Starting with the end in mind...

Ideas for engaging with

Graduate Attributes and Standards Curriculum Renewal
## Contents

What is the Graduate Attributes and Standards Project at USC? ................................. 2
USC Graduate Attributes ................................................................................................. 4
USC Learning and Teaching – Academic Policy ............................................................... 5
National Graduate Attributes Projects ......................................................................... 7
Utilising Constructive Alignment to design a program ..................................................... 8
Utilising Constructive Alignment to design a course ....................................................... 9
Designing Course Learning Outcomes .......................................................................... 11
Writing or revising your own Course Learning Outcomes ............................................. 13
Designing Assessment ................................................................................................. 14
Designing Assessment Criteria ...................................................................................... 16
Describing Assessment Standards ................................................................................. 16
Bringing Criteria and Standards together in a rubric ..................................................... 17
The new course outline template .................................................................................. 18
What are the new elements in the course outline template? ........................................... 18
How do I complete the new course outline template? ................................................... 19
  Learning Outcomes ...................................................................................................... 19
  Assessment .................................................................................................................... 20
  Learning Experiences .................................................................................................... 24
Graduate Qualities ......................................................................................................... 25
  Creative and Critical Thinkers ..................................................................................... 26
  Empowered .................................................................................................................... 28
  Engaged ........................................................................................................................ 30
  Ethical ............................................................................................................................ 32
  Knowledgeable ............................................................................................................. 34
  Sustainability-focussed .............................................................................................. 36
Generic Skills .................................................................................................................. 39
  Communication ............................................................................................................. 40
  Collaboration ................................................................................................................ 42
  Problem Solving .......................................................................................................... 44
  Organisation ................................................................................................................ 46
  Applying Technologies ................................................................................................. 48
  Information Literacy ................................................................................................. 50
Blackline masters ........................................................................................................... 52
References ...................................................................................................................... 55

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What is the Graduate Attributes and Standards Project at USC?

There is continuing development of the graduate attribute or capability agenda in the Australian tertiary sector. Most Australian universities have graduate attributes and they are agents for transforming teaching and learning practice. Universities are viewed as institutions that should create a social benefit and have outcomes congruent with a healthy and happy society; graduate attributes are linked to both the discourse of the social role of universities and that of employability. Barrie et al. (2009) identify four basic characteristics or descriptions of graduate attributes which apply to the USC Graduate Attributes: they are important; they are learning outcomes; they shape the way graduates will contribute to society; and they are the qualities that prepare graduates as agents of social good in an unknown future (as cited in O’Connor et al., 2011:105).

The Graduate Attributes and Standards Project at University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) facilitates and assists Program Leaders and Course Coordinators in the transition to the new set of attributes through workshops, one on one consultations and the production of helpful materials, such as this Guidebook. The new Graduate Attributes model of curriculum design asks us to view teaching and learning programmatically. Therefore this project is specifically designed to provide space for program teams to plan together to create dynamic, innovative, and connected learning journeys for their students.

Why are we doing this now?

USC has experienced extraordinary growth during its institutional life and the focus has been on developing new programs. This ongoing growth has created an excellent opportunity to reflect on curriculum renewal at the whole-of-university level. But why are we doing it now?

1. To enhance our students’ experience and to increase student retention.
   Research (Wilcoxson et al., 2011) shows that one of the reasons students leave university is because they can’t see where their degree is taking them. The graduate attributes curriculum renewal gives program teams a reason to re-articulate what students get out of the program and allows for courses to articulate with clarity how they fit into the overall learning outcomes of the program. This also ensures ownership by the academic staff who are the discipline experts teaching in the program.

2. To develop a USC language for graduate outcomes.
   When our graduates are seeking work in a very competitive environment, they need a language to talk about the qualities and skills they have developed during their university study. Our graduate attributes align with selection criteria for jobs in many fields and give students an opportunity to evidence their success in these attributes in a very concrete way.

3. To enable access to the USC experience.
   The USC Graduate Attributes bridge the need for more student-friendly practices in curriculum language and discipline content rigour. Research (Wirgau & Wilkinson, 2011) indicates that students find our language in course outlines inaccessible and difficult to understand. With a high percentage of students who are first in family to university, we need to articulate what we want students to know and be able to do as a result of engaging in learning. The language of the graduate attributes embedded into assessment creates clarity for students.
4. To ensure our curriculum meets the sector benchmarks.

The higher education sector is rapidly changing, in particular with its emphasis on broadening participation to a more diverse student cohort. There is also an increased focus on teaching and learning standards to ensure that universities produce quality graduates. The Graduate Attributes and Standards Project is drawing on a range of standards documents including the Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency (TEQSA) Course Accreditation Standards and Teaching and Learning Standards (as they become available), the Australian Qualifications Framework, standards embedded in professional registration requirements and the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Learning and Teaching Standards project to ensure that USC standards meet national and international quality benchmarks.

USC has been working with graduate attributes for 10 years now and we have developed our understanding of this important concept to both facilitate greater connections to disciplines for students and improve teaching and learning practice by our teaching staff. The latest understanding around graduate attributes is that they are best taught within disciplines and that they need to be explicitly described, mirroring both future employer expectations, the qualities and skills needed to successfully pursue higher levels of education as well as overall productivity in the community and society.

Don’t we already have Graduate Attributes?

There has been a new set of graduate attributes in policy since 2009 but because of all the structural changes within the University, the roll-out has been delayed. We are now moving to transition our renewed graduate attributes into our course and program documentation.
USC Graduate Attributes:

A term used to encompass the graduate qualities and generic skills that the University of the Sunshine Coast commits to fostering in all students enrolled in coursework programs.

USC has had a University-wide statement of graduate attributes since 2004. In late 2009, following an extensive consultation and development process, new graduate attributes were introduced. Feedback about the need for graduate attributes that are more inspiring and more applied has resulted in the two-category approach of including both qualities and skills.

