Strategies to Design Intentional Curriculum

Anticipate your likely audience

Consider the diversity of the student cohort in the design of your course:

- If you are new to this course consult colleagues who have taught the course previously to ask about the student cohort or access iexplore (https://iexplore.rmit.edu.au/iexplore/) for information.
- Consult your program manager about the previous Program Annual Review (PAR) data on the student cohort.
- Consider how you will cater to the needs of different groups in your cohort.
- Determine other courses students might have done prior to yours and design the course with the whole program in mind.
- Use real-world examples from diverse, global perspectives to illustrate key ideas and problems.

Consider the diversity of the student cohort in the design of your assessments:

- Use a range of assessments methods to cater for different types of learners.
- Design your assessments using a scaffolded approach to assist in student success.
- Treat assessment as an integral part of your course design.
- Provide choice to students in assessment tasks to cater for different learning styles.

“When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing.”

Adrienne Rich, Invisibility in the Academe.
Adopt a flexible curriculum to respond to a diverse student cohort

Consider the diverse needs of your students in the design of the course curriculum:
Include in your curriculum design:

- Activities that encourage students to draw on prior knowledge and experience.
- Opportunities that encourage students to make connections between knowledge and application.
- Different modes of learning in your design (face to face, flipped classrooms and blended learning).
- Learning and assessment activities relevant to student lives and career aspirations.
- Learning activities for visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners
- Reflect current industry practice and accreditation (AQF and professional body) standards.
- Opportunities for students to explore specific topics so that they can create understanding and experience deeper learning.
- A variety of learning activities to accommodate different Teaching Spaces (www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=1opmzu7tunng1)

For more information on delivery refer to Strategies to teach explicitly.

Use technology to facilitate a more inclusive curriculum:

- Use technology to make learning more accessible for all students.
- Use both synchronous and asynchronous communication channels.
- Upload all learning materials into the course online space.
- Ensure all online learning materials are accessible, well organized, easily identified and found by students.

Design curriculum to be responsive to changes in circumstance:

- Design your curriculum so it can be easily changed to cater for off-campus students or blended learning delivery if need be.
- Annually check your online materials to ensure they reflect the time and circumstance of delivery.

Ensure your curriculum design is accountable

Design curriculum to comply with the regulatory requirements:

- Design learning activities and assessments at the correct AQF level.
- Design course learning and assessment activities to reflect the learning outcomes of your program.
- Ensure the volume of learning is appropriate when courses are delivered in different modes.
- Familiarise yourself, and comply with, RMIT policy in your assessment design. RMIT Assessment Policies.

Access a range of methodologies to deliver activities that support different learning needs and styles:

There are many theories, pedagogies and principles that support an inclusive teaching practice; help us to understand more clearly how and why students learn; and assist us to design effective learning experiences, tasks and assessments. See Strategies for Teaching Explicitly for further details.
### Use a collaborative approach to the design of curriculum

**Liaise with industry to ensure industry focused outcomes:**
- Obtain feedback from industry on the types of learning activities and assessments you have designed to ensure they are current and relevant.
- Ensure your course design and assessments work together to assist students in their preparation for industry.

**Integrate the development of graduate attributes, Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and English Language Proficiency Skills into your course:**
- Design assessments to assist in building the graduate attributes expected from your program.
- Reflect industry practices in the design of your learning activities and assessments.
- Familiarise yourself with RMIT’s [Graduate Attributes](#).
- Access [WIL](#) for guidelines on WIL and practical placement guides.
- Access [The Study and Learning Centre (SLC)](#) for information on how to embed English language proficiency and academic skills into your program.

**Build collaborative opportunities for students:**
- Design activities that promote interaction, collaboration and shared reflection among students.

### Make your design decisions transparent

**Ensure design decisions are clear:**
- Create assessments with a clear alignment to the course learning outcomes and explain these links to students.
- Explain to your students why you have chosen learning materials, activities and assessment methods.
- Make expected outcomes clear to students.
- Give clear instructions to students on what you want them to do and prepare them explicitly for assessments.
- Build feedback processes into the assessment design and explain how these should be used for better performance.

**Align learning outcomes with learning activities and assessment:**
- Specify the knowledge, values, and skills that students are expected to achieve at the end of the course.
- Clearly articulate your expectations and the course goals, learning outcomes and requirements in your Course Guide Part B and in your first session. Reiterate these during the course at each new topic.
- Follow logical steps to lead to the preparation for assessment tasks and skill/knowledge/capability development.
- Prepare the course so that continuity is maintained i.e. sessions lead on from the previous class and connect to the next with matching readings and resources.
Ensure your curriculum design is equitable

Avoid bias and stereotypes: Ensure there are no inherent biases that disadvantage some students in your chosen assessments.

- Ensure there are no inherent biases that disadvantage some students in your chosen assessments.
- Use a range of examples to ensure all students can relate.

Provide students with transparent guidelines for their assessment:

- Make assessment rubrics available to students early so they have a solid understanding of requirements.
- Provide clear written instructions to students on how to complete assessments and allow class time to answer questions on impending assessments.
- Provide students with exemplars on which they may model their performance.

Use technology to broaden access to learning:

- Provide online access to learning materials for students unable to attend classes.
- Provide flexible options for assessment if required.

Ensure curriculum content does not perpetuate stereotypes:

- Ensure you do not use materials that could be deemed discriminatory by any groups in your course.
- Provide a range of non-biased scenarios for learning activities.
- Create culturally neutral and/or balanced activities.

Design learning and assessment activities to reduce the need for reasonable adjustment:

- Provide a comfortable environment and available times so you are approachable if students need to discuss assessments.
- Engage students in discussions about assessment and course design to alleviate the need for reasonable adjustment.
- Make reasonable adjustments if required.