

Teaching in an ECU Transnational Program: A Guide for Tutors



Names and contact details of important ECU staff

Your ECU Academic Colleague	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
Course Coordinator	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
Unit Coordinator	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
Head of School	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
	Name	
	Phone No.	Email
	Name	
	Phone No.	Email

Resources included in your package

"ECU Learning and Teaching Principles": http://www.ecu.edu.au/LDS/directorate/about/principles_teaching.pdf

Referencing Guide: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/pdf/refguide.pdf>

Teaching@ECU: The little red book (2008): http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/pd/ttl/ttl_guide.html

"Groupwork Academic Tip Sheet": <http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/tips/>

"MyECU Academic Tip Sheet": <http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/tips/>

"Plagiarism Academic Tip Sheet": <http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/tips/>

"Tutorials Academic Tip Sheet": <http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/tips/>

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Contents

You and ECU	1	What is a tutorial?	15
You and your students	3	Learning in tutorials and workshops.....	15
What kinds of students study at ECU?.....	3	Reasons for students to work in tutorials and workshops	15
Graduate attributes	3	Summary.....	15
Student responsibilities.....	4	Ways to engage students in learning	16
You and your responsibilities	5	Strategies to engage students in learning.....	16
Learning and teaching principles.....	5	Asking questions	16
Your ECU academic colleague	5	Question stems for encouraging higher order thinking skills.....	17
Teaching staff responsibilities	5	What do effective tutors do?	18
You and your teaching	6	Planning, organising and managing the tutorial	18
Unit Outline.....	6	Seating arrangements	18
Unit Plan.....	6	Reviewing the tutorial.....	18
Online learning.....	6	Monitoring your tutoring	19
Checklist: Teaching in an ECU transnational program .	6	When and how to evaluate your teaching.....	19
You and student assessment	8	Closing the feedback loop	19
The role of assessment in learning and teaching.....	8	Conclusion.....	19
Why use an assignment ‘marking key’?	8	References and further reading	20
Why is feedback important to student learning?.....	8	Reference list.....	20
Giving and receiving effective, constructive feedback	9	Readings: Re student-focused teaching	20
Assignment submission and cover sheet	9	Resources	21
Late assignments	9	Academic Tip Sheets.....	21
Assessment queries	10	Other ECU documents	21
Examination deferral.....	10		
Previous examinations	10		
Assignment checklist	10		
What is plagiarism?	11		
How to help students avoid plagiarism	11		
Checking ownership of work with Turnitin.....	12		
Suspected academic misconduct.....	12		
An awareness of student-focused teaching	13		
Deep and surface learning	13		
How the teacher affects students’ approaches to study.....	14		
Summary.....	14		



Making a Vital Contribution to Student Outcomes

ECU is a progressive and innovative university that is committed to providing high quality learning and teaching experiences for its students. We aim to be recognised nationally and internationally for our learning and teaching excellence. We are a tertiary institution that welcomes students from a wide range of backgrounds and have an enviable reputation for a culture of commitment to our students. The University has an increasingly distinctive academic profile with a particular focus on market-oriented, cross-disciplinary courses and innovative curricula. ECU is seeking to build its reputation as Western Australia's foremost institution for providing vocationally relevant, contemporary courses developed for, and guided by the needs of, the knowledge-based services and professions.

As a tutor teaching in an ECU course, you make a vital contribution to our student outcomes. How you teach, interact with and support students impacts directly on our success as a university and the development and practice of the University's core values of Integrity, Respect, Rational Inquiry and Personal Excellence.

To engage the hearts and minds of students in university education is an important and privileged mission. Please help us to provide the quality learning experiences and outcomes our students deserve.

*Professor Ron Oliver
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)*

Welcome to the ECU Teaching Staff

We welcome you to the ECU teaching staff and value your contribution to our transnational programs.

This booklet, *Teaching in an ECU Transnational Program: A guide for tutors*, aims to support you in your work with ECU students. This resource was developed specifically for ECU teaching staff who are based outside of Australia. We hope tutors who teach in the Asian, African and European continents find the information and 'reflection points' useful in understanding the policies, practices and aims of teaching at ECU.

This resource can be used as a set of 'tutorials' for you to work through before you begin your teaching and as a reference guide for issues which might emerge as you teach. The booklet supplements the wealth of information recorded in *Teaching@ECU: The little red book* (2008) which is also available to you. This booklet focuses on important areas of your work as an ECU tutor, especially: 'assessment', 'plagiarism' and 'student engagement in learning'. These are key teaching priorities for all ECU teaching staff as we work to enable students' learning.

*Associate Professor Glenda Campbell-Evans
Associate Professor Adrienne Kinnear
Project Leaders*



Edith Dircksey Cowan

General information about ECU

Edith Cowan University's origins go back to 1902 when it began as a teaching college. Today it is Western Australia's second largest university with approximately 23,000 students, including in excess of 3,000 students originating from more than 80 countries. Edith Cowan University is located in Perth, Western Australia, a gateway to Asia.

ECU is the only Australian University named after a woman - Edith Dircksey Cowan - Australia's first female Parliamentarian and a fighter for social justice. Edith Cowan also graces the Australian \$50 note.

Edith Dircksey Cowan was born in 1861 at Glengarry near Geraldton. She believed that education was fundamental to tackling the social issues of the day and further, that it was the key to growth, change and improvement. She fought tirelessly to improve conditions for women, children, families, the poor, the under-educated and the elderly.

ECU is a contemporary university providing quality tertiary education for the students of today. We pride ourselves on being supportive, flexible and relevant to the real world. We all know that the theory is important but ECU knows that putting what you learn into practice is just as valuable. That's why our courses have a strong focus on providing real life solutions to real life problems. Practical projects, industry placements and guest speakers are key features of our programs.

We strive to provide a different learning approach, developed to maximise the student outcome and experience, as well as providing state-of-the-art facilities and infrastructure.

With over 300 courses, ECU offers the flexibility and freedom to match your own talents and aspirations with a wide range of course options to give you the skills and knowledge to reach your goals.

ECU awards are recognised nationally and internationally, because of rigorous accreditation procedures used by the University, and consultation with professional and vocational groups. ECU is a member of the National Unified System of Australian Universities, the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee. Universities throughout the world recognise ECU programs for exchange purposes.

You and your students

What kinds of students study at ECU?

The ECU student population is diverse in age; prior experience; and social, religious and ethnic backgrounds. While some ECU students will have come straight from school, there will be many older students with a variety of life experiences. Indeed, a significant number of ECU students are over the age of 25 with full-time jobs or careers and they study part-time. University staff welcome students from all types of backgrounds and, as highlighted in the ECU "Student Charter", University staff must strive to provide all ECU students with equal opportunities, and staff should embrace the University's obligations to guarantee an environment free of racial, sexual, religious, cultural and physical discrimination.

The majority of ECU's 21,000 students are female (61% in 2007). Student numbers (for 2007) by mode of attendance are shown below.