The Graduate Qualities: Creative and Critical Thinkers, Empowered, Engaged, Ethical, Knowledgeable and Sustainability-focussed are represented on the Graduate Attributes graphic using cool colours.

The Generic Skills: Communication, Collaboration, Problem Solving, Organisation, Applying Technologies and Information Literacy are represented using warm colours.

Key Message

USC has 12 graduate attributes made up of 6 graduate qualities and 6 generic skills. They have been developed to recognise that in general, skills are more practical and immediate and enable the development of certain qualities.
USC Learning and Teaching - Academic Policy:

Key Message

USC's Learning and Teaching Policy requires all coursework programs to evidence all twelve attributes.

Below is an extract from the Learning and Teaching - Academic Policy (2011):

4. Graduate Attributes

Programs, courses, University teaching and the learning experience will be informed by the Graduate Attributes, a combination of Graduate Qualities and Generic Skills, expressed through Program Learning Outcomes.

The University community, both students and staff, shares responsibility for fostering and realising the Graduate Attributes.

4.1 Graduate Qualities

4.1.1 The Graduate Qualities are themes that the University community values, and therefore seeks to foster through all of its programs and the student's broader experience at the University.

4.1.2 The University provides opportunities for students to be:

- Creative and critical thinkers, generating original ideas and concepts, and appreciating innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Empowered, having both the capacity and confidence to pursue the attainment of full potential;
- Engaged, contributing positively to diverse communities through service and leadership;
- Ethical, acting with integrity in intellectual, professional and community pursuits;
- Knowledgeable, building disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge through a scholarly approach incorporating global and regional perspectives; and
- Sustainability-focussed, responding to ecological, social and economic imperatives.

4.2 Generic Skills

4.2.1 Generic Skills are transferable skills that are valued by the University as being important outcomes of a University education. These skills are those identified as important by employers, government and the higher education sector.

4.2.2 Students will be supported to develop the following generic skills:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Problem solving
- Organisation
- Applying technologies
- Information literacy
4.3 Program Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes are the specific learning outcomes that are identified, mapped, taught, practised and assessed within each USC program. They incorporate the Graduate Qualities and Generic Skills interpreting them in relation to the disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies that inform the program.


Like to know more?

Graduate attributes are a common feature across the Australian tertiary education environment. They help to articulate the distinctive features of a higher education, as well as expressing institutional values. Graduate attributes contribute to a framework for curriculum development, which includes other drivers such as disciplinary culture and professional expectations. Students can also use graduate attributes as a point of reference for their own development by keeping records of how they have been demonstrated. These records can be used when applying for work or further study.

A large number of people have been involved in creating USC’s Graduate Attributes. Students, academic staff, industry experts and professional staff worked together to create responsive, appropriate and exciting graduate attributes for USC. The attributes are part of the Learning and Teaching - Academic Policy, which was approved by University Council in December 2009.

Since late 2010, program teams have been working to incorporate the new graduate attributes into coursework programs. They do this with the support of Graduate Attributes Leaders and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) in the Faculties and the Office of Learning and Teaching, who manage the project on behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

The project is governed by a steering committee chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (International & Quality) who is also the chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee.
National Graduate Attributes Projects

At the national level, several key projects have investigated graduate attributes. The findings of these projects inform the Graduate Attributes and Standards Project at USC. These include:

**Understanding academic staff beliefs about graduate attributes project (B Factor), 2009:**

This empirical study surveyed more than one thousand academic staff and undertook a range of additional data gathering activities to devise an adoption continuum ranging from ‘sceptic’ to ‘enthusiast’. A key finding was that while a majority of staff agreed that graduate attributes were important, far fewer respondents actually reported incorporating them into teaching and assessment. The more confident and willing staff were, the more likely they were to teach and assess graduate attributes. The project materials are available online at: http://www.olt.gov.au/project-b-factor-understanding-academic-cqu-2007.

**The National Graduate Attributes project (GAP), 2009:**

This national scoping project found that eight elements were necessary to achieve effective curriculum renewal through graduate attributes. These elements were: conceptions, stakeholders, implementation, curriculum, assessment, quality assurance, staff development and student-centredness. The project materials are available online at: http://www.olt.gov.au/project-integration-assessment-graduate-sydney-2007.

**Beverley Oliver’s National Teaching Fellowship on Assuring graduate capabilities: evidencing levels of achievement for graduate employability fellowship, 2011:**

This fellowship has produced an extensive collection of resources about graduate attributes, standards, mapping, portfolios and assuring graduate capability. It has generated lively online discussions as well as a range of downloadable resources such as standards rubrics for a range of topic areas and links to online resources about implementing graduate capabilities. The project materials are available online at: http://boliver.ning.com/.
Utilising Constructive Alignment to design a program

Students gain experience in USC Graduate Attributes over the life of a program. Therefore, the process of renewal is driven by program level thinking, with courses contributing the building blocks to the various programs they are in. The process of aligning graduate attributes with all other elements of a program is depicted below. This framework is used as the organiser for this section of the guide.
Utilising Constructive Alignment to design a course

Key Message

*Program learning outcomes should align with course learning outcomes and manifest directly in assessment.*

Constructive Alignment is a term Biggs and Tang (2007) use to describe a curriculum design where learning outcomes, assessment and learning experiences work together so that every aspect of a student’s learning experience is focussed on achieving the agreed upon goals. At USC, the graduate attributes are expressed in the program learning outcomes to explicitly recognise the **contextual nature of graduate attributes**; the way an occupational therapist and an accountant engage with the graduate qualities and generic skills are quite specific to the discipline so one size will not fit all!

**Courses are informed by Program Learning Outcomes**

*Developing program learning outcomes can be best achieved as a cooperative process including input from the whole team.*

Program learning outcomes define the graduate attributes within the discipline and guide the courses in the program in terms of content, qualities, knowledge and skills that the students develop. Program learning outcomes allow you to define the Graduate Qualities in your discipline, interpreting them in relation to the disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies that inform the program.

