

Guide to Effective Tutoring at La Trobe University

**Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre
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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide was produced by the Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Centre (CTLTC), and offers professional development resources for tutors and demonstrators at La Trobe University. We define “tutors and demonstrators” as casual/sessional staff and/or postgraduate students who supplement and support the teaching of lecturers/subject coordinators.

The overall purpose of this guide is to provide all tutors at La Trobe University with strategies and information that will equip them to more effectively, efficiently and confidently help students learn. The *Guide to Effective Tutoring at La Trobe University* provides research-based strategies for small-group work which promotes engagement and participation, and is a practical resource for teaching in the La Trobe University environment. Note, however, that administration information and disciplinary-based resources should be sought from your Faculty.

Guide to Effective Tutoring at La Trobe University

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This resource, *Guide to Effective Tutoring at La Trobe University*, Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Centre (CTLIC), is available from *Tutoring and Demonstrating*, <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/tutoring.html>

1. Getting started successfully

The role of the tutor/demonstrator

What is a tutorial? Tutoring normally involves working with small groups of students, and involves discussion, facilitation and interaction on a first name basis. Since lectures generally involve large class settings, tutorials are the primary personal, face-to-face contact for students in their subject, and in their university life.

The tutorial may fulfil particular learning needs according to the subject and program goals, and this can be discussed with the subject coordinator. The assessment needs of the subject are likely to be a central concern of tutorials. To get the best out of working with groups in tutorials, the tutor should focus on learning *activity*, that is, engaging students in active learning rather than imparting or the transmission of knowledge.

Active learning engagement consists of:

- Learner to content: engagement of students with subject content, subject goals and assessment
- Learner to tutor: engagement based on shared expectations between students and tutors
- Learner to learner: as peer to peer relationships between students
(Anderson, 2003)

Active learning is most effective when the third of these are developed: peer to peer relationships between students. Then the tutor has applied Bill Pelz's (2004) principle of pedagogy: "Get the students to do (most) of the work."

Working with coordinators

Before entering the classroom with students, the tutor needs to be able to answer the questions "Why am I here? Who am I tutoring? What precisely am I expected to do? What resources do I have? What do students need? The planning of how student learning occurs in your tutorials starts with your subject coordinator.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR SUBJECT COORDINATOR

Who are my students? What mix of cultures, genders and age comprises this class? What language backgrounds do they have? Do they have life or work experience that may be drawn on as a resource?

The subject guide: Make sure you have a semester plan/schedule and the assessment requirements. What assessment tasks are relevant to my tutorials. What tutorial activities do I have, or am I expected to develop my own tutorials and materials? If so, are there past examples of activities? Are **teaching materials** available, such as textbooks, student learning guide, lecture notes, references/readings, laboratory manuals etc?

What **knowledge, skills and technologies** will I need for this subject? Is training available? (For example, using the Learning Management System (LMS), Turnitin. Is there any university or School-based training).

Assessment: Is marking students' work required? What are the marking criteria for each assessment task? What is the expected turn-around time for marking? How are plagiarism cases handled? Are there moderation of marking meetings that I should attend?

Am I expected to attend **lectures**? Is this part of my paid work or expected as part of your own preparation?

What University **resources** am I allocated as a staff member – email account, network access, office, phone, photocopying/printing allocations, stationary, library card, parking permit, etc?

Will I be need to undertake **evaluation** of my tutoring? If so, in what form, when, and how?

Meeting and communication: How shall we keep in touch during the semester so I can inform you on how students are going in my class, how I am going, and clarify matters? Will there Be meetings with you or with other tutors? If meetings are not feasible, will email communication be sufficient?

Building trust and developing an environment for learning

An important component of tutoring is building the relationships and trust within the class of tutorial participants. A positive, inclusive social environment will make the content and task-oriented focus of the tutorial more effective and dynamic. Activities for the group to get to know about one another and learn each others' names can start with icebreakers. In interaction and relationship building, similarities and differences within a group of people are the basis for building relationships. A group's social, geographical, language and cultural diversity can be a creative resource. Two strategies for getting started with your groups are icebreakers and learning names:

ICEBREAKERS

Fast icebreakers - Who is in this room?

- Introductions: students introduce themselves for one minute and include something memorable about themselves
- Find someone who.. Prepare a list of questions and ask students to match a person to the question. For example, find someone who plays a musical instrument.
- Re-organise the group: Individuals are asked to relocate themselves in the room according to the following markers:
 - Map people according to their place of birth in relation to Melbourne: showing the direction.
 - Group people according to the number of languages they speak
 - Group people according to their astrological sign, Chinese animal zodiac, or even Japanese personality blood type

Slow icebreakers - Building peer relationships

- **Profile:** Each student briefly interviews, then is interviewed by a colleague, and then presents a one minute profile of a colleague, including an “unofficial” or memorable detail about their colleague
- **Name archaeology:** interview a colleague and present their name story
- **Family Migration:** interview & present a colleague's family migration story (Caution: some migration stories are traumatic, so allow an alternative)
- **Decades:** Good where your class spans a large age group. Students form groups based on when they went to high school. Each group brainstorms a list of signature items from that decade, such as music, clothes, events, and social mores. Each group reports their lists, and together discusses insights from the activity.

Links for icebreakers (See Further resources)

[Teampedia.](#)

Morris, G. [Issues in Tutor Education.](#)

Chinese [zodiac.](#)

Japanese [personality blood type.](#)

The key to building productive interaction and an active learning group is knowing students on a first name basis, particularly unfamiliar names. This needs to be accomplished at the start of the semester, and learning names can be part of the process of getting started.

LEARNING STUDENT NAMES

Introductions: Use the *Introductions* or *Profile* icebreaker exercise to build familiarity with names

Name Badges: Prepare pin-on name tags based on your class lists and giving these out as people arrive. Use large fonts so that they are easy-to-read. Sticky labels can also be used as name badges.

Place cards: Have students make place cards on the first day of class that can sit on the desk in front of them.

Who is talking? Make a group protocol that students give their name before they speak. This can be continued until everyone (both teacher and students) feels they know each other. Also try and use students' names as often as possible.

What shall I call you? For unfamiliar names such as international students, check pronunciation with students and ask them how they wish to be addressed.

For more information on naming systems, see [Theory Into Practice Strategies \(TIPS\)](#) at La Trobe University's Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit.

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cdip/>

Setting expectations and ground rules

Students may have different notions and expectations of a tutorial. The students in your tutorial will reflect the diversity of culture, socio-economic background, and their own experience of education. Where an individual is the first in his or her family to go to university, the concept of tutorial or seminar may be unfamiliar. Even among tutors and lecturers, tutorial expectations vary across disciplines, and where one tutorial may comprise much lively discussion, another may consist of substantial portions of quiet individual or group work and problem-solving. Students may need to “discover” what your tutorial is.

All tutorials need to become a shared learning space, and you will need to negotiate expectations and set guidelines for the social aspects of learning. To make tutorials work well, find out what students' goals are with tutorials, perhaps collect in written form, then establish shared goals and build ground rules.

