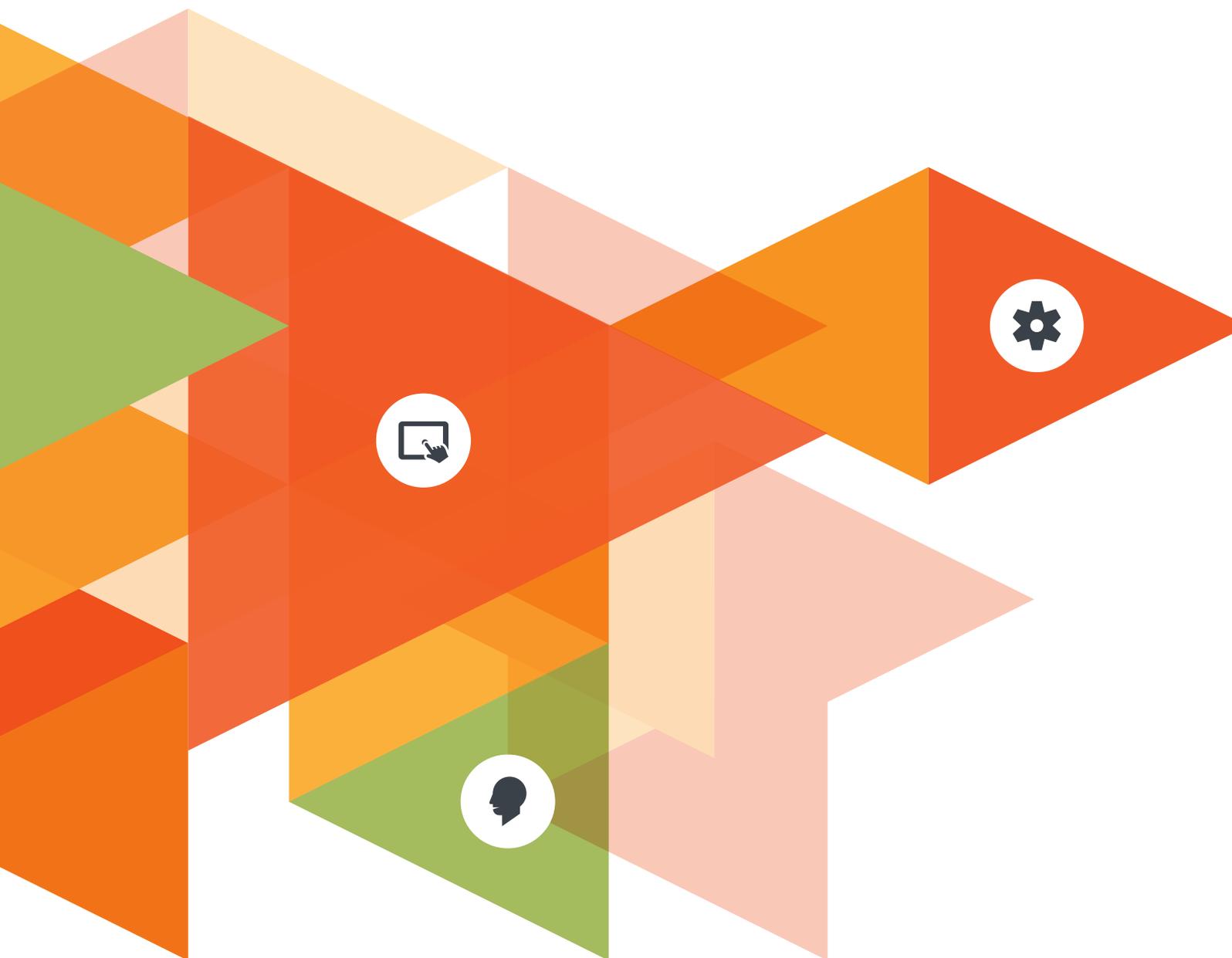


LEADING COURSES

Answers for Deakin staff who offer students
a brilliant education where they are
and where they want to go

CHAPTER 4: COURSE DELIVERY



First edition, June 2017





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CHAPTER 4: COURSE DELIVERY

This chapter explains:

- principles of cloud-first learning design
- creation of engaging learning experiences
- features of Deakin's cloud and physical learning spaces
- how Deakin supports the student experience.

Course delivery is fundamentally entwined with course design and assessment. Achievement of graduate learning outcomes relies on these three aspects of learning and teaching. Every iteration of unit and course delivery is a point in time to gather evidence, reflect on outcomes and refine the design. Teaching delivery is a skilled, professional activity that requires ongoing development.

Deakin's courses are delivered in accordance with the requirements of the [Course Design and Delivery Procedure](#), [Assessment \(Higher Education Courses\) Procedure](#) and external professional and regulatory requirements.

CLOUD-FIRST LEARNING

What is cloud-first learning design?

Deakin University is a leader in digital learning. Deakin's Cloud Campus comprises courses that can be completed wholly online, sometimes with some campus-based activities or assessment to access specialist equipment, spaces or learning activities. Cloud courses offer students flexible and accessible learning that allows them to structure their study around other commitments with family, work or other interests.

