Unit Coordinator Handbook

An introduction to Unit Coordination at ECU
Introduction

The Unit Coordinator is part of the academic leadership team at Edith Cowan University. As the Unit Coordinator you are responsible for ensuring the integrity, relevance and currency of the unit in relation to both documentation and delivery. The manner in which you carry out this role will impact on the quality of teaching and learning within your unit and will directly influence the student experience at ECU.

This handbook is designed to assist you with functional aspects of your role as Unit Coordinator and to offer insight into the policies and principles which underpin effective unit coordination at ECU. The handbook is further intended to help you deal with some of the challenges that inevitably arise, although we highly recommend that you discuss such matters with your Course Coordinator in the first instance.

This book is divided into seven sections, beginning with strategic requirements relating to your unit such as the Unit Outline and Unit Offering, followed by suggestions relating to delivery of your unit such as the Unit Plan document, administration tasks and resourcing. Your responsibilities in relation to managing staff, assessments and submission of final grades are outlined. The final section discusses the importance of reviewing your unit for continuous improvement.

(Revised October 2012)
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**Time frames for key activities**

A number of the activities that you perform need to be completed within specific time frames, to align with University policy and procedures. This section will provide you with some guidelines to assist your planning and preparation.

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| 4 weeks prior to the teaching period | € Review the Unit Outline on CMS.  
€ Submit changes to the Unit Outline for enrolment approval.  
€ Check CUOS Unit Offering details are correct.  
€ Plan staffing resources.  
€ Check bookshop resources / texts. |
| 3 weeks prior to the teaching period | € Finalise teaching content and assessment tasks.  
€ Write/update Unit Plan document. Check with your Faculty to ensure you are using the current version.  
€ If using an examination, nominate submitter, reviewer and enter other details on CUOS.  
€ Review library resources, including closed reserve and eReserve lists.  
€ Set up Blackboard site and upload Unit Outline and Unit Plan. |
| 2 weeks prior to the teaching period | € Check class numbers on Callista Connect.  
€ Confirm class times, rooms and staffing.  
€ Meet with staff to discuss unit requirements, assessment tasks, general teaching, marking, class lists and resources.  
€ Blackboard site checks:  
  o Setup is complete,  
  o Resources have been uploaded and updated,  
  o Adaptive release dates are correct,  
  o Welcome announcement is uploaded,  
  o Unit Plan and Unit Outlines are current and available,  
€ Students may be contacting you for special permissions – such as class changes, permission to waive pre-requisite units and personal circumstances that require assistance and support. |
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| 1 week prior to the teaching period        | € Download class lists from Callista Connect – these may change and should ideally be downloaded again on the first day of class.  
€ Distribute class lists to staff.  
€ Confirm staff have all required resources and equipment.  
€ Obtain and distribute spare copies of the Unit Plan to all teaching staff (original is available to students via the Blackboard site) for your unit.  
€ Ensure casual/sessional staff contracts are being prepared and signed.  
€ Be available to answer student enquiries. |
| During the teaching period                 | € Address student issues, class changes and late enrolments.  
€ Arrange staff meetings if required and keep in touch via email or informal chats.  
€ By week 3, advise Course Coordinator/Faculty Support Office of all non-attending students and any students who may be considered to be ‘At Risk’.  
€ Advise students of the Census Dates and Academic Penalty withdrawal dates.  
€ Contact Learning Advisors if special support is required.  
€ Advise students of the Faculty Learning Advisor services which are available.  
€ Check student wellbeing, both through discussions with staff and directly with students.  
€ Establish marking moderation resources and/or meetings.  
€ Ensure staff are completing marking and providing feedback within required timeframes. |
| Towards the end of the teaching period     | € If using an examination, submit both exam and deferred exam on CUOS.  
€ Encourage students to complete UTEI’s.  
€ Find out dates for Board of Examiners meeting/s.  
€ Moderate marking.  
€ Set due dates for final grades submission by staff.  
€ Set an Informal Review date for students to discuss marks and grades at the end of semester if they are unhappy with their final results. This is stage 1 of the formal Appeal Process. |
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| **After the teaching period** | € Upload final grades. Check with your Course Coordinator to find out if you need to prepare a Marks Recording Spreadsheet or whether you finalise your grades in Gradebook on Blackboard.  
€ Review the Unit Outline in CMS and revise if necessary.  
€ Collect samples of student work and obtain permission to use.  
€ Check Unit offering details for next teaching period.  
€ Discuss future teaching opportunities with staff.  
€ Conduct Informal Reviews with students.  
€ Review unit content and plan any required changes for next semester. |
All units offered at ECU have outlines in the Course Management System (CMS). The Unit Outline is a binding contract between ECU and the student which outlines how the unit will be taught. As a Unit Coordinator, you are responsible for ensuring that all elements of the unit delivery follow the requirements laid out in the official enrolment-approved Unit Outline as this is a legal contractual document. You are also responsible for ensuring that the Unit Outline is distributed to all students, is available on Blackboard and is revised at the end of the semester.

