

ACADEMIC PRACTICE: Learning and Teaching Framework

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1. Overview

This document describes the principles and capabilities that underpin the Institute’s approach to the academic practice of learning and teaching.

The Institute is committed to excellence in the design and delivery of learning and teaching. Excellence is achieved by ensuring that courses and subjects engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry so that learners derive maximum benefit from their study and are engaged in a learning environment that is stimulating, innovative, and research informed.

2. Scope

The principles and capabilities of the framework for the academic practice of learning and teaching apply to all academic, teaching, and support staff.

3. Principles of Learning and Teaching

The principles that guide and inform the Institute’s commitment to excellence in the practice of learning and teaching are:

- a. The cultivation of critical and independent thought and the capacity for learning throughout life.
- b. Creating an inclusive learning and teaching environment that recognises diversity and enhances participation and engagement of all stakeholders.
- c. Designing learning and teaching activities that foster progressive and coherent achievement of expected course and subject learning outcomes regardless of a learner’s place of study or mode of delivery.
- d. Monitoring learner participation, progression, and completion rates to improve learning, teaching and support strategies and create equivalent opportunities for academic success.
- e. Fostering a culture of scholarship that engages with advanced knowledge and inquiry underpinned by mutual respect and freedom of thought and expression.
- f. Providing secure and fit for purpose facilities, infrastructure, and support services that enhance the safety and well-being of all stakeholders on campus and online.
- g. Continuous review and improvement of all aspects of learning and teaching through acting on feedback and closing the quality loop.

4. Implementation

Implementation of the principles that guide and inform excellence in the practice of learning and teaching involves the capability of academic leaders, educators, and support staff to apply their knowledge, skills, and values to their learning and teaching practice. The Institute’s capacity to ensure high quality learning and overall academic success depends on the collaborative effort of all staff engaged in the academic practice of learning and teaching.

Appendix 1 provides a glossary of terminology for key words and phrases that are commonly used throughout the Institute.

4.1 Graduate Attributes

Graduate attributes articulate the distinctive features of a graduate of the Institute and clarify the qualities and skills that a graduate will demonstrate on completion of their course of study and learning experiences with the Institute.

HELI is committed to graduating professional practitioners who through their life and work will strive to be:

- Humane:** professionals who are compassionate, who communicate and work collegially and respectfully with awareness of cultural diversity and sensitivities.
- Ethical:** professionals who exercise social responsibility and accountability and manage challenges and uncertainty with integrity and professional confidence.
- Leaders:** practitioners who actively contribute to best practice in their professional community and guide the development of disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and expertise through scholarly activities.
- Inspiring:** practitioners who influence others through their innovative, critical and independent thinking and who continue to learn throughout life.

4.2 Course Learning Outcomes

Graduate attributes and course learning outcomes are identified, mapped, aligned, taught, practised, and assessed within each subject of a course of study.

Course learning outcomes define the knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills that a student of a course of study will acquire at the conclusion of their studies. Ideally, the graduate of a course of study will reflect not only the attributes of the Institute as a whole, but also the course-specific attributes of a professional practitioner in their chosen area of expertise.

There will be specific course learning outcomes aligned to Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) specifications that clearly define what the learner will have learnt at the conclusion of their course of study. Course learning outcomes should be designed to reflect most of the Institute's graduate attributes and clearly indicate what the graduate of the course of study will be able to do at the conclusion of their studies.

4.3 Subject Learning Outcomes

Subject learning outcomes define the knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills that a learner in that subject will acquire at the conclusion of the subject. Each assessment task within a subject should be mapped to and aligned with one or more of the subject learning outcomes to ensure that learners have multiple opportunities to experience and develop the required performance outcomes.

There will be specific learning outcomes that clearly define what the learner will have learnt at the conclusion of the subject. Subject learning outcomes should be designed to reflect aspects of the Institute's graduate attributes and aspects of the course of study learning outcomes and clearly identify which assessment tasks will be used to assess them.

4.4 Assessment tasks

Assessment tasks in a subject should enable learners to demonstrate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and their application specified in that subject's learning outcomes. Alignment

of assessment tasks to subject learning outcomes ensures that graduate attributes, course learning outcomes and subject learning outcomes all contribute to the acquisition of discipline-specific knowledge and skills for application in practice.