Table 1
ECU Student Enrolment 2007

Student characteristics	Enrolment	% Enrolment
Full-time	13,200	64
Part-time	4,800	23
Transnational (i.e., students studying an ECU course at an overseas partner institution)	1,800	9
International students studying an ECU course in Australia (onshore)	2,600	12
Australian Students studying an ECU course in Australia (onshore)	16,200	79

ECU welcomes the diverse backgrounds of its international students

ECU values its international students and, in 2007, over 1,780 of them studied in a transnational program and worked with tutors like you. These students are located in 30 countries. Approximately 64% of the 2007 transnational program students are male.

Reflection Point

Think about the students studying your unit and reflect on the similarities and differences of their social backgrounds (e.g., age, gender, race, religion, economic circumstances, past education). Now, consider ways that you can create an inclusive/non-discriminatory learning environment for your students.

Graduate attributes

ECU graduates are valued for their knowledge, abilities and skills. These characteristics are known as 'graduate attributes' and are developed in every ECU undergraduate course.

Table 2
ECU Graduate Attributes

ECU Graduates will be valued for their:	ECU Graduates will be exemplified by:
Ability to communicate	Clarity of written and spoken expression, including in public settings, and through appropriate use of technology
Ability to work in teams	Collaborating and contributing effectively in diverse settings
Critical Appraisal Skills	Planning, organising, problem solving and decision making
Ability to generate ideas	Having the courage and confidence to be creative and innovative
Cross-cultural and international outlook	Engaging productively and harmoniously with diverse cultures

All ECU undergraduates will be provided with opportunities to develop the ECU graduate attributes by the time they complete their course. Such opportunities will be embedded in course and unit content, learning activities and assessment tasks.

Note: Graduate attributes need only be identified for core or required units; for example, units that make up a major in a course. Your unit may not have designated graduate attributes.

Reflection Point

As a tutor teaching an ECU course you will need to pay particular attention to the graduate attributes, especially if you are teaching a core unit. Check your unit outline and plan to identify the graduate attributes expected of your students and organise opportunities for them to practise the graduate attributes identified in the unit materials.

You may like to list opportunities for your students to develop ECU graduate attributes relevant to your unit; see the example below.

Graduate Attribute	Opportunities to Develop Graduate Attribute
Ability to work in teams	Students participate in group work activities Students take specific role(s) in a group (e.g., leader, note taker, speaker)

Student responsibilities

Students who study an ECU course have responsibilities to themselves and the University. These responsibilities require them to join with University staff in creating a learning and teaching environment that promotes and fosters student academic, social and personal growth. Your understanding of these tasks will assist students to meet their responsibilities. Specifically, students involved in an ECU transnational program should aim to:

- Contribute to the reputation and development of the University by contributing where improvements can be made, and by participating in its decision-making processes where possible.
- Participate actively and positively in the learning-teaching environment, and maintain steady progress in their academic studies.
- Display responsible attitudes towards staff and fellow students.
- Be aware of, understand and comply with the University's Rules, By-Laws and Statutes relating to students.
- Comply with workload expectations, and notify appropriate staff if difficulties are experienced.
- Respond to reasonable requests from staff without undue delay.
- Honour the University's rules about cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or falsification of data, as well as the proper use of copyright material.

Reflection Point

Dot point two, above, is especially important as it requires tutors to develop a student-focused approach to learning and teaching. In your planning of tutorials think of ways you can engage your students so that they make steady progress in their academic studies. (For additional information on student-focused teaching read the 'Student-Focused Teaching' section of this booklet)

You and your responsibilities

Learning and teaching principles

Teaching at university is a complex process. It is important for teachers within a university to have a common understanding of what constitutes best practice and to have some means to articulate this. Such information is essential to guide and support the activities of agencies and staff within a university including support staff, sessional staff and those responsible for administering academic programs.

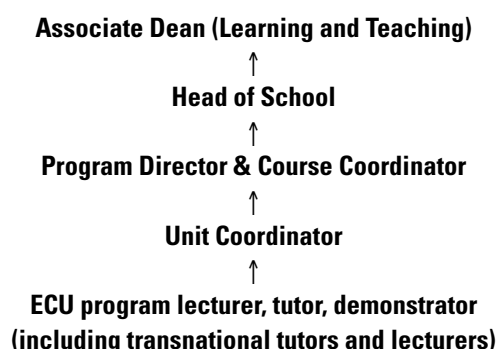
The University's Learning and Teaching principles are intended to guide the design and delivery of educational programs at ECU. The principles reflect the values of the University and its strategic aims and goals. They are not intended to describe how to teach, nor are they intended to describe the outcomes of learning. The principles can be used to guide your work with students. The principles are described in three areas: planning, delivery, and management (See Resources, p. 21).

Your ECU academic colleague

As a tutor teaching an ECU unit, it is important to know to whom you are responsible for each aspect of your work and that you are familiar with the course structure and units offered. If you have any concerns about teaching matters these are usually dealt with by consulting your 'ECU academic colleague'. Your ECU academic colleague may be a Program Director, Course Coordinator or Unit Coordinator. It is vital that you know the name and contact details of your ECU academic colleague.

In particular, the Unit Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that you have all the resources and materials you require to teach the unit. The Unit Coordinator is also responsible for preparing the specific assessment tasks and for assigning a final assessment grade to each enrolled student in the unit.

The chain of responsibility for all academic matters concerning all units and courses in the University is as follows.



Reflection Point

Add the contact details of your ECU academic colleague to the list on the inside cover of this book.

Teaching staff responsibilities

All teaching staff have the following 'teaching' responsibilities:

- Display responsible attitudes towards students at all times;
- Maintain knowledge within the discipline;
- Prepare and present unit material at an appropriate standard and within the resources available, and to enable students to succeed in their studies;
- Deliver effective University teaching with a focus on student outcomes; and
- Make reasonable accommodation within University policy for students with a disability.

All teaching staff have the following 'assessment' responsibilities:

- Assess students' work fairly, objectively, consistently and in a timely manner;
- Ensure that turnaround time for assessments is three weeks or less. Any increase in turnaround time for assessments requires the approval of your ECU academic colleague and students must be advised of the increased turnaround period in advance;
- Provide students with adequate feedback about their performance;
- Discuss assignments and exams during the teaching session (i.e., prior to students submitting work and after you have marked their work); and
- Be available at reasonable times so that all of your students may discuss with you aspects of the unit, including learning, assessment and feedback matters.

All teaching staff have the following 'administrative' responsibilities:

- Complete administrative tasks in a timely manner, and provide constructive feedback to your ECU academic colleague that will enable on-going improvement in the unit;
- Notify your ECU academic colleague of potential or actual conflicts of interest (e.g., you are teaching a relative's or neighbour's child) and the nature of such conflict; and
- Maintain the confidentiality of personal student information including assessment results, except for legitimate University purposes.