Ideally, a student should gain significant experience in **all USC Graduate Attributes** over their program. They will do this if the program learning outcomes correspond to the graduate attributes and students have multiple opportunities to experience them throughout the program. This is why mapping where, when and at what level students experience the graduate attributes is so important.

Course Coordinators need to know where their course fits into the program, what it contributes to the program and what level of engagement is required.

Many courses contribute to multiple programs. These are sometimes called service courses. Once a service course has identified the graduate attributes it addresses, these don’t change for the different programs. Program Leaders who utilise service courses build around them to ensure that the other courses contribute a balance of the other graduate attributes.
An example of Constructive Alignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Qualities</th>
<th>Renewed program learning outcomes</th>
<th>Specific course learning outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Engaged, contributing positively to diverse communities through service and leadership | • seek, identify and apply biomedical knowledge to a range of situations as part of a multidisciplinary team.  
• engage contribute to and advocate for advances in the biomedical science field. | Using recognised methods of science communication and appropriate practical techniques and tools contribute and critique current immunological issues. | Review Quiz on practical lab work  
Scientific Poster |
| Knowledgeable, building disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge through a scholarly approach incorporating global and regional perspectives | • maintain comprehensive knowledge of the fields of biomedical science by engaging with both current and developing theory and practice.  
• synthesise and evaluate knowledge produced from a variety of sources to reach conclusions.  
• communicate understandings appropriately to a range of diverse audiences, maintaining the integrity of the discipline. | Demonstrate knowledge of the principles and concepts underlying Immunology. | Review Quiz – practical lab work and basic knowledge  
Final Exam – covering the essential knowledge and understanding with larger scoping questions on context and importance of immunology and wider health contexts |
| Sustainability-focussed, responding to ecological, social and economic imperatives | • demonstrate awareness of ecologically, socially and economically sustainable practices in biomedicine.  
• articulate where and how biomedical science can contribute to improved health outcomes for individuals and communities.  
• articulate aspects of the place and importance of immunology in the local and global community. | Utilising scientific research gathered, link relevance of immunological issue to a broader population and produce a scientific poster demonstrating this connection. | Scientific Poster  
Some exam and quiz questions that link immunology practice and wider social contexts |
Designing Course Learning Outcomes

Key Message

*Each course should typically focus on a maximum of two Graduate Qualities and two Generic Skills.*

There are three main issues that a Course Coordinator needs to think about when identifying the attributes that best fit the course purpose and content:

1. What is the main focus of the course and how are students assessed in the course?
2. What are the program learning outcomes that inform the course?
3. How does this course sit within the students’ learning journey in the program?

Every course is expected to contribute to one or two qualities and one or two skills. Students may experience other graduate attributes in the course but these are not explicitly taught, practiced and assessed. This is a major shift in approach for USC. In the previous course outline, it was expected that course learning outcomes would relate to all graduate attributes but this is no longer the case.

Course learning outcomes represent the main reasons for learning and teaching in a course and tell a student what they should learn if they successfully complete the course. Course learning outcomes are aligned to program learning outcomes and therefore, graduate attributes. A course usually has 4-6 learning outcomes, as any more is usually unrealistic or too fine grained. In the course outline you are asked to create course learning outcomes that reflect the focus graduate qualities and identify which tasks will be used to assess them.

Like to know more?

When designing learning outcomes, Biggs and Tang (2007) recommend that the course coordinator should think about what students need to know and what kind of knowledge is involved; then what students should be able to do with what they know and at what level. They utilise the Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) taxonomy to show increasing levels of complexity in student learning:

Biggs and Tang (2007) advise avoiding ‘understand’ as a verb in a learning outcome because the word is so broad in meaning. It could be argued that all of the verbs cited in the SOLO taxonomy show students’ understanding at different levels. It is more helpful to students to be specific and it gives you a chance to differentiate in terms of the level of complexity at which you want them to ‘understand’ the content.

You might also be familiar with Blooms’ revised taxonomy which is similar to the SOLO. Note that Bloom does include understanding. In both the original and revised version, understanding is taken to mean comprehending, which is quite low on the taxonomy.

![Higher Order Thinking](http://blogs.wsd1.org/etr/?tag=blooms-revised-taxonomy)

**Higher Order Thinking**

- Creating
- Evaluating
- Analysing
- Applying
- Understanding (Comprehending)
- Remembering

**Lower Order Thinking Skills**
Writing or revising your own Course Learning Outcomes

Key Message

*When writing course learning outcomes, it’s important to include three things:*

1. *The verb/s that describes the appropriate level of understanding*
2. *The content or topic that is to be learnt*
3. *The context in which the verb used is to be deployed*

One strategy is to cut your current learning outcomes into discrete strips. Do they still make sense now they have been liberated from your course outline? They should be able to stand on their own and individually explain some aspect of the course.

In light of the new graduate attributes what qualities are already written in the learning outcomes? Which ones could you emphasise? If it’s not clear which of the graduate attributes the course learning outcome is addressing, look at the assessment task/s aligned with it. What graduate attributes are students most likely to utilise to successfully complete the task? Ideally you will look at your course, the course learning outcomes within the context of the program it supports. Is there a glut of creative and critical thinking attributes covered in other courses in the program? Is there an opportunity to look at the same content through the lens of another graduate attribute such as sustainability focused?

Please utilise the blackline master on page 52 to help you write or revise your own course learning outcomes. Each graduate quality (page 26-37) has examples of course learning outcomes drawn from current USC course outlines.
Designing Assessment

Once you have decided what you want students to know and be able to do, you then need to think about how you will ask students to demonstrate their new knowledge and skills. This is the function of assessment. Assessment asks students to bring the verbs from the learning outcomes to life in practice. Pickford and Brown (2006) remind us that whatever assessment strategy we choose, it must be fit for its purpose. That means if we want to know if students can evaluate, we need to give them an opportunity to do so in the assessment.

