

Policy Title: Curriculum Planning and Development

Policy Owner: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Keywords: AQF Numeracy Curriculum Planning WIL Work Integrated Learning

Policy Code: PL246 [ac095]

- [Intent](#)
- [Organisational Scope](#)
- [Definitions](#)
- [Policy Content](#)
- [Contact Information](#)
- [Accountabilities and Responsibilities](#)

1. INTENT

This policy informs staff of the approaches and principles to be applied in the design and planning of courses and units at ECU.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff involved in the development and approval of all Higher Education (HE) courses and units. This policy does not apply to VET courses.

3. DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	Australia’s national policy for regulated qualifications. The AQF encompasses higher education, vocational education and training and school education. It provides for national recognition and a consistent understanding of what defines each qualification type.
course	A program of study necessary to qualify for an award of the University
CAPS	Curriculum Approval and Publication System
CLO	Course Learning Outcome
ELP	English Language Proficiency, the ability of students to use the English language to make and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts
ECU Engagement Index	A measure of engaged teaching calculated from the engagement scores attributed to the core units in the course
GA	Graduate Attributes
HE	Higher Education
numeracy skills	“the ability to understand numerical, quantitative or quantifiable information, the ability to engage in an argument based on numerical or statistical evidence, and the strategic competence

	required to solve problems using mathematical concepts and procedures appropriately" (Gale, 1997)
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
ULO	Unit Learning Outcome
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning

4. POLICY

4.1 The ECU Curriculum Framework

4.1.1 All curricula at ECU follows the ECU Curriculum Framework as described in the following three principles:

- a. An employability orientation;
- b. A student-focused environment; and
- c. Learning-Centred Teaching

4.1.2 The ECU Curriculum Framework identifies the following attributes as those that form an integral part of curriculum planning. ECU courses are designed with:

- a. clearly articulated Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs);
- b. Unit Learning Outcomes (ULO) clearly aligned to the (CLOs);
- c. assessment approaches that support quality learning and teaching;
- d. a supportive student environment;
- e. the development of Graduate Attributes (GA) that enhance personal development and employability;
 - I. ability to communicate, clarity of written and spoken expression, including in public forum, and through appropriate use of technology;
 - II. ability to work in teams, collaborating and contributing effectively in diverse settings;
 - III. critical appraisal skills, planning, organising problem solving and decision making including the application of sustainable approaches to deal with complex problems;
 - IV. ability to generate ideas, having the courage and confidence to be creative and innovative; and **cross-cultural; and international outlook including aboriginal cultural awareness and responsiveness.**
- f. engagement with community stakeholders;
- g. opportunities for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL);
- h. teaching informed by research;
- i. opportunities for the development and enhancement of students' English Language Proficiency (ELP);
- j. the appropriate development of numeracy skills; and
- k. opportunities to ensure the development of students' international and global outlooks.

4.1.3 The ECU Curriculum Framework further identifies the following attributes as those that will form an integral part of course and unit delivery:

- a. active consideration for the needs of students in their first year;
- b. the use of technologies to support and enhance learning;

- c. flexible and active modes of learning;
- d. recognition of the diversity in the student cohort; and
- e. support for the transition to work.

4.1.4 This policy highlights the various elements to be addressed in the design and development of courses and units and to ensure quality learning and teaching outcomes.

4.2 Planning Course and Unit Learning Outcomes

4.2.1 In designing courses and units, the intended outcomes are to align with the learning outcome types and levels described in the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) (AQF). Courses will comply with the Awards and Classification Procedure [ac095.1] and the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

4.2.2 Distinct CLOs will be developed for each course, and:

- a. reflect the knowledge, skills and application as described in the AQF Qualification Type Specifications; and
- b. include attributes from the ECU Curriculum Framework, graduate outcomes and discipline specific outcomes.

4.2.3 Distinct ULOs will be developed for each unit:

- a. the achievement of all ULOs in a unit will be evaluated in the assessment strategies planned for the unit;
- b. the demonstration and development of CLOs will be mapped to ULOs in the course in clearly identified units; and
- c. revisions to course and units must ensure that all CLOs remain mapped to ULOs in prescribed units.

4.3 Assessment

Assessment strategies in units have a strong bearing on the learning outcomes achieved and must be carefully selected to ensure that the assessment is current and well structured.

