



PROCEDURES FOR QUALITY FLEXIBLE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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PROCEDURES FOR QUALITY FLEXIBLE TEACHING AND LEARNING

1 Preamble

This document complements and is to be read in conjunction with Australian Catholic University's (ACU's) *Policy on Quality Flexible Teaching and Learning*.

2 Background

This document supports the key principles outlined in the above policy.

3 Purpose

This policy is designed to:

- set out the procedures that underpin the University's approach to quality assurance surrounding flexible teaching and learning; and
- establish a shared understanding of flexible teaching and learning approaches through codes of good practice (see Appendices A – D).

4 Quality assurance procedures for flexible teaching and learning

Quality assurance procedures for flexible learning are continuously revised from both educational and technical perspectives. Responsibility for quality assurance of flexible teaching and learning falls into two key areas: (a) educational responsibility that lies with the Faculties which create and implement learning resources and (b) technical responsibility that lies with the relevant technical support areas (ACUonline, Library) and is coordinated by the Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (IATL) through the Online Education Coordinator (OEC).

Note: Although terminology may differ from time to time, there are two modes of flexible teaching: fully online units offered with no face-to-face requirement and web-enhanced units offered either fully or partially on-campus. The term 'distance education' refers to those courses or units providing hard copy materials for off-campus students.

4.1 Quality assurance procedures for planning flexible teaching and learning

4.1.1. Educational

Proposals for the development of fully online courses and units must include plans for quality assurance, monitoring, evaluation and review. Of particular importance is an explanation of how information about student performance and feedback and staff critique of units and courses will inform University-wide practice in ongoing course development. Educational planning resides with the Faculties which create and implement flexible learning resources.

4.1.2 Technical

Technical quality assurance for fully online units is coordinated by the IATL through the OEC in conjunction with ACUonline and Library staff. Technical support for flexible teaching and learning will be (a) aligned to institutional strategy; (b) adequately supported and deployed; (c) regularly updated and (d) co-ordinated. Coordination for technical support will include input from key stakeholders (e.g. IT, ACUonline, IATL, Faculties and the Library) and the Director of Flexible Teaching and Learning. Faculties will provide the OEC with the names of staff teaching/developing fully online units by week 4 in the semester before teaching is planned.

Web-enhanced units should undergo quality assurance educational checks co-ordinated within each School. A variety of peer review materials, checklists, support and training will be available to each School for this purpose through the IATL.

Refer to Appendix A for categories of activity and technical requirements.

4.2 Quality assurance procedures for designing and developing flexible materials

All materials must meet W3C and copyright standards and the University's standards for quality assurance. Faculties will adopt strategies for ensuring that quality flexible offerings are designed and developed appropriately. These strategies will include appropriate time release for staff to design/develop/redevelop materials to meet regular QA deadlines.

4.2.1 Faculties may design and develop flexible materials in-house or approach external developers. A business plan, quality assurance procedures and copyright details must be provided for external development to be approved by the DFTL with advice to the University Flexible Teaching and Learning Committee (UFTLC).

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4.3 Quality assurance procedures for implementation of flexible teaching and learning

The University will support the continuous improvement of flexible learning materials through systematic and regular evaluation of implementation strategies and outcomes. Implementation is evaluated according to defined decision-making and authorisation procedures.

4.3.1 All student assessment tasks will be undertaken on the University's Learning Management system. Note: no assessment tasks will be undertaken on publisher-managed websites that do not have a service level agreement with ACU.

4.4 Quality assurance procedures for evaluation of and feedback on flexible teaching and learning

The University encourages the integration of evaluation and feedback for continuous improvement. All staff will be encouraged to use the evaluation services offered by the IATL.

5 Procedures for the use of current and emerging flexible learning technologies

Innovative technology use in education goes beyond simply using the latest technologies available. It encompasses (a) articulation of the objectives of the use of any technological innovation and (b) alignment with organisational and educational practices.

5.1 Current flexible technologies

Flexible technologies will be used for the purpose of enriching teaching and learning experiences where value can be added for students and lecturers and cost-effectiveness is demonstrated for the University.