There is a preponderance of research to show that assessment directs students study activities and for some students, the assessment is the learning for the course. Therefore, we should design assessment that supports and encourages worthwhile learning (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004).

Assessment tells students what is most important to know and be able to do in a course, so alignment with course learning outcomes is vital. Assessment should be firmly integrated with learning and be an opportunity for students to demonstrate their growth in understanding throughout the course.

Like to know more?

All assessment should have formative elements. This means that within the learning process (and before they submit work for assessment), students receive feedback on their learning. Some authors (Price, Handley and O'Donovan, 2008) talk about ‘feed-forward’ because the focus on formative assessment is giving students the advice and tools they can use to be more successful in learning.

Another term that’s used in relation to feedback is ‘front-loading’. This means giving students lots of helpful feedback early in the course to let them know how they’re going and what they can do to improve (e.g. in the early low weighted assessment task). This early feedback saves time later and gives students a greater sense of control over their learning. The same is true at the program level. So if you’re coordinating a first year course, think about how the assessment and feedback can focus on improvement.

Designing assessment in a course is a challenging balance between making sure students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate the learning outcomes without assessing every learning outcome in every task. Considering how students’ knowledge and capacity is likely to develop is a clue to sequencing assessment. Therefore, find out as much as you can about how students are experiencing your course’s assessment. You can use this information to refine and renew the course.
Assessment is evidence of student learning

Each assessment task is a source of evidence from which to make judgements about how well the student is achieving the intended learning outcomes. The approach to assessment that is embedded in the new course outline template is a process originally developed by Hughes (2009) when she was working with academic staff to design assessment tasks that minimise opportunities for plagiarism. She views all assessment tasks as ‘texts’ where a text is ‘any meaning producing event’. This means a text can be an essay, a film, a conversation, a graph, an equation, a blog, an exam script, a performance, a short story and so on. A text can have written, spoken and/or visual elements.

Figure 1. An assessment task design (ATD) framework (adapted from Derewianka 1990, 19).


Hughes’ (2009) research shows that often, course coordinators’ expectations in assessment are tacit rather than explicit, particularly in relation to the audience for a task, and the student’s role in producing it. When working with an increasingly diverse student cohort, a more explicit approach is required.
Designing Assessment Criteria

The criteria are the elements that the assessor will focus on when making a judgement about the task. The criteria are pre-determined and published in the course outline. Students also use criteria to figure out what will be valued in the task and many plan their response to the task according to the criteria.

As each task is designed to assess how well the student has achieved the relevant learning outcomes, the criteria should be aligned to the learning outcomes and reflect the demands of the task. You need to ensure that the criteria reflect the elements of the task that are most valued.

For any given task, there are normally 4-6 criteria. This number gives a reasonable chance of making a fair and timely assessment and to direct students’ attention to the most important aspects of the task.

Describing Assessment Standards

An assessment standard is a defined level of quality. High Distinction is an example of an assessment standard. At USC, in a course with standard grading there are four passing standards (HD, DN, CR and PS) and one failing standard (FL). For limited grade courses there are two: Pass (PU) and Fail (UF). Assessment standards describe how well the students’ text has addressed the criteria.

At USC, in addition to grade cut-offs, there are descriptors of each standard written into the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) – Academic Policy which are based on the SOLO taxonomy. There are additional grades to describe particular circumstances such as Fail Absent (FA)

Each passing grade incorporates the characteristics of all lower passing grades plus an additional level of achievement.

High Distinction (HD)
Where a student's assessment demonstrates understanding of key knowledge at an extended theoretical level, characterised by originality, application of learning in new domains and mastery of all course learning outcomes.

Distinction (DN)
Where a student's assessment demonstrates evidence of integration and evaluation of significant ideas, the application of knowledge in flexible combinations within the field and principles and theories in relation to course learning outcomes.

Credit (CR)
Where a student's assessment demonstrates understanding of important facts and ideas, awareness of their relevance, and applicability of key ideas in accepted ways within the field in relation to the course learning outcomes.

Pass (PS)
Where a student's assessment demonstrates knowledge of fundamental concepts and essential skills sufficient to meet the course learning outcomes.

Fail (FL)
Where a student's assessment demonstrates limited evidence of relevant learning in relation to course learning outcomes and they have not satisfied the minimum requirements of the course.


1 Assessment Standards are distinct from the 'Standards' in the title of the project which refer to overall teaching and learning standards in the higher education sector. Being able to evidence rigorous and relevant assessment standards will contribute to USC’s ability to evidence achievement of teaching and learning standards at the institutional level.
Bringing criteria and standards together in a rubric

A marking rubric is a grid that contains assessment criteria, standards and standards descriptors. All rubrics have two features in common:

1) A list of criteria — assessable elements or “what counts” in the assessment task; and
2) Differentiated levels of quality, with a scale of descriptions of student work.

Using rubrics has many advantages:

• Students know what they need to do to be successful.
• Students have explicit guidelines regarding task expectations.
• Students can use rubrics as a tool to develop their learning.
• Academic staff can use rubric-based activities to engage students in formative feedback to make the task better before it is due.
• Markers have a common basis from which to make judgments.
• Results awarded have a justification which can be used as a basis for further feedback.

![Rubric example](image)
The new course outline template:

Key Message

The new course outline template encourages and assists course coordinators to reflect on and renew current practice in light of the Graduate Attributes.

A course outline is the means by which we can communicate the essence of our course to students, colleagues and others. Course outlines are used for a variety of purposes but the most important one is to tell students what they will learn, how they will learn and how their learning will be evaluated. It can also communicate how the course fits into the students’ program and which of the graduate attributes the student will engage with.

What are the new elements in the course outline template?