For a new tutorial group, an effective strategy is to establish expectations and build ground rules *from the students themselves*. This builds cohesion and ownership of the tutorial as a learning space.

To start this process, you may want to suggest a few initial ground rules. Keep them present and make them visible during the semester.

GROUND RULES ... SOME SUGGESTIONS

- All members make a contribution to the discussion
- Do preparation and prereading
- There is no such thing as a ‘stupid’ question
- Respect other people’s point of view
- Don’t interrupt anyone when they’re speaking
- Mobiles off
- Respect differences: don’t make negative or humiliating comments
- Criticize other people’s arguments, not their personality
- Listen to what other people are saying
- Treat the tutorial as a shared space, not your private space
- Keep group discussions confidential outside the group
- Remain focused on the specific tasks
- Members should feel responsibility towards achieving group aims
- Perform required preparation tasks outside the group
- Group members accept the ground rules

Adapted from: Exley, K. & Dennick, R. (2004). *Small group teaching*. London: RoutledgeFalmer, p.21

2. Making small groups work well

Assessment can be seen as the engine that drives student course activity, online or off. (Swan et al. 2006)

Planning for student learning

Expectations and assessment of learning in a subject takes place through **intended learning outcomes (ILOs)**. These are defined by Biggs and Tang (2007) as “statements, written from the students’ perspective, indicating the level of understanding and performance they are expected to achieve as a result of engaging in the teaching and learning experience.” (p. 55).

By designing your tutorial by matching learning activities with intended learning outcomes, you will be able to communicate and share expectations of the subject with the group. A subject normally has 4 -8 intended learning outcomes. Some examples from subjects across disciplines:

SAMPLE LEARNING OUTCOMES

BUSINESS: International Business Environment

- Describe the effects of globalisation on markets and production
- Explain why managers today need a global presence

HEALTH: Interdisciplinary Professional Practice

- Describe the impact of current Australian health and human service systems on service provision
- Evaluate the contribution of various disciplines to interdisciplinary practice in relation to individual and community needs

ENGINEERING: Mechanical Systems

- Outline the fundamental theory of friction and wear and its application in engineering
- Apply the principles of mechanical kinetics to single degree of freedom vibration systems
- Work effectively as a team member in a small-scale engineering project

HUMANITIES: Environmental History

- Identify changing understandings of humans and cultural landscapes
- Analyse representations of the environments over time
- Critically reflect on how humans have been shaped by natural environments

The process of aligning learning activities to ILOs, which in turn are aligned to an assessment task, is designing **constructively alignment** (Biggs & Tang, 2007, p. 54), a key curriculum design and teaching method in higher education. For more, see [Constructive alignment](#) at The Higher Education Academy (in Further Resources at the end of this Guide).

Note that some intended learning outcomes require a higher level of learning than others: examine the verb used to express the ILO: *describe* requires recognition and memorisation, a relatively lower level of learning, whereas *explain, reflect, apply, create* or *analyse* require more “relational” or abstract levels of understanding. For more on levels of understanding, see TEDI’s [Bloom’s SOLO taxonomy](#), and Biggs & Tang, 2007, pp. 76-83.

Designing a session

Covering ground or understanding concepts?

What should you be concerned about achieving at the end of your session? Should you make sure you “cover” curriculum content, or ensure your students grasp core concepts?

Your tutorial session is one component in the subject and program in which students are enrolled. You may find that content is “covered” in lectures, and tutorials can achieve the purpose of gaining deep understanding of concepts.

You can use the ILOs and subject information to design your sessions as part of the student experience of whole subject. A preliminary checklist before you design a session:

PLANNING CHECKLIST

1. What are your intended learning outcomes?
2. How are tutorials linked to assessment?
 - Is any assessment carried out in the tutorials?
 - What are the assessment criteria for these?
3. How are the tutorials linked with lectures
4. Who are your students?
 - (i) Where do they come from?
 - (ii) What challenges might they have?
5. Structure the learning
 - (i) How much of your session will be focussed on **content**, and how much **process** *
 - (ii) Where will you begin?
 - (iii) What happens in the middle?
 - (iv) How will you close the lesson?

**Process* includes discussion, reflection, groupwork, presentation. *Content* includes disciplinary activities, problem-solving, analysis, evaluating evidence, theorising, clarifying and understanding (Exley, & Dennick, 2004).

Making small groups work well

Plan your tutorial session by matching intended learning outcomes (ILOs) with learning activities. The following **tutorial planner** can be used to plan for an active learning tutorial. It can be downloaded from the *Tutoring and Demonstrating* website at CTLC [Teaching Resources](#). Check with subject coordinators for prepared plans. (Adapted from *Planning for Success*, 2006, University of South Australia, pp. 17-18).

TUTORIAL PLANNER	
Subject	Coordinator
Week	Year level
Overall time	Approximate number of students
intended learning outcomes /Assessment relevant to this tutorial	
Appropriate questions to stimulate discussion	
If using small group work, how will groups be formed? How will you support inclusivity?	
Evaluation approach	

Making small groups work well

Schedule of activities		
Intended learning outcomes	Activity?	Time?
<i>Eg. Icebreaker to get students talking and motivated</i>	<i>e.g. Introductions</i>	<i>15 mins</i>
Closing activity		

Engaging everyone in learning: Discussion and questioning approaches

Let the students do (most of) the work. ([Pelz 2004](#))

Learning does not occur spontaneously among a group of students, and needs to be a structured experience. Facilitating engagement among students by questioning is a key to building engagement and productive discussion. Skilled questioning opens up reflection, thinking and discussion among students.

The key to getting the students to do the work is discussion with a high level of peer interaction. A tutor will need strategies to stimulate discussion, direct it productively, make it inclusive, synthesise and close off a period of discussion.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING DISCUSSION AND PEER INTERACTION

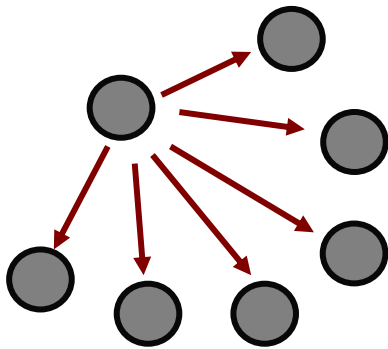
- Use the ground rules to emphasise there are no “stupid” questions.
- **Start** with easy questions, particularly with shy or reluctant students
- **Check** that everyone understands the topic for discussion.
- **Pitch** questions at a level appropriate for students’ understanding. Use **anecdotes** or personal experiences to make connections with real world experience.
- Use open ended questions as well as closed questions:
What? Where? When? How? Who.....? Why.....?
Tell me about, Tell me more.
- **Respond positively.** If an answer is inadequate you may need to clarify the question or redirect to another student. Reward good answers (in whole or part) by responding with encouragement.
- Give students **thinking time**. Note the “wait” time between question and answer is more acceptable in some non-Anglo cultures.
- Ask students to **write down** an answer to a question first, then share with a colleague. Then ask.
- **Encourage student questions.** Framing the discussion topic such that it requires questions to further the enquiry. Ask students to prepare their own questions on a topic.
- **Rephrase** and **redirect** discussion to other students, “Robert argues that ...”, “What do you think, Emily?”
- **Return** the discussion to the topic, “how does this relate to ...”
- **Recap** and synthesise a discussion when it is time to finish a topic. This can be accomplished by the tutor, or by asking groups of students to offer a summary.

Small group activities to enhance learning and motivation

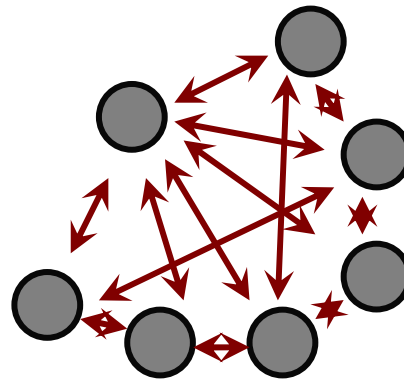
I can define teaching in one word: teaching is conversation' (Al-Mahmood & McLoughlin 2004)

What makes discussion effective in face to face settings? Active learning involves tasks structured around peer interaction, that is, learner to learner interaction, to complement other types of engagement, such as learner to tutor/lecturer, and learner to content interaction. A tutorial is the best learning space place to structure active learning based on peer interaction:

- Structured & facilitated
- Group centred
- A point of arrival, synthesis or closure.



Tutor to learner interaction



Learner to learner interaction

Group formation

A class of 15 to 25 may be too large for effective interaction and discussion for all students, and breaking students into smaller groups may be a way of achieving effective peer interaction.

How should small groups be organised: self-organising or structured? A self-organised, democratic approach may result in groups composed of like-minded, and culturally similar individuals, and lack of inter-group interaction is a risk. *It can be useful to move students out of their comfort zone, and to form and re-form groups regularly.*

- Random grouping: Assign numbers 1 – 5 to the class repeatedly. Then form groups by allocating the same number to each group: Group A consists of number 1; Group B of number 2, and so on. Then later, reform groups based on the sequence of numbers.
- Career grouping: Ask students what their aims are in terms career, and group them accordingly.
- Use astrology (Western or Chinese) to assign students to small groups – either with like signs or unlike signs

Making small groups work well

Rat; 1972, 1984	Horse; 1966, 1978
Ox; 1961, 1973, 1985	Ram; 1967, 1979
Tiger; 1962, 1974, 1986	Monkey; 1968, 1980
Rabbit; 1963, 1975, 1987	Rooster; 1969, 1981
Dragon; 1964, 1976	Dog; 1970, 1982
Snake; 1965, 1977	Pig; 1971, 1983

Chinese astrology: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_astrology

Motivation

Why would students be motivated to engage?

(i) intrinsic motivation: students engage with learning activities which are relevant and interesting,

(ii) extrinsic motivation: activity based learning is linked to core content - to lectures, readings, tutorial exercises and is explicitly linked to assessment.

Learning activities may be structured to include one or both social (intrinsic motivation) and task-based (extrinsic motivation) purposes. A combination of both, in which interaction is engaging (intrinsic) and given value by assessment (extrinsic), and is more likely to engage all students.

Small group strategies

Palloff & Pratt (2005) suggest collaborative and community building activities structured around learner to learner interaction. Examples are: case studies, small group projects, collaborative discussions, debates and role play (pp, 55ff).

Use small group strategies to plan your active learning session. For example:

- Think – pair – share
- Buzz groups
- Tell your partner
- Fishbowl
- Mini-quiz

[Smaller group teaching](#), Teaching Resources, La Trobe University.

For onscreen examples of small group work in Australian contexts, see the excellent resource on tutor training from The University of Melbourne and The University of Sydney (2007), [Generating Engagement](#)

Making small groups work well

The examples below are well known activity-based teaching techniques. These are selected from [Strategies for doing small group work in large classes](#), TEDI, University of Queensland,

STRATEGIES FOR GROUP WORK

Brainstorm

Students present a query or difficulty to a small group. The group then brainstorms the issue including possible factors and solutions. Reports to the larger group follow.

Buzz Groups

Short discussion in small groups ie neighbours in lecture theatre, about a set topic eg difficulties they are having, a question set by the lecturer.

Debate

Students are given two opposing positions to defend which focus on a key question in their study.

Peer teaching

Working in small groups, students research a topic and prepare to teach it to their fellow students.

Role play

Students are asked to adopt a role and play it within a given scenario. Students are then required to debrief the experience, analysing the scenario and the various actions/behaviours using key concepts or principles from the course.

Snowball groups (Pyramiding)

Pose a question, ask individuals to work on it, then to share their thoughts with one other, increase the complexity of the task and size of groups until you have a plenary session.

Tell your partner

An activity for pairs. Each person explains a topic/concept/ answer to someone else. The partner has to listen, then ask questions.

Think Pair Share

Each person considers the topic/question and writes down some ideas/answers. S/he joins with one other colleague for discussion. This provides a basis for wider discussion.

Fishbowl

One group discusses a topic. The second group observes the discussion and each person records:

- A partner's contributions (and gives individual feedback afterwards), or
- The important parts of the discussion (may be identification of issues, applications, generalisations, etc., depending on the task instructions)

Mini-quiz

A mini-quiz (3-6 items) is presented to all students before, as a diagnostic check on where they are, or after a task, to check their understanding. Both provide feedback.

Teaching a diverse student cohort

Culture is not static, but interaction, it is the 'know-how' of living, of interaction using shared meaning and practices. White, Ron. (1997). Going round in circles

On arrival – Encounters of the first kind (H3)

In a teaching and learning environment, the new international students student frequently must do a number of things simultaneously:

- use a new language (Australian)
- negotiate accommodation and living conditions
- decode unfamiliar cultural practices, such as Australian egalitarianism, and adapt to new social rules – areas of inclusion and exclusion, are arrangements loose or definite, how do people meet and greet
- adapt and engage with the new approach of student-centred learning, and manage their own learning

International students may need time as they become attuned to the new communication environment through immersion (Ballard & Clancy, 1997). All students can benefit from their inclusion, and intercultural communication is a part of the interaction during learning, and in professional life.

- Allow for an adjustment time for new international students of 2-3 months.
- Construct interaction among students from the start of a course, via pairwork and groupwork. Intervene to form and re-form small groups.
- Set expectations for intercultural contrasts and perspectives into learning activities,
- Mark written work for sense and meaning, rather than scrupulous spelling and grammar standards for the adjustment period

Expectations of English Language Proficiency

One of the significant indicators of English proficiency among international students is their IELTS level. In the figure below, the levels of English proficiency are represented as "IELTS band scores", from 1-9. At La Trobe University, undergraduate entry is set at IELTS entry level 6.0.

Note, however, the definition of "Competent user" at level 6. At this level, there is potential for misunderstandings based on context, rather than sentence comprehension. International students may need a period to adjust to Australian speaking styles and a generally unfamiliar cultural environment. In the education environment, students may be unfamiliar with Western concepts of student-centred learning, and unprepared for the responsibility of independent, self-managed learning.

IELTS band scores

9	Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7	Good user	Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6	Competent user	Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	Modest user	Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.
4	Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	Extremely limited user	Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1	Non user	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test	No assessable information provided.

