Teaching and Learning Guidelines: TEMPLATE (GENERIC)

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PART A: TEACHING AND LEARNING PRINCIPLES AND SYSTEMS

1. Foundations of the Southern Cross approach to teaching and learning

Teaching and learning at Southern Cross University (SCU) is guided by the University's Assessment, Teaching and Learning Policy and the Assessment, Teaching and Learning Procedures. The table below captures the six teaching and learning principles outlined in policy and offers brief examples of how they can translate into practice for Unit Assessors, Tutors and Markers.

Please note: Assessments are addressed in a separate Assessment Guidelines document (forthcoming).

Teaching and learning principles	Examples of practice
1. Learning is supported through a culture of respect, enquiry and dialogue.	- Always be respectful of students, even when their views challenge your own or concepts presented in a unit - present (in a neutral way) different points of view about a topic and ask students to compare and contrast, provide evidence for, or make an argument in favour of one or the other - establish clear expectations about netiquette and safe and respectful class environments - maintain a consistent teaching presence that invites questions and interaction
2. Learning is supported by recognising and broadening students' beliefs and knowledge.	- prompt students to apply theoretical concepts to their own life or work situation, or to a case study - include 'warm up' activities that invite students to reflect on and describe their experiences and perspectives in relation to a concept or practice - express high expectations that encourage responsibility and agency
3. Learning is supported by a consistent teaching delivery approach across the University.	- design self-access modules that are carefully curated, sequenced, media-rich, interactive and responsive - design class learning activities that require students to problem solve, apply knowledge, discuss, collaborate, and/or create - structure Blackboard sites in a way that is as consistent as possible with other units that students will encounter
4. Learning is supported through quality learning tasks.	- curate learning activities that promote building knowledge and skills needed for completing assessments and achieving learning outcomes - use media rich, Interactive Learning Environment (ILEs) such as learning sites which include embedded videos and related quizzes. - throughout self-access modules and class learning, clearly explain links between learning activities, assessments and learning outcomes

5. Learning is supported by readily available, high quality learning materials and resources.	• draw on best-practice examples and engage in professional development for teaching and educational design provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning • ensure that self-access modules are complemented by slides or other resources to guide class learning in a consistent manner across locations

Applying these principles contributes towards key strategies in the University's Strategic Plan 2020-2026, such as: curriculum reform for distinction and uplift; teaching excellence; and a distinctive and positive student experience (p. 27).

The purpose of this document is to outline how the above principles can be enacted in units and courses at SCU. These guidelines are also underpinned by the following policies, procedures and rules, which all staff should familiarise themselves with. A comprehensive list of policy documents can be found here.

- Assessment, Teaching and Learning Policy
- Assessment, Teaching and Learning Procedures
- Curriculum Design and Development Policy
- Curriculum Design and Development Procedures
- Academic Integrity Procedures
- Student Academic and Non-academic Misconduct Rules
- Academic Integrity Guidelines
- Rules Relating to Awards – Rule 3 – Coursework Awards – Student Assessment and Examination
- Academic Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy
- Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Policy (International students)
- Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Procedures (International students)

2. The Southern Cross Model

By 2023, units and courses will be delivered via a distinctive new model of teaching and learning: the Southern Cross Model. Key features of the Southern Cross Model include:

- Units are delivered in a six-week term, with a seventh week for additional study and in some instances for assessment where required.
- Students can enrol up to a maximum of two single-weighted units for each term (or an equivalent load of double or half-weighted units), and up to six terms per year.[1]
- A full-time load is eight single-weighted units per academic year and a minimum of four terms per year.
- There are usually up to three course entry points per year, e.g. Terms 1, 3 and 5.

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[1] Please note that international students are also subject to requirements specified by the Course Progress and Completion Within Expected Duration of Study Policy.

Learning in the Southern Cross Model is **active**, **interactive**, **responsive** and **guided**. Each unit is delivered via two forms of study:

- Self-access learning – six media-rich, interactive, responsive online modules per unit, and
- Class learning – guided, active class experiences in which students apply new knowledge and skills to real-world problems, questions and scenarios.

A glossary of key terms that relate to teaching and learning in the Southern Cross Model is included below. Staff can find out more about how the model was developed, and principles for designing units and assessments in the model, in the *Introducing the Southern Cross Model* Blackboard site.