Reflection Point

Consider the above responsibilities. Note ways in which you can work towards meeting these responsibilities.

You and your teaching

Unit Outline

The 'unit outline' is the University approved version of what you teach your students in each individual unit. It contains the essential details of the unit and how it will be taught; for instance, student learning outcomes, assessment items, unit content, texts and significant references. The unit outline for the unit you are teaching must be distributed in written or electronic form to your students unaltered and as a separate document. The unit outline is usually given to the students prior to or during your first meeting with them.

It is important that you are familiar with the content of the unit outline as it provides an official description of your unit; for example:

- what skills and knowledge students are expected to achieve; and
- what values and attitudes will be fostered by them satisfactorily completing the unit.

Students must also be advised in the unit outline how all marks and grades will be determined.

Your unit outline can be accessed from your ECU academic colleague and from ECU's *Online Handbook*: <http://handbook.ecu.edu.au/>

Unit Plan

The unit plan provides you and your students with a detailed account of the unit's topics to be covered; the assessment details; the structure of the unit; how content will be delivered (e.g., lecture, tutorial, laboratory workshop); and the unit timetable. The unit plan also specifies the names and contact details of teaching staff.

The unit plan supplements the general framework provided in the unit outline and gives additional information regarding the unit's: structure, content, delivery and assessment. The unit plan contains specific rather than generic information for each individual unit.

When you first meet with your students allow them time to read both the unit outline and unit plan. It is important that you set time aside so that the students can ask you questions about the information in these documents. It is essential that the students feel confident about the practices and requirements expected of them.

Online learning

ECU now has a substantial number of units that are taught online or have one or more components that require online access by students. The majority of online units are available on MyECU (Blackboard). However, some units may use a different online delivery system. If you are teaching an online unit or you require access to online resources and you are unsure about the system program used in the unit, contact your ECU academic colleague.

Your ECU academic colleague will advise you on your role and responsibilities for each unit that you teach using MyECU (Blackboard).

If you need to access the MyECU (Blackboard) site, do the following:

- a. From the ECU Homepage, click on the word 'Staff' (under the heading 'Information for').
- b. Click on 'MyECU (Blackboard)'.
- c. To login, click on 'Login to MyECU (Blackboard)'.

You will then be required to enter your ECU login Username and Password to authenticate your staff status.

The MyECU Academic Tip Sheets (see Resources included in your package) introduces you to MyECU and provides you with instructions on how to access MyECU.

Reflection Point

Before you start teaching the unit, check that you have all of the necessary resources and materials to work with your students. You may find it helpful to use the checklist below as a guide. If you require any material or resources, contact your ECU academic colleague and request them.

Checklist: Teaching in an ECU transnational program

It is important that you are aware of your exact role as an ECU transnational program tutor and how your ECU academic colleague will assist you in your work. Please make sure that your academic colleague has provided you with:

- Contact details of your ECU academic colleague
- An overview of your teaching roles and responsibilities in the unit;
- An overview of how the unit you are teaching fits into the overall structure of the course
- A unit outline
- A class list or instructions for obtaining class list
- A unit plan/ reader/workshop materials
- Access to online materials (e.g., MyECU)
- A unit schedule/calendar
- A tutorial program with clear guidelines

- Access to relevant library facilities and information
- A process for provision of weekly notes (if appropriate)
- Assessment details and criteria
- A process for receiving, marking and returning assignments
- The unit policy for advising students of their assignment grades or marks
- Information about the unit evaluation process and feedback
- A sample of the Unit and Teaching Evaluation Instrument (UTEI)
- Information about the process for handing student queries
- Details of any special occupational safety and health requirements
- A schedule of meetings with your ECU academic colleague/s
- Guidelines for you and your students if they are involved in a practicum or field work experience

In your first meeting with the students, you should ensure they have the following:

- A copy of both the unit outline and the unit plan
- Access to all the necessary materials including readings and online materials (if appropriate)

You may also like to read the following ECU documents:

- "Academic Misconduct Rules (Students)"
- "Assessment Policy" (see Resources, p. 21)
- "Assessment Policy (Summary)" (see Resources, p. 21)
- "Learning and Teaching Principles" (see Resources, p. 21)
- "Staff Guidelines to the Academic Misconduct Rules (Students)" (see Resources, p. 21)
- "Student Charter"
- Teaching@ECU: The little red book* (2008) (see Resources included in your package)

You and student assessment

The role of assessment in learning and teaching

Assessment is a means of supporting student learning; measuring and reporting student progress; and monitoring one's teaching (Gibbs, 2006; Ramsden, 2003). It is about: "getting to know our students and the quality of their learning" (Rowntree cited in Ramsden, p. 176). Assessment is a component of the learning program in each ECU unit and course. Within each unit, assessment tasks serve the following two main purposes:

- To promote student learning and improve student performance by providing timely and appropriate feedback to the student. This type of feedback encourages reflection and self assessment; and
- To evaluate each student's academic progress in relation to the learning outcomes of the unit.

Assessment tasks are an important aspect of student learning and academic growth as the tasks signal to students the knowledge and practices that are relevant to their study and where they should concentrate their efforts. Along with feedback, assessment provides students with an understanding of the standard of work expected of them.

Assessment can also provide academic staff with information about the effectiveness of their teaching. The quality of understanding displayed by students through their assessment tasks may indicate how effectively teachers have motivated students and facilitated their learning.

Part of a tutor's role is to assist students to progress academically and complete their studies. It is, therefore, vital that you understand the purpose, definitions, principles and practices of assessment conducted in your unit. Also, if you are marking student work is important that you follow ECU's "Assessment Policy" (see Resources, p. 21).

Why use an assignment 'marking key'?

If you are marking student assignments your ECU academic colleague will provide you with a marking key to ensure consistency of marking across the unit. If you do not have a copy of the marking key or you are unsure about how to mark an assignment, contact your ECU academic colleague.

A marking key with explicit and clear standards can:

- Give students clear guidelines about what is required;
- Be used to give students meaningful feedback about their strengths and areas in need of improvement;
- Make marking easier with large numbers of students;
- Reduce the number of students who appeal a mark;

- Encourage teachers to clarify their marking procedures in specific terms;
- Increase the validity of the marking process;
- Provide useful feedback to teachers regarding the effectiveness of their teaching; and
- Help discriminate between the quality of your students' work.

Marking practices need to be fair, valid and explicit. Difficulties associated with marking student work can include:

- Using personal criteria as opposed to the prescribed marking key (e.g., a preference that assignments are bound not stapled);
- Allowing bias (e.g., knowledge of student background) to affect marking;
- Assessing papers in relation to previous papers and not the prescribed marking key points;
- Tending to mark papers in the average grade range and avoiding higher or lower grades;
- Inconsistencies in identifying plagiarism; and
- Providing inadequate feedback to students.

It is every tutor's responsibility to keep accurate records of their students' assessment results and this includes marks for all of your students.

Reflection Point

Check that you have a copy of each assignment marking key and that you understand how to mark each assignment.