Further information

- To refer students to help for academic writing, referencing, researching and using the Library, consult the Library Guides <http://latrobe.libguides.com/>
- These offer online guides and personal contacts for information literacy by subject and discipline.
- Inclusive teaching, Developing an inclusive curriculum, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/inclusive-curriculum.html>
- Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit, Equality and Diversity Centre, La Trobe University. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cdip/>

Student diversity at La Trobe University (2008)

- 29124 students.
- 5005 local students were born overseas from 129 countries of origin
- 4,926 international students, 129 countries
- 6,460 or one quarter of our students spoke a language other than English at home covering 105 different languages
- 101 Indigenous students

Dealing with and defusing difficult situations

The start of the semester is a crucial for tutorials. Learning practices and habits of interaction are being formed, and students are more open to innovative approaches. An structured approach at the start of a tutorial, encouraging intercultural interaction, group participation and informal presentation, can establish a dynamic, effective teaching and learning environment. The following are some troubleshooting strategies for use when difficult situations arise.

Strategies for preparing active learning

Situation	Strategies
<p>Passive behaviour, confusion: Students are unprepared for the shift to student-centred learning</p> <p>Confusion with task and assignment expectations</p> <p>Resistance, passivity, boredom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce student-centred learning and independent learning from the start • persuade students that participation and groupwork is of value for both subject and program outcomes: • Make sure students attend orientation and are aware of university student services • If possible, organise or suggest activities where international and local students mix – eg. a mentoring or ‘buddy’ pairing • Make expectations explicit and stated in the Learning Guide. Relate assessments to learning outcomes • Establish expectations based on shared ground rules which set guidelines for interaction and student-centred learning • Build in formative feedback as well as summative assessment • Make clear that the intercultural and international context is a responsibility for everyone, and that working in an international environment is one of the program outcomes • Be explicit about the issues, acknowledge difficulties and remind students of goals of tutorials, and ground rules • Make connections between tasks in tutorials, assessments and lectures • Use some tutorial time building relationships with social oriented activities • Establish your own credibility and achievements and what you can bring to the tutorials.=
<p>Staying in one’s comfort zone Students stay with own friends, and stick to their comfort zone of knowledge and contacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use random grouping strategies to form and re-form small groups, and make re-orienting in the learning space an expectation (see Group Formation) • Use cultural diversity as a resource, and actively bring in global perspectives.

Strategies for managing tricky situations

Situation	Strategies
<p>Fragmentation: Student organise into culturally separate groups or cliques</p> <p>Local student(s) want to opt out of culturally diverse group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up habits of interaction and mixing early. Shift students out of their comfort zone ▪ Do not hesitate to manage the selection of the group as cultural mix, then use peer evaluation of individual contributions, followed by individual agreement and sign off on evaluation ▪ Build cultural comparison into activities and assignments ▪ Rotate the team leader among group. ▪ Suggest a team meets outside classroom, eg. café/restaurant.
<p>Low level of participation Reluctance to speak in class or ask questions Reluctance to participate</p> <p>Poor attention and interaction: Students overwhelmed by demands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish expectations of participation and discussion with each other for all students, build the habit of two-way interaction from start of course. • Dilute the fear – manage interaction in class, for example, use pair work or instant groups, where students speak to a group, and each group presents a question or a solution • Quietness may not mean they are not participating – allow “wait” time for student response • Allow 5-10 minutes after class for Q & A • Assign a student or pair of students to moderate or facilitate a discussion topic a week • Construct problem-solving tasks based on real world examples (eg. media stories) and situations relevant to students’ lives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set guidelines and expectations for participation at start of semester • Provide lecture/class schedule, including library times, and other time-management tips • Ask groups or pairs to come up with a question on what they are not clear about • Students may be swamped by amount of reading – encourage selective reading, eg. ‘mining’ an article • Encourage active conceptualisation of ideas learned, eg. summaries, annotated literature search

Making small groups work well

Situation	Strategies
<p>Harassment, bullying, racism: Bullying, racist or sexist language or behaviour among students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what behaviour or language is not acceptable • Refer to relevant policy and procedures at Harassment and Discrimination. http://www.latrobe.edu.au/equality/shhd/shhd.htm • Place behaviour in tutorials in context of working professionals • Remind students of ground rules and expectations for tutorials
<p>Emergency: Medical, fire etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Emergency procedures on your campus: • Albury-Wodonga: 8222, or mobile 0418 459 324 (24 hour service). • Bendigo 7999 (24 hours), or 9479 7999 or 000; • Bundoora: 2222 or telephone 9479 2222 or freecall 1 800 800 613 • Shepparton: 2683 or ext 2666, or 0000

3. Feedback, assessment and marking

Assessing your students: La Trobe's approach and policies on assessment can be found at: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/assessment.html>

The policy sets out the purpose, principles and approach to student learning, where responsibility for maintaining standards and the integrity of processes. Some brief extracts from the policy document:

Assessment Policy (extracts)

Policy Statement

The University is responsible for defining the criteria for success at particular award levels.

Assessment of student work must be criterion-referenced and aligned to specified learning outcomes, including graduate capabilities and the generic skills they encompass.

Within a subject, there should be both formative and summative assessment.

Assessment should be moderated using appropriate methods.

Assessment should be equitable, objective and auditable and meet the needs of a diverse student population.

All examinations should be marked anonymously and staff should avoid situations requiring them to assess a student with whom they have, or have had, a significant personal relationship.

Definitions

Formative assessment: monitoring student progress against standards and providing them with feedback comparing their progress to the standards with a view to helping them to achieve the standards.

Summative assessment: making judgement about student achievements against explicit standards and translating that judgement into a grade; used at the end of a subject.

Criterion-referenced assessment: students work is assessed with reference to written criteria derived from explicit learning outcomes.

Assessment Procedures (extract)

Approaches to assessment and feedback

Various types of formative assessment can be used, including:

- Self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Teacher individual feedback

Teacher group feedback

Feedback should aim to promote learning, be informative and constructive. It should address expected learning outcomes, identify strengths and weaknesses, give guidance on how to perform better and encourage students to develop strategies to prepare for future tasks.

Various forms of feedback may be given, including:

- On line discussion
- Tutorials
- Written individual explanations
- Lists of assessment criteria provided to students

Feedback should be effective in its communication to students and its demands on staff time.

How students learn: Surface and deep learning

'Good teaching is getting most students to do higher level or deep learning' (Biggs & Tang 2007).

Models of student approaches to learning mainly reflect a distinction between two orientations to learning (Ramsden, 1992; Biggs & Tang, 2007). These can be described in various binaries: meaning orientation or reproducing orientation, deep or surface learning, higher order learning or lower order learning, active learning or transmissive learning.

Active learning approaches afford an environment in which to structure learning activities and assessments and rubrics around deep learning. **Deep learning** can be described as intimate, critical, applicable, embodied understanding, and the ability to adapt complex and critical understanding to professional situations. **Surface learning** is used for memorisation, recall, rote learning, and the danger is that it is difficult to flexibly apply simple facts in workplace. Surface learning may, however, be useful as a means to achieve deep learning, particularly as a mode of learning that leads to deep learning. For example, memorisation may lead to deep learning, for example, memorising formulae or anatomical structures. Memory work is a method used by English as Another Language (EAL) students (Volet & Ang, 1998).