5.1.1 Strategic priorities and educational need will guide determination of the extent of the use of flexible teaching and learning in courses, major sequences or units within courses. Deans, Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees, and Course Development and Review Committees will consider the inclusion of flexible learning technologies in courses, disciplines and major sequences where appropriate.

5.1.2 The use of flexible technologies will not be uniform across the University as each Lecturer-in-Charge (LIC) will determine the appropriate mix of media and methods to meet the educational objectives of their units and courses, by making the best use of available resources, and considering educational appropriateness and cost when making choices among alternatives.

5.1.3 Units created for student learning [either in fully online or web-enhanced mode] will be housed on the University's LMS.

5.1.4 Collaboration for integrating flexible technology will occur across key functional areas, as represented in the membership of the UFTLC and facilitated by the DFTL.

5.1.5 Core functionality of current flexible learning technologies will be addressed through service-level agreements with internal and external providers.

5.1.6 Physical and virtual technical infrastructure will be aligned with institutional learning goals, maintained, administered and supported efficiently and effectively, and adequately resourced (refer to Appendices C-D for details.)

5.1.7 Evaluation will be undertaken to measure performance indicators of current learning technologies for all key stakeholders. Evaluation outcomes will be integrated in planning for continuous improvement purposes.

5.2 Emerging flexible technologies

Staff who wish to explore emerging flexible learning technologies are free to investigate potential uses for learning and teaching but are strongly urged to consult with IATL staff, most particularly the DFTL, before purchase of any equipment licences. Following evaluation of the technology, decisions regarding wider adoption will be facilitated through the office of the DFTL and the UFTLC. These decisions are articulated through the Minutes of the UFTLC and then disseminated to the University community.

5.2.1 Proposals for the development of courses and units utilising emerging technologies must include plans for student support and for quality assurance, monitoring, evaluation and review. An explanation should also be included of how information about student performance and feedback and staff self-evaluation of units and courses will inform University-wide practice.

5.2.2 Rigorous evaluation will be undertaken to measure performance indicators of emerging flexible learning technologies for all key stakeholders.

5.2.3 Evaluation outcomes will inform planning for continuous improvement purposes.

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6 Support for student learning

6.1 Students will be made aware of, and have access to, effective and well-resourced support for learning technologies and support will be designed to be responsive to student needs, coordinated with student training, and regularly developed in response to changing technology.

6.2 Students will be encouraged to complete all sections of the *eLearning Student Tutorial*. The eLearning Student Tutorial will be well-resourced and updated to ensure ongoing support for current and new technologies used to support student learning

7 Support for staff learning

Quality flexible teaching and learning are achieved when people are expert, enthusiastic, skilled and well-supported, and learning experiences are designed to engage the learner, and use multimodal approaches. Staff will be made aware of and have access to comprehensive technical and educational support for the use of the technologies in learning and teaching: prior to the implementation of the technology, in formal training sessions, on a just-in-time basis, and for trouble-shooting purposes.

7.1 Professional learning programs for staff will be provided via face-to-face seminars offered by the IATL, and the *eLearning Staff Tutorial* available online 24 hours a day through the *eLearning* site, together with other activities.

7.2 Staff will be asked to complete all sections of the *eLearning Staff Tutorial*.

8 Communication of this policy

Information about the *Policy on Quality Flexible Teaching and Learning* will be incorporated into staff and student training, printed materials and related online resources.

9 Policy review

The University may make changes to these procedures from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. In this regard, any staff member who wishes to make any comments about this policy may forward their suggestions to the Director, IATL.

10 Further assistance

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding these procedures should first consult his/her nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in the work area. Should further advice be needed, the staff member should contact the Director, Flexible Teaching and Learning.

11 Related documents

This policy relates to the following policies:

- *Policy on Quality Flexible Teaching and Learning*
- *University Strategic Plan*
- *Policy on Quality Teaching and Learning*
- *Teaching and Learning plans*
- *Strategic Plan for Online Teaching and Learning*
- *Online Learning System Technical Documentation and Guidelines*
- *Framework for Online Pedagogical Development: Principles and Guidelines*
- *The Policy on Evaluation of Teaching and Learning*
- *Policy and Procedures on Access to, and Support for, the Learning Management System.*

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Appendix A: Categories of activity and technical requirements

For flexible learning to be innovative, dynamic and high quality, minimum quality standards for units on the University's LMS are necessary. Note: no assessment tasks will be undertaken on publisher-managed websites that do not have a service level agreement with ACU.

A1 Categories of activity

A1.1 Distance education (DE) units

DE units will include in hard copy the:

- Unit Outline;
- Study Guide (including details of any face-to-face meetings and/or teleconferences);
- content and readings;
- assignment submission and feedback proformas; and
- clear expectations for students about how communication will occur, i.e. they should be told how they should communicate with staff and how soon to expect a reply, and any protocols that should be adopted.

Most distance education units should be web-enhanced, depending on the requirements of the cohort and the students' ability to access the Internet. Text books may be an additional student requirement.

A1.2 Web-enhanced units

Most on-campus units offered by ACU will have a unit in the University's LMS with the following core items.

Core items for web-enhanced units include:

- the Unit Outline as a pdf file in the Unit Information area;
- electronic resources (such as readings and content-based information) in the Unit Content area;
- a facility for teaching staff to communicate with students through a one-to-many communication, via the use of Announcements;
- a facility for staff and students to communicate with each other; this will, at a minimum, include email through the use of the Mail tool;
- clear expectations for students about how communication will occur, i.e. they should be told how they should communicate with staff how soon to expect a reply, and any protocols that should be adopted.

Optional

Staff may wish to enhance units with additional functionalities including:

- a teaching activities area with supporting material (such as PowerPoint files, interactive learning activities/quizzes, podcasts, e-books, e-portfolios, links to additional online resources);
- a facility for structured/moderated online interaction (asynchronous/synchronous online communication) between the lecturer(s) and students available for use at the choice of the lecturer(s) involved in the unit (such as blogs, e-journals, chats);
- use of advanced assessment facilities (such as Grade Book, Assignment Drop Box, other assessment activities).

Text books may be an additional student requirement.

A1.3 Fully online units

All assessable teaching and learning activities will be undertaken on the University's LMS. Staff will ensure adherence with the University's regulations regarding assessment.

Fully online units will have:

- the Unit Outline as a pdf file in the Unit Information area;
- electronic content resources (such content-based readings and information) in a Unit Content area;
- assignment submission and feedback (through the Assessments area, including the Online Declaration of Originality);
- unit evaluation (as determined by University policy) preferably using online format;
- all communication and interaction with students using appropriate synchronous and asynchronous tools (such as discussions, blogs, e-journals, chats):
 - a facility for teaching staff to communicate with students through a one-to-many communication, through the use of Announcements;
 - an opportunity for moderated, structured online discussion to ensure a social dimension to students' learning experiences; and
 - clear expectations for students about how communication will occur, i.e. they should be told how they should communicate with staff and how soon to expect a reply, and any protocols that should be adopted.

Students may be required to buy paper-based text books to supplement online materials.

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A2 Technical aspects for fully online and web-enhanced units

A2.1 Distance education (DE) units

- All DE materials will be quality assured within the relevant School.
- If a DE unit has a web presence, technical quality assurance will be the same as for web-enhanced units. Support in the form of training in DE pedagogy will be made available through the IATL's face-to-face and online training programs.

A2.2 Web-enhanced units

- Design for web-enhanced online units will be based on sound educational research and good practice.
- Units developed in web-enhanced mode will utilise the web-enhanced template that has been purpose-designed to meet W3C standards and is situated on the LMS. The template includes elements of unit information, content, e-resources and simple communication with students.
- LICs will ensure that all content, including readings and images, meet the University's copyright and W3C procedures.
- Web-enhanced units will undergo quality assurance educational checks co-ordinated within each School. A variety of peer review materials, checklists, support and training will be available to each School for this purpose through the DFTL and the IATL.
- Training in pedagogy will be made available through the IATL's face-to-face and online training programs.
- Staff will be encouraged to read the *Framework for Online Pedagogical Development: Principles and Guidelines*.

