



The University of Auckland

Guidelines for Effective Teaching

Introduction

The University of Auckland's *Strategic Plan 2005-12* includes a commitment to 'create and maintain an outstanding teaching and learning environment'. The University has a responsibility to ensure that all of its students, undergraduate and postgraduate, gain the maximum benefit from their education in a research-based teaching and learning environment that is inclusive, intellectually challenging and rewarding.

The University's Strategic Plan acknowledges particular responsibilities to Māori students, specifically by encouraging teaching, learning and research in a range of fields important to Māori. It also acknowledges its responsibilities towards the educational success of all equity group students from the wider communities it serves.

These Guidelines provide advice for staff on effective teaching and learning. They outline the responsibilities of the University and its expectation that staff and students will engage in high-quality teaching and learning.

Effective teachers support students to take responsibility for their learning. The Guidelines recognise that students are active participants in the learning process.

An outstanding teaching and learning environment

The University will meet the needs of students and staff and maintain an outstanding teaching and learning environment by:

- promoting the principles and practices of effective teaching and learning, including the links between teaching and research
- seeking to embed in every course diverse and inclusive teaching and learning practices that will offer the best opportunities for success to all students
- embedding an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, learning and institutional culture of the University
- providing support and professional development that will assist staff to become effective teachers
- recognising, rewarding and promoting excellence and innovation in curriculum design and teaching delivery
- providing a framework for monitoring and assuring the quality of teaching and learning
- maintaining facilities, infrastructure and services that support effective teaching and learning.

Principles of effective teaching and learning

Effective teaching and learning is:

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- research-based, innovative, challenging, responsive to the needs of diverse learners, and underpinned by sound disciplinary and pedagogical expertise
- founded on an in-depth understanding of a wide range of teaching, learning and assessment methods, of the practices which support student learning, and the ability to select and apply different teaching methods in appropriate contexts
- conducted in the context of, and with reference to, the goals and objectives of the University, its faculties, departments and schools.

Effective teachers:

- understand the relationship between knowledge and how students learn and integrate that understanding into course or programme design and delivery
- challenge and enable students to reach their highest appropriate level of learning through supporting them in taking responsibility for their own learning and engaging them with the subjects they are studying
- demonstrate a commitment to scholarly values, life-long learning, professional growth through reflection and self-evaluation, accountability for professional activities and development, and to responsible and ethical practice
- encourage students to engage in a variety of learning situations and support them in developing an understanding of the purpose of different learning formats
- emphasise the need for open-mindedness, critical analysis and evidence-based arguments and conclusions
- are able to communicate effectively in different formats to students from a wide variety of learning backgrounds
- practise and encourage tolerance and respect for diverse viewpoints, beliefs and practices
- use structured processes of curriculum design, development and delivery that are appropriate to their particular disciplinary context, the diversity of student learning styles, and, where applicable, the requirements of relevant professions
- develop information technology skills that enable them to use electronic information resources, new technology and new applications to improve course or programme design, development and delivery, and to enhance learning
- participate in monitoring, assuring and improving the quality of curriculum design, delivery and assessment.
- modify their teaching in response to evidence of student understanding and engagement

Implications for practice

Effective teachers continually look for ways to enhance their practice across all dimensions of teaching and learning.

Enhancing student learning

- provide opportunities that enable students to work towards acquiring the attributes and values in the relevant *Graduate Profile*
- express learning aims and objectives in the context of what students should expect to gain from their overall learning experience
- engage students by using teaching methods that encourage them to relate their learning to their own experiences
- provide opportunities for students to articulate their own views and responses, and treat those views with respect
- create opportunities, where appropriate, for experiential learning through field-work, internships and work placements to enhance student learning
- assist students to develop information literacy skills
- assist in the development of students' communication skills by providing opportunities for oral, multi-media and written presentations and for feedback on their performance

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- identify and maximise opportunities for innovative, collaborative or interdisciplinary methods of teaching and learning
- provide consistency and fairness in the organisation and delivery of courses with multiple streams, and courses taught by more than one member of academic staff.

Research-based teaching

- expose undergraduate students to the research base of the subjects they study, where appropriate, and incorporate current research and consultancy experiences directly into teaching content and approaches
- encourage enquiry-based approaches to learning
- provide appropriate opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in research projects
- involve postgraduate research students in staff research, seminars and conferences
- encourage students to feel part of a community of researchers, while training them in its practices, values and ethics
- develop the skills, experience and disciplinary or interdisciplinary expertise needed to achieve excellence in the supervision of postgraduate students at Honours, Masters and Doctoral level
- encourage students to develop research skills, and emphasise that these skills can be transferred from one learning situation to another
- recognise that teaching and learning are subjects for scholarly research.

e-learning

- identify and create interactive environments using teaching and learning technologies appropriate to the context and learning outcomes.

Assessment

- develop students' confidence by setting assignments which are achievable, challenging and relevant to course or programme objectives, and provide constructive and timely feedback
- provide clear, timely and accessible information about the nature of and criteria for assessment
- encourage in all students respect for academic integrity and an understanding of its principles and practices
- emphasise to students that work submitted for grading should be the student's own work, reflecting his or her learning.

Equity

- understand the variety of teaching and learning practices that may enhance the participation and success of Māori, Pacific, students with disabilities and other equity group students
- accommodate diverse learning styles and approaches in the curriculum, the classroom, and learning resources
- incorporate international and intercultural material and perspectives into course content, learning resources, and teaching approaches as appropriate.

Student support

- identify students who are experiencing academic difficulties and offer appropriate guidance or assistance
- be well-informed about learning and other support facilities, and encourage student use of such facilities to improve their learning and assist them in managing their studies
- make time for advising and supervising individual students.

Monitoring and assuring quality

- apply to teaching practice a knowledge of the University's policies and processes related to the quality assurance of teaching and learning
- use a variety of means, including self-review, student evaluations, peer observation and review, and benchmarking to monitor the quality of teaching and courses.

Feedback

- Use formal and informal feedback received from students to reflect on teaching practices, the effectiveness of student learning, course design and delivery, and make improvements if and as necessary
- To close feedback loops and support a student culture that encourages further feedback, inform students of changes/improvements made as a result of previous feedback. This can be done either before the course ends (for current students) or at the outset of the next offering of the course (for new students). Oral announcements, inserting material in course outlines/course books, and/or CECIL are among the means that can be used to inform students of what has been done in response to feedback.

Professional development

- continually enhance professional and disciplinary expertise through research, scholarship, performance, consultancy or professional practice and incorporate this knowledge into teaching
- review teaching skills and undertake professional development aimed at enhancing teaching capability.

Support for teaching and learning

The University's Centre for Academic Development supports academic staff in the areas listed above. All academic staff who are new to tertiary teaching must participate in the Centre's programme introducing teaching and learning at The University of Auckland.

Implementation and review

These Guidelines replace the policy *Effective Teaching at the University of Auckland* (January 2004).

These Guidelines will be:

- distributed to faculty and department academic committees
- sent to the Auckland University Students' Association for distribution to Class Representatives
- posted on the Teaching and Learning website.

These Guidelines will be reviewed by Teaching and Learning Quality Committee every two years.

Related policies, procedures and guidelines

University of Auckland Graduate Profiles

Assessment of Student Learning

Equity Policy

The Inclusive Teaching and Learning of Students with Impairments – The University of Auckland's Principles and Guidelines for Faculties, Service Divisions, Staff and Students

Information Literacy

Student Evaluation of Courses and Teaching Policy

University Framework for Quality Assurance

Student Charter

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