Development of criteria and standards for the Teaching domain in the RMIT Academic Profile

The new *RMIT Academic Model* comprises a single academic profile that provides for promotion on the basis of three benchmarks of expertise and practice - Research; Teaching and Engagement. Each benchmark comprises a set of criteria that define quality standards, and statements of indicative evidence that signal expected levels of performance required for promotion.

Parallel to the development of the new Academic Profile is the development of the *RMIT Researcher* and *Educator Development Framework*, comprising six domains of capability and associated skill sets that define the work of RMIT researchers and educators, and act as the basis for professional learning.

The national context for these RMIT developments is a project commissioned by the Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT), as part of their strategic priority, *Professionalisation of the Academic Workforce*, to design and trial a set of criteria and standards for university learning and teaching. The *Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS)* project team was led by Murdoch University and included academic leaders from the University of Western Australia, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University and the University of Notre Dame. The outcome of the project, the *Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS)* framework, was trialled by six Australian universities, each of which applied the framework to their own teaching criteria to review their institution's evidence and expectations. The six case study reports are available online at http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/framework/about/use/guidelines-institutions/good-practice-recommendations-case-studies/. The following extract from the AUTCAS website explains its aims and applications.

The AUTCAS Framework

The framework is a practical, flexible guide to assist universities and their academic staff to clarify what constitutes quality teaching.

The framework is underpinned by carefully researched definitions and principles of quality teaching that are expressed through <u>seven criteria</u>. The organising principle is alignment with academic appointment and promotional levels.

For each criterion the framework suggests standards of achievement that might be applied to each promotional level, cross-referenced to examples of indicative evidence that could be used to demonstrate achievement. The framework was developed with the intention that these criteria, standards and indicative evidence **be adapted** by individual universities to suit their own context.

http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/

The seven indicative criteria in the AUTCAS Framework are:

- 1. Design and planning of learning activities
- 2. Teaching and supporting student learning
- 3. Assessment and giving feedback to students on their learning
- 4. Developing effective learning environments, student support and guidance
- 5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of student learning:

- 5.1 Teaching and learning research incorporated into teaching practice
- 5.2 Inclusion of discipline based research in the curriculum and engagement of students in pedagogically sound discipline based research
- 5.3 Incorporation of professional, industry and work-based practice and experiences into teaching practice and the curriculum
- 6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development
- 7. Professional and personal effectiveness

Customisation of the AUTCAS Framework to align with RMIT strategic learning and teaching priorities and goals.

The domains of RMIT Researcher and Educator Development Framework have been mapped to the AUTCAS criteria (see summary in Table 1), and the intention is to use the AUTCAS criteria and indicative evidence as the starting point for the design of those for the Teaching Domain of the RMIT Academic Model, customising as required to reflect RMIT strategic goals and priorities.

Table 1: AUTCAS Aligned with RMIT Academic and Educator Development Framework

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AUSCAT CRITERIA	RMIT RESEARCHER AND
	EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT
	FRAMEWORK DOMAINS
Design and planning of learning activities	Pedagogy
2. Teaching and supporting student learning	Pedagogy
	Technology
3. Assessment and giving feedback to students on their	Pedagogy
learning	
4. Developing effective learning environments, student	Pedagogy
support and guidance	Engagement
5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional	
activities with teaching and in support of student learning	
5.1 Teaching and learning research incorporated into	Research
teaching practice	Pedagogy
5.2 Inclusion of discipline based research in the curriculum	Research
and engagement of students in pedagogically sound	Pedagogy
discipline based research	
5.3 Incorporation of professional, industry and work-based	Engagement
practice and experiences into teaching practice and the	Currency
curriculum	
6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional	Quality
development	Currency
7. Professional and personal effectiveness	Personal Effectiveness
	Leadership

Points of customisation

Given the direct mapping between the seven criteria and the domains of the RMIT Framework, no changes have been made to the criteria. Two components of the framework have been customised:

1. The good practice exemplars for each criterion have been amended to take account of relevant goals and priorities in RMIT's strategic plan to 2020: *Ready for Life and Work* (Nov 2015) – see Table 2.

