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Purpose

The enhancement of learning and teaching is central to the vision, mission, culture, activities, practices and future development of the University. The purpose of this policy is to:

1. identify and describe the University’s approach to learning, teaching and assessment;
2. articulate the University’s commitment to creating effective and meaningful learning opportunities and experiences through the development of high quality, relevant and current courses and services that are aligned with the University’s strategic directions;
3. encourage the University community to reflect on contemporary learning and teaching practices in a global society to better meet the diverse needs of the broad range of learners now and in the future; and
4. provide a clear framework for making coordinated decisions in relation to the enhancement of learning and teaching activities across the University.

Scope

This policy applies to the University’s learning and teaching activities. The policy is a key reference document for each School, Portfolio and for Third Party Providers involved in education and training provision to students of the University.

Definitions
Course: A program of study/research leading to the granting of an official award or qualification of the University contained in University Schedule 5.1. A course contains subsidiary elements variously referred to as units, competency units or modules.

Learning and Teaching: A flexible approach to education and training that supports the adoption of a range of learning, teaching and assessment strategies in a variety of learning environments to cater for differences in learning styles, learning interests, needs and variations in learning opportunities and/or circumstances. The underpinning principle of this definition is that the focus is on the learner.

Policy Statement

This policy describes the principles and practices that underpin effective learning, teaching and assessment at the University. These principles incorporate both learning processes and learning outcomes and are framed around providing better access for individuals, communities and businesses to lifelong learning that suits their circumstances, ways of learning, respects cultural differences and allows them to succeed in an innovative, global community.

The critical component of the University’s Learning and Teaching Policy is that the adoption of any of these principles and practices be based on the particular needs of learners and on the learning outcomes relevant to the course/program.

The principles and practices to which the University is committed in the provision of education and training include a focus on:

Student Engagement in Learning

To be achieved through the design, development, implementation and evaluation of active and cooperative learning, teaching and assessment approaches which:

- are intellectually challenging, stimulate curiosity and develop critical awareness;
- to ensure that courses prepare students for their chosen occupation and/or path in life;
- meet the diverse needs of students from different backgrounds and with different life experiences;
- respect, recognise and build on students' current knowledge and experience and provide appropriate opportunities for the formal recognition of prior learning;
- recognise individual learning needs and extend the student's range of learning styles and approaches to learning;
- recognise that learning and teaching are social activities that involve a network of personal, practical and social relationships;
- provide a variety of meaningful strategies and contexts to enable students to construct and apply new knowledge and skills;
- encourage and enable students to learn and practise the generic skills and attributes which underpin the characteristics of every graduate within the context of a particular discipline, field of practice and/or industry setting;
- create opportunities for regular feedback about learning progress which acknowledges individual learning achievements;
- encourage students to critically reflect on their learning experiences and relate these understandings to theoretical models and explanations, relevant fields of practice and/or workplace contexts;
• encourage and enable students to take responsibility for their own learning.

**Creation of Supportive Learning Communities**

To be achieved through the development, implementation and evaluation of:

• inclusive learning environments and learning partnerships that create a sense of support and belonging by recognising and valuing the diverse abilities, contributions, experiences, backgrounds and efforts through interaction of students and all staff. Such environments may be face-to-face and/or mediated by appropriate information and communication technologies and will be characterised by reasonable adjustments to enable full student participation;

• responsive, flexible courses and programs that increase the level of student centredness, control and access through a range of delivery options including online learning;

• systems, materials and services that are designed to support the learning and teaching activities of the University.

**Enhancement and Recognition of Teaching**

To be achieved through:

• recognition of excellence in teaching;

• support for innovative and inclusive learning and teaching practices;

• supportive and sustained professional/educational development that is meaningful, applicable, cooperative and collegial;

• critical inquiry and research into aspects of tertiary teaching, education and training which link teaching practice with research.

**Course and Program Design**

Through course and program development, implementation and evaluation to ensure that:

• courses and units are customised and/or contextualised appropriately to meet the needs of the communities and industries we serve;

• holistic and meaningful learning is encouraged through integration of student learning experiences within/across modules, units and courses;

• generic skills and discipline/vocation specific graduate capabilities are integrated within and across modules, units and courses;

• learning activities and assessment are clearly aligned with stated learning;

• assessment procedures and practices are valid, fair, flexible, feasible, culturally appropriate and incorporate clearly defined assessment criteria;

• assessment procedures and practices protect the integrity of assessment;

• the use of information and communication technologies is driven by decisions that relate to the science and art of teaching and are in turn designed to enable students to become independent lifelong learners;

• students have access to seamless educational pathways and support networks that encourage and support lifelong learning.

**Responsibility**

Academic Board and associated Standing Committees, Schools and Portfolios.
Legislative Context

- Educational Services to Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000.
- Educational Services to Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2001.
- The University of Ballarat Act - 1993 (as amended).

Associated Documents

- The Code of Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students approved by the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee (AVCC).

Statutes and Regulations:

- Statute 2.2 Academic Board.
- Statute 5.1 Academic Awards and Courses.
- Statute 5.2 Entry Quotas, Admissions and Enrolment.
- Statute 5.3 Assessment.
- Statute 5.4 Exclusion for Reasons of Unfitness.
- Statute 5.6 Admission to Academic Awards.
- Regulation 5.1 The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Masters Degrees by Research and Professional Doctorates.

Related Policies:

- Equal Opportunity and Valuing Diversity Policy.
- Evaluation and Improvement of Courses, Units & Modules Policy.
- Evaluation and Improvement of Teaching Policy.
- Assessment Policy.
- Moderation of Assessment (Higher Education) Policy.
- Pathways and Articulation Policy.

Related Procedures and Guidelines:

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Procedures (TAFE):
  - Assessment (TAFE) Procedure.
  - Course Implementation Plan (TAFE) Guidelines.
  - VET Qualification Delivery Procedure.
  - Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) Procedure.
  - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Procedure.
- Approval of New Award Courses (Higher Education) Procedure.
- Learning and Teaching Information and Resources Guide for Staff.
- Review of Established Sealed Award Courses (Higher Education) Procedure.
Implementation

The Learning and Teaching Policy is to be implemented throughout the University community via: