Learning and Teaching Evaluation Policy

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1 Objective

The objective of the Learning and Teaching Evaluation Policy is to provide a framework that specifies and mandates:

- the key principles and values that underpin learning and teaching evaluation activity at the University, and
- actions taken to monitor the quality of learning and teaching processes, outcomes and decision making, in order to enhance and improve teaching, curriculum and the student learning experience.

The Learning and Teaching Evaluation Policy underpins a culture of evaluation, achieved through partnership with the University's key stakeholders, for the purposes of continual improvement and the pursuit of excellence.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of learning and teaching pertaining to higher education and vocational education and training, with a particular focus on teaching practice and curriculum and their impact on the student learning experience. It applies to coursework courses and research higher degrees, to all staff contributing to learning and teaching and all students.

The Learning and Teaching Evaluation Policy sits alongside others within the University's Quality Management Framework, such as the Reviews and Benchmarking Policies. It also relates to the Assessment Policy which is focussed on student learning outcomes. Evaluation both informs and is informed by the formal review, benchmarking and assessment activities specified within these policies. The Learning and Teaching Evaluation Policy also underpins the UTAS Academic Standards Framework.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 Planning for Evaluation of Learning and Teaching

The ultimate aim of the evaluation of learning and teaching is to improve the student learning experience, including learning outcomes. The University's approach to quality management embodies continuous improvement, with a focus on the development and attainment of academic standards.

Evaluation is underpinned by an evidence-based approach to decision making.

The evaluation of educational provision is necessary in order to ensure that resources are used for maximum effect in the sustainability of programs.

When engaging in University planning and budgeting processes, organisational units give consideration to evaluation and review activity planned over the coming period.
3.2 Evaluation Purposes

The evaluation of learning and teaching serves both formative and summative purposes. The purpose depends on the type of evaluation which includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Purpose</th>
<th>Types of evaluation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Enhancement and Understanding</td>
<td>formative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship of Teaching</td>
<td>formative/summative</td>
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<td>Reward and Recognition</td>
<td>formative/summative</td>
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<td>Performance Management</td>
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<td>Evidence-based decision making</td>
<td>summative</td>
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<td>Regulatory</td>
<td>summative</td>
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3.3 Approaches to Evaluation

There are different approaches which may be adopted for evaluation depending on:

- particular requirements associated with each evaluation, including context and purpose
- sources of information and data available, including feedback from students and where possible international and national external reference points and benchmarks
- the criteria used for evaluation, including appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency.

3.4 Scheduling of Evaluation

Evaluation should be regularly undertaken, enabling staff to continuously reflect upon their teaching practice, and organisational units to assure the quality of their academic programs. This will include the scheduling of formal evaluation exercises with distinct and discrete intended outcomes, such as course reviews.

3.5 Reporting on Evaluation

The reporting of actions and improvements as a result of evaluation exercises is a critical component of evaluation.

Students, staff and other stakeholders (as appropriate) will be informed as to how outcomes have been used to maintain or improve the quality of learning experiences.
A summary of evaluation outcomes and planned improvement activity will be reported as appropriate to:

- immediate supervisors
- unit, course and discipline coordinators
- college executive
- university committees
- other stakeholders.

3.6 Ethical Issues

Evaluation is an ethical process that must be conducted in an open, transparent and systematic manner. Due regard needs to be given to the rights, privacy, dignity and entitlements of staff and students in all elements of the evaluation, including its design, operation and reporting and subsequent use of the evaluation data and findings.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Evaluation of learning and teaching provides a fundamental component of the learning and teaching partnership, and as such carries roles and responsibilities specific to the evaluation exercise for each of the participants in the partnership.

Roles of Individuals:

- Students play an important role through the provision of critical evaluation data and as co-contributors to the conceptualisation and implementation of optimal learning settings in the light of those data.
- Teaching staff play the leading role in helping to establish a learning and teaching environment that encourages and incorporates reflective evaluation and continuous improvement.
- Managers and Coordinators have the additional responsibility for providing leadership and for overseeing the quality assurance of courses, teaching and assessment.

Roles of Organisational Units:

- Organisational units play a supporting and enabling role, seeking to promote the use of evaluation data and findings in ways that serve the interests of students, staff and the University.
- The Tasmanian University Union (TUU) and other student representative organisations promote and represent the intellectual, material, social, sporting and cultural interests of enrolled students. These student representative organisations therefore play an important role in the evaluation of academic matters from the student perspective.
- Academic Senate has been delegated the responsibility for advising Council and the Vice-Chancellor on academic matters, including providing advice on means of achieving and maintaining excellence in academic activities. Sub-committees of Academic Senate therefore play an important role in overseeing evaluation of academic matters. Specifically, the University Learning and Teaching Committee (ULTC) and University Research Committee are responsible for quality assuring the implementation of the Learning and
Teaching Evaluation Policy, with a ULTC sub-committee established to assist with the conduct of this role.

- The Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU) carries particular responsibility for providing reports on the evaluation of learning and teaching to various committees of Academic Senate.

5 Definitions and Acronyms

**Evaluation**  
The collection, analysis and interpretation of data and feedback on the quality of learning and teaching.

**Key Stakeholders**  
The University’s key stakeholders include its students, academic and general staff and management, professional accreditation bodies, employers, other education providers and government.

**Learning Outcomes**  
What successful students are expected to know, understand or be able to do as a result of learning.

**Organisational Unit**  
College, Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

**Review**  
A formal, in-depth analysis ensuring continuing high quality, viability and compatibility with the University’s strategic direction and priorities.

**Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU)**  
The organisational unit within the DVC(Students & Education) Office responsible for the implementation and reporting of:

- Student evaluation
- Teacher evaluation
- Course and unit evaluation

**Tasmanian University Union (TUU)**  
The Tasmania University Union Inc (TUU) is the affiliated student association for all UTAS students.

6 Supporting Documentation

- Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan
- Quality Management Framework
- Quality Management Policy
- University Standards Framework
- Reviews Policy
- Benchmarking Policy
- Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning
- Code of Conduct in Supervision
- Good Practice Guide: Evaluating Learning and Teaching (draft)
- Course Review Procedure
- Course Review Guideline
## 7 Versioning

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