4.3.1 Principles

Assessment practices are designed to facilitate quality learning, and:

- a. are placed at the centre of subject and program design and used to advance student learning which is productive and relevant;
- b. align the learning outcomes, content, and learning and teaching approaches at the unit and course levels;
- c. are fair and equitable and will provide inclusive and trustworthy representations of student achievement;
- d. reflect rigorous academic standards and be based on pre-determined and clearly articulated criteria, standards and weightings;
- e. provide timely and meaningful, formative and summative feedback to students;
- f. provide feedback to enable students to improve their learning; and
- g. particular attention will be paid to induct first year students into the assessment practices and cultures of HE.

4.3.2 Assessment Procedures

- a. Activities within units will provide evidence of the achievement of all unit learning outcomes.
- b. Each unit (excluding Thesis units) will be based on a minimum of two components, two of which shall be of a different type.
- c. A least one assessment item will be of a type that provides an assessment of each individual student's performance.
- d. An appropriate grading schema, as described in the [Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules](#).
- e. Only one grading schema can be used in a unit irrespective of where it is offered or the mode of delivery.
- f. Grading schema used in the teaching period will be the same as that shown in the enrolment approved unit outline in the [Curriculum Approval and Publication System](#) (CAPS).

4.4 Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

WIL provides opportunities for students to develop their abilities to apply their learning in work settings. Opportunities for students to undertake WIL activities are expected to be provided in all undergraduate courses. Requirements for WIL are contained within the [Work Integrated Learning \(WIL\) Policy](#)

4.5 Engaged Teaching and Learning

ECU believes there are CLOs that can only be learned through engaged learning and teaching, that is, through external engagement and interactions with community stakeholders. ECU seeks to ensure distinctiveness in its courses through their demonstration of engaged learning and teaching in all courses.

4.5.1 All courses will demonstrate engaged learning and teaching

- a. Engaged teaching is characterised by mutual benefits derived from learning activities undertaken in conjunction with community and or industry stakeholders.
- b. The processes for incorporating engaged learning and teaching in courses and units include:

- i. course design, where external stakeholders contribute to the planning and design of courses to ensure their relevance and prospects for employment;
- ii. course delivery, where external stakeholders contribute to student learning through direct interactions and involvement;
- iii. course products, where students develop authentic products and artefacts for external stakeholders;
- iv. WIL, where students learn in workplace settings and employers contribute to their development and benefit from student activities;
- v. engagement will be planned at the course level and implemented at the unit level in all courses;
- vi. the form of engaged learning and teaching in each unit will be recorded in the CAPS;
- vii. measures of the levels of engaged learning and teaching in each course are described by the ECU Engagement Index, [Attachment 1](#) to this policy;
- viii. all undergraduate courses will seek to demonstrate at least satisfactory levels of engaged learning and teaching as measured by the ECU Engagement Index; and
- ix. the scope and extent of engagement in each course will be reviewed annually in the course report.

4.6 Teaching Informed by Research

Teaching and research are fundamental aspects of university activity and offer a number of mutual benefits when linked appropriately. Teaching and learning that is 'research-led' or 'research-infused' can benefit student learning substantially and is closely associated with knowledge transfer and community engagement.

4.6.1 Both the [Research Functional Plan](#) and the [Teaching and Learning Functional Plan](#) will include objectives associated with the promotion of research-informed teaching:

- a. research into discipline pedagogy and the promotion of effective learning and teaching will be encouraged;
- b. the goal of research-informed teaching will be included in the [Curriculum Approval Policy](#) and review processes at the course level;
- c. evidence of the effectiveness of this policy will be sought through student and other stakeholder evaluation; and
- d. professional development opportunities will be provided for staff to support and encourage their development of curricula which derive benefits from research and teaching connections.

4.7 English Language Proficiency and Development

4.7.1 All graduates are required to demonstrate appropriate levels of [English Language Proficiency](#) (ELP). Courses are expected to provide students with the opportunities to identify, develop and maintain appropriate levels of ELP.

- a. The minimum English standard requirement for admission into any course are set down in the [English Standards Policy](#).
- b. ELP will be contextualised in all courses to enable the students to develop the ELP required within the discipline and throughout the course of study.
- c. Moderation and external benchmarking will be undertaken to ensure appropriate standards of ELP are set and maintained.
- d. Students will be made aware of the standards of ELP required of graduates in their course and units and the responsibility they have in ensuring their ELP meets these standards.
- e. Where possible and practical, ELP feedback, together with recommended actions for assistance, will be provided in all assessments involving written forms of communication using the ECU ELP Measure contained in Attachment 32.
- f. All coursework courses will contain a prescribed unit where in a specific assessment will be made as to whether a student has or has not demonstrated within that unit the attainment of the ECU minimum standard of English language proficiency. Students who do not demonstrate the ECU minimum standard in the unit will be provided with appropriate English language proficiency support and development.
- g. Where possible and practical, a [Post-Entry Language Assessment](#) (PELA) will be offered to all commencing students.
- h. Students identified in the PELA with less than satisfactory ELP will be directed to support services to undertake appropriate English language proficiency development.
- i. Professional development will be made available to all teaching staff to enable them to provide appropriate assessment of students' ELP and appropriate feedback.
- j. All schools will provide sufficient ELP support for students requiring additional assistance. Students requiring additional assistance will be referred to the support services and the assistance will be made known to students throughout their course.