Table 2: Selected RMIT strategic goals and priorities

GOALS	PRIORITIES
Goal 1 A transformative student	Priority 1 Graduating ready for life & work
experience	Priority 2 Inspiring teaching
	Priority 3 Learning through work & enterprise
	Priority 4 Growing & valuing our diversity
	Priority 5 A digitally enable experience
Goal 2 Connected pathways	Priority 1 A distinctive form of connected education
	Priority 2 Supporting, access, progression & pathways
	Priority 3 Trailblazing approach to assessment &
	credentials
	Priority 5 Enterprise ready
Goal 6 Industry & enterprise	Priority 2 Connected with industry and community
embedded in everything we do	throughout the student journey
Goal 7 Global reach and outlook	Priority 1 Preparing students for the globalised world
	of work

- 2. The items of indicative evidence in the AUSCAT Framework have been customised by grouping into ten categories:
 - i. Program and course artefacts
 - ii. Professional artefacts
 - iii. Third party reports and references
 - iv. Feedback from peers, supervisors and students
 - v. Evidence of student engagement, progress and achievements
 - vi. Evidence of engagement with local and global communities organisations and industries
 - vii. Awards and professional recognition
 - viii. Academic leadership
 - ix. Evaluative artefacts
 - x. Evidence of impact.

The grouping of indicative evidence is used to facilitate review of the categories of evidence invoked for each criterion and set a framework for consideration of other relevant forms of evidence.

Criterion 1 | Design and planning of learning activities

To demonstrate this criterion you should provide evidence of good practice in planning, development and preparation of learning resources and materials for a unit, course or degree program, including coordination or involvement in curriculum design and development.

Good practice may be demonstrated across any or all of the full range of teaching contexts, including undergraduate, postgraduate, clinical and practical contexts. Where possible you should demonstrate how you have shown leadership or influenced others. Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- Planning and preparation
- Relevant disciplinary and cross-disciplinary knowledge
- Knowledge of workplace and community-based applications of disciplinary and crossdisciplinary knowledge
- Knowledge of student learning processes
- Knowledge and appropriate use of a repertoire of teaching techniques to support achievement of student learning goals.
- Knowledge of curriculum design and application of design options relevant to RMIT's mission, directions and goals.
- Knowledge and appropriate use of technology
- Innovative use of technology to design authentic learning experiences.
- Collaboration with teachers of VE qualifications and associate degrees to design student pathways.

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	Unit/course outline and materials
Professional artefacts	Details of mentoring and support of colleagues
Third party reports and references	Report from unit and/or course coordinator
	Expert peer review on course/program materials and innovation
	Letter from Chair of curriculum committee on contribution
Feedback from peers, supervisors	Student surveys and feedback to students on response/outcomes
and students	Student feedback from focus groups
	Student feedback derived from external independent evaluation
	Tutor feedback on preparation, organisation or mentoring support
	Feedback from teaching teams
	Feedback from staff mentored
Evidence of student engagement,	
progress and achievements	
Evidence of engagement with local	
and global communities	
organisations and industries	
Awards and professional recognition	 External peer recognition and/or review on impact of curriculum, discipline or innovation
	Awards and citations for learning materials
	Text book awards
Academic leadership	Details of leadership roles and specific contribution
Evaluative artefacts	
Evidence of impact	

Criterion 2 | Teaching and supporting student learning

To demonstrate this criterion you should provide evidence of good practice in teaching. Good practice may be demonstrated across any or all of the full range of teaching contexts. Where possible you should demonstrate how you have shown leadership or mentored and influenced others. Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- Innovative teaching that inspires learners
- Knowledge and use of a range of teaching techniques that:
 - Stimulate student interest and active engagement in learning
 - Value and promote diversity
 - Facilitate learning through work and enterprise.
- Your strategies for helping students to understand and apply concepts
- How you assist students who encounter difficulties
- Use of collaborative teaching approaches, for example with VE teachers to facilitate student pathways
- Use of examples and resources that reflect diversity and facilitate global learning.

