

Casual and Sessional teaching at UNE

Getting started

Innovations & Professional Development

Learning Innovations Hub

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Table of Contents

Welcome	5
Administration and organisation	6
Human Resource Services (HR)	6
Development	6
Web Kiosk.....	6
Information Technology Directorate (ITD)	6
Your IT account	7
Policies	7
UNE strategic teaching and learning plan	7
The <i>UNE Strategic Teaching and Learning Plan 2012-2016</i> ,.....	7
School procedures and support	7
Your discipline group	7
School committees and meetings	8
Internal School procedures and facilities	8
Teaching spaces for face-to-face	8
Equipment in lecture and tutorial rooms	8
Room bookings and timetables	8
Online systems	9
Moodle	9
Turnitin	9
Other software applications for teaching	9
Library online	10
eReserve	10
Copyright.....	10
CALLISTA	10
Course & Unit Catalogue	10
Learning process	11
Learning approaches	11
Designing for deep student-centered learning	13
Constructing learning outcomes	13
Assessing learning	14
Planning and preparing	15
Diversity	16
Social background, age and gender diversity.....	16
Cultural diversity	17
Physical and mental diversity	17
Engage in teaching – First classes	17
Break the ice and continue the dialog	17
Teaching in different modes	18
Ground rules and expectations	19
Before a teaching session	19
During a session	19
Dealing with class difficulties	20
Marking	20

Feedback	21
Assessment rubrics	22
Unit and Teaching Evaluations	23
Evaluating your teaching.....	23
Peer review	23
Research your teaching.....	23
References	24

Welcome...

This Getting started booklet is designed to be a handy first reference for you as you take up the role of casual or sessional teacher at UNE. At UNE, and at many universities across Australia, a high proportion of teaching staff at any one time are employed on a casual or sessional basis and make a vital contribution to the teaching mission of the University.

Teaching is at the heart of UNE's mission and an overall goal for this mission is:

UNE provides the highest quality learning experience for all students, through the delivery of relevant, future-oriented and quality assured courses ... (UNE Strategic Teaching and Learning Plan 2012-2016, p.2)

Whether you are new to university teaching, returning to teaching after a break, or new to UNE and unfamiliar with the structure and organization of your discipline here, this booklet aims to provide some essential information and resources to help you carry out your role in the University's provision of quality teaching and learning.

The booklet has three main sections:

1. Your teaching environment
Outlines some of the important administrative, physical and technological information that contributes to the context of teaching at UNE.
2. Engaging your students
Lays out some of the key aspects of engaging with your students and the teaching and learning process.
3. Quality in your teaching
Takes up the issue of quality in teaching and covers some of the core topics and activities involved in managing and developing your teaching.

In addition to this guide, there are other resources and forms of support that you can draw on in your role as casual or sessional teacher. These include an induction session for all staff, online information resources, workshops and regular interest group meetings on a variety of teaching topics offered by Innovations and Professional Development at the Learning Innovations Hub. The Unit or Course Coordinator in your discipline group in the School and the Organisational Development Unit will be valuable resources in fulfilling your role. A list of useful contacts for these and other resources is provided at the end of this booklet.

Your teaching environment

This section provides a quick reference guide to a number of the systems and units within the University that it is necessary or helpful for you to know about as a casual or sessional teacher. Many organizational as well as academic units play a role in maintaining the teaching environment at UNE. Here is some basic information and contact links to a range of these.

Administration and organisation

Human Resource Services (HR)

HR provides a number of services that relate to your role as an employee, including recruitment and contract administration, enterprise bargaining, equity issues, leave entitlements, superannuation, salary rates and payroll management. The general contact link for HR is: <http://www.une.edu.au/staff-current/une-areas/administration-areas/human-resource-services>

Development

Within Human Resource Services, the Development unit offers staff induction for all new staff and training and development courses both online and in face-to-face sessions. These include technical courses, such as in the student management system CALLISTA, as well as Work Place Health and Safety related information. Find out more about these through their webpage at: <http://www.une.edu.au/staff-current/development>

Web Kiosk

The University's online staff web based resource for accessing information concerning pay, payroll summaries and leave applications is Web Kiosk. As a casual or sessional academic staff member you will usually submit your payment timesheet and keep track of other details about your employment through this portal. Instructions for using Web Kiosk are available through the [login page](#) on the UNE web.

Before you login you will need to have your UNE staff user name and password account, which you can obtain through the Information Technology Directorate (ITD).