Why is feedback important to student learning?

Quality feedback is a valuable tool to advance student learning, and for learning to occur students must engage with the feedback given to them (Gibbs, 2006). The ECU "Learning and Teaching Principles" (see Resources, p. 21) require staff to provide feedback in a timely fashion and in a manner which enables students to maximise their learning opportunities.

Feedback informs students about what was done well, what else they could have achieved and how to improve their work. Feedback is a core part of learning and teaching at ECU. Feedback can be given in a tutorial and on assignment work. Feedback can be informal (e.g., verbal feedback in class) or formal (e.g., written comments at the end of an assignment). It can be given to an individual student, a small group or to the whole class.

Gibbs and Simpson (2004-2005, pp.15-23) suggest that feedback influences students' learning when:

- Sufficient feedback is provided, both often enough and in enough detail;
- The feedback focuses on students' performance, on their learning and on actions under the students' control, rather than on the students themselves and on their characteristics;
- The feedback is timely in that it is received by students while it still matters to them and in time for them to pay attention to further learning or receive further assistance;
- Feedback is appropriate to the purpose of the assignment and to its criteria for success;
- Feedback is appropriate, in relation to students' understanding of what they are supposed to be doing;
- Feedback is received and attended to; and
- Feedback is acted upon by the student.

Similarly, students seek feedback that is:

- Constructive and encouraging;
- Prompt - whilst they can still recall doing the work;
- Timely so that they can incorporate it into the next piece of work;
- Specific to the desired learning outcomes;
- Focused - highlighting achievement and areas to improve;
- Indicative of how the work needs to be changed;
- Educative in helping them to reflect on their work and effort produced; and
- Educative in assisting them to self-assess their work and progress.

Reflection Point

Think about ways that you could encourage students to engage with the feedback you provide. You may also like to reflect on the points made by Gibbs and Simpson (2004-2005), above, and consider the type of feedback you give your students.

Giving and receiving effective, constructive feedback

Giving effective, constructive feedback is not easy, especially when you have a large number of assignments to mark.

Feedback should be viewed as a helpful experience for the students. Students will benefit from listening to or reading feedback, checking that they understand each point made and then reflecting on ways to advance their work. You should be available to discuss assignment feedback with your students as this will help their academic development.

Assignment submission and cover sheet

Students at ECU submit assignments with a completed assignment cover sheet attached. This cover sheet has space for the student to complete information relevant to the assignment and its due date.

The cover sheet also provides students with information about:

- Copyright for assignments;
- Procedures and penalties on late assignments; and
- Cheating and plagiarism.

New ECU tutors should talk to their ECU academic colleague about the standard unit practice for accepting student assignments, returning student assignments and the use of assessment cover sheets in their ECU unit.

The cover sheet is available online from: http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/data/shared/documents/115_onsampus.doc

Late assignments

Students who wish to submit an assignment after the due date and avoid a late penalty must make application in writing to your ECU academic colleague stating their reasons. The penalty for late submission without your ECU academic colleague's approval is calculated as follows:

- Not more than one week late, a penalty of 5% of the assignment mark for each working day late.
- More than one week late, a mark of zero for the assignment.

For example, consider an assignment worth a maximum of 30 marks (30% of the total assessment in the unit) that is due on a Thursday. The late penalty is 5% of 30 = 1.5 marks for each working day late. A student who submits the assignment on the following Monday without your ECU academic colleague's approval is two working days late. The Saturday and Sunday are not ECU working days. The late penalty is $2 \times 1.5 = 3$ marks. The student assignment mark is 14 marks and with the 3 mark penalty the final mark is recorded as $14 - 3 = 11$ marks.

Application for Extension of Date of Submitted Work can be downloaded from the University web-site:

<http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/data/shared/documents/ext.doc>

Reflection Point

Has your ECU academic colleague spoken to you about assignment submission practices? If not, please contact your ECU academic colleague and request this information.

Assessment queries

Sometimes a student will be dissatisfied with an assignment mark and seek an explanation from you. Explain the mark clearly and offer constructive comments on how the student could attain a better mark in the future.

The student can request a review of his/her assessment mark and in this case refer the matter to your ECU academic colleague. If the student is dissatisfied, he/she can lodge a formal appeal by contacting your ECU academic colleague. For more information refer to "Student Appeals" at:

<http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/assessment/appeals/index.php>

Examination deferral

If one of your students wishes to defer an examination the student must apply in writing to your ECU academic colleague who will, then, forward the information to the Director of Student Services Centre or a nominee. The student must state the reasons why the deferral is sought and provide sufficient written evidence to support the application.

If a student does have grounds for a deferred exam (e.g., death in the family or sudden illness):

- Ask the student to provide sufficient written evidence to support the application; and
- Contact your ECU academic colleague as soon as possible.

If the student's application is approved, your ECU academic colleague will inform you of alternative exam arrangements for the student.

Previous examinations

Tutors should be aware of whether examples of previous exam papers are available to students. Typically, copies of past exam papers are stored at the University's libraries. Some papers are also available online by searching the University web page and the ECU online library catalogue. If you would like to inform your students about past exam papers ask your ECU academic colleague for information about where they can be obtained.

Assignment checklist

Make sure:

- Your students know the learning outcomes being assessed.
- You are aware of your responsibilities in relation to assessment as well as those of your students and your ECU academic colleague.
- You have a marking key that clearly indicates the points being assessed and the standards associated with different grades.
- You provide useful feedback to students.

For further details, on assessment, marking and feedback, consult the ECU "Assessment Policy" (see Resources, p. 21).

A convenient two page summary of the "Assessment Policy" is available to you (see Resources, p. 21).

Reflection Point

Students are often confused about what constitutes plagiarism. Use the Plagiarism Academic Tip Sheet (see Resources included in your package) to plan how you would explain to students

- i) *What constitutes plagiarism;*
- ii) *How plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct; and*
- iii) *How they can avoid plagiarism.*

Checking ownership of work with Turnitin

The Turnitin software can be used to detect possible plagiarism. It is available for use by ECU staff and students through MyECU. Turnitin is capable of comparing a document (perhaps an assignment) with content from an extensive database that includes journals textbooks and other students' assignments. Turnitin indicates the extent to which the assignment is similar to other documents in the database allowing for identification of non-original work.

You can use Turnitin as a resource for educating students on the importance of honesty in scholarship by encouraging your students to use this software to check they have acknowledged correctly the sources they have cited.

Students should be aware that if they submit their work to Turnitin that it becomes part of the Turnitin database.

If you are marking student work and you are concerned that students may have plagiarised text you can use Turnitin to check ownership of the work.

For further information about Turnitin go to: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/MyECU/myecu/using-turnitin-in-blackboard>

Suspected academic misconduct

If you suspect plagiarism in a student's assignment, do the following:

- Refer to the "Academic Misconduct Protocol" (see Resources, p. 21) or contact your ECU academic colleague; and
- Refer to the "Staff Guide to Academic Misconduct Rules" (see Resources, p. 21).

