which are provided to on-campus students.
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Centre for Learning and Development

**c.- Communicating with the Partner**

Once the Blackboard site/teaching materials have been sent to the partner institution and you have been informed of the name and contact details of the staff member who will be working with you, it is sound practice for you to contact the staff member so you can discuss with him/her aspects of the unit and how it might be delivered in the offshore setting. The initial discussions with the teaching staff member should cover such topics as:

- whether or not the staff member has completed the required induction to teaching at ECU, i.e. PDC111 and PDC 112;
- the overall scope of the unit and the learning outcomes sought;
- the teaching materials you have provided and the purposes they serve;
- any differences to the unit and materials this semester compared to last semester (in instances where the staff member has previously taught the unit);
- the assessments in the course, the deliverables and when they are due;
- how you would like the staff member to deliver the course, for example, how the various sessions might be run;
- the importance of being alert to plagiarism and academic misconduct;
- what extra resources and materials you might like the staff member to provide to make the unit more relevant and applicable to the local context; and
- the Blackboard site for the unit in this location: what access the partner staff member has and what things he/she is expected to do with the site.

It is important to remember that staff at partner institutions are often highly qualified and experienced lecturers, many holding positions at public universities in their home countries. It is therefore important that ECU staff regard staff in offshore institutions as partners in the delivery and assessment of our courses. It is also important for academics offshore to feel valued in their relationship with ECU staff and the University. Wherever possible, collaborate with partner staff involved in delivery of the unit. They can often contribute ideas and resources that help localise the curriculum and make it more relevant to their students. Their input is also useful in internationalising curriculum for the diverse range of on-shore students attending classes on ECU campuses. In this way, transnational programs can help achieve a better outcome for all ECU students.

**d.- Localising the Content**

Whilst it is important to ensure the equivalence of courses delivered on-campus and off-campus, in the interests of the learners and their learning, Unit Coordinators should look for ways to localise the curriculum to better meet the needs of the offshore students.

Localising the curriculum refers to the process of taking the learning resources and learning activities created for the Australian context, and incorporating examples and instances that can make the learning more meaningful and more relevant. Localisation involves retaining the same underlying principles and concepts while using different examples to illustrate and describe them. There are a number of strategies that can be used to localise a curriculum for offshore delivery.

It is important to guide your partner offshore teacher in how you would like the unit materials you have provided to be used. They should be encouraged to use local examples in lectures and workshops. Some offshore teachers expect that they must deliver your unit exactly how it is delivered and that they have no room to improvise or add their own thoughts and opinions.

It is important to provide the local lecturer with a clear understanding of what you would like him/her to do. Some guidelines you may provide him/her might be:
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- don’t always read the lecture slides word for word but to use local examples where possible and practical;
- include images and examples from local contexts in the lecture slides where possible;
- add local examples and links to the Blackboard site;
- add his/her own comments and notes to students in the Blackboard site; and
- use the Discussion Board in the Blackboard site to answer frequently asked questions.

It is also important to ensure the examination is localised, if this is appropriate. Where possible, local examples make better questions than those of a generic nature.

e.- Ongoing Communications

Once the teaching period is underway, it is important to maintain regular contact with your offshore teacher to ensure the unit is being delivered appropriately. Things you need to do include:

- responding to emails in a timely fashion; and
- proactively emailing the offshore teacher to see if there are any issues or need to communicate.

If issues do arise, you should discuss these with your HOS or the relevant Associate Dean International so they can be resolved in a timely fashion.

3. Moderating Assessments

Moderation refers to the processes used to ensure equivalence in outcomes across different instances of unit offerings. For moderation to be successful, it is important to address important processes in the development and delivery of the learning in the offshore location.

Effective moderation is based on developing and applying a shared understanding of the assessment requirements and standards against which student performance is to be judged. Unit Coordinators can help to develop a common understanding with their offshore teacher by:

- having detailed discussions about the assessment tasks;
- providing clear and detailed marking keys; and
- doing some cross-marking with the offshore staff member ahead of actual marking.

a.- Assessment 1 and Assessment 2

When the first assessment has been submitted by all students, the partner staff will mark all assignments at the offshore campus. A copy of 8 scripts (more if there is a large class) across the various grades will be sent to the ECU Partnerships Officer, together with a list of all students and the marks given. These are then sent through to the Unit Coordinator. In the meantime, the offshore staff member will return the marked papers to the students with the comments and a grade (within 10 days). Students are made aware that their initial result is provisional and some marks may be changed by the moderation process.
You are required to mark the sample scripts and to enter both your marks and the offshore teacher marks into the moderation report template (Page 6). If you feel that the marking of the offshore teacher is too harsh or lenient, you can apply a scaling to all the marks. It is expected moderation will be completed within 10 days of receiving the scripts.