Deakin aims to provide students, whatever their place or mode of study, with optimal learning experiences that engage and inspire learners through high-quality personal connection—between students and teachers, peers and the community. All courses connect students with an active learning community through online learning environments via unit and course sites and provide access to media-rich, interactive learning resources.

At Deakin, **premium quality learning in the cloud** is characterised by:

1. Cloud-first learning design based on Deakin's curriculum framework (Chapter 2) that creates:
 - engaging online learning experiences
 - high-quality learning resources, available in a range of modes to suit user bandwidth
 - authentic assessment that reflects real-world tasks
 - consistent and logical organisation of unit and course sites that structure learning to achieve learning goals and ensures inclusivity and accessibility.
2. Equivalent learning opportunities for all students that ensure:
 - online learning activities that require active learning
 - effective online interactions between students (learner to learner) and between learners and teachers
 - constructive and timely feedback on student progress
 - flexible learning paths that allow students to learn at their own pace.

Principles for premium cloud learning

Learning design and feedback

Focuses on the learning design, pedagogy and evaluation of technology-enhanced learning

- There is an overall consistent learning design that addresses the needs of online students.
 - Technology-enhanced learning is applied in a pedagogically sound manner.
 - The design of the unit and course sites promotes clarity and legibility.
 - Performance data including student outcomes and feedback is explicitly used to support decision-making in unit design.
 - Feedback to students is provided in multiple formats including audio/video feedback and is provided to both group and individuals.
-

Principles for premium cloud learning

Learning experiences and resources

Focuses on ensuring students have active, authentic and media-rich resources and access to appropriate supports and resources available from the site

- Students are provided with regular online activities through interactive, media-rich learning resources.
- The learning activities may be synchronous or asynchronous.
- The unit or course site is designed to invite students to interact with resources, teachers and peers in a meaningful way.
- Educational-technology tools used in unit and course sites have a clear pedagogical underpinning.
- Students receive instructions about how tools are used for online activities.
- The relevance of learning resources is clearly presented to students.

Communication and collaboration

Focuses on ensuring that a cloud student has the same opportunity to readily communicate with his or her teacher and peers

- Regular options for communication between students, such as social media, blogs and journals and discussion boards, are provided.
- Online availability of staff for interaction is clear and communicated to students.
- Mechanisms for synchronous feedback and communication between teachers and students are provided.
- Students are provided with regular updates on the progress of the unit and their learning, for example 'what was learned', 'what is coming up'.
- Active discussion boards are available in the unit site with staff overseeing discussions.
- Collaboration tools are used to ensure equitable access to synchronous learning activities.

Assessment and compliance

Focuses on equivalency of assessment, copyright and academic integrity

- Online students have equivalent opportunity to develop their skills to reach the standards required by unit assessment
 - Assessment tasks delivered online are equivalent to face-to-face assessment tasks.
 - At least one assessment task is delivered online.
 - Copyright issues are addressed.
 - Online assessment maintains standards for verification of student identity for assessment purposes.
-

THE DEAKIN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

How do Deakin students study?

Deakin courses are offered in two modes at both course and unit level to increase flexibility and accessibility. For regulatory and reporting purposes, the modes of delivery of courses and units are categorised as 'cloud' or 'physical campus' as follows:

Modes of delivery—definitions

Cloud Campus mode (course level)*

The dominant mode of delivery is online. There may be some scheduled learning experiences, and students may be required to attend a designated physical site for some assessment and learning tasks.

Cloud Campus mode (unit level)*

The dominant mode of delivery of the unit entails online learning resources and experiences; there may be some compulsory contact hours, and students may be required to attend a designated physical site for some assessment and learning tasks.

Physical campus mode (course level)

The dominant mode of delivery is through face-to-face learning experiences at a Deakin campus or other physical site. Students will also have access to online learning resources and experiences.

Physical campus mode (unit level)

The dominant mode of delivery of the unit entails face-to-face learning experiences at a Deakin campus or other physical site; access to online learning resources and experiences may also be provided.

* There are restrictions on the number of units that international students studying onshore can take in cloud campus mode. These are discussed in Chapter 2.

Around 25% of our students study fully online on our Cloud Campus and are reliant on the online environment and interactions. The remaining 75% study at one of Deakin's four physical campuses. Those students have their experiences augmented with rich digital resources and experiences in our learning management system.

Interacting with students and timetabled learning experiences

Good teaching is based on personal relationships. All students need access to teachers who help to organise learning, facilitate learning activities and give timely and rich feedback on progress. Teachers interact with students through timetabled learning experiences and through informal activities which may be online (discussion boards, blog posts, unit site messages) or on-campus (Q&A sessions, open classrooms, regular drop-in times).

Deakin describes timetabled learning experiences, whether delivered at a cloud or physical site, using the following terms:

- **class**—a session where teaching staff engage students, often in large numbers, through presentations and other learning activities
- **seminar**—an interactive smaller group session.

All classes must start and finish promptly, especially where they are recorded, as the automated recording system will finish at the scheduled time. On-campus students rely on the 10 minute gap between successive classes to get to their next class, and cloud students need access to a complete recording to ensure they have not missed key information.