If your ECU academic colleague is unavailable then contact your Head of School.

If you are invigilating/overseeing an in-class test and you see any unauthorised behaviour such as talking; sharing information with other students; or consulting notes, books, written or electronic material, do the following:

- If students are talking or seem to be otherwise sharing information with other students, tell them to stop immediately;

- If a student has any unapproved material, remove it immediately;
- Avoid any confrontation and allow the student(s) to finish the test; and
- Be as discreet as possible so as not to invalidate the test.

If you think that the student(s) may have cheated, do the following:

- Document what happened in the test, when it happened and what you did; and
- Refer the matter to your ECU academic colleague.

Where the misconduct is either substantial or intentional, your ECU academic colleague must refer the matter in writing to the Head of School setting out the nature of the alleged misconduct and the evidence in support of the charge. The Head of School (or nominee) will investigate the matter and, if satisfied that the student has committed an act of academic misconduct, impose a penalty in line with the extent of the misconduct.

An awareness of student-focused teaching

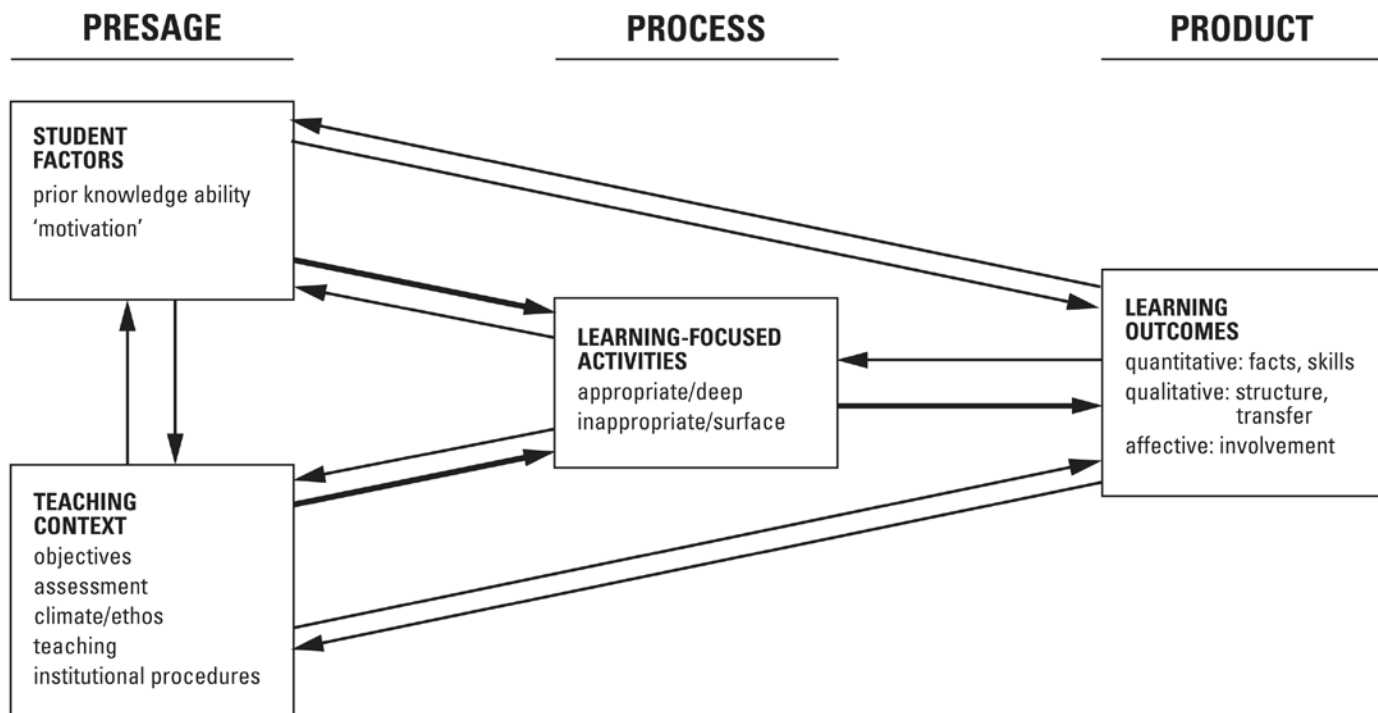


Figure 2. The 3P model of Teaching and Learning

(Taken from Biggs, 2003, p. 19).

John Biggs developed a model of student learning that emphasises the effect of student characteristics on their learning outcomes. In this model, the student background (presage) and what the student does (process) is linked to the quality of the learning outcome (product). This is the basis of a student-focused approach to learning and teaching. Once teachers realise how influential student characteristics are in the learning process, their teaching shifts from a focus on 'content' to a focus on how students 'engage' with the content. The focus on 'how the teacher can influence what the student does' is at the heart of student-focused approach to teaching. Figure 2, below, illustrates Biggs' Presage, Process, Product (3P) model of learning and teaching.

Trigwell and Prosser (2003, p. 190) have developed Biggs' ideas and state that within student-focused teaching: "the teacher prepares the content with an awareness of what is relevant to students, checks how they engage with it, and how their response might relate to the quality of their learning."

A student-focused approach concentrates on what the student does to advance learning. It is based on the understanding that learning develops when the student changes/transforms the way in which he/she thinks and behaves. Learning is not just knowing more but about understanding material differently. At university, this usually means knowing and understanding ideas in a more complex and interconnected way.

This section provides an awareness of, first, how students may approach their learning; second, the role of the tutor in student-focused tutorials; third, some practical ideas for planning, organising and managing tutorials; and fourth, ways to monitor your teaching, and the use of the Unit and Teaching Evaluation Instrument (UTEI).

Deep and surface learning

There are many factors that influence a student's approach to learning. Entwistle (1998, p. 74) observed that "students' approaches are affected by their prior educational and personal histories, which produce habitual patterns of studying". Some students, for instance, intend to learn information merely to reproduce it in an assignment or exam. Other students have the intention to question and understand the information and, then, change/transform their understanding of it. Some students only know and use a limited range of study strategies that focus on memorising and reproducing the learning materials. Conversely, some students know and use a range of strategies to help them to understand the learning materials. Figure 3, below, illustrates how a student's intention and the student's choice of learning strategy combine to form the learning approach taken by the student. Table 3 compares the 'surface' and 'deep' approaches to learning (adapted from Entwistle, 1998, p. 74).

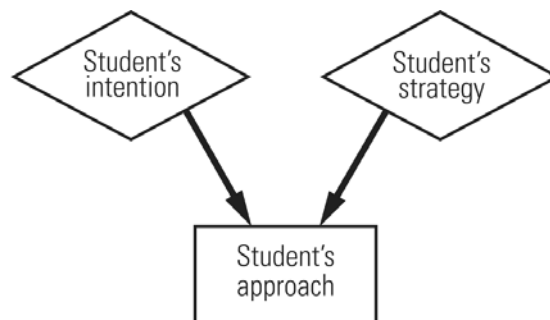


Figure 3. Intention combined with strategy results in an approach to learning.