The ECU Unit Coordinator is then required to send a copy of the Unit Moderation Report, and the adjusted marks, to the offshore teacher to show the outcomes and to address any issues. This feedback is very important because it can address problems early.

b.- The Examination/Major Assessment

As part of the quality assurance process, ECU marks all the final examination scripts. The partner staff bundle the scripts immediately after the exam and send them to the ECUI Partnerships Officer who immediately will send them to the ECU Unit Coordinator.

ECU staff are expected to mark examinations in the same timeframe as for on campus, i.e. within 5 working days. This is really important to enable students’ marks to be processed.

Once the examinations have been marked, the Unit Coordinator receives the Marks Recording Spreadsheet (MRS) for the offshore cohort with the assessments included. The Unit Coordinator checks the assessments marks are accurate and enters the examination marks and signs off on the final marks and submits the MRS.

c.- The Moderation Report

The final task in the moderation process is to complete the Moderation Report to include the examination feedback and the overall marks spread.

This form then needs to be submitted to the ECUI Partnerships Officer, The Head of School and Course Coordinator. It is a very important component of the ECU quality process.
# Unit Moderation Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Original Mark</th>
<th>Moderated Mark</th>
<th>Moderation Comments (ie. equivalence observed and changes made to assessment marks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments will include brief statements concerning:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• the consistency of marking standards with expectations;</td>
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<td>• scaling to be made to all marks;</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• issues which need to be addressed; and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• recommendations for change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Assessment 1
(To be completed immediately after assessment 1 is complete and form, with only this section completed, returned to offshore tutor and ECUI Partnerships Services Officer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Original Mark</th>
<th>Moderated Mark</th>
<th>Moderation Comments (ie. equivalence observed and changes made to assessment marks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>• issues which need to be addressed; and</td>
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<td>• recommendations for change.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Assessment 2
(If practical, to be completed immediately after assessment 2 is complete and revised form returned to offshore tutor and ECUI Partnerships Services Officer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Original Mark</th>
<th>Moderated Mark</th>
<th>Moderation Comments (ie. equivalence observed and changes made to assessment marks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• issues which need to be addressed; and</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• recommendations for change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Examination/Major Assessment Performance
(to be completed immediately after examination/final assessment has been marked and this revised form, complete with assessment descriptions above, sent to Course Coordinator, Head of School and ECUI Partnership Services Officer)

Comments will include:
- discussion of questions done well and questions done poorly,
- comments relating to student performances compared to assignments
- comments and recommendations on how to address issues for next time

## Final Distribution of Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final % Distribution of Grades</th>
<th>N &amp; I</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>HD</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offshore students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Onshore students</td>
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</table>

Signed (Unit Coordinator)  

Date
4. Offshore Visits

a.- Academic Models of Offshore Delivery

When ECU courses are taught offshore, there are several different models used:

Visit Model:

ECU lecturer travels to the offshore location at the commencement of the semester and deliver the lectures to the enrolled students in an intensive program. The ECU lecturer then returns to ECU and the students are guided by a local tutor who provides the workshops across the semester and marks the assessments. The ECU lecturer moderates the assessments marked offshore. The final assessment/exam scripts are marked onshore by ECU.

Non-visit Model:

ECU provides the learning materials to the offshore partner who organises for a local teacher to deliver the course. The local teacher also marks the assessments. The ECU lecturer guides the local teacher and moderates the assessments marked offshore as well as marking the final assessment/exam scripts onshore.

It is important when you are allocated the role of coordinating the teaching of an offshore unit for you to familiarise yourself with the academic model that is being used.

b.- Academic Activities

If your academic model includes a visit to the offshore location, it is important to establish with the Head of School, what your specific roles and responsibilities may be. When planning and conducting the offshore visit, there are a number of things to organise and coordinate. The following items suggest strategies you can use to assist in the organisation of the offshore visit.