Equitable delivery

Whatever the place or mode of delivery all students must be provided with equitable and consistent access to classes and seminars, facilities, infrastructure, resources and support to assist their progress and achievement of learning outcomes. This does not mean that courses must be delivered in the same way for all student cohorts. Rather, course delivery should be tailored to suit the needs and expectations of students who choose to study in different ways and/or at different places.

Ensuring equitable access to teaching and learning experiences is particularly challenging where some students in a given course are studying at a physical campus supported by cloud learning resources while others are studying exclusively in the cloud. Online students need opportunities to interact with each other and with their teachers just as much as on-campus students. Deakin's procedure requires that:

An equitable opportunity to participate in timetabled classes and seminars is provided regardless of whether the learning experience is delivered at a cloud or physical campus.

Interactivity online can take multiple forms and should be aimed at building a strong relationship between the teacher and learners. Interactivity for cloud students may be achieved through online tools including: virtual classrooms (Bb Collaborate, Skype), online group activities with a facilitator, webinars or social media (Deakin Blogs, see Cloud Learning Tools below).

The [Minimum Standards for Unit Sites](#) set the baseline for online experiences for all students:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Learning Experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active cloud discussion boards are available in the unit site with staff overseeing discussions. • At least one place on the site where unit-related student questions are answered in a timely fashion. • Information is published regularly to the site to maintain site activity (e.g. news and announcements, reminders about assignments, other unit requirements, responses to commonly asked questions). |
|-----------------------------|---|

Talk to the [Disability Resources Centre \(DRC\)](#) team about the resources and services available to help students with disability, physical or mental health conditions participate in university life.

The [Library](#) works with the DRC team to provide a range of services that support the needs of students with a disability. Accessible versions of print material can be made if appropriate to students registered with the DRC.

The [Library](#) can support incarcerated students through the library delivery service for Cloud Campus students.

Access, connectivity and capability requirements

To fully engage with Deakin learning experiences, students need to have access to and be able to use internet-connected devices. The requirements for effective study at Deakin University are:

- access to a device such as a desktop computer or laptop
- connectivity to the internet
- capability to use our online learning environments.

The detailed requirements for access, connectivity and capability are communicated to students on the [Computing Requirements](#) webpage.

CREATING ENGAGING LEARNING EXPERIENCES

How can I engage students in active learning experiences?

Students are more likely to learn effectively if they are actively engaged in learning experiences that involve quality two-way interactions between teachers and peers and peers to peers, rather than listening and taking notes during class. This section provides some ideas and resources for creating engaging learning experiences through active learning strategies.

Active learning

Active learning is a teaching and learning approach where students ‘seek new information, organise it in a way that is meaningful and have the chance to explain it to others’ (Allen & Tanner, 2005, cited in Armbruster et al. 2009). Teaching strategies that enact active learning include project-based learning, problem-based learning and engagement in collaborative learning processes.

Student-centred teaching and learning activities focus on guiding students to take responsibility for their learning. This is most commonly facilitated by designing social learning activities that are strongly aligned with authentic assessment tasks. It is learner activity and interaction (not the teacher’s activity) through which students’ knowledge is constructed (Biggs, 2011:102). A focus on active learning has influenced the introduction of strategies such as the flipped classroom (students read essential material prior to class) where classes explore understanding the material through discussion, quizzes, debate and problem-solving.

More ideas for designing and implementing an active learning approach can be accessed by self-registering in the **CloudDeakin Curriculum Design for Unit Chairs** resource (via the ‘More’ tab on your CloudDeakin site). Interesting ideas for designing [visible thinking](#) discussion activities can be found at the [Harvard Graduate School of Education](#) site.

Engaging students in large classes

Rather than delivering information in class, it is more efficient and effective for students to pre-read material and to use class time to support deep learning through teacher and peer interactions.

This is not always easy in lecture theatres with fixed, tiered seating. Students are also often unwilling to complete pre-reading or other preparation before class.

There are a number of strategies that encourage students to complete pre-reading. These include:

- creating a [reading jigsaw](#) activity where pre-arranged groups of four are allocated a section of a reading to summarise and present an overview to the rest of the class
- running quick, online quizzes at the start of a class
- asking students to bring focused questions about a reading to present to a small group, or, if possible, to the whole class (and the teacher) for discussion. This is most effective when the reading is clearly related to an authentic assessment task (see Chapter 4).

Other strategies for engaging students in large classes include:

- periodic checking for understanding of class material (questioning)
- setting a quick problem to be worked on in pairs
- pausing and asking pairs to ‘retell’ the teacher’s main point to each other
- providing a concept-map template for students to use instead of students writing notes in the class
- providing red cards to students so they can ‘flag’ the teacher to re-word/repeat a point (fun and very useful feedback for the teacher).



Want to know more?

For more ideas for teaching large classes see Biggs (2011:121) or self-register in the **CloudDeakin Curriculum Design for Unit Chairs** (via the 'More' tab on your CloudDeakin site) resource and access the **Located Learning** module.

References

Armbruster, P., Patel, M., Johnson, E. and Weiss, M. (2009) 'Active learning and student-centred pedagogy improve student attitudes and performance in introductory biology', *CBE Life Sciences Education*, 8:3, 203–213.

Bandura, A. (1986) *Social Foundations of Thought and Action*. Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hill.

Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2011) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*. NY: Open University.