You will need access to CMS to get copies of Unit Outline, amend existing ones or create outlines for new units. Your Faculty Teaching and Learning office can grant you read-only access to the CMS, but you will need to complete CMS training before being given editorial access to your units. Training availability and booking can be made by logging into the Staff Portal > Staff Kiosk > HR tab > Professional Development.

The Unit Outline is downloaded from CMS as a Word document. On CMS there may be several versions of a Unit Outline, for example, an archived version used previously, the enrolment approved version currently in use, or a working copy of the Unit Outline with changes yet to be approved. The enrolment-approved version is the one that should be downloaded and provided to students.

The Unit Outline should contain:

- a unit description (up to 150 words, used to inform others about the unit);
- learning outcomes (descriptions of what students are expected to learn in the unit);
- content (the topics and information that underpin the unit);
- graduate attributes;
- teaching approaches (such as lectures, workshops, laboratories and tutorials);
- how the unit will be assessed (number and type of assessments to be undertaken, adhering to the correct grading schema);
- whether there are any special requirements for passing (such as a pass in the examination);
- textbooks required by students when studying the unit; and
- any other reference materials.

Making changes to the Unit Outline

Changes to the Unit Outline must be submitted to the Faculty. Your Faculty Advisor Academic Programs can advise you in more detail about changes to your Unit Outline. Changes to unit outline documents are generally not implemented during a teaching period. Please emphasise with sessional colleagues that they cannot make any independent changes to the Unit Outline as this document is contractually binding on ECU. If they wish to make suggestions for Unit Outline amendments these should be collated by the Unit Coordinator and implemented after the teaching period.
Decisions about the extent of revision required for a unit are informed by:

- feedback from staff;
- feedback from students (including through UTEI’s);
- changes within the discipline area or profession;
- changes to resources - including texts, references, journals, websites.

**What changes can be made in CMS?**

There are three categories of change that can be made to your unit outline in CMS. The most frequent changes that a Unit Coordinator needs to consider are minor changes, called Small Updates. If you wish to make a Significant Amendment to a unit, or create a Replacement Version of a unit, you should contact your Faculty Advisor Academic Programs who will refer you to the appropriate person for authorisation of changes.

**Small Update (minor change) involves changes to:**

- unit content - by less than 20%;
- mode of delivery;
- teaching and learning processes;
- texts;
- significant references;
- journals;
- websites;
- assessments;
- name and details of the Unit Coordinator.

**Significant Amendment (new version) involves changes to:**

- title (minor corrections only such as typographical errors);
- description (which must not affect the ASCED code);
- unit content - within a range of 20% to 50%;
- learning outcomes – by less than 25%;
- pre-requisites;
- graduate attributes.

**Replacement Version (new code) involves changes to:**

- ASCED code of an existing unit;
- credit points of an existing unit;
- unit content - by more than 50%;
- learning outcomes - by more than 25%.
How to make changes to your Unit Outline

1. Make a working copy of a unit for minor changes:
   - login to CMS [http://cms.ecu.edu.au];
   - locate the enrolment approved version of the unit using the top menu;
   - click new unit version from side menu;
   - choose type of revision (minor change, new version or archive), reason, click new version;
   - a working copy is generated that can be edited.

2. Making minor changes:
   - login to CMS [http://cms.ecu.edu.au];
   - bring up the working copy of the unit from the main CMS menu;
   - from the menu bar on the left, choose the fields to be changed, such as content or text;
   - the current entries show, make the changes;
   - click update.

3. Submit changes for School approval:
   - when all changes have been made, choose Approve Unit from the left menu bar;
   - set the new status to pending school;
   - add comments to guide the approver;
   - set the date from when the changes are to be made effective;
   - click update.

When should changes be made?

Minor changes, new versions and new codes required for significant changes must be enrolment approved by the Faculty. Your Faculty Teaching and Learning Office will be able to give you specific deadlines for getting enrolment approval.

Always contact your Teaching & Learning Office for exact dates. New Versions or New Codes take considerably longer time frames and need to be carefully supported by the Course Coordinator, Program Director and Head of School.

You may wish to refer to the Course and Unit Approval Policy for specific information about unit and course approvals and timing.
(http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/tmp/ac086.pdf)
Most unit management processes are now carried out through the Courses and Unit Offerings System (CUOS). CUOS manages unit offerings, course offerings, timetable requirements, exam requirements, UTEI data collection and integrates with a number of other systems used by ECU such as Blackboard, SIMO, Callista and CMS.