The new course outline is very different from the previous version in many ways. The main differences include:

- a student-friendly approach, including using questions as headings;
- the adoption of the new USC Graduate Attributes;
- reconceptualising how we represent learning outcomes and graduate attributes to a purposeful alignment and choice of coverage at the program, rather than the course level; and
- changes to how assessment is aligned with the graduate qualities and the generic skills.
How do I complete the new course outline template?

There are three specific sections of the new course outline that are in the domain of academic work. These sections use red text in the template and are the sections on:

1) Learning outcomes
2) Assessment
3) Learning experiences

Learning outcomes and assessment are the key areas that academic staff have said they want this guidebook to focus on.

There are other sections of the outline that can be completed with administrative assistance. These sections use purple text.

Learning Outcomes

This table has been set up to be a smart table with the last column using a drop down box so you can indicate which Graduate Attribute(s) the specific learning outcome is aligned to.

To prepare to fill this table in you would need to know what graduate qualities your course is addressing and how they will be assessed. Identifying the graduate qualities in relation to the learning outcomes is a deliberate strategy to ensure students see a connection between the course, the assessment and the graduate qualities that are developed over the program’s duration.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. How does this course contribute to my learning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The specific learning outcomes that you will achieve by successful completion of this course:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Click here to enter the first learning outcome; enter subsequent outcomes in the rows below, with one outcome per row. Use 4 - 6 outcomes that are linked directly to program learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment

The second component of the new course outline which varies from the previous edition is Section 5.1- Assessment Tasks, which is how the assessment in your course is described. The purpose of this new format is to clarify why and how students in your course are being assessed and to ensure they get the information they need to successfully complete the assessment. The assessment practice should be meaningful, connected to the purpose and content of the course and develop the key graduate qualities and generic skills addressed in your course.

When explaining an assessment task to students in the course outline, it is best to be succinct, remembering that there are multiple platforms for communicating with students about the detail of assessment.

Key Message

It is important to remember that what appears in the course outline must be what occurs in the delivery of the course. USC’s course template has some sub-headings for each task to help students understand what is required.

Each assessment task has five explicit elements to be addressed in the task description. In most existing course outlines, the first three elements were addressed in the task description. This is to help students who may be less familiar with university assessment, to gather explicit information on what is required.

Goal: The goal of the task should explain why a student is doing the task – what is its purpose in the learning? This element presents an opportunity to incorporate the verbs expressed in the course learning outcomes that relate to the assessment task.

Product: The product is the type of text a student will create, eg. scientific report, essay, debate, poster, interpretive dance, monologue, research paper, journal article, critique of policy.

Format: The format details how the product is to be presented, what the context is, what the student’s role is or who the anticipated audience is. It should also explain whether it is a group or individual task, the mode, the medium and the length/duration of the task. Sometimes student choice in one or more of these elements is an effective way to engage and empower students, if it assists the learning.

Criteria: The criteria are the elements that the assessor will focus on when making a judgement about the task. As each task is designed to assess how well the student has achieved the relevant learning outcomes, the criteria should be aligned to the learning outcomes, reflect the demands of the task and the level at which students should be performing. Criteria do not have standards written into them (standards are usually adjectives that describe how well the task has addressed the criteria).

Generic Skills: This section explicitly identifies the generic skills embedded in the task to highlight to students what skills they should be using when producing the task. They are included with the task to remind students to use the skills in generating a product. The level should reflect the complexity at which the skill should be deployed.
• **Introductory**: students demonstrate the skill at a foundational level; in a familiar context and with support through the learning experiences
• **Developing**: students build on introductory use of the skill, developing breadth or depth or engaging in the skill in a new context
• **Graduate**: students engage in the skill independently and can apply the skill in new or unfamiliar contexts

You can click on the drop down menu on the left hand side to choose the generic skill then click on the skill assessment level to choose introductory, developing or graduate.

---

### Assessment Task 1: Click here to enter name of task. If there are more than four tasks then copy this title along with the following two tables, paste after task 4 and edit to describe the task.

| **Goal:** | Click here to enter the goal, problem or challenge in the task. |
| **Product:** | Click here to enter the statement of the task and clarify what the students will create. |
| **Format:** | Click here to enter the context, student’s role and audience for the task. Identify: group or individual, mode, medium, text type, length/duration. |
| **Criteria** | Click here to enter criteria that identify the elements by which work will be assessed, drawn from the course learning outcomes identified for the task on page 1. |
| ** Generic skill assessed** | **Skill assessment level** |
| Choose the first of one or two generic skills that are assessed in this task, with an indication of the level at which they are assessed in the column to the right. Enter subsequent skills in the rows below, along with all required information. Roll your mouse over the underlined text to get additional instructions on how to add and delete a row. | Choose an item. |
Sample Assessment Tasks

Sample 1

Assessment Task 1: Online revision quizzes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goal:</strong></th>
<th>The goal of the online revision quizzes is to ensure you have opportunities to practice the skills and revise the content explored each week in directed study activities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product:</strong></td>
<td>You need to complete each multiple choice quiz after having revised the content and concepts from the week’s lecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format:</strong></td>
<td>There are a total of 6 weekly quizzes beginning in week 2. You should attempt every quiz. Each quiz is available for two weeks and you can attempt it as many times as you want to.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Criteria** | Correctly answering the quiz questions indicates your ability to:  
1. Select and apply statistical techniques to analyse scientific data.  
3. Design scientific studies to answer simple research questions.  
4. Show professional integrity in interpreting the results of scientific studies. |

**Generic skill assessed** | **Skill assessment level** |
--- | --- |
Problem solving | Introductory |

Sample 2

Assessment Task 1: Case Study Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goal:</strong></th>
<th>In this assessment task, you will apply your ethical understanding by critically reflecting on a legal and ethical dilemma within a paramedic practice situation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product:</strong></td>
<td>You will produce a case study report which will critically reflect on lawful decisions along with ethical values, principles and theories then apply them to a given situation. Finally, you are to highlight possible professional development requirements for your professional practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format:</strong></td>
<td>The case study will be maximum of 3000 words and be presented word processed in a report format using headings. You are to write as a paramedic student to your tutor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Criteria** | 1. Quality of critical reflection and argument, supported by use of evidence  
2. Recognition of conflicting ethical theories and explanations.  
3. Clarity of understanding of ethical and legal issues presented in the case study.  
4. Logic of argument, including presentation and organisation. |

**Generic skill assessed** | **Skill assessment level** |
--- | --- |
Communication | Graduate |
Organisation | Graduate |
Assessment Task 3: Literature Review

**Goal:** In order to take a scholarly approach to your teaching, you need to engage with the literature in the domain of higher education and apply it to your context, which is the goal of this task.