Information Technology Directorate (ITD)

ITD provides support with information technology systems for both staff and students via email, telephone or in person at their Service Desk. The range of services offered to staff can be accessed at: <http://www.une.edu.au/it-services/staff/>

Your IT account

Before you can use staff online systems and resources you need to set up an account (email address/username and password). You can apply in person at the ITD Service Desk with a completed [New Account Registration](#) form. If you are working off campus, email the Service Desk at servicedesk@une.edu.au or call 02 6773 5000. More information about staff IT accounts is available on the ITD website at: <http://www.une.edu.au/info-for/new-staff/your-staff-account>

Policies

Governance of University life takes place within a context of policies, which articulate principles upon which plans and courses of action on a wide range of matters can proceed. A full list of UNE policies are available at: <http://www.une.edu.au/policies/academic-policies>.

Some of the most important policies for you to become familiar with as you move into your role as a teacher are listed on this page, including the [Assessment](#) policy, which includes policy covering examinations, special assessment, extension procedures and general assessment procedures. Other important related documents are those covering [Graduate Attributes](#) policy and the various guidelines relating to [Plagiarism](#). It is a good idea to gain an acquaintance with these, particularly in the first instance the Assessment policy, as a useful background and guide to your work with students.

UNE strategic teaching and learning plan

The *UNE Strategic Teaching and Learning Plan 2012-2016*, http://www.une.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/43717/tandl-strategic-plan.pdf is a relatively brief document which summarises some of the major aspirations and principles upon which teaching and learning at the University should be based. Your School may also have its own set of guiding documents to further inform your understanding.

School procedures and support

Your discipline group

Your closest working relationships in your teaching role will be those of your School and discipline group. You may be working as part of a teaching team as well as with a Unit or Course Coordinator who may be supervising you. Building and maintaining good communication with these colleagues is one of the most important factors in establishing a sound foundation for your role.

Everyone in the School has many commitments and demands on their time but it can be very useful to establish early on in your appointment the best time and frequency for setting up a regular meeting with the Unit or Course Coordinator, or the group if you are team teaching, to discuss teaching or organizational issues. These meetings, either in person or via any appropriate media if you are at a distance or cannot schedule a face-to-face conversation, can be invaluable. As well as breaking down the isolation that many casual and sessional staff experience, these regular consultations can help you:

- ensure you are on the right track with your teaching approach
- gain information about aspects of the subject or assessment you are unsure about
- develop or share a new idea for teaching
- discuss and find solutions for class management issues
- become aware of School-based mission statements, plans and policies.

School committees and meetings

At a somewhat broader level, a number of committees and meetings in the School will deal with business that may impact on your role or that will provide some useful context for understanding how the School and the University works.

As a casual staff member, you may not have the time to attend all of these meetings or they may not be immediately relevant to your work. It can still be very useful to find out about which ones there are, their functions, and who normally attends or is on the committee. Some, however, such as moderation and examiners' meetings, will be important for you to know about. Ask your Unit or Course Coordinator about these and discuss those it will be necessary or helpful for you to attend.

Internal School procedures and facilities

Each School also has its own administrative procedures, including those for supplying and maintaining equipment and facilities, allocating office space and supplies and arranging conference attendance. Staff in your School office will be able to provide you with information and assistance.

Teaching spaces for face-to-face

Equipment in lecture and tutorial rooms

Getting to know ahead of time the spaces you will be teaching in and how to operate any equipment, such as data projectors, computers and interactive white boards they might contain, is an essential step towards feeling confident in working with a class. Your supervisor, teaching colleagues, School administrative or technical staff can all be good sources of information here. Be proactive about approaching them.

Similarly, if your work involves practical tutorials, laboratory sessions or fieldwork, introduce yourself to the technical officer or staff member responsible for helping to organize these activities or maintaining these facilities and discuss your teaching needs.

Room bookings and timetables

Many lecture and tutorial rooms that you will be working in may already have been booked before the beginning of Timester and timetables established. However, it is always a good idea to check these. Most teaching spaces at UNE are booked centrally through [Timetabling](#), where you can check class, intensive school and examinations timetables as well as check and make room bookings.

Bookings for some spaces may also be managed in the School. Ask your colleagues about any that you might need to use.

Online systems

UNE has a major commitment to online teaching and more than 80% of teaching and learning activity takes place in the online environment. This section introduces some of those you need to know about.

Moodle

The main online teaching software (or 'learning management system') currently used at UNE is Moodle. Two online sites developed and maintained by the Learning Innovations Hub:

1. *Getting Started in Moodle @ UNE* <http://moodle.une.edu.au/course/view.php?id=175> which introduces you to the basics of Moodle, and;
2. *Teaching Online @ UNE* <http://moodle.une.edu.au/course/view.php?id=2>, which provides information and resources in Moodle for enhancing online teaching, will be good places to start learning your way around this software.

In addition, small group and one-on-one online and face-to-face sessions on the pedagogical aspects of teaching online are offered by the Innovations and Professional Development team at LIH. Find program and contact details about our [courses](#) on the team website.