Active Learning	Active learning is an umbrella term for a range of pedagogical approaches which engage learners in meaningful activities requiring them to take new information and apply it, rather than simply recording, reading, viewing or listening to it. Active learning can be used in class in problem solving and is facilitated through the teaching presence of staff and peers. For examples see Active Learning in Action.
Guided Learning	Guided learning refers to learning experiences in which students advance their knowledge and skills with the support of others. Guided learning activities may include modelling practice, joint problem-solving, explanations and can be used in classes, on-line study or self-paced learning resources. Emphasising and exercising learner agency is a key characteristic of guided learning (Billet, 2012).
Interactive Learning	Interactive learning is a term used to describe a real-life approach to education through guided social interaction. Teachers fostering a challenging but encouraging space for learners to engage with and develop new skills and knowledge. Examples of interactive learning include problem- and project-based learning. For more information see What is interactive learning.
Just-enough	Just-enough means sufficient to develop knowledge, skills or application of one or more unit learning outcomes.
Module	Module here refers to a discrete learning package which addresses one or more unit learning outcomes and is media-rich and interactive.
Responsive Learning	Responsive refers to learning experiences which provide feedback on learners' engagement with learning tasks. This feedback should show the degree to which learners are meeting unit aims and how they can improve their knowledge, skills and application of those to better meet learning objectives.

3. About the Faculty, College or Discipline

The relevant Faculty, College and/or discipline will insert a brief outline here.

4. University systems for teaching and learning

Units are delivered via a range of University systems and spaces. Support for is provided through Technology Services. Information for new staff can be found here.

The following is indicative/general information.

Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate

Blackboard is a browser-based Learning Management System (LMS) that houses unit learning sites. Learning sites contain the interactive self-access modules for a unit, as well as assessment details and submission links, unit staff contact details, discussion boards, readings, and other unit-related information and tools.

Blackboard Collaborate is a virtual classroom within the learning site. Instructors can create 'rooms' in Collaborate for facilitating online classes.

Guidance for using Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate is available here.

Turnitin

Students may be required to submit their assessment tasks for marking via the text-matching software Turnitin. To prepare for marking student work submitted via Turnitin, Markers and Unit Assessors should familiarise themselves with the range of resources available on the Academic Integrity Framework page. Detailed information on Turnitin, including instructional videos, are available on this CTL Knowledge Base page.

Physical teaching spaces

The following is indicative/general information.

eAcademic and UCMS

eAcademic is a web based student/course information site and is accessed through MySCU. It provides Unit Assessors access to student information such as enrolment, contact details, and class lists. Importantly, it is also where end-of-unit grades are submitted.

The Unit and Course Management System (UCMS) is the University's online system for managing course and unit approval processes in accordance with the University's policy. Some staff may be required to enter and update unit and course details in UCMS. Training and support are provided by UCMS Support.

PART B: TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICE

5. Unit design and development

Unit design and development involves planning and creating a unit of study for delivery. This may include designing a new unit or redeveloping an existing unit. Unit design and development is governed by the University's Curriculum Design and Development Policy and Curriculum Design and Development Procedures and should also be guided by the pedagogical principles of the Southern Cross Model.

Unit design starts as part of the course design process, and there are typically two key components: 1) constructive alignment and course mapping; and 2) unit design and development.

1. **Constructive alignment and course mapping.** This component is completed as part of the course level mapping and constructive alignment process. It is usually undertaken by Course Design Teams as specified in clause (5) of the Curriculum Design and Development Procedures, and is guided by the curriculum design principles articulated in Sections 4 and 5 of the Curriculum Design and Development Policy. Part of this process involves establishing core unit elements, such as:

   - specifying unit learning outcomes
   - specifying assessment types
   - mapping unit learning outcomes to both assessments and to course learning outcomes
   - documenting the unit aim, key content topic areas and the assessment schedule for approval in the UCMS.

2. **Unit design and development.** This component includes:

   - the establishment of an appropriate overarching approach to learning in the unit (for example, an instructional approach combined with activity-based, project-based, inquiry-based, problem-based, or work-integrated learning)
   - assessment design
   - the selection, development, curation and modularisation of appropriate content relevant to the unit learning outcomes, including engaging learning activities
   - digital design and the development of unit materials and resources, including population and development of the Blackboard learning site and self-access modules.