CLOUD LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

How can I create premium learning resources?

Cloud learning is delivered through unit sites and course sites. These sites are created using a suite of educational technologies packaged via a central learning management system to create the CloudDeakin ecosystem. Students access unit and course sites via the DeakinSync portal.

Components in the CloudDeakin ecosystem are maintained as enterprise systems with support available for staff and students. Platforms are regularly updated and may change over time as needs change and products develop. Deakin uses the Desire2Learn product Brightspace as the core learning management system. Some courses are trialling other platforms such as the FutureLearn open-learning platform.

Course and unit sites are constructed by course and unit teams with primary support from faculty teaching and learning teams. Further assistance is available from Deakin Learning Futures and the [TeachAssist](#) support site. Unit and course site design must comply with the University's minimum standards that are set out in the following schedules of the [Course Design and Delivery Procedure](#):

- [Schedule B: Minimum Standards for Course Sites](#)
- [Schedule C: Minimum Standards for Unit Sites](#)

Maintaining the standards ensures that students have a good online learning experience and can access consistent information that will support their learning. Cloud learning resources provided on unit sites must meet the following standards.

Learning resources

- **Resources** have a clear and logical flow, consistent formatting and descriptive file names.
 - Units offered to **cloud students** provide comprehensive learning resources organised to enable self-directed learning
 - **Technical and study support** links are included on the unit home page.
 - If classroom capture is available and used, **Echo capture and virtual classroom recordings** must be provided to all students in a timely manner. Non-recording of classes must be approved by the head of school. Students must be notified of classes which are not recorded and the reasons for this (e.g. class cancellation or group discussion).
-



Publisher Packages Unistart

I want students to watch, read, listen to learning resources

echo
EchoALP Class Capture

DeakinAir
DeakinAir Video Library

D2L Learning Topic Pages

Talis Library Readings

CloudDeakin



I want students to find out what's going on and discuss learning with teachers and peers



D2L News and Notifications

D2L Threaded Discussion



I want students to produce and display evidence of learning

D2L Portfolio

Office 365

Office 365 Collaboration Tools

WordPress Blogging

I want students to develop and submit assignments for assessment and feedback

***SparkPlus**

Turnitin

D2L Assessment

D2L Grade Book

WordPress Assessment

***Doubtfire**

I want students to collaborate with other students



echo
EchoALP Class Capture

Office 365

Office 365 Collaboration Tools

BBCollaborate/Skype for Business Webinars

CloudDeakin ecosystem

*Available as linked systems not full integrations.

Copyright and texts

General principles for selecting texts and readings for students include ensuring the material is contemporary, authentic and highly relevant to the unit. If unit chairs wish to set texts for purchase that they have authored, Academic Board approval is required.

Prescribed texts and recommended readings set for a unit are normally also made available to students through the Library. The Library has an electronic-format-preferred policy for information resources. Additional information is on the Library [Collection Development](#) pages.

Prescribed textbooks are not always made available to the Library by publishers, and in these cases the University may not be able to provide equitable access to information resources students need to complete courses. In that case, the University would not comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Support Act, the Higher Education Standards Framework and TEQSA guidelines. It is useful to discuss titles under consideration as a prescribed text with the Library in advance of a decision. Library staff are able to advise on alternative titles, or to have more detailed negotiations with publishers and seek the level of access the University requires.

While in general it is possible to use copyright material in a unit, there are exceptions and limits that need to be observed. Visit the Library webpage [Teach](#) for guides to all matters relating to copyright in teaching materials and reading lists. Library staff are available to assist with specific enquiries. In addition, the [Copyright and Licensing](#) wiki site offers detailed information and guides.

Learning design and cloud learning tools

From a student's perspective, resources found in their unit site should be part of the unit's learning story. In addition to providing essential resources (unit guides, notes, readings), a unit site should also help students make sense of an evolving narrative and engage them in self-directed learning.

We could consider a **model of interactivity** that encourages students to participate actively in their learning. Moore (1989) wrote about three types of interaction for distance learning (Learner-Content Interaction, Learner-Instructor Interaction and Learner-Learner Interaction). Others (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2000) have built on Moore's work to think specifically about online types of *interactivity* that foster learner engagement. For example, a strong teacher to learner presence provides a student with 'a sense of belonging, helping them to feel connected to community of learning and increasing their likelihood of persisting' (Stone, 2016). In practice, this might involve welcoming students, being responsive in discussion forums, providing regular feedback and facilitating peer learning. Making use of appropriate digital tools is a key strategy when designing for cloud learning.

The CloudDeakin ecosystems includes a range of digital tools to support interactive learning experiences. Tools are normally embedded within unit sites to ensure accessibility. Detailed information and user guides for these tools are available from the [TeachAssist](#) website.