Table 3
Surface and Deep Approaches to Learning

Deep approach Is essentially “transforming”
Intention – to understand ideas for yourself by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating ideas to previous knowledge and experience • Looking for patterns and underlying principles • Checking evidence and relating it to conclusions • Examining logic and argument cautiously and critically • Becoming actively interested in the course content
Surface approach Is essentially “reproducing”
Intention – to cope with course requirements by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying without reflecting on either purpose or strategy • Treating the course as unrelated bits of knowledge • Memorizing facts and procedures routinely • Finding difficulty in making sense of new ideas presented • Feeling undue pressure and worry about work

Typically, students take a surface approach to learning when they:

- Have no interest in the subject and are not motivated;
- Perceive the content as boring or can’t see the relevance of it;
- Have limited opportunities to select, for instance, assignment topics or assignment format (e.g., choice of essay or poster);
- Have too much to learn and not enough time to study;
- Find the work too hard;
- Can get away with it (i.e., when a unit or course require students to only reproduce lecture and textbook content); and
- When they lack an awareness of the different ways to explore content and produce work.

Typically, students take a deep approach to learning when they:

- Are interested in the subject and motivated to learn;
- Can see the relevance of the subject;
- Have a choice in what and how they study;
- Have time to explore ideas;
- When their level of challenge is right - not too hard and not too easy;
- Want to understand concepts and frameworks; and
- When the assignment task requires them to research a topic, question information, analyse and categorise information, and reflect on meaning (i.e., explore content critically).

How the teacher affects students’ approaches to study

In your tutorial you can foster a deep approach to learning by:

- Aligning tutorial activities with the unit’s learning outcomes.
- Matching the content and pace of your delivery to the students’ prior knowledge and skills.
- Making sure that you allow the students enough time to work with the ideas you have covered.
- Encouraging your students to discuss, explore and understand the ideas raised in the tutorial.
- Providing the students with useful feedback about their understanding of the issues discussed.
- Encouraging the students to reflect on their learning and then take action that increases their knowledge and skills.
- Creating tutorial activities that allow the students to explore ideas that interest them.

Summary

The approaches used by students to study:

- Describe the way students study and learn;
- Are usually described as ‘deep’ or ‘surface’ learning; and
- Are influenced by academics’ teaching methods.

A deep approach to learning leads to a better understanding of the complexities, interconnections and meanings of the material explored by the students. Effective teachers encourage students to use deep learning strategies and actively discourage them from using surface learning strategies.

Reflection Point

Think back to when you were a student. Identify when you used a surface approach and when you used a deep approach to learning.

- *When and why did you take a surface approach to your studies?*
- *Conversely, when and why did you take a deeper approach?*

In summary, a deep approach to learning is taken when students have an intrinsic interest in a discipline area; have the skills and strategies to critically explore the learning material, and sufficient opportunities and time to transform their understanding. Students who have access to a range of strategies make strategic choices about the most appropriate approach to use. Their choice is made as a response to their perception of the learning context.

What is a tutorial?

Lectures and tutorials are a means of engaging university students in learning. Typically, a lecture is delivered to a large group of students and in this situation the lecturer disseminates information to the group. The role of the lecturer is one of 'expert' and the students as 'learners'.

Tutorials are organised to facilitate learning rather than disseminate knowledge. Tutorials are conducted with small groups of students. This learning environment is designed to support the understanding of lecture content and provide students with an opportunity to explore, probe, debate and interpret issues and to observe how others engage with information. The students become active participants in the learning process as they work with and learn from each other. Biggs suggests that the students should "do much of the work" and that the tutor "chairs the proceedings" (2003, p. 88).

The term 'workshop' is sometimes used synonymously with 'tutorial'. Workshops can also involve students in hands-on or laboratory activities.

Learning in tutorials and workshops

When conducting a tutorial, think of yourself as a 'guide on the side' rather than a 'sage on the stage'. Features of student-focused tutorials and workshops include:

- student-student interaction
- staff-student interaction
- group work
- individual work
- concept and skill questioning and clarification
- smaller class sizes
- much less formal than lectures
- flexible structure

'Group-work' in undergraduate study is a valued way of conducting, for instance, tutorial, small group, field work, project, and reflective activities. Group-work activities aim to develop students':

- learning approaches;
- learning outcomes;
- collegial team work practices;
- communication skills;
- problem solving capabilities;
- reflective practice; and
- peer-assisted learning.

ECU aims to graduate students who have the 'ability to work in teams: collaborating and contributing effectively in diverse settings'. (see Resources included in your package for Tutorial and Groupwork tip sheets).

Reflection point

There are many reasons for conducting tutorials and workshops as part of the planned learning experience for students, and below there are 14 reasons you may like to consider. In relation to your unit outline and plan, which ones do you think will be the most important reasons for conducting the tutorials?

Reasons for students to work in tutorials and workshops

1. To develop skills in the oral communication of ideas.
2. To develop logical thinking.
3. To provide feedback to both students and tutor about the effectiveness of learning and teaching.
4. To assist students to classify information and to understand the relationships within and between issues.
5. To assist students to identify an overarching key concept that unites a collection of issues (e.g., student schooling, age, gender and race are united under the key concept of 'demographic information').
6. To change attitudes.
7. To allow students to research an area and present their findings to a group.
8. To help students to achieve a practical understanding of group dynamics.
9. To increase the motivation of students in their given subject areas.
10. To afford students some measure for responsibility for their own learning.
11. To identify and practise important skills.
12. To allow students to discuss concerns and worries.
13. To encourage students to solve problems.
14. To encourage collaboration rather than competition in the approach to study.

Summary

The reasons you agree with and prioritise will depend on a combination of factors. These include the subject you are teaching, your students' expectations of tutorials and workshops, and your experience and intentions as a teacher. Student-focused tutorials and workshops provide a range of opportunities for students to check their understanding and identify strengths and weaknesses in their thinking.

Ways to engage students in learning

Reflection point

Reflect on your time as a student and think of some tutorials or workshops in which you have participated. How did effective tutors engage you in learning and, similarly, how could you engage your students?

Strategies to engage students in learning

Student-focused teachers use a variety of strategies to engage students in learning.

Developing understanding

- Asking questions to develop student understanding.
- Asking questions to check student understanding.
- Inviting students to respond to material and knowledge.
- Monitoring student responses and checking.
- For their understanding or confusion.
- Communicating information in a way that engages student interest, clarifying difficult aspects and putting information into context so that its relevance is apparent;
- Providing timely, useful and meaningful feedback especially, but not only, on student assessment.