The Associate Dean (Education) and/or relevant Chair of Discipline will liaise with staff in the Faculty or College to initiate the unit design process for a new or redeveloped unit. The University's Centre for Teaching and Learning provides a range of resources and services to support this process and the achievement of good practice in unit design and development. Relevant resources and guides can be found on this Design page, as well as under Assess, Develop, Teach, and in the Assessment Guidelines (forthcoming).

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Overview of roles

Faculties/Colleges can augment these descriptions as needed, in line with the appropriate role statements. The Chair of Discipline and Associate Dean Education Role Statements will be added when available. Note that these roles are not included in section 6.2.

Course Coordinator - as per the Course Coordinator Role Statement:

The Course Coordinator is the academic staff member designated to manage and administer a Course in line with University strategic directions. Course Coordinators are the University's 'champions' for the program and its success, and in undertaking their role and responsibilities, will reflect Southern Cross's core values. Responsibilities fall into three key areas: 1) Course design, development and accreditation; 2) Course management and delivery; and 3) Course quality, integrity and review. Course Coordinators are guided in their role by University academic policies, procedures and rules, with which they must comply.

Unit Assessor - as per the Unit Assessor Role Statement:

The Unit Assessor is the academic staff member designated to manage and administer a Unit of study and uphold the academic integrity of that Unit. The Unit Assessor has responsibility for three broad areas: 1) Unit design and curriculum development; 2) Unit administration and delivery; and 3) Unit quality and review. Unit Assessors are guided in their role by the University's academic policies and procedures, with which they must comply.

Tutor

Tutors are responsible for delivering class learning, either online, face-to-face, or both. They are required to work under the guidance of the Unit Assessor, including attending preparation meetings, and to ensure that class learning is delivered in a way that is consistent across the unit's modes and locations. Tutors may also be a first point-of-contact for students, and need to provide informative, respectful and timely advice, promptly escalating issues to the Unit Assessor.

6.2 Responsibilities during a unit life cycle

The following table outlines a general timeline for unit delivery and the responsibilities of the Unit Assessor, Tutor and Course Coordinator associated with each phase of unit delivery. Please note that quality assurance and ongoing guidance and support for teaching and assessment is provided via the relevant Chair of Discipline, Associate Dean (Education) and the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

The following is indicative/general information.

	Before Unit	**During Unit**	**End of Unit**
Unit Assessor (as per the role statement)	• Where required make changes to unit details in UCMS and submit for approval as per Course and Unit Approval Authorities • Add unit staff to UCMS and liaise with Course Coordinator to raise contracts • If myReadings are used, rollover or any updates need to be advised as per the process and timeline • Arrange class prep meetings and assessment moderation meetings with teaching/marking teams • Prepare class teaching slides and resources • Update unit self-access modules as needed • Set up the unit Blackboard site, including checking and updating information, documents and resources • Ensure the unit Blackboard site is made available for students • Attend orientation events	• Welcome students to the unit • Facilitate class teaching prep meetings and assessment moderation meetings • Monitor discussion board forums • Post regular unit announcements in the learning site • Ensure quality and timely marking of assessment items and release results to students • Manage and respond to issues, as well as enquiries from students and staff • Respond to Access and Inclusion issues as needed • Promote completion of Unit Feedback Surveys	• Moderate final grades with tutors/ markers • Upload final grades to eAcademic • Submit grades and required documentation for ratification at the Committee of Examiners meeting • Update the Course Coordinator of any post-ratification grade changes, and submit to eAcademic for approval by Chair of Faculty Board • Release grades for final assessment tasks after ratification by the Committee of Examiners. (NB the UA never releases final grades for the unit; these are released by the University) • Access Unit Feedback Survey results and Unit Performance Reports, and submit unit reports to Course Coordinator as required • Where required in response to unit evaluation, action unit refinement in accordance with University policy and in consultation with the Course Coordinator
Tutor	• Participate in preparation meetings and orientation events as required • Familiarise with teaching spaces, relevant WHS policy and procedure, and access to photocopying and supplies	• Maintain regular contact with the Unit Assessor, including attending regular prep meetings as required • Use pre-prepared class learning materials, such as slides and handouts • Facilitate class learning in a way that is consistent with University policy and the delivery of the unit in other locations and modes • Respond to student enquiries in a timely and respectful manner • Promptly escalate any issues to the Unit Assessor	• Moderate final grades with the Unit Assessor