Collaboration tools (virtual classrooms)

These tools are commonly used at Deakin to enable synchronous online communication and collaboration between staff and students. Participants can:

- talk online in real time
- chat via text online
- share videos, presentations and applications.
- work in groups

Two options are supported: BbCollaborate and Skype for Business.

| | |
|--|---|
| Learning and assessment activity tools (blogging, portfolio, peer assessment) | <p>These tools create online activities for individual students or groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WordPress blogging tool creates online sites for individual students or for whole classes • Portfolio tool is part of the Brightspace product and allows students to create an integrated portfolio of work • SparkPlus structures peer assessment activities • Turnitin text matching tool can assist students to identify poor referencing (see Chapter 6). |
| Class recordings (Echo) | <p>Classes in large teaching rooms are automatically recorded by the Echo Lecture Recording system. Echo recordings can also be booked in many smaller classrooms. Some classes use live-streaming to allow online students to join the class in real time.</p> <p>Echo recordings are made available to students through unit sites and should be provided wherever possible. Where recording is available, students must be notified of classes which are not recorded and the reasons for this.</p> |
| Authoring and content tools | <p>Teaching teams use a range of tools for construction of unit sites and management of content. Tools include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talis Aspire: for managing reading lists • Smart Sparrow: for creating adaptive learning modules • DeakinAir: for creating and managing video content. |

References

- Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). 'Critical Inquiry in a Text-Based Environment: Computer Conferencing Higher Education', *The Internet and Higher Education 2* (2-3): 87–105.
- Moore, M. G. (1989). 'Editorial: Three types of interaction', *American Journal of Distance Education*, 3:2, 1–7.
- Stone, C. (2016). 'Opportunity through online learning. Improving student access, participation and success in higher education'. [National Guidelines](#). NCSEHE & The University of Newcastle.

PHYSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

What standards has the University set for its physical learning spaces?

The following principles inform the University on the design of and support for physical learning spaces:

1. Spaces should enable rather than constrain learning and engagement through flexibility, technology, accessibility and comfort (thermal and familiarity) for staff and students. Spaces should be delightful and engaging, providing cost-effective visual stimuli.
2. Informal spaces should be inviting and porous, creating a sense of community. Bright, light and airy environments with delightful, relaxing areas that students love to be in.
3. Spaces must be upgraded sustainably, effectively (to a good quality standard) and efficiently (through wise use of resources and maintaining viable seating capacity).
4. Designs are user-centric, driven by staff and students and with advice from the Campus Learning Spaces Committee, including experts in
 - a. teaching and learning (faculty teaching staff)
 - b. space design (Facilities)
 - c. technology fit-out (eSolutions)
 - d. space allocation (Timetabling)
 - e. accessibility (Equity and Diversity).
 - f. financial sustainability (Chief Financial Officer)
5. Informal spaces should accommodate users' varying learning needs during and between trimesters (e.g. individual, group, exam prep) and allow for different traffic flows and types of activities.
6. Spaces should enable interactions between students on campus and in the cloud, and informal spaces should facilitate cross-disciplinary connections.
7. Informal learning spaces should be inspirational and owned by students, encouraging the generation and sharing of ideas, like professionals.

8. Capacity needs to be balanced with functionality—reduction in capacity must be carefully managed.
9. Presenter desks should be unobtrusive, moveable, and cater for presenter accessibility needs.
10. Power provision should be optimised to enable full flexibility.
11. Internal spaces should reflect natural light and extend into informal spaces, where feasible.
12. All teaching spaces should have basic power and presentation systems, audio reinforcement (as appropriate to size). An appropriate proportion should have added capabilities (such as capture technologies, videoconference) and audio interaction (such as push to talk microphones for students). Technologies should be seamless, elegant, and 'just work', with easy instructions and help readily at hand when needed.
13. Staff require immediate assistance when technologies malfunction, and ongoing capacity building to use learning space technologies appropriately.

Deakin has defined a [taxonomy of generic campus learning spaces](#) to set clear expectations for different types of rooms relating to seating capacity, furniture and available technology (including presentation display/s, public-address system, audio capture, audio-visual/PC integration, video-conferencing).

STUDENT PLACEMENTS

How do I ensure that students on placement have a quality learning experience?

Student placements (including industry-based learning, internships and practicums) are included as compulsory or optional components of many Deakin courses to build real-world skills that will contribute to students' work-readiness.

While students are on a placement, Deakin remains responsible for their learning experiences and the quality of their supervision. We cannot delegate this to the host organisation.

[Deakin's Student Placement Procedure](#) sets out the procedures that staff, students and hosts should follow when facilitating and managing student placements, while allowing for variations in approach and responsibilities from faculty to faculty. Talk to your student placement manager to find out how placements are managed and delivered in your faculty.

It is critical that students receive sufficient information before they undertake a placement to enable them to participate effectively.

Depending on the faculty, placements are overseen by the head of school or department, nominated course director or unit chair.

For some professional qualifications (e.g. nursing and teaching), placements are required by the accrediting agency as a pre-condition of completion and the consequences of failure are very serious for students. If students look like failing their placement you should contact the chair of your faculty academic progress committee.

SUPERVISED RESEARCH PROJECTS

How should I support students undertaking research projects as part of their course?

Deakin expects that students undertaking research as part of honours or coursework programs will be provided with appropriate support to develop research skills and outputs relevant to the field and the level of study. The specific obligations of unit chairs and the supervisors that they appoint are set out in the [Research in Honours and Coursework Units Procedure](#). Here is a summary.