Approaches to learning: Feedback or formative assessment

Feedback is any information or activity which “affords or accelerates learning” (Hounsell, 2005). Its key function is to evaluate progress and achievement, and provide support and encouragement. It is important that students, tutors and teaching staff have a clear understanding of what feedback is particularly as it is included in the evaluation items for the Student Feedback on Teaching (See 5. Evaluation and Improvement).

Dai Hounsell (2004), in his paper, *Reinventing feedback in the Contemporary University*, retrieves feedback from its often held status as assessment comments, to be integral to discussion and interaction in groupwork. He makes the following points:

- Feedback can be extrinsic (assessment focussed) or intrinsic (activity and practice based)
- Feedback can be immediate and verbal – there is lack of engagement when it arrives after an assessment
- Feedback can be to a whole class feedback – for example, the minute paper
- Feedback can be many to many - peer feedback. Student involvement in identifying strengths and weaknesses in their own and others' work
- Feedback can be a loop – can be given on unfinished work
- Feed-forward – enables students to engage constructively with tutor's comments and to gain practice in revising

Facilitating discussion and questioning is central for effective groupwork. A productive active learning session will reflect a high level of student to student interaction, and a sense of achievement and closure in discussion.

McGowan (2008) suggests the use of marking rubrics as formative assessment:

- **Feed-back:** Use rubric as cover sheet, with ticked boxes for overview of strengths and weaknesses
- **Feed-forward:** Provide rubric as guideline before assignments, to set out criteria and levels of achievement)

A range of feedback techniques for use in classrooms are described by Cross and Angelo (1993) as **Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS)**. Some CATs that you might want to consider include:

- **Minute paper:** the key in making best use of the minute paper is not the questions you ask but how you make use of the feedback from students to guide their future learning.
- **Misconception/Preconception check:** ask students before you start a topic what their ideas are about it. Then use this as the starting point for talking about how the area is understood within your discipline.
- **Categorising grid:** when approaching problems, students often need to understand which category of problem they are dealing with. By providing them with a grid that lays out the problem solution space and then getting them to suggest where the problem sits you can get an idea about how they are approaching problems.

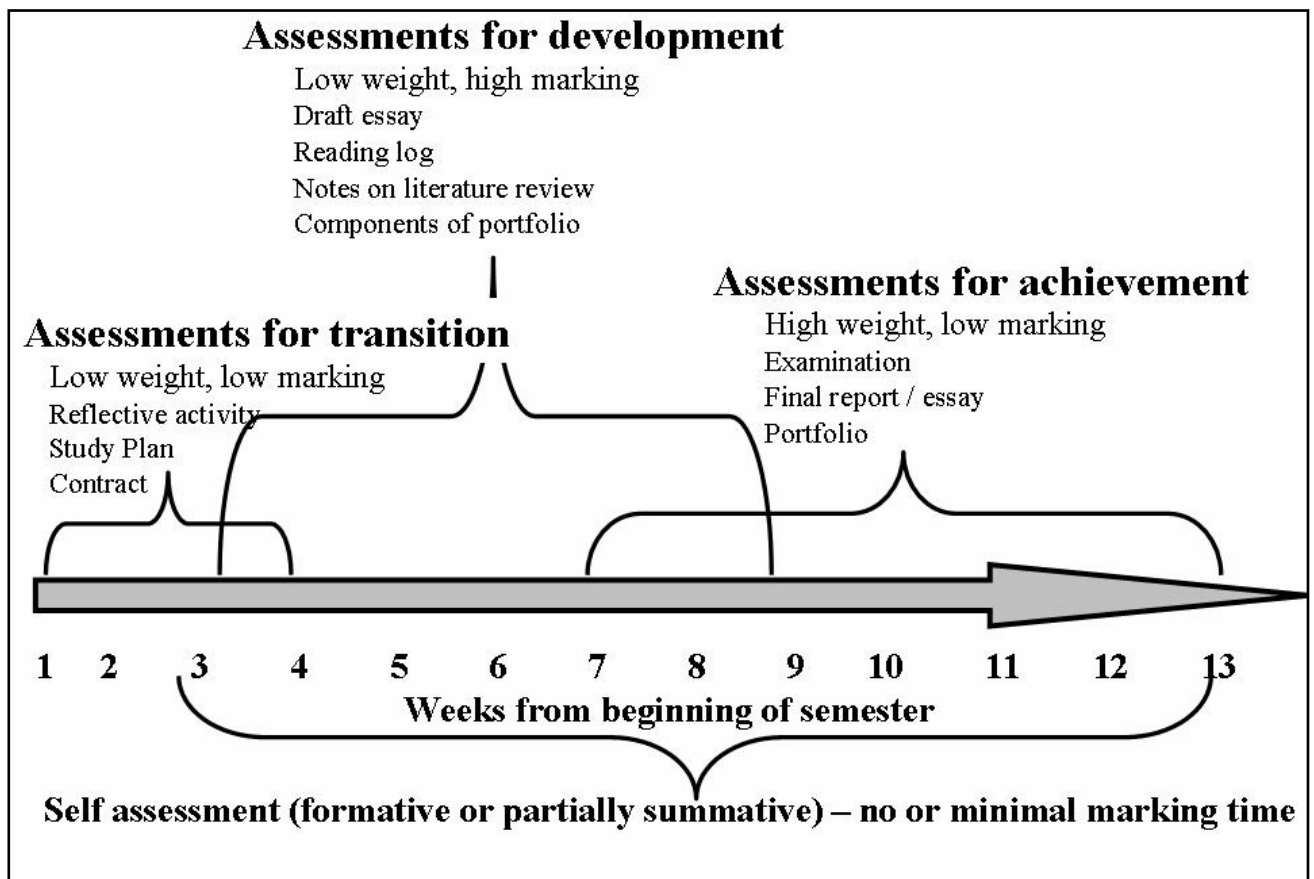
Feedback, assessment & marking

- **Concept Maps:** Students draw a diagram or maps between major concepts showing mental connections
- **Group Instructional Feedback Technique:** Students are asked three questions about the class: What works? What doesn't? What can be done to improve it?

Instructional Assessment Resources, The University of Texas at Austin.

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/teaching/plan/method/cats/>

Assessment is most effective if students receive feedback *before* the final, summative assessment. Taylor (2008) set out a model of assessment in which low risk, early assessment is integrated into the a semester, and formative and summative assessment is organised as assessment for **transition**, for **development**, and for **achievement**



Strategies for assessment, Taylor, 2008, p. 23

Marking and moderation

Assessment at La Trobe is criterion-referenced, as described in the policy statement:

Assessment of student work must be criterion-referenced and aligned to specified learning outcomes, including graduate capabilities and the generic skills they encompass. Assessment Policy,

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/index.html>

The distinction is made between criterion and normative assessment:

Criterion-referenced assessment: students work is assessed with reference to written criteria derived from explicit learning outcomes.