Supporting students

- Being flexible and adapting content and teaching to meet student needs.
- Communicating clearly to students what is expected of them and why, and ensuring that students understand and are satisfied by the reasons given.
- Talking slowly and pausing to check student understanding.
- Being sensitive to the students' feelings and needs.
- Supporting, valuing and encouraging all students to participate in learning.
- Recognising and valuing students' diverse backgrounds.
- Encouraging discussion on study skills such as writing skills, note taking, problem solving and examination preparation; and, acknowledging individual student's high achievement.

Maximising opportunities for learning

- Observing group work and checking for student participation.
- Organising, facilitating and monitoring small group work.
- Engaging students in active, independent and reflective learning which involves ongoing dialogue and discussion and develops the important meanings, interconnections and implications of what is learned.

- Providing opportunities that allow misconceptions to be clarified.
- Creating learning situations in which students engage in open-ended activities requiring the organisation of information and the application of skills in new ways.

Have a command of the subject

- Imparting correct and relevant information.
- Stimulating and enthusing students to engage with learning.
- Communicating ideas well to students.
- Showing students pathways to further learning.
- Demonstrating a personal knowledge of and commitment to the discipline, and supplying the enthusiasm necessary to generate trust, respect, motivation and interest.

Being professional and personable

- Providing a role model for their students.
- Taking a genuine interest in the discipline area and student learning.
- Monitoring the effects of their teaching.
- Reflecting on ways to enhance learning and teaching.

Asking questions

In student-focused teaching the role of the teacher is not to tell, but to check and build the students' understanding. Student-focused tutorial teaching often means designing and asking thought provoking questions that challenge student thinking. Generally speaking 'closed' questions, where the question elicits a 'yes/no' or factual response, are not good questions for building student understanding. Use 'open' questions that encourage students to give examples, explain and predict will help their academic progress.

Tutors can use 'open' questions to:

- assess students' developing understanding;
- clarify students' misconceptions;
- stimulate students' thinking;
- prompt students to question ideas;
- prompt students to elaborate on ideas;
- encourage students to analyse an issue and logically order their ideas;
- encourage students to link their thinking to theory and/or practice; and
- reflect on their understanding and determine new ways of thinking about issues.

Question stems for encouraging higher order thinking skills

To teach students to analyse, synthesise and evaluate new knowledge, tutors need to ask questions that will help students to practise these skills.

The following rhyme can be used to help your students frame higher order thinking questions:

I have 7 friends they hold me true. Their names are
'What', 'Why', 'When', 'Where', 'How', 'So' and 'Who'.

(Apologies to Rudyard Kipling, The Elephant's Child).

Table 4

Higher Order Thinking Question Stems

Analysis (break information into component parts)	<p>What are the ideas put forward by the author?</p> <p>How does X compare with Y?</p> <p>What evidence can you find to suggest X?</p> <p>How would you describe X?</p> <p>Who are the main participants in this event?</p>
Synthesis (develop a new understanding of the topic)	<p>What ideas can you add to this understanding?</p> <p>Why has A influenced B?</p> <p>So what would you predict from these results?</p> <p>What might happen if you combined A and B?</p> <p>So what is the importance/relevance of this work?</p>
Evaluation (appraise the worth of something)	<p>To what extent does A affect B?</p> <p>What are the implications of this outcome?</p> <p>How will you respond to these issues?</p> <p>What recommendations will you now make?</p> <p>On the basis of C, what would you suggest and why?</p>

Tutors can also use questions to manage the group dynamics including: to support and value students' prior understanding and experience, to re-direct attention to the topic, and to involve particular students by looking in their general direction.

When responding to student answers to a question, tutors should:

- Pause and allow time for students to think about their answer.
- Always react in a positive way to reduce student fear and encourage students to 'have a go'.
- Acknowledge informed and appropriate responses.
- Probe unclear or surprising responses by seeking a clarification, an application or an example:
 - "please explain that a little further"
 - "what is an example of that?"
 - "how would you describe the concept/practice?"

- Refocus or adjust a question if the students provide inappropriate or incorrect responses. Do not tell them the answer.
- Redirect the question to others in order to obtain a range of perspectives before summarising the responses.
- Rephrase the question if a student experiences difficulty answering it.
- Work with students to help them produce an informed and considered answer. For instance, you could describe the topic or provide examples that they may like to think about.

When students ask the tutor a question, the tutor should consider posing the question to the group as this will encourage other students to think about possible answers.

Summary

Questions and student-focused teaching

The teacher-focused approach to learning is used to check and test retention of information that has been presented. Conversely, within the student-focused approach questions are used to encourage students to probe their understanding, problem solve and develop answers for themselves. Using questions in this way models critical thinking for students and encourages them to actively think about what they are learning.

Teachers who use a student-focused approach need to:

- Ask questions instead of answering them; and
- Consider the purpose of each question.

For additional information about 'using questions effectively in teaching' you may like to go to *Teaching Tips Index* at:

<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm>

Reflection Point

Think of a question you could ask at the beginning of a tutorial to check students' prior understanding.

What do effective tutors do?

Planning, organising and managing the tutorial

Good teaching is achieved when the teacher considers the planning, organisation and management of each tutorial. Student-focused teaching requires teachers to pre-plan work that enables students to interact with the content, each other and their tutor. A flexible teaching approach will allow the students to explore a topic, ask questions and solve relevant problems for themselves.

Some ECU tutors will be expected to independently plan, organise and manage all of their tutorial content. Other tutors will be given information that describes each week's tutorial and its intended outcomes. If you have any questions regarding the planning, organisation and management of your tutorial please contact your ECU academic colleague.

Table 5
Ideas for Planning a Tutorial

Clarify aims and objectives	<p>What are the tutorial learning outcomes?</p> <p>What knowledge, attitudes and skills will the students learn or practise?</p> <p>How do you plan to tell the students?</p> <p>What preparation is required of you?</p> <p>What preparation is required by the students?</p>
Make sure you are familiar with the tutorial activities	<p>What focus and warm-up exercises are needed?</p> <p>What organisation and arrangements are needed?</p> <p>What activities will be used (e.g., small group work, discussion, exercises, debates)?</p> <p>What facilities and resources are needed?</p> <p>What will the students be doing?</p> <p>What prior understanding or skills are needed?</p> <p>What will you be doing?</p>
Decide the assessment – monitoring method	<p>What parts of the session will be assessed?</p> <p>If so, how will you assess them?</p> <p>How will you monitor whether the tutorial learning outcomes have been achieved?</p>
Decide the summary and plan for the next time	<p>Who will summarise the learning in the tutorial? How?</p> <p>What follow-up is needed? By whom?</p> <p>What preparation is needed for next time?</p>
Decide what you would like feedback on	<p>Did you try anything different, and do you require student feedback about your teaching?</p> <p>Are you concerned about anything that is happening in your tutorials?</p> <p>Do you know what the students are feeling unsure about?</p>

Helping students understand student-focused teaching

Just as teachers may need to change their teaching to a more student-focused approach, students will also need to adjust their behaviour and expectations. It is important to spend some time at the beginning of the first tutorial developing a shared understanding of what is expected in the tutorial. One strategy is to develop with the students a set of 'ground rules' for the tutorial.