**Accessing CUOS**

If you require access to CUOS, you should email Callista Support (callista@ecu.edu.au) and request access. You will need to advise them of the modules that you require access to and whether you require read-only or update privileges. Approval from your Faculty Manager is required.

You can access CUOS from left-hand side of your Staff Portal. You may need to add the link to your "Easy Logins" by clicking on the 'edit pencil' icon next to the "Easy Logins" title. This will allow you to add the application to your list.

**Making Changes to Unit Offerings**

As Unit Coordinator you are responsible for ensuring that Unit Offering details in CUOS are correct. This is vital because information for students is taken directly from CUOS.

Unit Offering details include when and where a unit will be offered, such as Summer School, Term 1, Trimester 1, on-campus at Joondalup, Mt Lawley or Bunbury, or off-campus. These unit offering details should match the information contained in the Unit Plan.

Units will be rolled over from one teaching period to the next. One of your main functions will be to check and update this rolled over data. You can make changes to unit offerings through CUOS as follows:

1. On the Units tab click New.
2. Enter the information relating to the new offering. Click Create.
3. Upon clicking Create the Unit Coordinator and Grading Schema information will automatically be populated, this information coming directly from CMS.

**If a unit is entered in error** it is not currently possible to delete it directly in CUOS. You will need to contact the Callista (Student Systems) Support team for assistance. In the meantime, remove the tick from the 'Offered' checkbox to stop the unit being available for use.
Resources to assist you with CUOS are available on the ECU Intranet.

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**Strategic policies relating to unit offerings**

**Course approval and review**

ECU has a very comprehensive system for the approval and review of courses and units. This is critical to the statutory and functional requirements of course quality and course consistency. It is important to be aware of the Course and Unit Review Policy, available at [http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000350](http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000350).
Unit Coordinators are responsible for preparing a Unit Plan for every unit. The Unit Plan provides students with operational information about how the unit is being offered and conducted.

The Unit Plan, along with the Unit Outline should be distributed and explained to students in the first contact session of the semester. An electronic copy of the Unit Plan and Unit Outline should be made available on Blackboard.

A Unit Plan will typically contain the following information:

A Unit Plan template is available from your Faculty.

**Assessment information in the Unit Plan**

As a Unit Coordinator you have a wide range of assessment choice outside of the traditional examination model. It would be useful to explore alternatives which may be better suited to assessment of the learning outcomes for your unit and which may be more equitable for students with diverse learning styles. Support is available from the Centre for Learning and Development in regard to assessment strategies that align with the directions of the ECU 2012 Undergraduate Curriculum Framework.

Under current policy assessment for each unit must be based on a minimum of two components, two of which are of a different type and at least one assessment item must be of a type that provides an assessment of each individual student’s performance. If you set an exam then students need to be advised of the structure of the exam and provided with sample questions, answers and marking keys but not the contents of the exam.

The turnaround time for assessments is currently ten days or less.

As a general guide, ensure that the Unit Plan assessment information contains:

- guidelines about each assessment task which are clear for all students to understand, including students from different backgrounds;
• detailed marking criteria for each assessment task, with clear standards of performance;
• an explanation of Learning Outcomes and Graduate Attributes being assessed;
• submission information - where to submit, whether electronic submission or hard copy submission is required, coversheets, referencing requirements;
• due dates and times for all assessment tasks;
• information about the examination - if there is to be one, whether it will be open or closed book;
• a statement on how each student’s final grade is determined – for instance, the total of the marks for all unit assessment items; or whether students must pass one component (regardless of the overall mark) in order to pass the unit.

Scholarship of teaching and learning

You are encouraged to visit our Better Teaching Resources (http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/learning/for-academic-staff/curriculum-2012-resources) Apart from many excellent resources dealing with teaching and learning there are resources available related to unit design.

Strategic policies relating to unit plans

The University has a policy that specifically covers the assessment process. It provides guidelines on assessment tasks, submission, deferrals, examinations and grading schema. New staff should read this document before creating unit plans and before speaking to students about assessments in units and courses. The Assessment Policy can be located at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=000000028.

The University regards academic misconduct of any form as unacceptable. The penalties for an act of academic misconduct depend on the severity of the misconduct but can include exclusion from the course or suspension from the University. For further information about dealing with academic misconduct, please refer to the Academic Misconduct Rules (Students) at: http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/governance_services/uni_rules.html.
Unit Delivery & Administration

As Unit Coordinator you may be responsible for a unit delivered off-shore or off-campus by external tutors. It is important to make an effort to stay in touch with off-shore and off-campus staff, to ensure they receive the support they require and to ensure the quality and consistency of unit delivery. Be aware that these units will require some form of moderation. Please see [http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/learning/for-academic-staff/guides-handbooks-and-tip-sheets](http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/learning/for-academic-staff/guides-handbooks-and-tip-sheets)

Schools often share courses and units with the Faculty for Regional and Professional Studies, the ECU South West campus, in Bunbury. As Unit Coordinator, if your unit is offered at our Faculty for Regional and Professional Studies, you must ensure you coordinate the delivery of your unit with the Regional Coordinator.