Turnitin

Turnitin Originality Check is an online database that checks the text of any files submitted against a large number of Internet sites and databases and provides an online report of the level of originality of the text. More information about the database and obtaining and interpreting the reports it produces is available at: <http://moodle.une.edu.au/mod/book/view.php?id=77431&chapterid=11683>

At UNE, Turnitin is used to help teaching staff check the originality of text submitted in assignments and for students to check their own work. When you set up assignments in Moodle, the Turnitin Originality Check is set up by default. You can also submit text files directly to Turnitin to check originality at: <http://moodle.une.edu.au/mod/book/view.php?id=77431&chapterid=54076>

Other software applications for teaching

In addition to Moodle and Turnitin, UNE has other applications that can be very valuable to you – to communicate with students or to offer self-assessment activities, for example. Information about some of those currently provided, as well as opportunities to take part in demonstration and hands-on practice sessions, is available at:

<http://lih.une.edu.au/teach/>

Library online

The Dixson Library will be a vital resource for both you and your students, providing learning and teaching spaces, specialist subject assistance, reference materials, consultative opportunities for study skills and a range of other services for all the University community. Find out more about these services at: <http://www.une.edu.au/library/>.

Online, as well as in in-person spaces, the Library provides an array of valuable [services to staff](#), including access to databases of resources, including journals and eBooks, searching and research support services and copyright information.

eReserve

One Library service of particular relevance to you in planning and offering your teaching will be [eReserve](#), the Library's electronic reserve collection. It enables teaching staff to provide online, copyright-compliant access to journal articles and book chapters which are not otherwise available electronically. It is important to become familiar with the scope and functions of eReserve as it plays a significant role in the University's compliance with Intellectual Property legislation.

Copyright

The use of intellectual property not owned by yourself or the University – that is, 'third party' material - is governed by legislation with which all employees of UNE need to comply. It can be quite difficult to distinguish how certain materials can be used in your teaching and different conditions might apply when teaching online than when teaching face-to-face. The eReserve collection mentioned above is one way that the use of copyrighted material can be managed. UNE's Copyright Office provides more extensive advice and information on all aspects of intellectual property for educational purposes at: <http://www.une.edu.au/copyright/>.

CALLISTA

This data system is the means by which UNE staff organise and manage information relating to student enrolments, attendance and course and unit progression. You may not have to work directly with CALLISTA - although check with your supervisor or other staff in your School about this - but it will be helpful to have a basic knowledge of what it contains and the reports it can provide. Further information about the CALLISTA system as well as login access, is available at: <http://www.une.edu.au/callista/>.

Course & Unit Catalogue

It will also be helpful to know about the Course & Unit Catalogue, which lists and briefly describes all courses and includes a quick look-up feature to enable you to read the details about individual units of study. The Course & Unit Catalogue at: <http://www.une.edu.au/courses/> also provides links to useful information such as advance standing and principal dates.

Engaging your students

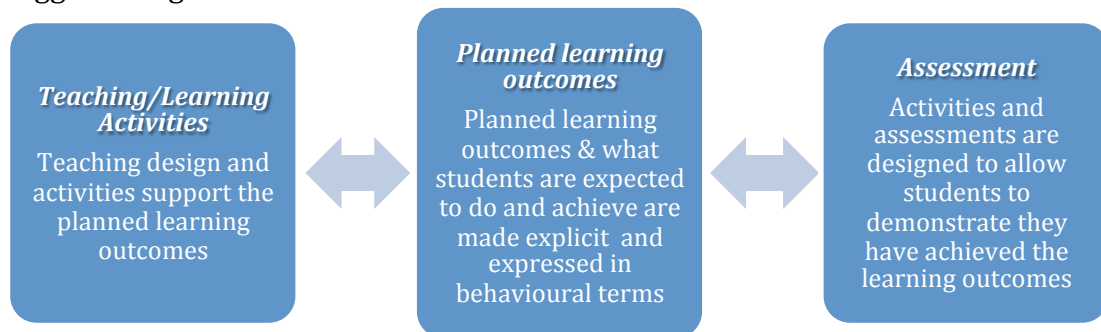
One of the most critical roles we have as teachers is to engage ourselves with who our students are in order to help them engage with the learning experiences we offer. As in any human relationship, the key is to begin a conversation and develop a dialog. In this way, the exchange of ideas and information and the *change*, which is at the heart of the process of learning, can take place. First, a little of what the learning process might be.

Learning process

Consider this quotation from Biggs and Tang (2007: 19):

Expert teaching includes mastery over a variety of teaching techniques, but unless learning takes place, they are irrelevant; the focus is on what the student does and on how well the intended outcomes are achieved.

This quotation sums up a significant concept in teaching characterized as **constructive alignment**, which can be represented in this way (adapted from Biggs & Tang 2007: 59):



In this way, planned learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment are in alignment. There is a coherent pathway from what is asked of the student to how they can achieve it. There should also be a dialog between all parties at all stages of the process. The alignment principle is widely recognized as fundamental to effective teaching for learning, regardless of the subject content. Designing learning to be constructively aligned or *outcomes-based* has also been linked to the approach to learning adopted by the student.