4.8 Numeracy Skills and Development

4.8.1 ECU graduates are required to demonstrate appropriate levels of numeracy. ECU courses are expected to provide students with the opportunities to identify, develop and maintain appropriate levels of numeracy.

- a. All courses will consider the type and level of numeracy to be achieved by graduating students.

- b. The development and demonstration of appropriate numeracy skills and capabilities will be considered in the planning, delivery and assessment in all courses.
- c. Opportunities will be made available to students to assist them to identify, develop and maintain their numeracy skills and capabilities.

4.9 Internationalisation of the Curriculum

4.9.1 International and intercultural perspectives developed within courses prepare students to perform capably, ethically and sensitively in international, multicultural, professional and social contexts.

- a. All courses will include the integration of elements supporting internationalisation of the curriculum.
- b. Internationalisation will form an integral component in the design and development of a course. It will be evident in the learning and teaching strategies, resources and materials and assessment strategies employed in unit delivery.
- c. Where courses are delivered in more than one country, processes will be facilitated to enable staff on the different campuses to co-develop curricula, learning experiences and assessments that model inclusive principles and enhance the integration of diverse views;
- d. Care will be taken to ensure that resources and materials reflect local as well as global content and perspectives.
- e. The university will provide professional development for staff and support for students' language and academic skills development as integral components of internationalisation of curriculum processes.
- f. Internationalisation of the curriculum will be included in benchmarking activities undertaken for a course.
- g. Staff will be supported in and recognised for the development of international and intercultural perspectives in their teaching.

Professional development for staff together with guidelines and documents for supporting the processes and activities described in this policy will be provided and maintained by CLT.

4. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In relation to this policy:

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education) has overall responsibility for the content of this policy and its operation.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Other documents which are relevant to the operation of this policy are:

- a. [Award Classification and Structure Procedure](#)
- b. [Curriculum Approval Policy](#)
- c. [Course and Unit Delivery and Assessment Policy](#)
- d. [Course and Unit Evaluation and Review Policy](#)
- e. [Work Integrated Learning \(WIL\) Policy](#)
- f. [University Rules: Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules](#)

6. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

Policy Owner	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
All Enquiries Contact:	Manager, Academic Governance and Standards
Telephone:	6304 2179
Email address:	j.mccaffrey@ecu.edu.au

7. APPROVAL HISTORY

Policy Approved by:	Acting Vice-Chancellor on 21 October 2014
Date Policy First Approved:	5 December 2012
Date last modified:	9 October 2014
Revision History:	25 June 2013 – Amended 7 March 2014 – Amended AB13/14 & approved by VC 10 March 2014, 9 September 2014 (CTLC29/14), 14 September 2014 (RHDC16/14), 9 October, 2014 (AB060/14).
Minor Revisions:	17 March 2016 - Minor revision update to reflect the academic organisation re-design 27 February 2017 - Minor revision update to reflect the academic organisation re-design
Next Revision Due:	June 2017
TRIM File Reference	SUB/39743

Attachment 1: Engagement Mapping Index

1. Course design

Using the descriptions below, choose the number of points applicable to your course and briefly justify the number of points for each category.

1.1 This course has an active Consultative Committee that has regular meetings. The score for this item reflects the existence and activity of the Consultative Committee:

- a. 0 point for a Consultative Committee 0 meetings this year;
- b. 3 points for a Consultative Committee with 1 meeting this year; or
- c. 5 points for a Consultative Committee with 2 or more meetings this year.

1.2 The design of this course was guided by **strong industry/community input and involvement**. The number of points reflects the level of involvement and response to industry input in the course design. For example:

- a. 1 point for Consultative Committee input alone;
- b. 3 points for Consultative Committee input and demonstrable input from industry and employees; or
- c. 5 points for industry accredited course.

1.3 There are **industry/community inputs and feedback** into the course that are used for continuous improvement. The number of points reflects the scope and extent of feedback and evidence of uptake in the course:

- a. 1 point for demonstrated feedback from industry to Course Coordinator during the year;
- b. 3 points for demonstrable industry/community feedback leading to course revisions; or
- c. 5 points for large scale inputs from industry and community used for benchmarking and course improvements.