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	
Professional artefacts	 Examples of student work/ theses Peer review and personal responses to the review and practices
Third party reports and references	Letters of invitation or thanks
Feedback from peers, supervisors and students	 Student surveys and feedback to students on response/outcomes Student feedback from focus groups
Evidence of student engagement, progress and achievements	Postgraduate student grades and time to completion
Evidence of engagement with local and global communities organisations and industries	
Awards and professional recognition	 Recognition from university national and international peers Nomination for a teaching award Success in a university, national or discipline teaching award
Academic leadership	Adoption of innovation by others
Evaluative artefacts	Systematic monitoring of student learning outcomes
Evidence of impact	Impact of innovation/initiative within university or wider Impact of mentoring on peers or colleagues

Criterion 3 | Assessment and giving feedback to students on their learning

To demonstrate this criterion you should provide evidence of good practice in the design and execution of assessment tasks, alignment of assessment with the desired learning outcomes and provide appropriate and timely feedback. Good practice may be demonstrated across any or all of the full range of teaching contexts. Where possible you should demonstrate how you have shown leadership or influenced others. Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- Support for students to develop and demonstrate intended learning outcomes, educational principles and work readiness.
- Provision of constructive and timely feedback
- Collaboration with program team peers to design coherent assessment approaches across the program.
- Clearly stated assessment requirements/criteria
- Design and use of a range of assessment tasks to meet course and program objectives
- Design of assessment tasks that build cumulatively towards achievement of capstone outcomes and demonstration of work readiness.
- Design of assessment for authentic learning
- · Innovation in the design and execution of assessment
- Engagement with students to review assessment criteria, tasks, weightings and timing.
- Engagement with industry stakeholders to validate work-related assessment tasks

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	Unit/Course outline with assessment tasks and marking criteria
	Extracts from a number of units/courses showing variety of
	assessment tasks
	Examples of innovative assessment tasks
	Examples of standards of student learning
Professional artefacts	Peer review of course assessment and response to review
	Examples of policies, practices and their implementation
Third party reports and references	Examples of examiner reports and/or independently moderated
	student work
Feedback from peers, supervisors	Student surveys and feedback to students on response/outcomes
and students	Student feedback from focus groups
	Feedback from course coordinator on assessment tasks and student
	outcomes
	Feedback on role in establishing moderation and standards practices
Evidence of student engagement,	Peer recognition of leadership role and achievements
progress and achievements	
Evidence of engagement with local	
and global communities	
organisations and industries	
Awards and professional	
recognition	
Academic leadership	
Evaluative artefacts	Use of learning analytics
Evidence of impact	Data evidencing impact of assessment innovation

Criterion 4 | Developing effective environments, student support and guidance

To demonstrate this criterion you should provide evidence of good practice in activities related to the creation of an engaging learning environment for students, including; supporting transition, and the development of learning communities and strategies that account for and encourage student equity and diversity. Good practice may be demonstrated across any or all of the full range of teaching contexts. Where possible you should demonstrate how you have shown leadership or influenced others. Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- Availability to consult with students
- How you link students to appropriate support, services and opportunities for authentic learning
- How you encourage students to support and engage with each other
- How you build learning communities in the course and across the program
- How you respect and require students to demonstrate respect for others
- How you support students with diverse backgrounds and perspectives
- Use of innovative strategies to support students and create supporting and engaging learning environments

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	
Professional artefacts	 Details of role and engagement in learning communities (formal or informal) Extent and participation in innovation for student engagement
Third party reports and references	Reports evaluating the effectiveness of targeted student support interventions on student retention and progression
Feedback from peers, supervisors and students	 Student surveys and feedback and responses to these Informal unsolicited student or peer feedback Feedback from students and peers relating to roles e.g. student advisor or leader in learning communities Feedback from peers or students mentored
Evidence of student engagement, progress and achievements	
Evidence of engagement with local and global communities organisations and industries	
Awards and professional recognition	
Academic leadership	Examples of leadership role and outcomes
Evaluative artefacts	Use of learning analytics showing student engagement with student support services such as PASS and English Language Proficiency
Evidence of impact	

Criterion 5 | Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of learning

NOTE ON SCHOLARSHIP.