Learning approaches

Research by Marton and Säljö (1997) established two distinct learning approaches. One, classified as a *surface* approach, and characterised as 'reproducing' in tendency, found the learner focusing on memorisation of segments of tasks rather than on meaningful relationships between parts. As a result, even though they had concentrated on remembering facts and details,

these students were less likely than another group in the study to remember the ideas and facts.

In contrast, the students who adopted the approach classified as *deep*, found the learners focusing on 'actively making sense' of the task. These students looked for 'connections', 'underlying structure' and relationships to real world examples. As a result, they both understood the task better overall and could recall ideas and evidence more successfully than the other group (Ramsden 2003: 42).

As Ramsden outlines, how students go about learning is associated with differences in how students organise information. One way, described as 'atomistic', finds students confusing an author's argument with the evidence they use to support it and seeing each component as a single sequence of 'facts'. The alternative, or 'holistic' approach, finds students maintaining the structure of the author's argument through 'integrating the whole and the parts' (p. 43). The relationship of deep and surface approaches with, respectively, holistic and atomistic modes of organising learning, is illustrated in this figure.

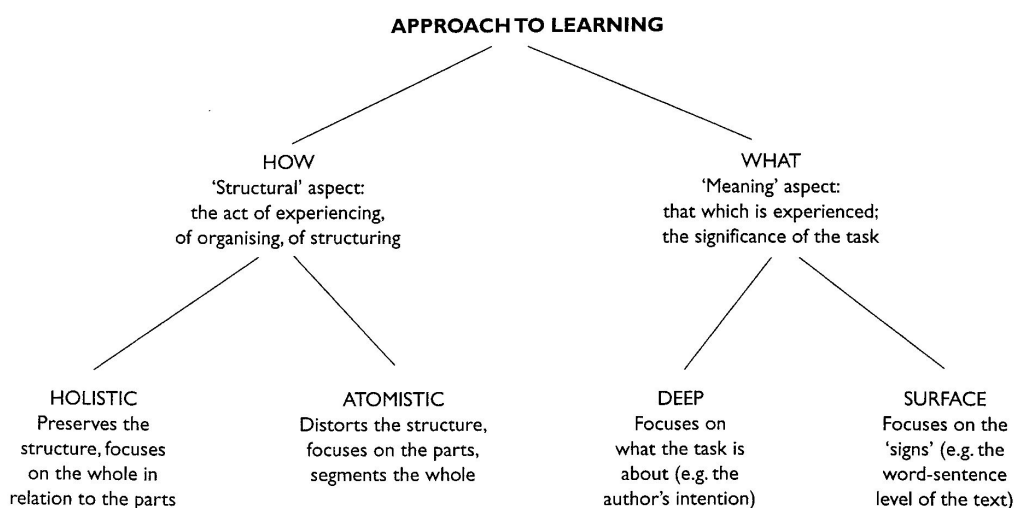


Figure: The logical relation of approaches to learning (Ramsden 2003: 44)

As Ramsden (2003: 45) stresses, both learning approaches are generic: '[e]veryone is capable of both deep and surface approaches, from early childhood onwards'. In addition, findings are that the approach adopted is highly dependent on the educational setting and its learning tasks. Thus, approaches to learning are not so much 'something a student *has*; they represent what a learning task or set of tasks *is* for the learner' (Ramsden 2003: 45). Whether a student skates on the surface or engages with the task to make sense of it for understanding and increased expertise depends to a large extent on what they are asked to do and the way the tasks set for them are structured and presented. Key to this process is the concept of student or learner-centered learning design.

Designing for deep student-centered learning

While we might agree that deep rather than surface learning is our aim, how do we design for deep learning? In general terms, and with the prospective experience of learning of the student in mind, you would:

1. Construct and articulate the learning outcomes
2. Design the tasks and activities that would lead to the successful attainment of the outcomes
3. Establish how you will evaluate the success of your learning design

Constructing learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are central to the student's experience of learning. At many universities, including UNE, learning outcomes are now derived from The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), an integrated policy that comprises learning outcomes for each qualification type and level in the AQF framework.

Learning outcomes are constructed as a taxonomy, or series of categorisations based on the system of AQF levels, of what graduates are expected to **know**, **understand** and **be able to do**. Learning outcomes are expressed in terms of the dimensions of: knowledge, skills and the application of knowledge and skills. The following table outlines these dimensions.