Course Coordinator (as per the role statement)	• Ensure delivery of courses and units is and remains compliant with all University and accreditation policies • Liaise with Unit Assessor to ensure unit preparation is completed in a timely way • Manage and facilitate orientation events as required	• Maintain regular communication with Unit Assessors and teaching teams • Manage escalated issues in accordance with University policies and procedures	• Provide course reports to the Committee of Examiners for final grade ratification • Share course feedback and updates with Faculty/College Board and Unit Assessors • Complete annual course report, and any other reporting requirements as per policy • Use iQILT data, analytics and other forms of student feedback to inform continuous improvement • Coordinate course reviews and unit redevelopments

7. Setting up a Blackboard learning site

7.1 Populating the learning site

The following is indicative/general information.

Blackboard sites can be crucial to how a student experiences a unit. Students respond positively to a logically-organised and un-cluttered site, with easily accessible information and resources.

Consistency for students should be achieved by following any checklists or templates provided by the relevant work unit or this checklist provided by the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

The Unit Assessor is responsible for setting up a unit's Blackboard site prior to the term or session. Before sites open:

- Each menu item, provided as per the University's template for Blackboard site structure, must be populated with the correct, up-to-date information and documents.
- All links in the self-access modules should be checked, and materials updated as needed.
- myReadings, if used, must be requested via the myReadings team by the due date (this is usually during the previous teaching period, so must be organised well in advance).

7.2 Welcoming students to the unit

The following is indicative/general information.

The Unit Assessor should prepare a welcome announcement for when the unit is made available to students. This announcement will be the first thing a student sees when they enter a unit. It is important that it is informative and has a positive tone.

- A suggested structure for a welcome announcement is provided here.
- Embedding a video created through Camtasia or Mediasite is an excellent way to 'humanise' a staff member's presence in the unit.
- Providing a short tour of the learning site, either in this welcome video or a separate screen capture video, can assist students with navigating important areas of the site.

The Unit Assessor can also create a discussion board thread for students to introduce themselves to each other and to staff. The Unit Assessor can post a short introduction to themselves to begin this thread and link to it from the welcome announcement.

8. Delivering class learning

The following is indicative/general information.

Class learning in the Southern Cross Model should guide students through **active learning experiences** that consolidate and extend the self-access materials by asking students to:

- apply knowledge
- engage in dialogue around issues, ideas and concepts
- work on problems
- collaborate with peers
- co-create documents or products
- investigate issues and evaluate or analyse sources and cases
- practise and provide/receive feedback on key skills.

How the classes in a unit are sequenced and what kinds of activities occur during each class will depend on the pedagogical approaches that best suit a particular topic or discipline.

- Classes could be workshops, practical exercises, laboratories, guided discussions, tutorials, problem-based scenarios, collaborative exercises, debates or simulations.
- A unit could include a one-hour online class early in the week attended by all students (and recorded), followed by a two-hour class for each location/mode later in the week. Or this order could be reversed.

Resources and guidance for best practice in teaching, both online and face-to-face, can be accessed via the Centre for Teaching and Learning, the *Introducing the Southern Cross Model* Blackboard site, and through professional development opportunities.

Consistent delivery, established at prep meetings and through use of the pre-prepared class learning materials, is expected in all unit locations and modes. During each teaching period:

- The Unit Assessor should arrange prep meetings for teaching teams before and during the teaching period. [The expected maximum length, e.g. 30 minutes, and frequency, e.g. weekly, of these meetings will be specified here.] Tutors are expected to attend these meetings.
- The Unit Assessor should prepare slides, handouts, and/or other resources to guide class learning. These will be attached in a hidden area of the Blackboard site for staff to access. Tutors are expected to use these resources in class in ways discussed in the prep meetings.

- The Unit Assessor will make available downloadable PDF copies of tutorial slides and resources for students no later than end-of-day on the Friday before each week commences.
- All staff teaching in physical spaces must conform to relevant WHS policies and complete a work unit induction. The induction includes a WHS checklist that covers emergency procedures, specific workplace procedures and requirements, and safety personnel details for the relevant work unit. Further information about emergency and crisis management at each campus is available here. An A-Z of emergency and WHS information is available here.