Reflection Point

Identify three ground rules you regard are important when conducting a successful student-focused tutorial. Usually students want very similar ground rules as you. For example, they also want everyone to come on time, to be prepared and to respect each other.

Seating arrangements

The way in which the furniture is arranged for a tutorial affects the dynamics of the room. If you want students to take responsibility for their learning, you need to shift the attention from you to them. If you want them to interact you will need to arrange the furniture so they can see each other and work together. A common furniture arrangement for student interaction is the café style where students sit in groups of 4–6 around a table. In this arrangement the teacher walks around the room talking to groups of students checking that they are on task and are not experiencing any difficulties.

Reviewing the tutorial

Effective teaching involves engaging a continuous, active and responsive process of critical self-review in order to improve. This process involves:

- Monitoring one's teaching effectiveness by collecting and interpreting relevant data from a variety of sources (e.g., informal and formal student feedback, peer review); and
- Reflecting critically on this information to identify your strengths and weaknesses in both the unit and your teaching.

Monitoring your tutoring

An ongoing commitment to improvement is a fundamental characteristic of student-focused teachers. These teachers seek to evaluate, formally and informally, what is working and what can be improved. Purposeful evaluation benefits students, staff and the institution. Evaluation is an integral part of the “Plan, Do, Review and Improve” quality assurance process conducted by ECU teaching staff.

When and how to evaluate your teaching

- When you are teaching monitor what is happening in the tutorial and adapt your teaching if necessary.
- At the end of each tutorial, reflect on your teaching and the students’ work and use this knowledge to plan for the next tutorial.
- At the end of the unit, reflect on your teaching, student outcomes and student feedback and, then, consider changes that can be made before you teach this unit again.

You can monitor and evaluate your teaching in a number of ways, including self assessment, asking students, and asking colleagues.

Self assessment

After each tutorial, evaluate what you did:

1. What worked well (when did the learners seem most engaged)?
2. What might need improving (when did the learners seem most distanced/distracted)?
3. How you would change the session next time?

When planning the next tutorial or workshop refer to these reflections.

Asking students

Student feedback can help you adapt your teaching and improve student learning experiences. It also provides students with opportunities to take responsibility for their learning.

When you obtain student feedback you can find out:

1. How the students feel about the tutorial learning environment you have conducted. For example, you could ask the students to jot down on a piece of paper things they want you to:
 - a. keep doing.
 - b. stop doing.
 - c. start doing.
2. What they are learning – this is useful for both you and them. For example, you could ask the students to jot down on a piece of paper:
 - a. This is something I learnt today.
 - b. This is something I liked today.
 - c. This is something I am not sure about.

If you have access to the Internet, try a ‘Google search’ for “classroom assessment”

Asking your colleagues.

Colleagues who know your subject and/or know your students can give you useful feedback on your planning and management of a tutorial. Prior to conducting a tutorial you may like to discuss aspects of the tutorial with a colleague.

The unit and teaching evaluation instrument (UTEI)

At the end of each semester all units taught at ECU are evaluated using the standard university Unit and Teaching Evaluation Instrument (UTEI). The UTEI is a three-part questionnaire asking students about their learning experiences in the unit. It has separate components for:

- Unit Evaluation – the quality of the unit itself.
- Tutor Evaluation – the quality of the tutoring (e.g., guidance and feedback); and,
- Lecturer Evaluation – the quality of the lecturing (e.g., learning support and guidance).

UTEI results are returned to lecturers and to each Head of School. The data generated is used to identify each unit’s strengths and weaknesses. You should contact your ECU academic colleague for your students’ feedback. Your ECU academic colleague will advise you on how to interpret and use the scores to identify any areas for improvement. If you are scoring less than 35 - 40 on the tutor evaluation, it is important to also consider the qualitative comments (available from your ECU Academic colleague) in the discussion.

Closing the feedback loop

Students appreciate feedback on how a unit may have changed from one year to another as a result of evaluation. It is important to explain to them any improvements in the unit. (For additional information refer to the previous section ‘Why is feedback important to student learning?’).

Conclusion

Teaching in an ECU Transnational Program: A guide for tutors is designed to support tutors who teach an ECU course outside of Australia. This booklet provides information about students who study at ECU, tutor responsibilities, ‘student-focused teaching’, student assessment, plagiarism, referencing, and ECU policies and relevant documents. The learning and teaching ideals of student-focused teaching are highlighted throughout this booklet. We encourage all of our teaching staff to explore, consider and implement a student-focused approach. We also encourage staff to monitor their students’ academic progress and reflect on ways to enhance learning and teaching.

Please forward any suggestions about how to improve this booklet to ECU’s Centre for Learning and Teaching at:
<http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/>

References and further reading

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Readings: Student-focused teaching

There are some excellent resources around to help you plan and facilitate an effective tutorial session. For example:

- Bertola, P., & Murphy, E. (1994). *Tutoring at university: A beginner's practical guide*. Perth, WA: CEA publications, Curtin University.
- Brown, S., & Knight, P. (1994). *Assessing learners in higher education*. London: Kogan Page. Flinders University. (2007). First time teacher? Retrieved February, 20, 2008, from <http://www.flinders.edu.au/teaching/support/sessional-teachers/first-time-teacher.cfm>
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Resources

Academic Tip Sheets

ECU has produced a range of Academic Tip Sheets for students, below, which you and your students may find useful. They are available from: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/tips/>.

Academic essay	Annotated bibliography
APA Style	Assignments
Blogs journals et al.	Chem Lab report
Effective writing	Exam techniques
Exegesis	Groupwork
Lectures	Literature review
MyECU	Oral presentations
Plagiarism	Podcasting
Reading effectively	Referencing
Report writing	Research paper
Self management	Tutorials
Using the library	Written assignments

Other ECU documents

"Academic Misconduct Protocol": http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000041

"Application for Extension of Date of Submitted Work Form": <http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/data/shared/documents/ext.doc>

"Assessment Policy": http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000028

"Assessment Policy Summary: Assessment@ECU": http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/directorate/about/assessment_ECU.pdf

"Assignment Cover Sheet": http://www.ecu.edu.au/student/data/shared/documents/115_ontampus.doc

"Staff Guide to Academic Misconduct Rules, Students": http://www.ecu.edu.au/LDS/directorate/about/AcMiscGuide_staff.pdf

"University Rules: Academic Misconduct Rules (Students)": [http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/legal_legis/resource_file/academic_misconduct_rules_students\(070327\).pdf](http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/legal_legis/resource_file/academic_misconduct_rules_students(070327).pdf)

Your reflections

Centre for Learning and Teaching
Edith Cowan University
Mount Lawley Campus
2 Bradford Street
Western Australia
Telephone: (61 8) 9370 6101
Facsimile: (61 8) 9370 6500
<http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/>