The concept of scholarship of teaching, closely associated with the work of Ernest Boyer was only ever defined by him in vague terms. It is recommended that RMIT engage in reflection on the meaning and develop an agreed definition to assist academic staff to engage in scholarly activities that are recognised for the purposes of promotion. The following definitions from UQ and Curtin are provided as a starting point.

For an activity to be defined as scholarly it should be public, susceptible to critical review and evaluation, and accessible for exchange and use by other members of one's scholarly community. The scholarship of teaching develops from a basis of scholarly teaching in a discipline but is not the same as excellent teaching. It involves exploring, testing, practicing and communicating improved pedagogies, learning processes, curricula, policies and learning materials. It meets the following additional criteria in the context of promoting student learning:

- It requires high levels of discipline-related expertise.
- It requires an understanding of who the learners are, how they learn and what practices are most effective in the context of the discipline (pedagogical content knowledge)
- It breaks new ground and is innovative
- It can be replicated and elaborated
- It is documented and subjected to peer review

University of Queensland. 2007. Working Party on the Diversity of Academic Roles. www.uq.edu.au/teaching-learning/docs/Scholarship-of-teaching-learning.doc

Teachers engaging in scholarship in teaching and learning seek to improve teaching at the tertiary level by:

- Consulting and applying the literature on teaching and learning
- Investigating their own teaching
- Adopting innovative teaching approaches
- Formally communicating their ideas and practice to peers through publication and other formal means; and
- Seeking and obtaining peer recognition for their ideas and practice.

Curtin University https://clt.curtin.edu.au/research/scholarship_teaching_learning.cfm

In order to demonstrate good practice in this criterion you should provide evidence of how you contribute to or use knowledge of teaching and learning, the discipline or professional practice to support student learning. Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- Engagement in the scholarship of teaching.
- Incorporation of the scholarship of teaching and learning research into teaching practice
- Engagement in and application of pedagogically-based research on learning through work and enterprise
- Engagement in and application of research on assessment.
- Contribution to the quality and relevance of teaching and learning within or beyond your discipline

• Design and delivery of programs and courses that incorporate opportunities for students to engage in pedagogically sound discipline-based research. Incorporation of professional, industry and work-based practice or experiences into teaching practice or curriculum

The indicative standards and evidence for this criterion has been divided into 3 subsections because we recognise that there is variation in the applicability of this criterion to different universities, disciplines and individual teaching contexts. Different institutions may include or exclude these subsections to fit their specific teaching context. Likewise individuals are not expected to address each of the subsections, but should highlight their particular contribution to knowledge related to teaching or use of knowledge to support student learning.

5.1 Teaching and learning research incorporated into teaching practice

Indicative evidence

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	Excerpts from unit/course materials demonstrating incorporation
	of current T & L research into teaching activities
Professional artefacts	Details of conferences and presentations
	Copies of publications and details of contribution and impact
	Details of mentoring roles and outcomes
Third party reports and references	References and letters from peers
Feedback from peers, supervisors and	
students	
Evidence of student engagement,	
progress and achievements	
Evidence of engagement with local and	
global communities organisations and	
industries	
Awards and professional recognition	Details of grants and awards (successful and unsuccessful) and
	outcomes
	TEQSA, OLT recognition as assessor or expert
Academic leadership	Details of leadership roles and contribution confirmation by peers
Evaluative artefacts	
Evidence of impact	Impact of projects, grants and other initiatives for the university or
	(inter)nationally

5.2 Inclusion of discipline based research in the curriculum and engagement of students in pedagogically sound discipline based research

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	Excerpts from unit/course materials demonstrating the incorporation of current disciplinary research or the inclusion of research orientated tasks.
Professional artefacts	
Third party reports and references	 Peer review reports related to teaching/curriculum materials Letters of reference from peers or invitations indication standing in discipline Assessor reports
Feedback from peers, supervisors and students	Student surveys and feedback
Evidence of student engagement, progress and achievements	Student participation in conferences, presentation of papers and/or publishing