Table: AQF 3 dimensions of the learning outcomes¹

Knowledge is what a graduate knows and understands .	Skills are what a graduate can do .	Application of knowledge and skills is the context in which a graduate applies knowledge and skills
<p>It is described in terms of depth, breadth, kinds of knowledge and complexity, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depth of knowledge can be general or specialised • breadth of knowledge can range from a single topic to multi-disciplinary area of knowledge • kinds of knowledge range from concrete to abstract, from segmented to cumulative • complexity of knowledge refers to the combination of kinds, depth and breadth of knowledge. 	<p>Skills are described in terms of the kinds and complexity of skills and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cognitive and creative skills involving the use of intuitive, logical and critical thinking • technical skills involving dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments • communication skills involving written, oral, literacy and numeracy skills • interpersonal skills and generic skills. 	<p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application is expressed in terms of autonomy, responsibility and accountability • the context may range from the predictable to the unpredictable, and the known to the unknown, while tasks may range from routine to non-routine.

¹ AQF, 2nd Ed Jan 2013, Page 11

Generic learning outcomes (Graduate Attributes), the transferrable, non-discipline specific skills a graduate should achieve, are incorporated into qualifications.

Here are some hints for constructing learning objectives as well as some phrases and verbs to describe expected outcomes at different year levels.

At UNE, course and unit learning outcomes are written using a standard format:

1. *Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*
2. *Upon completion of this unit, students will be able to:*

Learning outcomes are also constructed in terms of desired behavioural outcomes. For example, and simply put, outcomes can be expressed as verbs, such as: *define, analyse, appraise, review, interpret.*

Key phrases that can be used to describe the outcomes might be: (at UNE 200 level), “demonstrate an understanding of...”, “formulate...”, “solve ...”, “resolve...”, “analyse information in the context of...”. At UNE 300 level, students might be asked to, “critically evaluate the consequences of...”, “construct a synthesis of different approaches to...”, “adopt the model of ...”, “design policies suitable for...in the presence of...”.

More information about the development of learning outcomes and the tasks that will enable students to achieve them can be obtained from Biggs and Tang (2007) and other works cited in References, or from your Unit Coordinator, teaching team members and through the LIH website.

Each qualification level in the AQF has an associated number of learning outcomes seen as appropriate for that level. You can download the latest edition of the AQF from: <http://www.aqf.edu.au/resources/aqf/>. It is worth familiarising yourself with the information that applies to the units or courses in which you are teaching and deciding how the learning tasks and activities students are asked to undertake are designed to allow students to achieve the stated learning outcomes. Designing your own learning tasks for students can be one of the most enjoyable aspects of teaching. Your own insight into the student experience, added to the information provided in the resources cited in the References section and the advice of experienced colleagues are the bases of learning the art of designing for learning.

Assessing learning

As the principle of an aligned approach to learning outlined here states, assessment is a key element in the construction of learning. Assessment tasks are the means by which students demonstrate how they have achieved the learning outcomes as well as the teacher's best means of gauging how learning is occurring. For many casual and sessional staff, assessment tasks may already have been established for the units in which they are employed to teach. If they are not or if you wish to make changes to assessment tasks, be aware that

significant changes to assessment need to be approved by the Academic Programs Committee of the University and thus may not be an option in the first time you offer the unit. Again, it is important that you familiarize yourself thoroughly with the details of the [Assessment policy](#) in order to conform to any requirements in this regard.

In general, any assessments need to be designed to enable students to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes. When you are ready to design assessment for your own teaching units, there is a large amount of literature available to guide you. The work of Biggs and Tang (2007), Marton et al. (2005) and Ramsden (2003) cited in the reference list are all valuable foundational texts. A further range of resources on assessment related topics is available at the Higher Education Academy page, '[Assessment Projects and Resources](#)'.

Constructive alignment for deep learning is a complex and challenging principle to ensure in practice, particularly if you are new to teaching or in a new teaching situation. We cannot cover all there is to understand about teaching in this brief 'getting started' guide but the selected references listed in the References section will be a good place to begin when you are ready to explore the subject further.

In the meantime, here are some basic considerations for dealing with the early days of teaching that are compatible with a constructively aligned approach for you to build on as you develop your role as a teacher.

Planning and preparing

Careful planning is essential to a successful teaching and learning experience. You may have arrived after the teaching period has commenced or have been given a teaching plan, assessments and resources already established for the subjects you are teaching but it is still important to 'own' as much of the teaching approach as possible. This will enable you to feel more in control of your part of the situation as well as more natural in your relations with students and other staff.

All units taught at UNE have planned learning outcomes and assessments outlined in the Course & Unit Catalogue at: <http://www.une.edu.au/courses/>. Spend some time absorbing the available information about the units you will be teaching and where they relate to the course.

- Familiarise yourself with all relevant study materials made available through the School, whether these be online or in another format, and talk to your supervisor and other School staff to gather as much information as you can about what you will be teaching.
- As a casual or sessional teacher you should not normally be expected to design a unit from scratch, although you should have an opportunity to suggest modifications or even a complete learning redesign after some

experience with working with students in the unit. Talk to your supervisor or teaching team about this as the Trimester progresses.