9. Student communication

9.1 Learning site communication and response times

The following is indicative/general information.

Maintaining teaching presence in a unit is important for helping students feel that they matter, and that teaching staff are there to guide and support them in their learning. There are two main ways to achieve this in a unit.
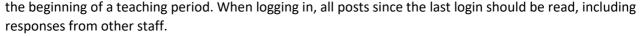
Learning site announcements

- During the unit, the Unit Assessor should post regular [what this means, e.g. weekly, will be specified here] announcements in the learning site. These announcements should encourage student success. They can congratulate students on reaching milestones and foreshadow upcoming class activities, assessment tasks and opportunities for support and guidance. Whether staff should avoid sending announcements as emails will be specified here, e.g. Announcements should not be sent as emails unless they are welcoming students to the unit, or they relate to an urgent matter or requirement.
- It is important to maintain a respectful, friendly and informative tone in all communications with students. Teaching staff should endeavour to be conversational rather than speaking as a teacher to a student.
- Avoid using imperatives in caps (e.g. READ THE ARTICLE THIS WEEK), red font and overuse of bold. Used sparingly these can catch students' attention; used frequently these set an inappropriate tone.

Discussion boards

- As above, all responses in discussion boards should be respectful, friendly and informative. Staff can find guidance about posting respectfully and meaningfully in online discussion forums on this CTL Knowledge Base page, in The Guide to Fostering Asynchronous Online Discussion in Higher Education, and in this resource for Facilitating Online Discussions.
- Moderation of online discussion spaces must adhere to the University's Code of Conduct Policy, Information Technology Conditions of Use Policy, Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Prevention Policy, and the Rules – Student Academic and Non-academic Misconduct Rules.
- The Unit Assessor is expected to monitor the discussion boards regularly [what this means will be specified here]. Students should be made aware of how often the discussion boards will be monitored at

the beginning of a teaching period. When logging in, all posts since the last login should be read, including responses from other staff.

- In large units where there are multiple staff monitoring the same discussion boards, shifts should be arranged to avoid doubling-up on responses.
- In units where particular staff are responsible for monitoring particular discussion boards (e.g. group or tutorial-based discussion boards), each staff member should monitor the relevant discussion board regularly [specify what this means], reading all posts and responding where needed since their last login.

9.2 Other contact methods and response times

The following is indicative/general information.

- Teaching staff are expected to communicate with students outside of classes via University email or the unit discussion boards. Phone contact expectations will be specified here.
- Teaching staff are expected to respond to student emails within 24 hours during normal business hours. Where expectations differ this will be specified, e.g. if there are particular roles with agreed out-of-business-hours contact times.
- Students should be made aware of these contact expectations at the start of the teaching period.

9.3 Awareness of University services and support

The following is indicative/general information.

Teaching staff should maintain awareness of, and refer students to, the services that are available to support learning and wellbeing. A list of these services can be accessed here. They include:

- Learning Zone – workshops, appointments, guides and other resources for academic skills development
- Library – researching for assessments, referencing, digital literacy
- Student administration (client services)
- Technology Services
- SCU International

- Student Access and Inclusion
- Indigenous Australia Student Services (IASS)
- Counselling
- Careers
- Health services
- Multifaith and pastoral care
- UniLife
- Student Advocacy Service

9.4 Code of Conduct

Staff and students are bound by the University's Code of Conduct, which specifies minimum standards and obligations relating to the conduct and behaviour expected of members of the University community.
All staff should familiarise themselves with this document and adhere to the Code in all interactions with other staff and students. Escalation processes and support provided where students or staff may have contravened the Code of Conduct will be specified here.

10. Unit evaluation and reporting

The following is indicative/general information.

The Academic Quality, Standards and Integrity Policy describes the University's approach to upholding and improving the quality, standards and integrity of its academic activities and outcomes, while supporting compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (Cth).

- A formal process for the monitoring and review of units occurs through the Internal Quality Indicators in Learning and Teaching (iQILT) reporting process – the Unit Review Process – which evaluates unit performance at the conclusion of each teaching period in which that unit was offered. A flowchart for this process can be found here. Further information on the Student Feedback Survey administered at the end of each teaching periods can be found here.
- The CTL provides guidance on evaluating teaching, including benchmarking, peer review and gathering informal feedback.