To assist you with these alternative modes of delivery, you should try to ensure the following:

- timely distribution of course and unit materials;
- discussion of all aspects of the teaching and learning program prior to delivery;
- all staff are aware of ECU rules and policies associated with learning and teaching, such as plagiarism, assessment procedures and student appeals;
- moderating of marking and provision of moderated examples to staff to aid consistency;
- accurate marking records are maintained by all staff.

Blackboard

All units at ECU must have a Blackboard site. The Blackboard site can be used for student interactions relating to the unit and for placing copies of unit materials online. The Blackboard site facilitates discussions between students, allows staff to provide support to students between class times and facilitates the exchange of materials and assessment submission.

When students and staff login to Blackboard they will see the units they are enrolled in listed on the right-hand side of their screen. This list provides links to Blackboard sites for each unit. You can access Blackboard from your Staff Portal.

It is critical that the Unit Outline on Blackboard is the same as the current CMS approved version. You are encouraged to explore Blackboard’s many other uses, including discussion boards, wikis, online blog areas, announcement pages and access to Grade Centre. Using Blackboard can greatly improve student engagement and ultimately improve your UTEIs.

The basic information that should be available on your unit’s Blackboard site is:

- the Unit Outline and Unit Plan;
- assignment descriptions and resources;
- reading lists and links to relevant Web sites;
- discussion boards to facilitate learner interactions.

Additional items that may be provided include:

- examples of past assignments;
- sample exam papers;
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Centre for Learning and Development

- copies of lecture slides and presentations;
- communication tools such as wikis, blogs, podcasts;
- electronic assignment submission areas;
- discussion areas for group work teams;
- displays of student work;
- student surveys.

It is important to check access/availability dates are correct when uploading resources for students or when creating assessment submission areas. If these are incorrect, students may not have access to the materials or assignment submission areas.

The ECU Centre for Learning and Development has an eLearning Assist team who can assist you with operating your Blackboard site. They can be contacted during regular working hours on 6304 2777. Your Administrative Support Officer is responsible for rolling over your Blackboard site at the end of each teaching period.

**Timetables**

The [Timetable Office](#) coordinates the timetable for delivery of all on-campus units at ECU. Each School has a Timetable Coordinator who provides the Timetable Office with information regarding the scheduling of classes and the constructing of a teaching timetable. Information they provide includes preferred day, time and room; delivery methods; room and equipment requirements.

As Unit Coordinator, you must advise your School Timetable Coordinator of your delivery requirements well in advance of the teaching period. There are no guarantees.

Once the timetable for a unit has been finalized, the class times and days will be entered into Callista so that students can access and enrol into a unit via SIMO. Staff can view timetable information via Callista Connect from the Staff Portal. Exam timetabling is coordinated by the Assessments Office.

**Class lists**

Class Lists are downloaded via Callista Connect. Unit Coordinators need to monitor student enrolment into the unit during the enrolment period, to ensure there are adequate numbers of teaching staff available at the commencement of the teaching period.

**Rooming**

Prior to commencement of teaching, colleagues should visit their classroom and ensure they are familiar and comfortable with use of the equipment. Those wishing to use laptops would be advised to purchase their own cable to make the connection to the plug on the wall.

Rooms are allocated to educators in hourly slots, however, teaching sessions only last 45mins in an hour. Due to management issues such as distribution...
of materials, unit announcements and student questions, you may find the actual delivery
time is actually closer to 35 minutes in an hour. As a Unit Coordinator it is important that this
information is fully understood by all new staff.

Rooms must always be left set up for the next class. If you move desks and chairs, always
be sure to put them back for the next class and to leave the room in a tidy condition with
boards cleaned. Rooms must be vacated 15 minutes prior to the end of your session to allow
time for the next educator to set up.

**Audiovisual equipment**

Most teaching spaces at ECU are configured to enable the educator to use technology in the
delivery of lessons. Equipment in teaching spaces typically includes:

- an data projector;
- Internet connectivity;
- DVD player;
- whiteboard.

To use the data projector, staff must take a laptop computer and a cable to make the
connection. The ECU wireless mesh can be used to gain Internet connectivity.

Staff should contact Multimedia Resources if experiencing a problem in a room. Multimedia
Resources are available on all campuses. If you wish too borrow equipment then visit:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ECU Multi Media Resources</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mt Lawley Campus</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:itservicedesk@ecu.edu.au">itservicedesk@ecu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 6304 6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building:</strong> eLab, Building 10.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joondalup Campus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:itservicedesk@ecu.edu.au">itservicedesk@ecu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 6304 6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building:</strong> eLab, Building 31.233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South West Campus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:itservicedesk@ecu.edu.au">itservicedesk@ecu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 6304 6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building:</strong> Library, Building 3.101E</td>
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**Control Box** - The control box sits in the corner of the room. Typical configurations include a DVD player and sound system.