- Take some time to reflect on the learning outcomes specified for the unit and work out what activities and tasks students can be asked to do to engage them with the planned outcomes. Are those already indicated in the unit materials compatible with your approach? What scope, if any, is there for adaptation? How are the tasks structured to engage a deep approach?
- Identify and collect any additional resources you may require for your classes. Remember to do this in a way which complies with Copyright agreements. If you are unsure, check the Copyright Office website at: <http://www.une.edu.au/copyright/>.
- Ensure you have all the basic logistics, such as room bookings and equipment, under control. If you will be using applications such as PowerPoint or Internet applications in a face-to-face lecture or tutorial, do visit the teaching space before the class time and try out how the equipment functions in that location.
- Take advantage of the workshops and orientation sessions for staff offered through the LIH website. You can also request one-on-one assistance or consultation through this site.
- Plan how you will conduct classes to get students actively engaged in the unit and working towards the planned learning outcomes. To plan for this engagement, you need to consider in detail who those students might be.

Who are my students?

A key to developing the dialog which is essential for learning is to begin to appreciate where the people you will communicate with are coming from and letting them know something about you. Regardless of when you begin teaching, whether at the start of Trimester or weeks into the teaching period, take the time to get to know something of your students and share a little information about yourself. One of the main themes that should emerge as you get to know your students is that there will almost certainly be a diverse range of situations and circumstances among the group.

Diversity

Here are some of the broad aspects of diversity to keep in mind.

Social background, age and gender diversity

While a number of characteristics of students, such as gender and general age group, might seem self-evident when you meet face-to-face, people's diversity is not always obvious. That is why the introductory icebreaker activities suggested below can be so critical in giving you some understanding of the diversity of your student group.

As a starting point, remember that many students at UNE are mature age or special entry students who may not have studied formally for a number of years, may not have a family culture of tertiary study and may be feeling less than confident about their ability to study and to fit in in the university environment. Avoid making assumptions and do not use generalisations based on age, social groupings, ethnicity, gender, economic status or physical and mental capacities.

Cultural diversity

UNE has a significant proportion of students from other countries and cultural backgrounds, for many of whom English is not their first language. Study at UNE can present a major set of extra challenges for these students. The document [Cultural Diversity and the UNE](#) outlines some principles and guidelines. There are also specific requirements related to students enrolled as International students. You can find out about these requirements, as well as the range of assistance available to International students through the [UNE International](#) webpage.

Physical and mental diversity

Students may also have a diverse range of physical and mental conditions that can affect their study. [Student Central](#) provides information and support contacts for students and information for staff working with students with special needs. Assistance may include counseling, study materials and communications help.

There are many aspects to diversity. That said, however, attempting to answer the questions: Who are my students? What experiences will they be building on when studying my unit? can seem difficult when all the information you may have to start from is a list of names and student identification numbers. This should be your first step when you move from planning and preparation to your first class session.

Engage in teaching – First classes

Having planned and prepared as far as possible before your first class it is time to begin getting to know your students and letting them get to know you.

Break the ice and continue the dialog

Depending on the class size and how comfortable you feel with any particular approach, try a standard icebreaker like this one outlined in Kavanagh, Clark-Murphy and Wood, 2011: p. 88:

Ask students to form groups in a number of different ways. Then allow five minutes for discussion, after which they move to the next grouping. Make sure you give students time to introduce themselves within their groups before moving to the next. The groupings you choose should not be complex and should include things that students can easily relate to and that are relevant to both the students' personal life and their university life.

Specifics will depend on the nature of your group but could include:

- Form a group with other students majoring in the same discipline as you.***
- Are you studying full or part time? Form a group with others doing the same.***
- Find all the students born in the same month as you.***

There will be other specific groupings you might suggest, such as: occupation, 'most/least favourite thing about study so far' or 'the assessment task I have learnt the most from in previous study'. Get groups to report back to the main group and offer a summary at the end in which you also give some background on yourself.

Alternatively, start with a short profile of yourself that you are happy to share – your background, education, research interests, most memorable study experience (either good or bad), other employment you may have had, and so on. Then ask your students to do the same.

Think carefully about the questions you ask or the information you request. Where possible align them with unit topics or other aspects of the unit or with gaining information to help you tailor discussion in relevant ways. One useful piece of information to add and request is: Where I live now is...which is some.... kms from where I was born in.... This can provide a useful starting point for understanding cultural background and context.

These activities can be adapted to work both face-to-face and online. While they may seem to detract initially from your class time, it will be time well spent in coming to understand the experience your students bring to your class.