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Unit chairs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that students receive an appropriate induction, including training in research integrity, codes of conduct, ethics, occupational health and safety, intellectual property and any other necessary matters • Appoint a staff member with appropriate qualifications, knowledge, experience and time to supervise the student's research (as set out in the Procedure) • Arrange for alternative supervision if the supervisor is absent for more than two weeks • Monitor any issues or conflicts between students and supervisors and initiate early strategies to reduce the impact on student progress. |
| Supervisors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate sufficient time for adequate supervision and agree with the students on a schedule of meetings • Guide the student on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – choice and definition of research topic – planning the research – supporting the achievement of progress milestones – relevant literature – research methods, techniques and obligations • Provide the student with feedback on work in progress and suggestions for improvement within a reasonable time-frame • Encourage and support the presentation, publication and dissemination of the student's research. |

Assessment will be conducted according to the [Assessment \(Higher Education Courses\) Procedure](#) with the following additional requirements:

- Assessors:
 - will not have supervised the research and be independent of the conduct of the research
 - may be external to the University where an appropriate staff member is not available
 - will have appropriate qualifications and experience to assess the research project.
- Two or more assessors must assess the research where the unit is worth two or more credit points.

WORKING WITH SESSIONAL STAFF

How can I support the sessional staff in my team?

Unit chairs feature strongly in Principle 1: Quality of Learning and Teaching of the Sessional Staff Standards Framework (Office for Learning and Teaching Benchmarking leadership and advancement of standards for sessional teaching ([OLT BLASST](#)) project).

Qualifications of sessional staff

In general, sessional staff are required to have a qualification one AQF level higher than the course they will teach. For example, teaching into a bachelor degree (AQF level 7) requires a teacher to have a qualification at AQF level 8 (bachelor degree honours, graduate certificate or graduate diploma). However, Deakin also recognises professional experience deemed equivalent to formal qualifications. So, for example, a bachelor degree teacher may have a bachelor degree plus five years' current experience in the profession or five years' current teaching experience informed by scholarship in the discipline and teaching and learning practice.

Decisions related to equivalence of experience are decided by associate heads of school teaching and learning, on the advice of senior members of academic staff with expertise in the relevant discipline.



Want to know more?

For more detailed explanation of Deakin's requirements and the criteria for equivalence, see the [Course Design and Delivery Procedure](#), Schedule A: Academic Staff Qualifications and Equivalence Framework.

Induction of sessional staff

Responsibility for inducting sessional staff new to Deakin sits with faculties, schools and departments. Ideally, sessional staff should be provided with an induction to teaching and learning from a faculty or school perspective. Benchmarking leadership and advancement of standards for sessional teaching (BLASST) faculty level standard 1.2a advises that a good practice standard includes a paid induction providing a range of strategies to support sessional staff in learning and teaching. Strategies could include face-to-face seminars, induction resources such as sessional handbooks, an induction website, access to teaching and learning courses and materials (such as the CloudDeakin course *Teaching and Learning at Deakin* (sessional staff) accessed from the 'More' tab in the teacher's CloudDeakin site), and an induction to relevant digital learning tools.

Supporting sessional staff

Strategies for unit chairs to support sessional staff include:

| | |
|---|--|
| Working as a teaching team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a teaching plan for each seminar • Create a teaching team forum on the unit site. |
| Supervising and mentoring sessional staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give sessional staff school or faculty hard copies of all sessional handbooks* (or equivalent) • Show sessional staff teaching and learning resources (faculty sites such as Health Innovation, Learning and Teaching Network, and CloudDeakin self-registering resource Teaching and Learning at Deakin (Sessional Staff)) • Facilitate peer observation opportunities where possible • Assist sessional staff to evaluate their teaching informally. |
| Supporting sessional staff in assessment processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide links to relevant assessment policies and procedures • Provide hard copy of online teaching and marking sessional handbook* (or equivalent) • Review assessment criteria and rubrics for evidence clarity • Provide sample marking • Provide sample feedback to students • Provide moderation process. |

* Collaborative writing project between Deakin Learning Futures (DLF) and schools. Completed: Life and Environmental Sciences, Nursing and Midwifery, Faculty of Arts and Education, Architecture and Built Environment, Marketing, Information Technology, Psychology, Health and Social Development. Contact Julia Savage (DLF) for further information.



Want to know more?

For more ideas see the module **Working with sessional staff** in CloudDeakin—self-register in the **Curriculum Design for Unit Chairs resource** (via the 'More' tab on your CloudDeakin site).

References

[Sessional staff standards framework](#) (OLT Fellowship).

STUDY PERIODS

What are the key dates in Deakin's academic calendar?

Deakin uses the [trimester academic calendar](#) for most courses, although different study periods are used for some courses and units. Courses that are delivered on a trimester basis should make use of the trimester system to enhance student flexibility in relation to study load and study duration. To shorten the duration of particular courses, study in all three trimesters may be required.

Calendars for courses that use semester study periods are available in the [University Handbook](#).

Start Anytime

Students enrolled in [Start Anytime](#) units can fast-track the unit and complete it in as little as four weeks or take their time and complete it over a year. There are no assignment deadlines and students can complete work within a timeframe that works for them.

Start Anytime is available in four units that are part of several postgraduate business degrees and in work-integrated learning units.

If you're interested in offering a unit in Start Anytime mode, talk to your associate head of school or associate dean teaching and learning.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

What information do students need about their course or units?