**RGB connection** - Use a cable to connect the laptop into the RGB connection (the left socket in this picture). You can also connect sound and Internet. Wireless internet is available in all rooms.

**Turning Projector on** - Press the red ON button to turn the projector on. Press the green button (several times) to select the correct data source e.g. computer or DVD.

### Library

Ensure well in advance that the library has copies of texts and core readings for your unit. You also need to ensure that all unit references are in the library and available from the Library’s Closed Reserve and/or eReserve. If you wish to place readings on eReserve you will need to complete a request form and provide the reading as a PDF. Library staff can assist you with sourcing and scanning documents for use in the Library eReserve. You can find the form and more information on this service at [http://www.ecu.edu.au/library/ereserve/reserve2.html](http://www.ecu.edu.au/library/ereserve/reserve2.html).

### Bookshop

Your School will order required text books through the ECU Bookshop 3 or 4 months ahead of a unit being delivered. If you have changed (or wish to change) your textbook you will need to communicate directly with the bookshop. Be particularly careful that you order the current edition. If you change the textbook, don’t forget to update the Unit Outline in CMS.

The bookshop will usually order textbooks for about 60% of the students who enrol in a course (based on previous experience with students’ purchasing patterns). If you feel that you will need more (or less) you
should inform the bookshop and discuss it with them. The bookshop contact details are available at https://www.ecu.edu.au/centres/facilities-and-services/our-services/bookshop/contact.

**Advanced Standing**

As Unit Coordinator you may be required to assess a student’s application for advanced standing. Students will apply for this recognition of prior learning (RPL) if they have studied a similar unit before or feel they have significant work experience and can already demonstrate the learning outcomes for a unit. Your guideline is that students must be able to demonstrate achievement against at least 70% of the learning outcomes of the unit for which they are applying. It is important to understand that as Unit Coordinator, you are not to sign off on Advanced Standing. This must be done by the Associate Dean Teaching and Learning or Course Coordinator.

Please download and digest the Advanced Standing booklet available at http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/learning/for-academic-staff/guides-handbooks-and-tip-sheets before handling these inquiries.

**Teaching and learning responsibilities**

You are encouraged to visit the ECU Learning Intranet, available from the Staff Portal at www.ecu.edu.au. The teaching and learning responsibilities section outlines important information relating to unit delivery and teaching.

**Strategic policies relating to unit delivery**

Personal data and academic achievements of students are private records, protected by the Privacy Policy. Staff should be aware that student results, study records and personal details must be stored securely and should not be provided to a third party without the student’s consent in writing. A copy of the Privacy Policy is available at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000335.

ECU is committed to ensuring an environment that is safe and free of harassment and discrimination through providing working, teaching and learning processes that support all staff and students. This commitment is formalised in the Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination policy available at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000006.

ECU is also committed to reconciliation and to recognising and respecting Indigenous peoples in our history and place. ECU recognises and respects its continuing association with the traditional custodians of the land upon which its campuses stand and programs operate, and their rights and responsibilities. The Recognising Indigenous Australian People and Country Policy is available at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000332.

ECU recognises that a safe and healthy work environment is conducive to job satisfaction and productivity. The Occupational Safety and Health policy establishes a framework by which the University will operate to proactively prevent injury and harm to all employees, students, visitors and contractors.


Any intellectual property (IP) created by staff or students in the course of ECU activities are covered by this policy. The policy provides guidelines for identification of what constitutes intellectual policy and circumstances where rights can be transferred. A copy of the policy is at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000077.
As a Unit Coordinator you may be required to coordinate staffing resources for your unit. Course Coordinators establish the ‘sessional staff budget’ with the Head of School and Unit Coordinators identify and recommend colleagues for teaching in accordance with budget constraints.

You should always meet with staff under your supervision prior to the commencement of the teaching period. They should be provided with a unit plan, class list, room number/s, a unit timetable and work expectations during this meeting. You should discuss marking and feedback requirements and timeframes; student consultation availability; and other requirements relating to their teaching position. Check that you have current contact details, an email address and that they have access to computing facilities (including logins), learning materials for the unit, building access and other resources required to complete their teaching.

As Unit Coordinator, you are encouraged to include teaching colleagues and sessional staff in Unit design improvements. Strategies to assist you with this include:

- invite feedback on the unit and recommendations for improvement from teaching staff;
- discuss UTEI and other evaluation tool feedback;
- promote professional dialogue on student feedback;
- include staff in course and unit review processes.