- Communicating with the ECUI Client Manager to plan the precise dates when you will need to visit the offshore location. This will have to be organised in conjunction with the partner institute.
- Determining the activities you will be required to undertake. In some instances staff travel offshore to deliver an intensive lecture program across a weekend. In other instances staff members deliver one or two lectures and workshops across a day or two and network with the partner teaching staff during the visit.
- Often the partner institute will ask the lecturer if they would be happy to do a presentation on some research or discipline related topic to staff. In some instances ECU staff present public seminars as part of the marketing and engagement activities of the partner.

c.- Organising International Travel

Organising your international travel can be quite complex. Activities to consider in the planning stage include:

- obtaining a visa, if the country being visited requires one;
- using the Travel Approval System to gain permission to travel;
- using the University Travel Agents to book the travel and accommodation;
- finding out if vaccinations are needed;
- ensuring you have a university credit card to pay for all incidental costs e.g. taxis, meals (staff must ensure they keep all receipts to reconcile the credit card account);
- finding out the location of your hotel and how to get there from the airport;
- finding the address of the partner institution and the best modes of transport (and times taken) for the journey from the hotel; and
- finding out about places to eat at and visit during your stay.
d.- Travelling in Offshore Locations

Depending on the country you find yourself teaching in, there can be some traps for the novice traveller. When travelling to a new country, it is very important that you investigate any local customs and traditions that may need to be known. For example:

- **Payment for items.** Different countries have different preferred methods of payment. In some countries everything can be put on a credit card, in others, it is best to have cash and coins for incidental items.
- **Social customs.** In the various countries where ECU staff travel, there are many and varied customs which are helpful to know. For example, when to shake hands, when not, when to look someone in the eye and when not.
- **Religious Festivals.** When planning your trip, you will need to know if there are any religious festivals or holidays which may interrupt the teaching program at that time.
- **Politics and Government.** There are many different forms of government and politics in the countries we visit. It is important to know the form of government in the country you are travelling to and what forms of freedoms and restrictions are in place.
- **Security and Safety.** Some offshore locations may not be as secure and safe as others. Knowing what to expect and when/where to be vigilant is very important in such settings.

e.- Teaching in Offshore Locations

Knowing the local customs and traditions can be very useful to save embarrassment and potential problems when delivering programs in offshore locations. Some teaching methods which work well in Australia are less useful in some offshore locations. Some problems which staff have reported include:

- **Cultural Issues.** In some countries students are extremely respectful of their university teachers whom they see as all-knowing and infallible. This often discourages students from questioning and discussing topics which may challenge their teacher’s views.
- **Religious Issues.** It can be quite challenging when teaching for the first time in a country where there are different religious beliefs. Knowing what is acceptable to discuss or knowing when to stop teaching for prayers is important, so as not to cause offense.
- **Gender issues.** Some countries do not have the same equalities in terms of gender roles and responsibilities. This can be troubling when first observed and teachers need to know how to respond and operate when teaching in such settings, e.g. setting up student groups or holding class discussions.
- **Politics and Government.** In Australia, lecturers and students can be quite open and candid in the comments they pass on Government and political figures. This will not always be the case in the countries you may visit. It is important to know and understand the political context of the country in which you will be teaching.

ECU offers a range of country-specific materials to ECU staff travelling to teach offshore. The Professional Development Course PDC 115: Transnational Teaching at ECU, run by the Centre for Learning and Development, also provides staff with invaluable information to ensure effective transnational teaching and learning how to avoid hidden traps. In addition, talking to others involved in offshore teaching can be a useful way to prepare for your offshore teaching and travel.
5. The Final Touches

a.- Deferred and Supplementary Assessments

At the end of the teaching period, there are still some matters to be completed. As with on-campus students, there may be some deferred examinations or supplementary examinations which will need to be marked. These must be completed quickly and efficiently to enable the students’ progress to be maintained. A time limit of 4 weeks is set for this task.

b.- Unit and Teaching Evaluation Instrument (UTEI)

The UTEI is conducted among students in all offshore units to enable you to reflect on your teaching. The Unit Coordinator will see the results of the UTEI process for their offshore unit and offshore teacher. As Unit Coordinator, you are required, within 4 weeks of the end of the teaching period, to:

- review the outcomes for the unit and teaching evaluations;
- share the UTEI data with your offshore teacher and discuss any issues that are revealed; and
- decide if there are any actions that need to be taken in relation to the unit in the offshore location and the performance of the offshore teacher.

c.- The Unit Report

At the end of each year, Unit Coordinators are required to provide a Unit Report to the Course Coordinator that will form part of the Annual Course Report. If you find there are issues that have arisen in the delivery of your offshore unit, these should be noted and included in the information in the annual Unit Report. Off course, if there are pressing issues, these will need to be dealt with earlier.