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Evidence category	Indicative evidence
	 Number of students progressing to research degrees Number of postgraduate students supervised to completion, grades and time to completion Number of students in academic/research positions following graduation
Evidence of engagement with local and global communities organisations and industries	
Awards and professional recognition	Peer review recognising role and contribution
Academic leadership	Receipt of prizes or awards by students supervised
Evaluative artefacts	
Evidence of impact	Details of leadership roles, duration, achievementsAdoption of teaching/curriculum materials by others

5.3 Incorporation of professional, industry and work-based practice and experiences into teaching practice and the curriculum

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Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	Excerpts from Unit/Course materials demonstrating the
	integration of case studies and/or industry experience
Professional artefacts	
Third party reports and references	
Feedback from peers, supervisors and	Feedback from students on experience
students	Peer review of professional /authentic experience
Evidence of student engagement,	Letters or surveys of industry satisfaction on preparation of
progress and achievements	students for practice
Evidence of engagement with local and	Extent of participation by students, industry
global communities organisations and	Invitations to work with industry, letters of support from
industries	industry
	Feedback from industry partners indicating alignment between
	industry requirements and learning outcomes
	Feedback from industry partners indicating the efficacy of
	programs in preparing graduates for professional practice
Awards and professional recognition	
Academic leadership	
Evaluative artefacts	
Evidence of impact	

Criterion 6 | Evaluation of practice and quality improvement

In order to demonstrate good practice in this criterion you should provide evidence of how you work with peers and students to evaluate individual and team practice and plan and implement improvements to the curriculum structure and learning and assessment options. .

Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- How you use evaluation of practice to guide changes to your own course planning and teaching
- Participation in program team-based evaluation of practice, based on use of learning metrics, student feedback and outcomes data.
- How evaluation and improvement strategies have contributed to enhanced student learning experiences and achievement of outcomes

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	
Professional artefacts	 Mapping achievements and experience to professional standards frameworks Certificates/ transcripts of professional development undertaken, duration, changes made as a consequence Details of contribution to the professional development, mentoring of others, and outcomes Teaching Portfolio demonstrating reflective practice
Third party reports and references	Invitations to present keynote at T & L and disciplinary conferences
Feedback from peers, supervisors and students	 Student surveys, comments and feedback Peer review on a range of dimensions of teaching
Evidence of student engagement, progress and achievements	
Evidence of engagement with local and global communities organisations and industries	
Awards and professional recognition	Application for teaching fellowship (HERDSA, HEA)
Academic leadership	Examples of leadership contribution in professional development and evaluation
Evaluative artefacts Evidence of impact	Details and examples of the impact of the change in practice, evidence of changes in student, peer evaluation

Criterion 7 | Professional growth and personal effectiveness

In order to demonstrate good practice in this criterion you should provide evidence of effective professional practice, professional and personal development and contributions to academic leadership.

Good practice in relation to this criterion might include demonstration of:

- Engagement in professional development activities consistent with individual workplan and agreed program level continuous improvement goals.
- Engagement in reflection on practice.
- Support for and professional engagement with peers in your program team(s)
- How you contribute to academic leadership

Evidence category	Indicative evidence
Program and course artefacts	maicative evidence
Professional artefacts	 Mapping achievements and experience to professional standards frameworks Certificates/ transcripts of professional development undertaken, duration, changes made as a consequence Details of contribution to the professional development, mentoring of others, and outcomes Teaching Portfolio demonstrating reflective practice
Third party reports and references	Invitations to present keynote at T & L and disciplinary conference
Feedback from peers,	Student surveys, comments and feedback
supervisors and students	Peer review on a range of dimensions of teaching
Evidence of student engagement, progress and achievements	
Evidence of engagement with local and global communities organisations and industries	
Awards and professional recognition	Application for teaching fellowship (HERDSA, HEA)
Academic leadership	Examples of leadership contribution in professional development and evaluation
Evaluative artefacts	
Evidence of impact	Details and examples of the impact of the change in practice, evidence of changes in student, peer evaluation