**Product:** You are to develop a literature review based on a question you create from one of the following sub domains: pedagogy, curriculum design, assessment, technology.

**Format:** The literature review is for an unknown academic audience. It should be 1500 words in length. The literature review should include a general introduction to frame your question, explain the issue and why you consider it to be important to investigate further. It should then review and critique the literature within the sub-domain to respond to the question. Your conclusion should draw together the outcome of the review.

**Criteria**
- Explanation of the issue and its relevance to your current teaching and learning context.
- Selection of academic literature.
- Critique of the literature within an analytical framework/structure.
- Use of referencing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generic skill assessed</th>
<th>Skill assessment level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information literacy</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Learning Experiences

The final section that appears somewhat differently is Section 6.3 – Course Activities. The main difference is how the activities are divided into directed and independent activities. Directed activities are those activities which form the contact hours for the course whereas independent activities including group work, individual study and readings are the activities that the student is expected to engage in outside of the contact hours. Key activities that enable success in the course should be briefly described.

#### 6.2 Teaching semester/session(s) offered

Click here to enter the teaching sessions when the course will be offered eg. "Semester 2 each year".

#### 6.3 Course activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Week / Module</th>
<th>What key concepts/content will I learn?</th>
<th>What activities will I engage in to learn the concepts/content?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Click here to enter key concepts/content for this week. Enter subsequent weeks in the rows below, along with all required information</td>
<td>Click here to enter directed study activities e.g. lectures, tutorials etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the course activities may be subject to variation.
The Graduate Qualities are themes that the University community values, and therefore seeks to foster through all of its programs and the student’s broader experience at the University.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides opportunities for students to be: creative and critical thinkers, generating original ideas and concepts, and appreciating innovation and entrepreneurship.

Creative and Critical Thinkers

What is it?
Creative and critical thinking is a process that generates new ideas. It is based on the ability to reason logically, to assimilate, synthesise, analyse, appraise and evaluate evidence and arguments. New ideas and concepts are formed by recognising opportunities to combine ideas, objects, processes, methods, and systems to advance intellectual understanding.

How is it shown?
A creative and critical thinker:
• Applies a logical process to critically evaluate an issue and generates innovative, practical solutions by combining a variety of knowledge, understanding and skills.
• Uses alternative approaches when critically assessing contexts.
• Remains open to new concepts and changing situations.
• Asks many questions to inform understanding.
• Is able to recognise, recapitulate and assess arguments.

An experienced creative and critical thinker has developed an ability to use both creative and conceptual processes and skills with which to ascertain the validity or strength of arguments and identify bias, false or specious reasoning.

They are able to reflect critically on their own intellectual performance and analyse and evaluate their practical output. Innovation and entrepreneurship involves recognising creative opportunities and being able to combine ideas, objects, processes, methods, and systems to create innovative products and outcomes.

Benefits of Critical and Creative Thinkers: Creative and critical thinking allows people to show initiative and respond to unknowns in an enterprising and innovative manner to achieve a positive outcome to future challenges.

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Creative and Critical Thinkers:
• Based on relevant theory and concepts, gather, analyse and interpret relevant data for critically and creatively arriving at innovative solutions
• Use critical thinking to identify, analyse and solve problems in diverse areas.

The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled.
Plutarch
Creative and Critical Thinkers

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Solves problems using different methodologies.
- Reflects on thought processes.
- Creates a product demonstrating knowledge.
- Makes simple connections between practice and theory.

**DEVELOPING**
- Analyses and reflects on content, methods and processes.
- Applies methods of analysis to determine the quality and validity of an argument or problem.
- Solves problems using independently chosen methodologies.

**GRADUATE**
- Defines and refines independent study project through negotiation with mentor/teacher.
- Constructs and generates new approaches and concepts.
- Demonstrates thinking 'outside of the box'.
- Leverages current knowledge and understandings to new issues, problems or situations.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides opportunities for students to be: empowered, having both the capacity and confidence to pursue the attainment of full potential.

Empowered

What is it?
An empowered person has a strong sense of self-esteem and self-awareness and is motivated to make a difference. They work from a sound knowledge base that affords them a sense of competency, control and confidence in the discipline. Being empowered manifests in authentic skill and knowledge development that leads to professional practice of some kind.

How is it shown?
An empowered person:

- Holds a sound knowledge base that supports their ability to apply knowledge and skills to a field of study.
- Applies critical thinking skills to link theory and practice.
- Is capable of setting goals, planning the steps required to achieve success and is motivated to pursue the determined course of action.
- Through authentic case studies demonstrates field or professional practice.
- Can demonstrate the necessary qualities and skills in order to successfully pursue a field of practice.

An experienced empowered person is self-directed and self-motivated and is aware of gaps in their knowledge and skills. They possess the key knowledge, qualities and skills that will enable them to be successful with their field of choice.

Benefits of Empowered: Empowered people can create positive change. There is a realisation that achievement of regional and global goals requires a multidisciplinary approach along with collaboration and communication. An experienced empowered person has the ability and confidence to use a variety of skills and methods to achieve their purpose.