A2.3 Fully online units

- Design for fully online units will be based on sound educational research and good practice.
- Units developed in fully online mode will be utilise the fully online template that has been purpose-designed to meet W3C standards and is situated on the LMS. The template includes elements of unit information, unit content, lectures, e-resources, assessments, assignments and feedback, and communication with students.
- LICs will ensure that all content, including readings and images, meet the University's copyright and W3C procedures.
- The OEC will ensure that new shell templates for fully online units will be (a) ready six months prior to the semester required; and (b) unless otherwise advised, the quality assurance of the units will be completed by Orientation week of each semester.
- Units will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Faculties, and the DTFL and the IATL in the light of developments in flexible pedagogy and technology.
- Staff will be able to access support from Online Advisers, Educational Designers and ACUonline staff, and from training made available through the IATL's face-to-face and online training programs that include exemplars.
- Staff should read the *Framework for Online Pedagogical Development: Principles and Guidelines*.

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Appendix B: Code of Good Practice for Flexible Teaching and Learning

Introduction

This Code of Good Practice for Flexible Teaching and Learning elaborates on the principles and values that govern ACU's teaching and learning activities. It is intended to provide guidance for organisational units, staff and students to ensure that programs and services reflect good practice, resulting in a high standard of quality for the online teaching and learning environment.

The University recognises that rapid technological change and its adoption by the community present both opportunities and challenges for good practice. General principles of good practice in higher education require interpretation and adaptation if these new technologies are to make a positive contribution to the university experience of today's diverse cohorts of students. Learning from experience and modifying practice as a result of experience are cornerstones of success.

University Good Practice

The University, through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), has responsibility for:

B1 *Information and communication*

- B1.1** Maintaining a communication program to solicit input from students and staff, report on how issues are being addressed, and keep stakeholders informed of flexible learning plans and developments.
- B1.2** Providing advice to students and staff about University policies and procedures pertaining to appropriate behaviour in the flexible learning environment.
- B1.3** Through the IATL, providing professional learning programs and resources to assist staff to work in the flexible environment, including how to design appropriate assessment and take advantage of the collaborative opportunities available.

B2 *Quality assurance*

- B2.1** Through the IATL, providing support for professional learning and technical quality assurance in the use of the LMS.

Joint University and Faculty/Directorate Good Practice

The University, jointly through Faculties and Directorates, has responsibility for:

B3 *Student and staff training and support*

- B3.1** Informing students of the University's policies on use of computers and the Internet, including policy on Internet access and information about sanctions for misuse of computing facilities and services.
- B3.2** Ensuring that expectations for students are guided by reasonable assumptions of access, experience and skills appropriate to the particular student group.
- B3.3** Providing to all staff who work and participate in the flexible learning environment, and to all students expected to use the flexible environment, appropriate printed and online information about the system and resources, and timely and ongoing training in their use.
- B3.4** Providing staff and student access to ongoing technical assistance in the use of the LMS on a schedule appropriate to their needs.
- B3.5** Providing staff with access, as needed, to appropriate advice and support for teaching and learning in flexible environments and developing resources.
- B3.6** Ensuring, in the promotion of the units, that information presented is accurate and comprehensive.
- B3.7** Providing staff with support for engaging with and evaluating the effectiveness of innovative technologies that support deeper student learning.
- B3.8** Providing staff with access to printed and online resources, as appropriate, on issues arising in flexible teaching and learning.
- B3.9** Collating and analysing the results of evaluations of flexible teaching and learning for the broader improvement of practices across the University.

B4 *Information management*

- B4.1** Ensuring that online information is up-to-date and making provision for routine removal of outdated information on the LMS.

B5 *Prospective students*

- B5.1** Before enrolling students who reside in other countries at ACU, ensuring that the laws of their country and accessibility of online facilities will not prevent full participation in the course or adequate access to learning resources.