Teaching in different modes

There has been much discussion over the last few decades about the qualitative differences, if any, there are between online and face-to-face teaching. These discussions continue in the educational literature, with many finding no significant difference in learning outcomes between online, face-to-face and blended (both face-to-face and online) means of delivery (e.g. Larson and Chung-Hsien Sung 2009). To learn more of these discussions, the *No Significant Difference* website at: <http://www.nosignificantdifference.org> provides a repository of articles arguing from both perspectives – but mainly pointing (so far!) to no significant difference in learning outcomes between the modes. These findings continue to support the position that it is not the teaching medium but the teaching approach and design that is key to learning.

All teaching modes present their challenges and opportunities. Nevertheless, there are differences in approach and technique that are required for different media. The nature of these will emerge as you begin to plan your teaching for a range of media. As teaching online may be the least familiar to you as you take up your casual or sessional teaching role, it will be helpful to spend some time

looking at the articles on the award-winning COFA Online Gateway site produced and maintained by the University of New South Wales at: <http://online.cofa.unsw.edu.au/learning-to-teach-online/lto-episodes>. It provides interesting perspectives and information on a number of topics under the general theme of learning to teach online.

As already mentioned in the previous section, the Learning Innovations Hub also offers a range of resources and workshops to assist you in both online and face-to-face teaching. Investigate these at: <http://www.une.edu.au/staff-current/academic/teaching/learning-and-teaching-support/academic-staff-development/courses>.

Ground rules and expectations

Regardless of the medium in which you deliver your teaching, carefully consider and make explicit at the first session what the session is about and the basic ground rules of behaviour in the class. These can include: ways of listening and questioning, respectful and inclusive language, contributions to discussions, group work, use of equipment and, especially for online interactions, the times when you will be able to respond to student queries. Discuss these with students to clarify your rationale for setting the protocols.

Before a teaching session

Before each session, reinforce any points that might need a reminder (although don't repeat the same detailed list by rote each time if you can avoid it!) and communicate what will be covered in the session, its aims and how it will be structured. Include a brief outline of how the session fits into the overall plan of the unit and what the expected session outcomes might be.

During a session

Maintain the opportunities for dialog and active engagement through asking questions and inviting students to do so as well. Here are some suggestions:

Technique	For face-to-face	For online
Ask open-ended questions	An open-ended question is one where the answer is not easily either 'yes' or 'no'. Questions that begin with How? and Why? Or as 'Tell me something about...', 'Tell us about a time when...' have a greater chance of a fuller response.	Very much the same.
Respond	Always respond positively to both questions and answers from students. If an answer is not complete, is slightly off topic or indicates misunderstanding, try to acknowledge some aspect of what they have said and then refine or extend your question: 'Yes, that is an important [aspect] of the [topic]. What about the [other aspects/s]?'	Very much the same, except: advertise to students the days, times and frequency they can expect you to respond to their questions and comments. This prevents frustration and confusion when your other commitments keep you from online discussions.

Redirect	Engage more of the group or different students from those who have answered so far by such techniques as: "Thanks, that's an important point. [Another group or individual], what do you think? How would you answer that?" Repeat this technique several times to engage all of the class if possible.	Again, the technique works in a similar way, regardless of the medium.
Rephrase	If students do not respond and do not seem to have understood your question, ask it in another way or break it down into a smaller component to ask first.	Again, the technique works in a similar way, regardless of the medium.
Space	Allow a space of time for students to respond. A period of 10 to 15 seconds is usually enough to gauge whether the student is just formulating their response or does not know how to answer.	Time will depend on the protocols you set up in the online site. Provide guidance by indicating the specific date/time by when an answer is expected or needed.
Probe	Extend the interaction and students' thinking about a topic by follow up questions, such as 'What alternatives can you suggest?', 'Why do you think that is important?' and, 'How would that look/work in practice?'	Again, the technique works in a similar way, regardless of the medium.

Dealing with class difficulties

The best ways of guarding against the development of inappropriate and disruptive behavior in a class group is to plan all activities carefully and to establish the ground rules clearly from the beginning and reinforce them as necessary. However, on occasion, disruptive and uncivil behavior can develop and it is best to address this as soon as possible to avoid escalation.

One of the first things to do if you notice behaviour that disturbs you is to intervene and remind students of the ground rules and class protocols. If necessary and if the behaviour continues or escalates, it may be necessary to notify Security or other UNE officers. It is a good idea to ask before you begin teaching what the appropriate procedures and personnel may be in the event of difficulties.

Marking

Marking of assignments and assessment tasks is one of the most significant aspects of the teaching and learning process for yourself as teacher and for students as they obtain feedback on their progress toward and achievement of the learning outcomes. Increasingly, much marking is either performed online as well as returned to students online and there are opportunities available for you to learn about the software applications, such as Grademark, that can help you with these tasks. Find out more about these at: <http://moodle.une.edu.au/course/view.php?id=2>.

In general, each School may have its own procedures and requirements for marking and administering the recording of grades. To gain a clear

understanding of what may be required in your School or discipline group, use this checklist of questions to ask of your Unit Coordinator or teaching team before you begin marking.