Normative assessment: grades are awarded based on a predetermined distribution. The most common form of normative assessment assumes grades/marks are distributed according to a standard normal distribution curve. Each student's grade in the subject is determined in part by how well other students in the subject do.

Assessment Policy, La Trobe University.

The Assessment Policy further describes conditions for assessment

- Within a subject, there should be both formative and summative assessment.
- Assessment should be moderated using appropriate methods.
- Assessment should be equitable, objective and auditable and meet the needs of a diverse student population.

Assessment Policy, La Trobe University

La Trobe University Grading Schema

80 - 100% pass A

70 - 79% pass B

60 - 69% pass C

50 - 59% pass D

Ungraded pass. P

May also denote satisfactory completion of a Masters Prelim course or postgraduate thesis

Grading Schema <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/acadserv/current/gradingschema.html>

Consistency in marking

Consistency in marking, or moderation, is about fairness in marking, and finding agreement between markers.

Procedures for marking are set out in La Trobe University's assessment policies (Assessment Procedures):

Where there is more than one marker, selected pieces of work from each assessment task should be reviewed by the subject co-ordinator to verify the level and consistency of the marks allocated by the markers.

This process increases the reliability of the assessment process and application of standards, promotes consistency, supports objectivity and establishes a shared understanding of standards and fairness in assessment.

Assessment Procedures, La Trobe University

However, each faculty has its own interpretation of the policies, along with slightly different implementation practices. Tutors need to ask subject coordinators about local practices concerning issues such as submission of work, applications and penalties for extensions, assessment criteria, moderation, collation of grades, double marking requirements, academic misconduct and plagiarism.

Where large cohorts of students are involved, moderation can be approached at the subject coordination level, as a team process, involving meeting:

- at the assessment design stage – to review marking criteria
- at the marking stage, before processing of marks. Where there is more than one marker, selected pieces of work from each assessment task should be reviewed by the subject co-ordinator to verify the level and consistency of the marks allocated by the markers.
- at the end of semester, to review the subject assessment procedure

Orrell (2006) describes some strategies to achieve reliability

- multiple marking of the same paper by either the same assessor or by two different assessors
- blind marking
- marking all responses to the same question in the case of tests that contain several short answer questions
- establishing standards using model assignments
- neutral external examiners

Example of Marking Procedures

Example from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences academic policies:

Marking procedures:

In subjects from first to third year level the all individual written work worth 25% or more of the available marks must be marked in the following manner. It is the responsibility of Schools to ensure that where non-written work, such as a performance, is assessable, comparable procedures are adopted to ensure reliable assessment.

i. **Double-marking** of all As and Ns; this need not be “blind”, but may simply be a check on the appropriateness of the mark;

ii. **In the event of disagreement**

- the markers are to discuss the work and attempt to arrive at an agreed mark which will then stand;
- where agreement cannot be reached on the mark, the result will be the average of the two marks provided the markers agree on the grade;
- where agreement on the grade cannot be reached the Program Coordinator (or Head of School if the Program Coordinator is one of the markers) will appoint a third marker who will, after considering the opinions of the two previous markers and the work in question, act as an adjudicator and determine the final mark;

iii. **Assessment meeting**: subject co-ordinators must arrange a meeting of all staff involved in assessment in the subject to discuss criteria and to expose new markers to the expectations of the subject;

iv. **New markers** will be involved in cross-marking with an experienced marker either at the assessment meeting or by submitting a sample of their marked work to an experienced examiner before returning it to students.

Assessment criteria examples

While the previous section describes La Trobe University's assessment policies, each faculty has its own interpretation of the policies, along with slightly different implementation practices. Tutors need to ask subject coordinators about local practices concerning issues such as submission of work, applications and penalties for extensions, assessment criteria, moderation, collation of grades, double marking requirements, academic misconduct and plagiarism.

Here we will just provide selected examples, but they are not meant to be illustrative of the huge variety of assessment situations within all of the faculties.

Examples of Assessment Criteria

The following two examples are from the University of Sydney's Economics Unit of study outline guidelines, see <http://teaching.econ.usyd.edu.au/UoS>

Example 1: Assessment criteria for discussion board

Criteria 1: Active Participation throughout the semester (number and continuity of contributions)

- Search and print out your discussion board record with title and date

Criteria 2: Use of appropriate computer mediated communication protocols

- Ability to follow threads
- Can attach documents
- Can compose messages when appropriate
- Can post correctly to topic or forum

Criteria 3: Collaborative learning

- Demonstrates reading of other contributions either by commenting or adding to other postings
- Encourages others to respond because of the nature of the contribution (e.g. posing questions, provocative statements, widens debate)
- Fail = no attempt to be collaborative, just posts textbook answer or 'I agree with everyone' with no further collaborative approach
- Pass = makes attempt to be collaborative not just 'I agree with everyone else'
- High Distinction = effective engagement (e.g. # responses or style of language), summary of previous discussion points, provocation to encourage debate.

Criteria 4. Application of theory

- Demonstrates ability to apply theory in other situations (e.g. at work, family, group, uni)

Criteria 5. Appropriate analytical annotations

- Demonstrates ability to plan and analyse postings to ensure incorporation of theories, collaborative comments

Example 2: Assessment criteria for class participation

Class participation (10%)

At the end of the semester each student will be allotted a participation mark. It is worth 10% of the overall assessment to encourage your active participation to promote your own and your class learning. Being able to contribute to group learning and solving problems with others is an attribute employers value highly.

The criteria to be considered in calculating the participation mark are:

- Quality of contribution: Relevance, contribution to understanding, critical analysis, clarity of contribution, originality, comparative insight, consistency of valuable contribution, evidence of learning in the unit of study
- Contribution to group climate: Not domineering. Passivity and brevity of comment. Facilitation of further discussion.
- Courtesy and tact: Respect for peers and lecturer
- Attitude to learning: Interest, attentiveness in class

Example 3: Individual Essay Marking Guidelines (Faculty of Health Sciences)

Argument and analytical content: The essay should answer the question set and demonstrate an understanding of key concepts and appropriate theories discussed throughout the semester. There should be evidence of wider reading that has been understood and used appropriately.

MAXIMUM 25 marks

Organisation of the essay: The essay should have a well-written introduction, main body and conclusion. Your argument should be organised into clear paragraphs that link in a logical sequence. **MAXIMUM 12 MARKS.**

Referencing: The origin of all ideas, quotations and data must be indicated. Essays should be referenced using APA style.

MAXIMUM 6.5 MARKS.

Presentation: Higher written communication skills include an ability to write in a clear, academically appropriate style. The essay should demonstrate command over grammatical structure and vocabulary, correct spelling and punctuation, and well-structured sentences. Essays should be typed in 12-point font, using 1.5 line spacing with a 5 cm left-hand margin.

MAXIMUM 6.5 MARKS.