Deakin aims to ensure that students can access clear, concise and compelling information about the right courses for them and their employment and career opportunities.

It is important that the promises we make to prospective students through our marketing materials, agents, website and handbook are met and that students receive the learning experience they sign up for. This is an important consideration when courses and units are revised, and transitional arrangements may need to be considered to ensure that students are not disadvantaged (see Chapter 8).

University Handbook

Current information about all courses and units is included in the online [University Handbook](#) which is the source of truth for unit and course information. Information in the Handbook includes:

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Course information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course learning outcomes • Delivery locations • Duration • Requirements for completion • Course structure • Recognition by professional bodies • Career opportunities • CRICOS registration (where the course is offered to international students studying in Australia on a study visa). |
| Unit information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When and where unit is offered • Pre-requisites, co-requisites and incompatibilities • Scope of content • Timetabled classes and seminars (physical and cloud) • Nature and weighting of assessment tasks. |

For a full list of requirements, see the [Course Design and Delivery Procedure](#), cl 43.

Information for prospective students about [Deakin's courses](#) is also available on the public website.

Handbook updates

Between April and July each year, faculty or school curriculum teams coordinate an update of the curriculum and Handbook entries. The content of the Handbook for the following year is finalised and released in July.

The entries in the Handbook are derived from course specifications approved by the Academic Board or faculty board (depending on the nature of the specification). You should plan well ahead to ensure that any changes are approved in time for inclusion when the Handbook is released so that information is accurate and remains as stable as possible.

While not ideal, it may be necessary to revise information in the Handbook after the annual update to include later course revisions.

Unit Guides

All units must have a unit guide completed or updated by the unit chair for each offering of the unit and included at the top level of the unit site in accordance with the [Minimum Standards for Unit Sites](#). The processes for preparing the unit guide vary from faculty to faculty and are managed by your faculty or school curriculum team.

All unit guides must conform to a standard template developed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning in consultation with faculties and other relevant areas. The following information must be included:

1. unit learning outcomes and scope of content
2. unit learning activities, including requirements for attendance at timetabled classes and seminars, and indicative workload
3. unit assessment tasks including:
 - a. clearly articulated assessment criteria for tasks that require the exercise of academic judgement
 - b. alignment with the unit learning outcomes and [Deakin Graduate Learning Outcomes](#)
 - c. due dates and other requirements
 - d. any provision for negotiation of assessment tasks (e.g. allowing students to nominate topics) and a clear statement of the negotiation process
 - e. rules on submission, including extensions, penalties for late submission and final submission date
 - f. any hurdle requirements
 - g. the period of time within which feedback is provided on assessment
4. support available to students
5. improvements made to the unit in response to student feedback.



Want to know more?

See: [Course Design and Delivery Procedure](#), cl 44.

Marketing materials

Course leaders have an important role in providing accurate and timely information for course marketing materials.

It is a specific requirement in the Standards for Higher Education that representations about Deakin, its courses and charges by us or other parties (including agents) must be accurate and not misleading.

The ESOS National Code also requires us to ensure that:

- our marketing is professional, accurate and maintains the integrity and reputation of the sector
- our CRICOS is number is included in written marketing and other material for students
- we do not make false or misleading claims.

Talk to your faculty's curriculum team for information about quality assurance processes and timelines.

SUPPORTING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

What information and help is available for students with particular needs?

Students should expect to feel supported by the University as they progress through their studies irrespective of their background or mode or place of study. To complement the roles of course leaders and teachers in designing and delivering an inclusive curriculum, Deakin has a wide range of central services and information available to support student learning and success. [DeakinSync](#) provides students with a single entry point to information about these services.

Course leaders and teachers should be aware of the support on offer so that they can refer students to information or help where it is needed.

Below is a summary of academic and other support and information available to students. Links to more detailed information are provided.

Study support

Study support home page

UniStart

Online modules providing brief introduction to assist students to prepare for their study at Deakin

Includes links to information about orientation sessions and academic skill development services.

Academic skills resources

Preparing for study

- organising studies
- digital study tools
- assignment planner
- academic integrity
- researching
- critical thinking, reading and note-taking
- participating in discussion
- group work

Writing

- academic style
- integrating sources
- referencing
- drafting and proofreading

Maths

- Ask a Maths Mentor
- portals to general and discipline-specific information and resources

Assignment types

- essays
- reports
- reflective writing
- oral presentations

Exams

- preparation
 - confidence
 - relaxation techniques.
-

Library

- a wide range of high quality information resources
 - online guides including [Study](#) and [Library Resource Guides](#) to help students get started with their research for assessment tasks
 - assists students with their information needs by providing individual advice online or in person
 - students can contact their [Liaison Librarian](#) to discuss finding, using and sharing information for their assessment tasks
 - provides services for students with a [disability](#) including access to resources and rooms equipped with assistive technology.
-

Ask Study Support

- email link for advice on referencing or starting an assignment
 - how to access Writing Mentors and Maths Mentors
-

English language and communication

Access to:

- WordPower—a program including face-to-face workshops and online activities to improve English language skills within disciplines
 - Clarity English Programs—a suite of self-paced interactive English language programs
 - iDeal—a free online diagnostic test that helps students to identify areas where they might improve English language and communication skills and services and programs to assist them.
-