Assessment tasks are assessed by the subject educator in accordance with specific criteria to objectively measure a learner's performance and to provide constructive feedback to confirm and/or foster the acquisition of required knowledge and skills. Assessment tasks should be firmly integrated with subject content and learning outcomes to provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate growth in understanding throughout the subject.

A subject will normally have an integrated assessment regime of normally three summative assessment tasks that aim to address all subject learning outcomes and contribute to the achievement of expected course learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

5. Supporting excellence in learning and teaching

The Institute has implemented a *Quality Framework [QAF001]* to support continuous quality improvement in the practice of learning and teaching and alignment with the Institute's *Academic Plan [PLN030]* and overall strategic and operational objectives.

The Institute aims to achieve excellence in the practice of learning and teaching through:

5.1 *Support systems* that:

- a. enable academic staff to undertake relevant scholarly activity and professional development opportunities to enhance their teaching;
- b. foster and encourage innovation and best practice in teaching;
- c. promote continuous quality improvement of infrastructure and learning resources;
- d. address stakeholder grievances as they arise and provide appropriate assistance; and,
- e. encourage and celebrate the academic achievements of staff and students.

5.2 *A Learning Environment* that is:

- a. *designed to meet, address, and support the learning* needs of all stakeholders;
- b. characterised by flexibility, accessibility, and effectiveness; and,
- c. free from harassment and discrimination and is conducive to learner engagement, participation, and collaboration.

5.3 *Course Content* that:

- a. is constructively aligned to achieve the realisation of graduate attributes and course and subject learning outcomes through well-designed learning and teaching activities, resources, and assessment tasks;
- b. addresses discipline, professional, and employer needs and priorities;
- c. equips learners for critical and independent thought and the capacity for learning throughout life; and,
- d. is subject to rigorous review and improvement and informed by scholarly enquiry and research.

5.4 *Teaching practices* that:

- a. engage and foster curiosity, facilitate learning and are learner-focussed;
- b. give due recognition to the knowledge and experiences of learners;
- c. enable students to become independent thinkers and life-long learners; and
- d. facilitate a range of learning experiences where knowledge and skills are appropriately tested and explored.

5.5 *Educators* who:

- a. display expert knowledge of and enthusiasm for the Institute’s discipline;
- b. take a scholarly approach to teaching and engage with current research and practice to inform their teaching;
- c. respect learner contributions and encourage active participation;
- d. plan, design, deliver, manage, and improve their teaching to enhance learning;
- e. provide formative and timely advice and feedback on assessments;
- f. are familiar with and use technologies and media to support and enhance learning, teaching, assessment, and evaluation; and,
- g. adhere to relevant legal, ethical and policy frameworks.

5.6 *Learners* who:

- a. are critical thinkers and independent and self-directed;
- b. are effective communicators;
- c. engage respectfully with the perspectives and opinions of others;
- d. are self-reflective, creative and open-minded;
- e. actively and competently engage with online learning technologies;
- f. are aware of their legal, ethical and policy responsibilities; and,
- g. strive to be engaged and active learners.

6. Associated documents

- PLN030 Academic Plan
- QAF001 Quality Framework

7. Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Details
1.0	Academic Board	20 April 2016	Document creation and initial approval
1.1	Dean	23 September 2016	To incorporate nomenclature of “educator” and “student” and update graduate attributes
1.2	Dean	27 September 2017	Minor change to first graduate attribute approved by Academic Board
1.3	Dean	6 September 2018	Minor change to Section 4 as requested by AQC
1.4	Dean	13 February 2020	Minor changes to update nomenclature
1.5	Dean	25 January 2022	Addition of ‘framework’ to replace ‘policy’, minor edits to content and terminology.