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Empowered:

- Through a sense of self-awareness and self-belief develop a personal culture of continuous self-directed learning enabling ongoing personal and professional development.
- Demonstrate initiative and the application of creative and strategic thinking to make decisions.
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Identifies techniques and strategies used in discipline area.
- Develops proficiency in industry practices and authentic discipline skill sets.
- Reflects on and shares personal experience, viewpoints and expertise.
- Is able to make choices and substantiate decisions within the context of professional practice.

**DEVELOPING**
- Uses techniques and strategies appropriate to discipline area with confidence.
- Increases proficiency in industry practices and authentic discipline skill sets.
- Reflects on and shares personal experience, viewpoints and expertise.
- Is able to make more sophisticated choices and substantive decisions within the specific discipline area.

**GRADUATE**
- Uses an action research approach to understanding a discipline specific issue or problem.
- Demonstrates expertise and capabilities in knowledge and skills in the discipline.
- Recognises the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach to problems and diversity of thought.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides opportunities for students to be: engaged, contributing positively to diverse communities through service and leadership.

Engaged

What is it?
The term “engaged” refers to the engagement or connection a person makes with a discipline, profession or section of the wider community in order to contribute and to make a positive difference to the lives of others. The act of being engaged in a professional context could relate to engagement with the literature in the discipline, with policy and practice or with other professionals; a contribution is made to the development of understanding in that field. Engagement acknowledges diversity within any community including indigenous perspectives, cultural, intellectual, physical and mental well-being, social and socioeconomic factors.

How is it shown?
An engaged person:
• Interacts with policy, practice, beliefs and procedures within a discipline and develops new or deeper understandings of implications of its implementation.
• Works with professionals in the area as a work placement or service unit.
• Develops connections with wider discipline areas via research, service, or work placement.
• Engages with key issues in the discipline linking theory to practice.
• Critiques contemporary practice.
• Takes classroom learning and applies it to the field.
• Develops social interaction skills of respectful discourse, negotiation and collaboration.

A person experienced in engaging within their discipline will possess a strong sense of civic responsibility and is active in contributing for the betterment of others. They utilise critical and creative thinking and apply it in authentic settings. Active engagement is enhanced by a humble posture of learning.

Benefits of Engaged: USC’s mission is to contribute to the advancement of the region. Providing opportunities for students to be engaged, contributing positively to diverse communities through service and leadership is one of the many ways this mission is realised.

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Engaged:
• Work effectively with teams from diverse backgrounds, display effective leadership behaviours and effectively communicate knowledge and information.
• Interact effectively in leadership and/or subordinate roles within diverse client, employer, professional and community groups including those with competing interests to deliver measurable outcomes.
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

INTRODUCTORY

• Is introduced to regional events that support the advancement of the discipline. Eg. seminars, conferences, workshops, local media coverage.
• Is introduced to Work Integrated Learning as an explicit link between theory and practice.
• Analyses contributing factors to community profile – demographics, geographic location, economy and social infrastructure – and reflects on strategies to contribute meaningfully.
• Develops understanding of respectful interactions by observing modelled behaviors and using opportunities to apply effective social skills.
• Critically analyses case studies or contextualised scenarios to develop strategies related to building successful partnerships within the community.

DEVELOPING

• Engages with the regional community within discipline context.
• Participates in a Work Integrated Learning course or work placement with success.
• Critically engages with discipline research, practice or policy.
• Acknowledges the value of external expert opinion and advice drawn from contextual experience.

GRADUATE

• Develops collaborative learning partnerships between themselves, academics and peers based on trust and mutual respect.
• Independently develops professional contacts and learning partnerships within the regional community.
• Engages in Work Integrated Learning position with early career professional excellence.
• Identifies a community need through observation and consultation, researches 'best practice' for strategies to work towards a solution, organises and collaborates with stakeholders to devise and implement an action plan to achieve agreed outcomes, monitors, evaluates and reflects on benefits and limitations of process.
• Plans a research project, assumes a leadership role and accepts responsibility for quality of outcomes.
• Engages with discipline research and develops a publishable artefact Eg: essay, article, journal article, poster, presentation, art exhibit, professional product.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides opportunities for students to be: ethical, acting with integrity in intellectual, professional and community pursuits.

Ethical

What is it?
Ethical behaviour is an outcome of an active process of ethical thinking, critical reflection and decision making - a process during which a course of action is determined. Ethical behaviour and practice relies on an understanding of conduct considered to be correct and appropriate and in accordance with a stated code of ethics. It is recognised as behaviour that will result in applying benefits to the majority and is not based on promoting self-interests.

How is it shown?

An ethical person:
• Can recognise ethical issues.
• Develops an understanding of acceptable and appropriate conduct and practice within their intellectual and professional lives.
• Demonstrates knowledge of theories and modes of ethical reasoning that will inform and guide their decision making in dealing with ethical issues.
• Is aware of ethical issues regarding intellectual property, including attributing sources of original work.
• Demonstrates ethical practice in professional, interpersonal and community systems.
• Applies, and is capable of justifying, chosen ethical practices to model and to promote appropriate practice.
• Queries assumptions and uses critical thinking and ethical frameworks to identify strengths and weaknesses of established processes.

An experienced ethical person is aware of the necessity for identification and implementation of ethical conduct and practices. They value integrity, honesty and respect between all parties in all areas of life - personal, social, work and community.

Benefits of Ethical: The Ethical attribute extols critical thinking, evaluation based on ethical frameworks and judgment within discipline practice. Ethical considers how one’s actions may affect others and looks towards reducing harm and increasing benefit (social, environmental and economic). The Ethical attribute nurtures personal integrity, values, beliefs, moral code, and social mores. It also enables students to critically consider the values and understandings that influence all decision making processes.