COMMENTS

FINAL MARK

/50

Feedback, assessment & marking

Example 4: Group Peer Assessment						
Please assess your group members individually by giving a mark of 1-5 (by ticking the appropriate box) in each of the following ten categories.						
Name (of colleague being assessed):						
	5	4	3	2	1	
Regularly makes a useful contribution in group discussions						Finds it difficult to be a contributing group member
Can be relied upon to carry out allocated duties accurately and without supervision						Needs more supervision than most in carrying out instructions assigned to her/him
Works amicably with others as a member of a team						Has difficulty in working with colleagues and is sometimes not accepted as a member of the team
Responds well to instructions / advice / criticism						Resents criticism and is reluctant to accept advice
Is consistently courteous and helpful to colleagues						Appears off-hand and casual in dealing with colleagues
Shows excellent ability to plan and complete own work						Has not yet learned to organise own work effectively
Is outstanding in ability to organize and supervise work of others						Is not able to organise and supervise work of others
Grasps essentials very quickly						Has difficulty in recognising essentials
Successfully anticipates the requirements of new situations and takes appropriate action						Has difficulty in recognising implications of new situations
Is good at solving problems						Has difficulty in suggesting solutions to problems
Comments:						
Your Name:			Date:			

Academic Integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means being honest in academic work. University work needs to meet the highest standards of integrity because university research has impact on many communities. La Trobe University is committed to academic integrity, so it promotes academic honesty and teaches the conventions of academic acknowledgment.

Student Learning. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/integrity-what-is.html>

An approach to Academic Integrity brings both an ethical and formative assessment approach to teaching and learning. The CTLC lists some Strategies for reducing plagiarism, including Library resources for referencing, and the use of the web-based text-matching software Turnitin. Turnitin is a text-matching software that can be used to identify incidences of coincidences between a student's paper, published materials, and other works submitted to Turnitin. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/turnitin/>

Plagiarism is described on the university's plagiarism website at:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/plagiarism/>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when you use another person's words, ideas or other work but do not say that you have borrowed or used these. For example, you might copy or reproduce words, sentences or whole sections from a book, journal, website or even another student's essay without acknowledging that you have borrowed this work. It is also considered to be plagiarism if you copy or reproduce pictures, diagrams and other non-text materials without acknowledgement.

According to section 1.2 of La Trobe University's Academic Misconduct Policy (2007, p.1), there are many forms of plagiarism.

These include:

1. direct copying of sentences, paragraphs or other extracts from someone else's published work (including on the Internet and in software) without acknowledging the source;
2. paraphrasing someone else's words without acknowledging the source;
3. using facts and information derived from a source without acknowledging it;
4. using ideas directly derived from an identifiable author without acknowledging the source;
5. producing assignments which should be the student's own independent work in collaboration with and/or using the work of other people (e.g. a student or tutor).

For the full text of the Academic Misconduct Policy see:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/policy/all-policies>

Feedback, assessment & marking

For further information, see *Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism*.

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/integrity.html>

Strategies for reducing plagiarism.

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/integrity/strategies.html>

Turnitin. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/turnitin/>

James, R., McInnis, C. and Devlin, M. (2002) *Assessing Learning in Australian Universities*.

Excerpt prepared by Marcia Devlin.

<http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/docs/PlagMain.pdf>

4. Managing learning online

Online or flexible learning may be a part of the teaching and learning environment for your subject. Online learning is not a new paradigm, “There are really no models of e-learning per se – only e-enhancements of models of learning” (Mayes & De Freitas 2004, p. 4). Online learning makes use of networked technology to enhance and achieve good learning outcomes.

Integrating online learning

An online learning environment presents the same learning challenges as face to face teaching: how to structure inclusive learning activities which promote learning to achieve effective assessment based on learning outcomes, and how to integrate the learning needs of students for the subject with the technologies. An effective form of online learning is blended learning: this approach structures learning activities by blending face-to-face and online modes (Field (2005). Some examples of blended learning:

- Preparation for a face-to-face tutorial structured as an online activity, such as a case study response, or reflection from readings, posted to the tutor via the LMS.
- An online tutorial can be structured around problem-solving activities, with responses shared with the group via online discussion on the LMS
- Students can conduct a collaborative project or task as a small group by an online discussion group, or a self-organised blog or wiki

Working with online technologies

Online learning is primarily conducted through La Trobe University’s Learning Management System (LMS), at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/learning-technologies/index.html>

As a tutor, your participation in online learning will take place via the status of “Teaching Assistant” in the subject on the LMS. You will need to work your subject coordinator for guidance in how online learning is integrated into the subject as a whole, and what the requirements of the tutor will be in this context.

The learning management system (LMS) provides three components: content, interaction, and assignment submission. Around these an approach to flexible learning can be assembled and applied to your teaching and learning environment, as shown in the following table:

Managing learning online

Teaching and learning environment	Examples of online learning activities
Learning resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lectures, lecture recordings, materials and reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject content, readings from the Library on the LMS Recorded lectures via Lectopia
Learning activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> case studies, investigations projects, interviews, tasks, brainstorming, debates, group work, discussion topics. 	Learner interaction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> case studies via website peer collaboration via blogs online discussion on LMS to post and share documents
Tutor facilitation and support of learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication spaces such as journals, online discussion, email. 	Teacher support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> announcements, self-testing, moderated online discussion
Assessment	Assignment submission via LMS

For guidance on structuring learning activities using technologies at La Trobe University, several useful resources are available:

- Guidelines for flexible learning using the La Trobe University Learning Management System (LMS)**
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/tech-guidelines.html>
- An approach to flexible learning at La Trobe can be found at
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/flex-learning/index.html>
- Effective online discussion* can maximise participation is critical to creating an inclusive, lively and productive virtual learning space. See
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/assets/downloads/EffectiveOnlineDiscussion.pdf>
- For quick and accessible resources on using the LMS, see *How Do I ...?*
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/lms/howto.html>
- Set ground rules or use a netiquette guide to build common expectations for online discussion. This sets rules for what can be discussed, tone of questions and criticism, agreement of language style, eg., “academic informal”, and so on. Two examples can be found at
 - Student Guide: Netiquette, Macquarie University Online Teaching Facility.
<http://online.mq.edu.au/docs/neti.html>
 - Netiquette for online discussion, UTS.
http://www.iml.uts.edu.au/learn/teach/utsonline/NetiquetteLevel3_2006.pdf

5. Evaluation and Improvement

Evaluation is the process of gathering information about various aspects of a unit in an academic course or program, analysing and interpreting this information. Most important is acting on the results for the purposes of improving teaching and student learning.

Evaluating and reflecting on our practice as teachers is the key to improving teaching and learning at La Trobe.

Further reading: [Planning an evaluation](http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/evaluating/thinking-eval.html) covers planning, sources, methods of evaluation, and alternatives to student based feedback. See <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/evaluating/thinking-eval.html>

Reflection and application: Setting up future success

Evaluation is a means of understanding the effects of our teaching on student learning. It implies collecting information about our work, interpreting the information, and making judgements about which actions should be taken to improve practice (Ramsden, 1992).