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Appendix B: Code of Good Practice for Flexible Teaching and Learning

- B5.2** Publishing on the web, for access by prospective and current students, advice and information about:
- likely printing requirements;
 - online teaching and learning, including advice about required motivation and commitment and strategies to use when learning online;
 - technology requirements;
 - how to access their online materials and key semester dates;
 - the amount of time required to be spent online and using a computer; and
 - equity provisions for disadvantaged students.

Faculty Good Practice

Faculties have responsibility for:

B6 *Supporting staff*

- B6.1** Ensuring workload practices are appropriate to the flexible learning environment including in the semester of development;
- B6.2** Ensuring that all staff, including sessional staff, have appropriate access to online facilities, appropriate professional learning related to their use, and technical support.
- B6.3** Ensuring staff have the opportunity to improve scholarship in flexible teaching and learning in an ongoing manner.
- B6.4** Ensuring that staff are identified and informed well in advance of their allocation to develop an online unit. Staff should be given a notice and given workload whilst they are developing an online unit that is consistent with the Workload Policy.

B7 *Supporting students*

- B7.1** Having in place strategies to accommodate student access to flexible learning resources, and to ensure fairness and equity when there is technical breakdown in the online environment, including provision for extension of assignment deadlines, if appropriate.
- B7.2** Making appropriate provision for higher degree by research students to form and engage with learning communities using the online environment.

B8 *Information and communication*

- B8.1** Approving and publishing Faculty expectations for student participation in online activities and other procedures related to learning in the flexible learning environment.
- B8.2** Clearly stating expectations for electronic communication activities to promote understanding, cultural tolerance and sensitive communication.
- B8.3** Including in unit descriptions and in unit outlines, information about the mix of flexible approaches employed in the unit.

B9 *Teaching and learning*

- B9.1** Where new resources are required, assessing the costs and benefits of using internal or external developers.
- B9.2** Ensuring that resources and activities adhere to the W3C accessibility guidelines.
- B9.3** Ensuring that assessment strategies in courses and units accommodate students' learning needs and reflect stated learning outcomes.
- B9.4** Informing students about the extent to which activities and communication are tracked and monitored within the LMS, what information may subsequently be retrieved and reviewed, and what rights of access they have to information so retrieved.
- B 9.5** Incorporating into courses and units the development of students' online information research, critical analysis and synthesis skills.
- B9.6** Ensuring that resources and activities adhere to ACU's *Policy on Cultural Diversity* and that appropriate provision is made for international students and those from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- B9.7** Ensuring that Course coordinators are comply with the requirements for international students as contained in the *ESOS Act*.
- B10** *Quality assurance*
- B10.1** As part of course reviews, evaluating the quality of flexible resources by both students and staff against intended learning outcomes.
- B10.2** Monitoring innovations and performance and modifying practice, as necessary.

Staff Good Practice

- B11** Staff, as appropriate to their work roles, are responsible for:
- B11.1** *Participation in the online environment*
- B11.2** Participating in activities in accordance with teaching and learning strategies and policies that have been specified for the course or unit.
- B11.3** Participating in professional learning activities appropriate to the range of roles they undertake.

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Appendix B: Code of Good Practice for Flexible Teaching and Learning

B12 *Teaching and learning*

B12.1 In courses and units, making appropriate provision for moderated and informal interaction among students and between students and staff.

B12.3 Providing students with information in advance about what to do if the LMS fails, and ensuring that no student is unfairly penalised by system failure.

B12.4 Taking responsibility for ensuring that online assessments are appropriately planned and supported.

B13 *Quality assurance*

B13.1 Sharing, reflecting on and reviewing personal experiences reported by participants working in the flexible environment in order to improve personal practice and provide feedback towards the improvement of flexible pedagogy.

Student Good Practice

B14 Students who reside in other countries while studying at ACU should ensure pre-enrolment that the laws of their country and accessibility of online facilities will not prevent full participation in the course or adequate access to learning resources.

Students are responsible for:

B14.1 Regular participation in the online environment and activities, including frequently checking communication components.

B14.2 Informing themselves of expectations for their use of the LMS, including the requirements of their units and appropriate online behaviour.

B14.3 Ensuring that they comply with *ACU's Policy on Computer and Internet Acceptable Use*.