1. Assignment delivery and return How do I receive assignments and return them when marked? How and where is receipt and delivery recorded?
2. Marks and grades What is the grading system used? How and where are these recorded?
3. Rubrics Are there standard assessment rubrics used in the units? Do I need to devise my own? (See more about rubrics below)
4. Time and payment Is there a recommended time to spend on marking assignments? Is this time for which I will be paid?
5. Return time Are there expected times by which marking must be completed, assignments returned to students and marks recorded?
6. Feedback Are there guidelines for how much or what style of feedback should be provided to students?
7. Extensions What are the policies and procedures for granting extensions?
8. Resubmission Can students resubmit assignments for remarking? What is the process?
9. Plagiarism What should I do if I suspect plagiarism?
10. Team marking Are marks moderated or team-marked? What is the procedure for this?

Feedback

Feedback on assignments and assessment tasks is one of the critically important activities in the teaching and learning process. While marks are an essential aspect of your response, communicating to students about their efforts both as they progress (*formative* feedback) and as they complete their study in the unit (*summative* feedback) is equally essential for learning. What comprises effective feedback? Nicol (2010: 512) summarises research that points to good written feedback as being:

- **Understandable:** expressed in a language that students will understand.
- **Selective:** commenting in reasonable detail on two or three things that the student can do something about.
- **Specific:** pointing to instances in the student's submission where the feedback applies.
- **Timely:** provided in time to improve the next assignment.
- **Contextualised:** framed with reference to the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria.

- **Non-judgemental:** descriptive rather than evaluative, focused on learning goals not just performance goals.
- **Balanced:** pointing out the positive as well as areas in need of improvement.
- **Forward looking:** suggesting how students might improve subsequent assignments.
- **Transferable:** focused on processes, skills and self-regulatory processes not just on knowledge content.
- **Personal:** referring to what is already known about the student and her or his previous work.

Nicol (2010: 513) adds that feedback (whether written or delivered verbally) is more likely to achieve these characteristics when it is provided in the context of an ongoing interaction and dialogue with students.

Assessment rubrics

An assessment rubric, also described as a grading schedule or marking scheme, is a set of criteria, often presented in a tabulated form for student achievement in assessment tasks. Rubrics make the criteria by which an assignment or task will be assessed explicit and as such can contribute to how the student goes about constructing their learning while providing a framework within which the teacher approaches assessing students' work. Rubrics should be made available to and discussed with students from the beginning of their study in a unit. There are many examples of the value and challenges of using rubrics in higher education (Reddy & Andrade 2010) to consider in your development of a constructively aligned learning experience.

While rubrics include generic criteria such as those for grammar and referencing, they also provide a matrix for grading content knowledge and subject-specific skills. Ask your Unit Coordinator or teaching team members about the use of rubrics in the subjects you will be teaching or create your own. A good introduction to the nature and use of assessment rubrics in an Australian Higher Education context is provided on the University of New South Wales Learning and Teaching website at: <https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessment-rubrics>.

Quality in your teaching

An increasing interest at the National level in the quality of higher education and the standards by which that quality is assessed is reflected in the ongoing activities of the Australian Qualifications Framework Council and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency ([TEQSA](#)), which has a brief to regulate standards in the sector. At UNE, as elsewhere in Australian universities, responses to the call to accountability for quality standards for which these agencies have responsibility, course mapping and the review of learning outcomes at the unit level to ensure standards compliance are ongoing.

Your discipline group, Unit Coordinator and teaching team colleagues will be the first sources of information about what the status of quality review is in the course and units in which you are teaching. Further information is also available on the page [TEQSA and UNE](#) and through contacting LIH.

Unit and Teaching Evaluations

These evaluations are a regular part of ongoing assessment of teaching and learning. Ask about the schedule and procedures in your School or contact the [Corporate Intelligence Unit](#), which has responsibility for the evaluations.

Evaluating your teaching

In addition to the programmed institutional procedures, which provide information about standards compliance as well as the perceptions of students about your unit and your teaching, it can be very valuable to think about other ways of evaluating your teaching in order to develop yourself professionally.

Peer review

Asking colleagues to observe or review and provide feedback on aspects of your teaching can be very valuable experience. While this may seem a daunting prospect, especially if you are new to the discipline group, it can be a most useful means of gaining insights into your practice. Also, LIH provides pro-forma documents that can be used to facilitate peer review of your teaching and/or your teaching materials/online units.

Research your teaching

Setting up research projects on aspects of your own teaching, either as an individual or as part of a teaching team in collaboration with other specialist staff can provide you not only with valuable evaluative data about your own teaching but also enhance your general professional development and promotion prospects through publication, or teaching citations and awards. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) has gained momentum in Australian universities over the last decade and the value of this area of research continues to be recognised at the institutional level.

You can find more information about peer review and researching your teaching at the [SoTL Support](#) page.

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