Sessional Staffing

It is likely that you will be working with sessional staff, who are integral to the flexibility and social sustainability of the University. It is therefore important to remember that sessional colleagues also work at other universities or in partnership organisations. How we treat colleagues greatly influences our organisational reputation. The University seeks to nurture collegial relationships as part of its social sustainability, engagement and inclusivity agenda.

Try to ensure you are aware of the working cycle of your sessional colleagues, as well as remaining aware of any pending, budget, course or timetable changes. Sessional colleagues often have other employment commitments to schedule around their ECU work, as well as life style and family considerations.

As a Unit Coordinator you have an essential role to play in ensuring that sessional colleagues are welcomed to the University, treated fairly, respectfully and professionally supported. New colleagues are often confronted by complex tasks and need support in gaining an understanding of ECU policies and procedures, as well as accessing relevant resources and services.
As part of the social sustainability agenda it is important that you include colleagues in any collaborative endeavours to improve students’ learning experiences and outcomes. Being perceived as part of a team enhances retention of colleagues.

Over time, established sessional colleagues gather vital corporate knowledge of how the University, Faculty, School and your Program operates. Often we do not fully appreciate the social and corporate capital of a colleague until they leave. Colleagues become important partners in the teaching and learning process. Training new staff involves a great deal of orientation from simply accommodating photocopying codes to CMS training programs. This loss of engagement is counter to the notion of organisational sustainability.

Good teams take time to build, so try to ensure you provide the necessary leadership and explicitly declare their value to other senior colleagues.

**Appointments and Remuneration**

All paper work associated with appointments is normally managed by the School Administrative Officers. You should ensure contracts have been prepared, signed and returned by all sessional staff in a timely manner, to foster good working relations. Late return of contracts equates to late payment. It is a good idea to provide sessional staff a direct contact person in the school for them to liaise with about matters relating to their salary, superannuation and other employment matters.

**Induction, Training and Professional Development**

All new sessional colleagues are required to complete professional development unit PDC111 before or during their first teaching period. Staff will be paid when they attend this and any of the University’s compulsory PDC units. More information about these units is available from the Centre for Learning and Development website, [Roles-based Development Framework](#) information.

Not all tertiary colleagues have formal education or teaching credentials. Therefore, it is appropriate for the University to offer support to assist them to upgrade their personal teaching qualifications. Heads of School retain the power to waive or partially waive the requirements to participate in PDC112, PDC113 or PDC114 if the new colleagues can demonstrate appropriate teaching qualifications, skills or experience. The following units are offered by CLD:
Strategic policies relating to staffing

All staff at ECU are guided by the Code of Conduct framework which aims to provide guidelines for appropriate behavior and to assist staff with addressing ethical issues.

Examinations

ECU uses a consistent procedure for its examinations that all Unit Coordinators need to apply. The Student Services Centre, Assessments Office, manages all aspects of the examination process and provides comprehensive materials on the ECU website to guide Coordinators. The procedure is now entirely online through CUOS.

For each examination a submitter and a reviewer must be nominated. As Unit Coordinator you may choose to be either the submitter or the reviewer. As examinations pass through each stage (submitted, approved, print ready) automatic emails will be generated. In addition to this, for a defined period up until an examination is submitted, the nominated submitter will receive an email to prompt them to submit an exam.

If examinations are used they should be submitted electronically and be at least 25% different to previous examinations. A deferred examination should also be prepared.

In setting the examination paper the Unit Coordinator should ensure that the examination:

- covers the full extent of the course;
- questions are aligned to the course outcomes;
- is error free and there are no ambiguous questions;
- questions can be completed in the allowed time;
- paper recognises the type of exam, such as closed book, open book, restricted open book;
- is supported by a marking guide.

For all examinations students should be provided with:

- the examination form and structure, such as length of the examination, types of questions and mark breakdowns;
- sample questions;
- sample answers and marks.

The Assessments Office manages the examination timetable and examination process. Unit Coordinators should attend the first fifteen minutes of any examination (or be available on the phone) to answer questions and queries. Colleagues employed by the Student Services Centre invigilate examinations.

Completed examination papers can be collected from nominated collection points. These scripts remain the property of ECU and should be kept for 18 months and then disposed of securely. Students can request remarking and can be granted supervised access to their script in case of query.

Students’ progress at ECU is determined by the Faculty Board of Examiners, who meet at the end of each semester and rule on student results and their subsequent status.
Marking and feedback

Students must be assigned a mark for each assessment task they complete according to the Grading Schema and the marking criteria indicated in the Unit Outline. There must be sufficient feedback provided to the student to be able to justify the mark that has been given. It is not uncommon for marks to be queried by students and adjusted. If a student queries their mark for an assessment, it is a good idea to consult with a colleague or another member of the teaching staff for the unit, to obtain another opinion. Remember, a copy of any feedback should be retained by the lecturer, just in case a student wishes to question the mark or their final grade in an appeal.