B14.4. Adhering to the *University's Information Technology Conditions of Use*.

B15 *Quality assurance*

B15.1 Providing feedback and recommendations based on their experiences of the online environment.

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Appendix C: Code of Good Practice for Flexible Teaching and Learning in Physical Learning Spaces

Physical learning environments will demonstrate a high quality, educationally sound design with appropriate use of available flexible technologies.

Good Flexible Practices for Physical Learning Spaces

The University, through the Executive Director, University Services, and the local senior officers, has responsibility for ensuring the following practices are implemented.

C1 *Environment*

C1.1 The Physical Learning Space (PLS) includes: classrooms, specialised teaching spaces, lecture rooms, tutorial rooms, laboratories, computer rooms and other University-approved environments both inside and outside the University.

C1.2 The PLS should incorporate design/layout that is conducive to providing an effective learning experience.

C1.3 The design/layout of the PLS should be a collaborative effort between outside experts, academic staff, student representatives, Campus Operations, office of Properties, the Manager, Equity and Access, and the Director of Information Technology.

C2 *Accessibility support*

C2.1 Accessibility support should be incorporated into the design of the physical learning environment, where practicable, including consideration for both moving to/from the PLS and providing an environment conducive to learning for all students.

C2.2 Consultation with the Manager, Equity and Access will occur as appropriate.

C3 *Technology*

C3.1 Technology should be integral to the teaching and learning experience.

C3.2 Technology includes current and emerging audio/visual presentation equipment, lecture recording equipment (for selected environments), tools to enhance the teaching and learning experience (mobile and fixed computer laboratories) and mobility solutions.

Standards for, and monitoring of, infrastructure reliability, including system redundancy, availability, scalability, and rules for downtime and service schedules, and for operations, including authorisation and security, must adhere to ACU policies in this area.

C4 *Skills and Awareness*

C4.1 Professional learning programs will provide skills for staff and students to maximise the teaching and learning experience.

C4.2 Online and printed documentation/catalogue that details the standard offerings in the PLS will be developed, e.g. seating, personal computers, projectors, overheads, DVD/CD/video, recording and playback, mobile and fixed computer facilities.

C5 *Support and maintenance*

C5.1 Support and maintenance responsibilities for the PLS will be developed.

C5.2 Support roles and arrangements will be well communicated to users of the PLS.

C6 *Quality Assurance*

C6.1 Quality assurance processes will be developed to provide feedback on the quality of the PLS.

C7 *Innovation and continuous improvement*

C7.1 The PLS will be reviewed, evaluated and renewed at regular intervals.

C7.2 Feedback from University stakeholders and participation in inter-university communities (e.g. CAUDIT, EDUCAUSE) will be sought to ensure knowledge of emerging trends in the PLS.

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Appendix D: Code of Good Practice for Flexible Teaching and Learning in Virtual Learning Spaces

The University aims to ensure an eLearning environment that is “sustainable, scalable, self-sufficient, contemporary, appropriately resourced, accepted as part of the University’s core business, meets student needs and delivers quality teaching and learning” (*ACU Strategic Plan for Online Teaching and Learning 2007 – 2009*, p. 3). Virtual learning spaces will demonstrate a high quality, educationally sound approach with appropriate use of available flexible technologies.

Good Flexible Practices for Virtual Learning Spaces

The University, through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), has responsibility for ensuring that the following practices are implemented.

D1 ***Environment***

D1.1 The Virtual Learning Space (VLS) will support teaching and learning in a higher educational setting.

D1.2 The VLS includes the University-supported LMS for teaching and learning, and other approved current and emerging flexible technologies (including mobile learning).

D2 ***Accessibility support***

D2.1 Accessibility support is incorporated into the design of the VLS.

D3 ***Technology***

D3.1 Technology that is well-designed and well-integrated, with appropriate levels of performance and usability, will be selected.

D4 ***Skills and awareness***

D4.1 Professional learning programs will provide skills and awareness for both staff and students in the effective and efficient use of the VLS.

D5 ***Support and maintenance***

D5.1 Support and maintenance responsibilities for the VLS will be developed and in place.