Students Helping Students Hub

Information about student mentoring programs including how to:

- find a mentor
 - become a mentor
-

Study support home page

- PASS program**
- Peer Assisted Study Skills (PASS) program is offered in units which have high rates of incompleting
 - CloudPASS is the online version for cloud units, conducted in Skype for Business
-

- Higher degree and research (HDR) students**
- Study skills resources for HDR students, including access to:
- HDR cloud site
 - thesis study groups
-

- IT Help**
- Information about common IT questions relating to:
- passwords
 - Wi-Fi
 - printing
 - email & calendar
 - software
 - hardware
 - CloudDeakin
 - files & syncing
 - phone & Skype.
-

Other support

- Career planning**
- DeakinTALENT—programs, resources and services to help student explore career interests and connect with employers
-

- Disability services**
- Information about Disability Resource Centre services to assist students with disability, health or mental health conditions to participate in university life, including:
- development of Learning Access Plans (LAPS)
 - assistance to produce accessible study materials
 - advice on adjustments to assessments
 - assistance with note-taking, Australian sign language (AUSLAN) interpretation or laboratory work
 - advice on Library services
 - advice on assistive technology
 - support during practical sessions and placements
-

- Health and wellbeing**
- Range of services to help students stay healthy and safe, including:
- Safer Community service for students who feel threatened or unsafe
 - medical centres
 - multi-faith chaplains
 - counselling services
-

- Advocacy and legal advice**
- Deakin University Student Association (DUSA) services, including:
- student advocacy in academic and disciplinary matters
 - free legal service
-

- International student advisers**
- essential information for international students
 - information about support provided by International Student Support team, including visa requirements, cultural and personal difficulties and crisis management
-

- Financial support**
- Information about financial support available to students including:
- general student loans or tuition fee loans (for international students)
 - international student scholarships and bursaries.
-

Students under 18

While the University is an adult learning environment, we enrol some students under 18. While Deakin does not take on parental responsibility, we need to facilitate the successful entry, transition, learning and support of underage students.

Deakin's [Underage Student Management Policy](#) explains what support underage students can receive. Students aged 17 are treated as independent, mature individuals and are not provided with additional support unless specifically requested.

As part of the enrolment process, consent from the parent or guardian is given for underage students to attend field trips, excursions or other off-site study activities. Students under 17 cannot attend an overnight activity unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Regardless of parental consent the University can still decide that some activities are not suitable for underage students.

In addition, under the National Code, the University must ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to protect the safety and social wellbeing of **international underage students** not being cared for in Australia by a parent or suitable nominated relative. Check the [Underage students FAQs](#) for more information.

Staff members who are concerned about the wellbeing of an underage students should raise their concerns with the Executive Director, Student Life or faculty general manager.

MONITORING ACADEMIC PROGRESS

How do we monitor progress to ensure students get help when needed?

Each trimester, faculty committees review the academic progress of students to ensure that they are satisfactorily advancing towards the completion of their degree. Monitoring academic progress provides the University with an opportunity to provide targeted advice, referral or assistance to students who are having difficulties completing their unit or course requirements.

| Progress status | Criteria ¹ | Actions by committee ² |
|--|---|---|
| Students are at risk of unsatisfactory progress where they: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fail one or more units in a trimester or are unlikely to complete their course within the maximum period of study | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> notifies student in writing implements strategy to assist student to improve performance |
| Students have made unsatisfactory progress where they: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fail at least 50% of credit points in each of the preceding two trimesters or fail a unit twice or fail a compulsory practicum or placement or will not complete their course within the maximum period of study | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> notifies student in writing may propose one or more specified actions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> warning restrictions on enrolment or specification of units to be completed exclusion from course for minimum period of three trimesters. |

¹ Trial indicators of unsatisfactory progress of students enrolled in professional practice courses were approved by Academic Board in July 2016.

² See [Academic Progress Procedure, Schedule A](#).

Students may accept the proposed process or make a submission as to why the proposed action should not be implemented.

For the details of these processes, see the [Academic Progress Procedure](#).

For faculty-specific information about academic progress processes, check the [Academic progress](#) page.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

What should I do when a student complains about my course or unit?

From time to time students will complain about some aspect of course or unit management or delivery. In the first instance, students are encouraged to raise their concerns directly with the responsible person or area. If a student contacts you with concerns about the course or a unit, listen to what they have to say and try to resolve their concerns informally if you can. Where a student raises issues that are serious, complicated or require investigation, or the student refuses to accept your initial response to their concerns, you should advise them to lodge a [complaint](#) through the University's [Student Complaints Resolution policy](#) and [procedure](#).

The [Concerns and Complaints webpage](#) provides information about the formal complaint resolution process and about the people and services who can support students raising different issues. Safer Community can assist students who say they feel threatened or unsafe, and students who mention [discrimination](#), [sexual harassment](#), [victimisation](#) or [bullying](#) should be referred to the University's [Harassment and Discrimination Contact Officers](#) for advice and support. (Both groups also provide advice for staff.)

For more information about the University's complaint resolution process, or suggestions about how to respond to a particular issue, contact the [Manager, Student Complaints and Appeals](#).