All staff are responsible for keeping accurate records of all assessment results, including marks, for all their students. You should refer to the retention and disposal schedule available on the Office of Governance Services, Records and Archives website, for information relating to how long student assessment records should be retained. These records should be kept confidential, except for legitimate University purposes and stored in accordance with the University Records Management policy at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000055.

At the end of a teaching period, each student should be assigned a final grade for their unit studies.

Moderation

As the Unit Coordinator you are responsible for ensuring that assessment is fair, valid, consistent, reliable and equivalent to others in that assessment even if taught on another campus. This involves more than just marking then reviewing allocated grades as this does not guarantee quality assessment.

ECU policies for Moderation of Assessment, Assessment and Course and Unit Review guide the process of moderation for all units offered outlining specific procedures for both multiple markers and managed courses.

Moderation of assessment MUST be used
• whenever more than one person marks an assessment item in a unit; and
• for units delivered off-shore in ECU managed courses (those delivered by ECU partners).

As the Unit Coordinator of a managed course (delivered off-shore), you are expected to provide the partner institution with marking keys. You are expected to remark 10% of enrolments (at least 8 marked samples) from each grade of each assessment item within 10 working days of receiving the sample assessment. You are also expected to complete the Assessment Moderation Report using the ECU Online Moderation System. See required steps outlined in 4.2 of the Moderation of Assessment and 4.5 (v) of the Assessment policies.

As the Unit Coordinator of an on-shore program, when there is more than one maker, you must use a moderation process to ensure consistency in the marking processes of the different markers.
A “How to Do it” guide is provided in the Curriculum 2012 Resources section of the Learning Intranet via the Staff Portal. You are expected to provide all markers with a sample marking experience for each assessment. This is to develop a shared understanding of the marking standards. Alternatively, the same person marks each question across all papers for a unit but this is not always possible.

Moderation strategies may differ depending on the number of students studying the unit and the number of teaching staff involved. However, the process usually involves collaborative decision-making with all markers about assessment criteria and expectations for grading levels before marking begins. Preliminary sample marking, double marking, cross marking, discussions of standards and avoiding post-hoc adjustment of marks/grades are good practices. As a start, all students and markers should be familiar with and use the marking criteria/keys/rubrics in the Unit Plan.

For double marking, two staff mark the same piece of work submitted for assessment. This can be done quite quickly if the unit coordinator sends a few de-identified assessment items to all markers using scripts from the previous year or as soon as the first few assessments are submitted. You then compare the marking before hosting a real or virtual pre-marking meeting with all markers. If you identify significant differences in marking, it is your responsibility to give timely and sensitive feedback to markers so that standards are applied consistently across the unit. Double marking is often also carried out when a piece of assessment has received a Fail grade. You may request that any assessments to be given a Fail are sent to you (before being given to the student). You can then remark and check the standard. You may also wish to check student work that attains very high marks (before marks are given to the student).

For cross marking, assessments from two staff members are exchanged for marking, e.g. a tutor marks another tutor’s assessments; or a lecturer on one campus marks for the lecturer on another campus and vice versa.

More resources are available in the Better Teaching Resources section of the Learning Intranet via the Staff Portal. Also, an ALTC Learning and Teaching Project (2008-2010) developed the Assessment Moderation Toolkit that provides useful resources relevant to the moderation of fair assessment in all higher education programs.

**Recording marks**

At the end of every teaching period, the Unit Coordinator must produce a marks recording sheet, which lists all students enrolled in the Unit for that teaching period and their respective final grade. This marks recording sheet is then uploaded into Callista (the ECU system where official student records are managed). As Unit Coordinator you must ensure that a mark has been assigned for each student enrolled on the official marks recording spreadsheet.

To assist you with managing this task, you should consider using Gradebook (in Blackboard) to record student marks throughout the semester. Staff can enter the marks for each assessment task into Gradebook as they complete their marking. From Gradebook, the marks (and feedback if you choose) can be distributed to students via the My Grades area in your Blackboard site. In addition to this, at the end of semester, the marks recording sheet can be prepared by downloading the marks information directly from Gradebook. Marks Recording training is available to assist you with this.
Towards the end of the teaching period, contact your School Administration Officer and find out the cut-off date for marks submission. You then need to advise all teaching staff of their due date for completion of marking and final grades. You may wish to incorporate a marking moderation session prior to the marks submission due date. Make sure you allow a few days for last minute adjustments or late assessments.

Before preparing the marks recording sheet, you must ensure all marking has been completed and moderated. You can finalise the marks for all students in Gradebook and then download your marks recording spreadsheet. Alternatively you can download a marks recording spreadsheet for each class and distribute it to each staff member to upload student grades for each class.