The cycle of reflection on what happens during a tutorial is a crucial component in developing as a teacher. Part of this process is gathering evidence. For tutors, there are the formal processes of Student Evaluation of Tutoring (SFTU). You can request an SFT, and view the data and use it to improve your teaching practice. See *Student Feedback*: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/studentfeedback/>

Evaluation of your teaching or tutoring can also be conducted through informal approaches. These methods can provide information on the effectiveness of your teaching, give students a say in the feedback cycle, and provide evidence of your teaching.

Approaches to evaluation of teaching encompasses a range of methods for collecting evidence, which can be used for probation and promotion purposes, supported by the CTLC. These include teaching portfolios, peer review of teaching, a process for mentoring for teaching, and student feedback surveys.

Information on these can be found at *Reflecting on Teaching*, CTLC. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/career-development/index.html>

Phil Race suggests *Nine ways of gathering feedback from students*.

1. Interviews with individual students.
2. Feedback activities with groups of students.
3. Solicited feedback from large groups, e.g. 'stop, start, continue'.
4. Questionnaires.
5. Student representation.
6. Informally, through tutorials, seminars, etc.
7. Students' summative performance.

8. Students' coursework performance.
9. External observers, moderators, examiners, peer-observation.

Phil Race, *In at the deep end - starting to teach in higher education*. Queen's University, Belfast. <http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/hr/training/gtu/students/resources/pgwt/deepend.htm>

Example evaluation approaches

Evaluating your tutorial session provides you with feedback for the tutorial, and builds knowledge, engagement and participation for students. Some strategies to evaluate tutorial sessions:

The Minute Paper

Handout an evaluation sheet for immediate completion and return. Find a ready to print version at : <http://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/t4l/assess/resources/1minute.pdf>

Please answer each question in 1 or 2 sentences:

1. What was the most useful, interesting or meaningful thing you learned during this session?
2. What idea is still unclear from today's session?

Angelo, T. A. & Cross, K. P. 1993 Classroom Assessment Techniques, San Francisco, Josey-Bass Publisher

The Muddiest Point

Using the Muddiest point strategy is a quick and easy way to find out what your students find difficult or confusing about a topic. At the end of a class - lecture, tutorial, workshop, lab - ask students to answer the following question briefly. "What was the muddiest point in the session today?" Collate responses and note any areas which are mentioned by a number of students. At the beginning of the next class, discuss these and provide additional explanations, examples or reading material, etc. to clear up the muddy point.

Mosteller, F. (1989). The "Muddiest Point in the Lecture" as a Feedback Device, *On Teaching and Learning*, Volume 3. <http://bokcenter.fas.harvard.edu/docs/mosteller.html>

Looking ahead: Possible next steps Evaluation of Teaching

The **Student Evaluation of Teaching (SFT)** questionnaires available through the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre are accessible by ALL teaching staff at La Trobe University.

The following example shows the SFT survey which students complete routinely. You can request an SFT, and view the data and use it to improve your teaching practice.

Student Feedback on Teaching

Questions about your learning (5=Always, 4=Usually, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never, NA= Not Applicable)

1. I attend this lecturer's class sessions	5	4	3	2	1	NA
2. I prepare well for this lecturer's class sessions	5	4	3	2	1	NA
3. I participate actively and thoughtfully in class sessions	5	4	3	2	1	NA
4. I ask the lecturer for help/guidance when I need it	5	4	3	2	1	NA
5. I use the lecturer's feedback to improve my learning/performance	5	4	3	2	1	NA
6. Overall, I give my best possible effort to learning from this lecturer	5	4	3	2	1	NA

Questions about your learning (5=Always, 4=Usually, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never, NA= Not Applicable)

7. Clearly connects the subject's learning objectives to learning activities, assignments, and assessments	5	4	3	2	1	NA
8. Communicates ideas and information clearly	5	4	3	2	1	NA
9. Provides useful feedback to improve learning	5	4	3	2	1	NA
10. Inspires interest in the subject material	5	4	3	2	1	NA
11. Is available and helpful when asked	5	4	3	2	1	NA
12. Organises and uses time effectively to promote learning	5	4	3	2	1	NA
13. Assesses, marks, and grades fairly	5	4	3	2	1	NA
14. Treats students and their ideas with respect	5	4	3	2	1	NA
15. Uses required texts/other required materials effectively	5	4	3	2	1	NA

Summary Questions (5=Very High, 4=High, 3=Adequate, 2=Low, 1=Very Low; NA= Not Applicable)

16. Overall, the amount this lecturer contributes to my learning is	5	4	3	2	1	NA
17. Overall, I rate this lecturer's teaching effectiveness as	5	4	3	2	1	NA

Comments – Please write or print legibly. If you need more space, continue on the back of this page.

- A. Which two or three specific aspects of this lecturer's teaching have contributed most to your learning?
- B. Please suggest two or three specific, practical changes this lecturer could make to improve his/her teaching.

For further help, contact Evaluating Teaching at
<http://www.adu.latrobe.edu.au/Evaluations/Studenteval.html>

6. Academic support and resources for tutors and students

Key La Trobe resources for tutors

This resource, *Guide to Effective Tutoring at La Trobe University*. A Handbook for Tutoring at La Trobe University, Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Centre (CTLC), is available from Tutoring and Demonstrating, <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/tutoring.html>

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/integrity.html>

Assessment policy, La Trobe University, <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/policies/academic.html>

Assessment procedures. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/policy/documents/assessment-procedures-2009-05-08.pdf>

Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit, La Trobe University. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cdip/>
Equality and Diversity Centre. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/equality/>

Evaluation:

- Evaluating teaching. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/evaluating/index.html>
- Planning an evaluation. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/evaluating/thinking-eval.html>

Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice Toolkit, Equality and Diversity Centre, La Trobe University. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/cdip/>

Effective online discussions. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/index.html>

Flexible learning. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/index.html>

Inclusive teaching, Developing an inclusive curriculum, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/inclusive-curriculum.html>

Language and Academic Skills. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/lasunits>

Library modules relating to tertiary learning, academic skills, information literacy. <http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/training/>

Smaller group teaching. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/index.html>

Technology Guidelines and Policies. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/teaching-resources/tech-guidelines.html>

Teaching Technologies: LMS, Turnitin, Videoconferencing. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/learning-technologies/index.html>

Key La Trobe resources for students

Resources for students, including practical exercises and advice about academic reading, writing, note-taking, oral presentations, and tips on referencing, exam preparation and much more. See *Student Learning*. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/>

Important links for students:

- Language and Academic Skills. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/learning/lasunits>. La Trobe University has advisers who can work with you to improve your language and learning skills and assist you with assignments.
- Library modules relating to tertiary learning, academic skills, information literacy. <http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/training/>
- Library Guides - Library Guides <http://latrobe.libguides.com/>

Academic support and resources

Further resources

- Bloom's SOLO taxonomy, TEDI, Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI), University of Queensland. http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/downloads/Biggs_Solo.pdf
- CATS, Instructional Assessment Resources, The University of Texas at Austin.
<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/teaching/plan/method/cats/>
- Constructive Alignment, Engineering Subject Centre, The Higher Education Academy.
http://www.engsc.ac.uk/er/theory/constructive_alignment.asp
- CSHE Resources For Sessional Teaching, University of Melbourne.
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