D5.2 Support roles and arrangements will be well-communicated to users of the VLS.

D6 ***Quality Assurance***

D6.1 Quality assurance processes will be developed to provide feedback on the quality of the VLS.

D7 ***Innovation, and continuous improvement***

D7.1 The VLS will be reviewed, evaluated and renewed at regular intervals. Innovation and continuous improvement is encouraged, shared and well-supported.

Title: Procedures on Quality Flexible Teaching and Learning
No:

Approved by: Teaching and Learning Committee
Date:

Officer Responsible: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)

Contact Officer: Director, Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning

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Appendix E: Key to Abbreviations

ACUonline	Management unit responsible for providing professional and technical services associated with Learning Management System (LMS)
DE	Distance Education
DFTL	Director of Flexible Teaching and Learning
FTLC	Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee
IATL	Institute for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning
IT	Information Technology Directorate
LIC	Lecturer-in-Charge
LMS	Learning Management System
OEC	Online Education Coordinator
PLS	Physical Learning Space
PVC(AA)	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)
UFTLC	University Flexible Teaching and Learning Committee
VLS	Virtual Learning Space

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Appendix F: Terms and definitions related to flexible teaching and learning

Abbreviation	Definition
ACODE	is the Australasian Council of Open, Distance and eLearning.
Asynchronous online communication	is the use of online technologies for teaching and learning that do not require immediate and simultaneous interaction. Such teaching and learning may be collaborative (e.g. email and computer conferencing) or one-way (e.g. audio and video streaming).
Blog	is a frequently updated online journal or diary.
Distance education	focuses on the pedagogy, technology and instructional systems design to deliver education to students who are not on campus.
eLearning	is a term used to describe learning enhanced by the use of communication and computer-based technologies, including but not restricted to online learning (in web environments), mLearning (using mobile technologies), the streaming of content (podcasting) and the collaborative production of content (e.g. wikis, blogs). Within ACU the term <i>eLearning</i> also refers to a site with staff and student resources, the eLearning Staff Portal housed on the University's home page.
Flexible learning	expands choice on what, when, where and how people learn. It supports different approaches to learning, including online learning/eLearning. [Adapted from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, accessed 19 February, 2008. http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/nts/dap/framework.htm].
Fully online mode	is a mode of delivery of a unit or course with no face-to-face components, in which all interactions among staff and students, educational content, learning activities, assessment and support services are online.
Mobile learning	or mLearning refers to the use of mobile and handheld IT devices, such as Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), mobile telephones, laptops and tablet PC technologies, in teaching and learning.
Learning Management System	is software that allows educational institutions to create and host courses on the Internet.
Online	means anything that is available from or linked to a network server or that occurs on an electronic network.
Online Education Coordinator (OEC)	is a person within IATL responsible for oversight of quality assurance of fully online units and related staff training..
Online environment	is an online space or place encompassing specific facilities, activities and participants, which may be part of a defined wider environment and which has links to other spaces, places and participants.
Physical learning spaces (PLS)	include classrooms, lecture rooms, tutorial rooms, laboratories, computer rooms and other University-approved teaching environments both inside and outside the University.
Podcasting	is a method of releasing audio/video files to the Internet, allowing users to subscribe and receive new files automatically.
Specialised teaching spaces	are teaching locations designed for specific purposes, e.g. scientific laboratories. They are normally managed by a Faculty/School but some or all activities using the space are timetabled centrally.
Synchronous online communication	is the use of online technologies for interactive teaching and learning activities that take place in real time and enable two-way communication between the teacher and students.
Teaching spaces	are general, non-specialised areas used by the University community at large for teaching and other related activities.
Unit	is a coherent set of learning activities assigned a unit code by the University. The University's current LMS uses the American term 'course' for unit.
Virtual learning space (VLS)	is a combination of software systems and webpages designed to support teaching and learning in an educational setting.
W3C	are world wide web accessibility principles for web design.
Web-enhanced mode	is a face-to-face unit provided with an electronic repository of unit materials, together with a facility for communication among academic staff and students.
Wiki	is a website or similar online resource which allows users to add and edit content collectively.