Your final marks recording sheet must be submitted to your Head of School (or nominee) who will forward this information to Assessments. Often, your School Administration Officer will collect this information and submit it to the Head of School on your behalf. Assessments then forward this marking information to the Board of Examiners for final approval before submission to Callista records.

If you have any students who have been given permission by the Assessments Office to sit a deferred exam, they should be shown on the marks recording sheet as DE (deferred). Any other students who have been granted extensions should be shown as H (hold).

It is very important to meet all deadlines associated with Marks Submissions so that students can receive their results in time to re-enrol.

If a student’s mark or grade needs to be changed after the Marks recording sheet has been submitted, then you must complete a Results Amendment Form. The Result Amendment Form must be submitted through your Head of School to Assessments.

**Scaling of marks**

It is important that any scaling of student marks is consistent with the requirement to assess students’ work fairly, objectively and consistently and is defensible. It is also crucial that the integrity of the assessment of performance against learning outcomes is not compromised by the imposition of scaling.

If you find it necessary to scale marks at the end of your Unit, you are encouraged to seek advice from the Associate Dean with responsibility for learning and teaching, to assist you with this process. It is recommended that scaling of student marks occurs in statistically valid ways.

Students need to be alerted to the possibility of scaling in the Unit Plan. Students need to be made aware of the nature and purpose of any possible scaling.
Strategic policies relating to assessment

The University has a policy that specifically covers the assessment process. It provides guidelines on assessment tasks, submission, deferrals, examinations and grading schema. New staff should read this document before creating unit plans and before speaking to students about assessments in units and courses. The Assessment Policy can be located at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000028.

A process exists for students who are dissatisfied with a unit mark or grade to appeal that result. Formal procedures for student appeals and grade reviews can be found in the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress rules available at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/governance_services/uni_rules.html.

The University regards academic misconduct of any form as unacceptable. The penalties for an act of academic misconduct depend on the severity of the misconduct but can include exclusion from the course or suspension from the University. For further information about dealing with academic misconduct, please refer to the Academic Misconduct Rules (Students) at http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/governance_services/uni_rules.html.
At the end of a year Unit Coordinators are required to complete a unit review, in conjunction with the Course Coordinator, based on the UTEI data for all offerings of the unit in that year. Unit reviews include:

- a list of the values achieved for the overall unit, lecturers and tutors in the UTEI;
- a discussion of issues that may have impacted on the unit outcomes;
- actions planned to address any sessional colleagues with low tutor evaluations;
- a list of areas identified as needing action (usually from student written comments);
- planned actions for improvement.

**UTEI – Unit and Teaching Evaluation Evaluation Instrument**

Academic colleagues can access UTEI reports via the Staff Portal.

UTEI data is collected through the online administration of the survey to students. Paper forms should be used by exception only. This requires approval from the Pro Vice Chancellor, Teaching and Learning. The Head of School should put a case as to why online UTEI administration is not viable.

An instrument such as the UTEI has two principal purposes. The first is diagnostic, enabling colleagues to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the unit and their teaching. The second is that of monitoring units and their teaching over time.

The UTEI is a standardised three-part questionnaire that provides for:

- unit evaluation of each unit, and within the unit,
- lecturer evaluation of each lecturer;
- tutor evaluation of each tutor.

Thus the UTEI separates the teaching of each unit into two generic components:

- lecturing - organising the content and providing class instruction, such as making clear the standard of the work expected, making the content interesting and engaging;
- tutoring - conducts classes in an encouraging way, supporting student learning, making clear what students are expected to do and learn and also assesses student work providing feedback and guidance.

Each staff member teaching a unit is evaluated either as a lecturer only, a tutor only, or both a lecturer and a tutor. By providing student feedback data on individual units and educators, the UTEI is an important quality tool enabling university colleagues to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning across the University.

Students use a Likert scale to indicate whether they strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree to the various statements about teaching and learning.

Numerical scores of -100, -50, 0, 50 and 100 are given to the responses and results aggregated.
An aggregated satisfaction score of 50 shows on average all students agreed with the statement.

Unit Coordinators should pay close heed to the UTEI results as they are a good health check on a unit’s delivery.

All staff can access their UTEI results from the UTEI link in the Staff Portal.

**Scholarship of teaching and learning**

You are encouraged to visit the Learning Intranet available from the Staff Portal. The scholarship of teaching and learning section outlines important information relating to use of UTEI information in unit design and review.

**Strategic policies relating to UTEI**

This website provides a comprehensive overview of the UTEI process, data and report information at [http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/qatl/utei_system.html](http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/qatl/utei_system.html).
We hope this handbook has provided you with a range of useful information and advice to support you in your Unit Coordination role. This handbook should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the Little Red Book, which is now available online via the Learning Intranet tab on the Staff Portal.

If you have any suggestions for improving the content of this handbook, please email the Centre for Learning and Development cld@ecu.edu.au.