6. Important Documents

ECU Assessment Policy

ECU e-Learning Policy

ECU Moderation Policy

Internationlisation of the Curriculum at ECU

Course and Unit Review Policy
## 7. Offshore Teaching: Coordination Roles and Responsibilities Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>ECUI</th>
<th>HOS or Nominee</th>
<th>Unit Coordinator</th>
<th>Course Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Ahead of time**             | 1. Develop teaching schedule in accordance with requirements of the relevant agreement  
2. Confirm what units are to run this teaching period  
3. Ensure CUOS reflects (entered by the School Officer) this teaching schedule | 1. Approve course for teaching offshore  
2. Approve units to be delivered offshore  
3. Approve the CC & UC to be involved in offshore delivery  
4. Approve offshore teachers for all units | | |
| **Up to 4 weeks before teaching period starts** | 4. Inform ECU staff of roles and responsibilities  
5. Confirm all offshore staff have received ECU induction  
6. Confirm all necessary materials have been sent  
7. Confirm all Blackboard sites are available  
8. Confirm course materials are localised  
9. Send unit materials to partner by due date | | 1. Send unit materials to ECU by due date  
2. Create Blackboard site for offshore delivery  
3. Communicate with offshore teacher to ensure understanding of unit and delivery  
4. Ensure offshore teacher has localised the content where appropriate | |
| **During teaching period**    | 10. Facilitate and ensure moderation of workflow between offshore teacher and unit coordinator occurs in a timely manner  
11. Facilitate the resolution of issues for offshore program | 5. Contact and respond to any communications from the offshore teacher in a timely fashion  
6. Moderate all assessments in a timely fashion and return outcomes to offshore teacher  
7. Set exam(s) for offshore unit with input from offshore teacher | | |
| **Up to 2 weeks after teaching period** | | 8. Mark all exam papers/final assessments  
9. Write Moderation Report and submit to Course Coordinator, ECU & HOS  
10. Submit marks into MRS | | |
| **Up to 4 weeks after teaching period** | 12. Confirm all exams/final assessments have been marked and results submitted  
13. Confirm all UTEI Reports have been distributed to offshore staff  
14. Confirm all Moderation Reports have been received and sent to partner | | 11. Mark deferred exams  
12. Review the UTEI of offshore teacher and communicate findings back to teacher  
13. Report key issues to Course Coordinator for each unit | |
| **End of Year**               | 15. Ensure Annual Course-Report is stored in TRIM | 5. Endorse Annual Course Report and send to ADTL & ECU | | 1. Write Annual Course Report (with moderation) and submit to Head of School |
The Checklist below provides a useful means for a staff member to plan and organise their teaching across a teaching period. It can be used to store important information and to plan when tasks need to be completed.

Unit ___________________________ Offshore Location ___________________________

Teaching Commences _______________ Teaching Finishes ___________________________

Offshore Teacher ___________________ Email ______________________________________

ECUI Partnership Officer______________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackboard site established for offshore students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Communication with offshore teaching staff to discuss unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offshore teacher localised unit materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with offshore teacher to discuss marking of assessment 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate assessment 1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderation feedback from Assessment 1 provided to offshore teacher</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with offshore teacher to discuss marking of assessment 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate assessment 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderation feedback from Assessment 2 provided to offshore teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss examination details with offshore teacher, localised content</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan offshore visit dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan offshore visit activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organise travel arrangements (travel approval, flights, hotel, visa, vaccine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review country specific details from ECUI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark all examination papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete and submit Marks Recording Spreadsheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete and send Unit Moderation Report to ECUI, HOS, offshore teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss UTEI outcomes with offshore teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Include issues in Unit Report for Course Coordinator</td>
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