Document owner: Dean

Appendix 1 – Institute Terminology

Terminology	Definition
AQF	The 'Australian Qualifications Framework' (AQF) is the national framework for the recognition, endorsement and quality assurance of Australian qualifications and incorporates qualifications from each education sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework. (AQF definition 2013)
Assessment	'Assessment' is the process of measuring the performance of students in a subject that enables all stakeholders to monitor progress, assess achievement of subject learning outcomes, and assign grades.
Assessment task	'Assessment tasks' are activities set for students that enable them to demonstrate the learning outcomes of a subject and make it possible for the assessor to determine levels of achievement.
Assessment criteria	'Assessment criteria' are the elements that the assessor will focus on when making a judgement about an assessment task. The criteria are pre-determined and published in the Canvas LMS for each subject.
Award course	An 'award course' is an accredited course of study that leads to the conferral of an AQF qualification.
Award of a qualification	'Award of a qualification' occurs when the student has met the requirements of the qualification and the qualification is certified through the provision of a testamur. The term 'conferral' may also be used to describe this process. (AQF definition 2013)
Capstone subject	A 'capstone subject' provides an opportunity to integrate and synthesise course content with personal learning and experience, and to draw conclusions that form the basis for further scholarly investigation and professional growth and development.
Core	'Core subjects' are a set of subjects that develop the required knowledge and skills and must be undertaken to complete an award course.
Course learning outcomes	'Course learning outcomes' are statements describing the acquisition of knowledge, skills and their application in a discipline or body of knowledge on completion of a course of study.
Course of study	A 'course of study' is a structured sequence of subjects aimed at the acquisition of knowledge, skills and their application in a discipline or body of knowledge (may also be referred to simply as a course).
Curriculum	'Curriculum' is the academic content in a subject or course of study that involves a range of structured learning experiences and assessment activities.
eLearning	'eLearning' involves electronically designed use of any digital technology or resources to deliver and support specific teaching and learning aims and outcomes. Also referred to as 'online learning'. (TEQSA definition 2012)
Educator	An 'educator' is an academic member of staff appointed to teach in a subject within a course of study and to assess performance.

Terminology	Definition
Elective	An 'elective' is a subject chosen from a number of options in the curriculum of an award course.
Faculty	'Faculty' refers to academic staff who deliver, teach or facilitate learning in a subject. Faculty may be composed of a combination of permanent full-time, part-time and sessional academic staff.
Full-time study	'Full-time study' refers to undertaking the maximum number of subjects allowed in a study period. According to the AQF, teaching, learning and assessment activities are usually measured in equivalent full-time years. The generally accepted length of a full-time year, used for educational participation, is 1,200 hours ¹ .
Grade	A 'grade' is a representation of the overall level of attainment achieved by a student in a subject as recorded on the student's official statement of academic record.
Graduate attributes	'Graduate attributes' are the qualities, skills and understandings that the Institute agrees its students should develop during their time with the Institute. These attributes include but go beyond the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that forms the core of the Institute's courses.
Learning outcome	A 'learning outcome' is the articulation of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning. (AQF definition 2013)
LMS	'LMS' refers to the Learning Management System used by the Institute to deliver online learning and to provide access to the full range of learning resources and support systems.
Part-time study	'Part-time study' refers to undertaking less than a full-time load over an academic year.
Record of Results	A 'Record of Results' is a record of all subjects leading to an AQF qualification that a student has undertaken. In other tertiary institutions this may be alternatively called a 'transcript of results', 'academic transcript', 'record of achievement' or 'statement of results'.
Statement of Attainment	A 'Statement of Attainment' recognises that one or more subjects from a course of study have been successfully completed.
Subject	A 'subject' is a discrete element of a course of study undertaken over a single study period in which the student enrolls and on completion of which the student is awarded a grade.
Subject learning outcomes	'Subject learning outcomes' are statements aimed at the acquisition of subject knowledge, skills and their application on completion of the subject.
Student	A 'student' is a person who is enrolled in a course of study offered by the Institute. A student may also enrol in one or more subjects of a course of study and be awarded a Statement of Attainment on successful completion of one or more subjects.

¹ <https://www.aqf.edu.au/sites/aqf/files/volume-of-learning-explanation-v2-2014.pdf>

Terminology	Definition
Study period	A 'study period' refers to structured periods of time within the academic year during which subjects are undertaken. The Institute's academic calendar consists of 4 ten-week study periods called 'terms' with a two-week break between each study period or term. There is an extended break between term 4 and term 1 of the following academic year.
TEQSA	'TEQSA' refers to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency and is Australia's independent national regulator of the higher education sector established by section 132 of the <i>TEQSA Act 2011</i> .
Term	A 'term' refers to the Institute's 'study period' which consists of 4 terms each of ten-weeks' duration in each academic year. The 4 terms in an academic year are abbreviated as follows: T1/20nn; T2/20nn; T3/20nn; T4/20nn.
Testamur	'Testamur' is the official certification document that confirms that an AQF qualification has been awarded to an individual.