2. Course Delivery

2.1 Up to 12 units, including Foundation and core units for course major are considered.

2.2 For each unit choose the type of Engaged Teaching from Table 1 below. The highest Engagement score is chosen for the unit. To qualify for inclusion, the Engagement activity must be formally assessed in the curriculum.

Table 1: Engagement Activities and Scores

Unit delivery (1 point)	The involvement of external stakeholders in the delivery of units. For example: having industry people present guest lectures; industry/external people running workshops; and/or taking students on site visits.
Course products and services (5 points)	The unit involves the creation of products and services for external stakeholders from learning activities: For example: design students creating Web pages for external clients; advertising students undertaking advertising briefs for real clients.
Workplace/ community activity (5 points)	The unit involves students undertaking activities in the workplace and/or community. For example: Law students working in the Northern Suburbs Legal Centre; Marketing students completing projects for clients; and/or students undertaking workplace projects for course credit
WIL (10 points)	Students learning through experiences in workplace settings with formalised partnerships. For example: Nursing students undertaking practicum placements in hospitals; Paramedical students undertaking practicums as ambulance drivers; and/or Teaching students undertaking practicum placements in Schools

1. Calculating Engagement Index

When the Engagement for the units has been scored, the Engagement Index is calculated by adding the scores for all units (0-120) together with the scores for the course design (0-15). This delivers a score in the range 0-135. The university has established the following bands based on the Engagement Index and its goal is to have all undergraduate programs in the satisfactory band or above.

Table 2: Engagement Bands

Course Engagement Rating	Engagement Index
Room for improvement	1-35
satisfactory	36-70
>satisfactory	71-135

Attachment 2: ECU English Language Proficiency Measure

Levels of proficiency	Low proficiency	Developing proficiency	Moderate proficiency	High proficiency
Aspects of writing	<p>Incorrect or inappropriate aspects of writing obscure meaning in many places.</p> <p>Significant editing needed to clarify the meaning, along with extensive proofreading to correct technical errors.</p>	<p>Incorrect or inappropriate aspects of writing obscure meaning in some places.</p> <p>Some editing needed to clarify the meaning, along with extensive proofreading to correct technical errors.</p>	<p>Aspects of writing are mostly accurate. Mistakes rarely affect clarity of meaning.</p> <p>Minor editing needed to clarify the meaning, along with careful proofreading to correct technical errors.</p>	<p>Aspects of writing are appropriate and optimally constructed, allowing clarity of meaning.</p> <p>Meaning is clear and needs only a light proofread to correct technical errors.</p>
<p>Sentence structure</p> <p>1. sentence completeness</p> <p>2. sentence length</p> <p>3. phrase/clause order</p> <p>4. use of conjunctions</p> <p>5. word order</p> <p>6. punctuation</p>				
<p>Word use</p> <p>7. word choice</p> <p>8. word form</p> <p>9. word omission/redundancy</p> <p>10. verb tense/agreement</p> <p>11. spelling</p> <p>12. apostrophes</p>				

Sentence Structure

1. Sentence completeness: sentence includes subject, verb and complete thought.
2. Sentence length: length is appropriate to context or discipline.
3. Phrase/clause order: parts of the sentence (phrases and clauses) are ordered logically.
4. Use of conjunctions: linking words are used correctly to show the relationship between ideas.
5. Word order: words are ordered correctly in a sentence.
6. Punctuation: the correct use of full stops, commas, semicolons, colons and capitals.

Word Use

7. Word choice: words are correct and appropriate for the context.
8. Word form: correct part of speech is used; e.g., [to] affect / [the] effect.
9. Word omission/redundancy: words should not be missing or be unnecessarily repetitive.
10. Verb tense/agreement: correct use of verbs that indicate time and correct word forms that agree grammatically with other words in the sentence.
11. Spelling: correct spelling is used.
12. Apostrophes: indicate ownership or contraction.

The ECU ELP Measure shows a student's achievement in written ELP against the ECU minimum standard.

- The ECU minimum standard for written English proficiency which all students should demonstrate by graduation is *moderate proficiency* (at least) in both the aspects of Sentence Structure and Word Use.
- Undergraduate students in their second year are expected to be able demonstrate moderate proficiency in at least one of these aspects.

ECU Minimum Standard for English Language Proficiency on graduation from any course

	Low proficiency	Developing proficiency	Moderate Proficiency	High Proficiency
Sentence Structure			X	
Word Use			X	