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Ethical:
• Demonstrate high standards of ethical behaviour, independence of thought and professionalism.
• Negotiate and conduct arrangements with all stakeholders in an ethical manner.
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Explores the concepts of ethics, ethical behaviour and different ethical frameworks.
- Develops understanding of intellectual, professional and community ethical codes of practice.
- Is aware of the difference between personal values, opinion and ethical decision making.
- Uses real world ethical issues and hypothetical situations to explore implications and consequences of rules, regulations, policies and procedures of practices.

**DEVELOPING**
- Identifies, reflects on and discusses ethical practices in intellectual, professional and community areas.
- Critically examines ethical principles, theories and concepts in relation to problem solving of real world issues.
- Elaborates on own ethical thinking processes according to given structure for decision making.

**GRADUATE**
- Demonstrates advanced understanding of ethical practices from perspectives of intellectual, professional and community impact.
- Applies knowledge of ethical theories.
- Critically examines, analyses and evaluates ethical decision making frameworks and codes with an authentic discipline practice.
- Considers and justifies alternative courses of action in ethical decision making; discusses consequences for all stakeholders.
- Collaborates with peers to design and present a process to ensure ethical standards are maintained in an area of practice.
- Demonstrates professional ethical standards in work integrated learning, or workplace setting.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides opportunities for students to be: knowledgeable, building disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge through a scholarly approach incorporating global and regional perspectives.

Knowledgeable

What is it?

A knowledgeable person has a sound grasp of subject matter and accumulates, recalls and applies relevant facts, concepts, skills, procedures and processes. A knowledgeable person, while gathering and analysing information from a variety of sources, uses prior knowledge as a basis onto which new knowledge is built and, being aware of potential gaps in their knowledge, actively seeks to make further and stronger connections between knowledge and understanding. A knowledgeable person is aware that new knowledge is constantly being generated and that knowing how to learn, re-learn and un-learn is central.

How is it shown?

A knowledgeable person:

- Can work with multiple conceptualisations of knowledge, including factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive.
- Constructs and reflects on new knowledge and understanding through an enquiry process involving research, analysis, evaluation and synthesis of current information.
- Applies theory to problem solving and discipline based practice.
- Demonstrates a scholarly manner with research, data collection and manipulation.
- Shows understanding of the body of knowledge that underpins professional practice or discipline area.
- Makes connections between interdisciplinary knowledge.
- Translates bodies of knowledge, theory, and research into expository products.
- Contextualises discipline knowledge within greater fields of action.

An experienced knowledgeable person knows how to leverage research, data, and information to create new knowledge and contributes to advancing these concepts to benefit global and regional practice. They are able to independently conduct a research plan and use a scholarly approach to utilise theories and critically analyse information.

Benefits of Knowledgeable: Being knowledgeable empowers individuals to recognise the body of knowledge from past and present practices as a guide for directing and informing future understandings and knowledge yet to be constructed.

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Knowledgeable:

- Understand and explain the nature and scope of theory and develop comprehensive and cohesive plans and practical solutions.
- Through scholarly pursuits develop disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge enabling the formulation of innovative solutions to issues of varying complexity.
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Can articulate basic facts, concepts, and rules of discipline practice.
- Demonstrates basic metacognitive practices.
- Can follow scholarly methods of analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- Develops an understanding of types of knowledge, e.g. factual, conceptual, procedural or metacognitive.
- Commences development of explicit knowledge (knowing what) required for discipline and begins to form connections between concepts (knowing why).

**DEVELOPING**
- Demonstrates the application of theory in an artificial setting or in an abstract context.
- Makes linkages between knowledge types.
- Applies knowledge and understanding to real world situations – global and regional.

**GRADUATE**
- Develops and applies deep knowledge of theoretical underpinnings through a process of metacognition and self-reasoning to identify knowledge gaps.
- Collaborates within and across disciplines, and with external practitioners, in researching identified global and regional problems within relevant to practice.
- Makes deeper connections between knowledge, concepts and processes (knowing what, why and how) and seeks to construct and contribute new information to further develop knowledge and understanding.
- Demonstrates a sophisticated level of understanding of the knowledge domains for the specific discipline.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides opportunities for students to be:
sustainability-focussed, responding to ecological, social and economic imperatives.

Sustainability-focussed

What is it?
Being sustainability-focussed means recognising the interdependence between economic, social and ecological systems and having the ability to evaluate how different practices will affect outcomes across these domains. It requires the comparison of alternative actions against social, economic and ecological objectives with the goal of achieving a balance that would provide for the needs of both current and future generations. Achieving sustainable outcomes necessitates a process of iterative analysis and decision making, often in the face of considerable uncertainty and with limited information. It is value-based and is informed by ethical frameworks whether they are explicit or implied. It includes consideration of path dependencies, cross-cultural realities, heritage, governance and institutional arrangements, capacity building, irreversible consequences, long-term planning horizons and competing views of reality.

Focus on sustainability creates awareness of how individual disciplines and fields of study all play a role in shaping future outcomes: social, health, environmental, and economic. Sustainability-focussed teaching and assessment practices encourage students to look at broader issues, community contexts, possible externalities and potential impacts of their field of practice.

How is it shown?
• A sustainability-focussed person purposefully connects discipline knowledge and practice to advance wider social, environmental and economic objectives.
• They can identify potential impacts of an action, product, process, communication, experiment, social interaction, policy or plan and devise solutions.
• They participate actively in discipline-based discourses and in raising community awareness to encourage positive changes in social behaviour towards increased inclusion of sustainable practices.

Benefits of Sustainability-focussed: The capacity to apply what we know today, including our current needs to give consideration to the needs of future generations and to plan for their futures in our current practices.

Examples of Learning Outcomes for Sustainability-focussed:
• Develop a social, environmental, economic and political awareness of property as sustainable personal, financial and community assets.
• Evaluate aspects of tourism, leisure and event management organisations for their corporate governance.
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**

- Is familiar with the terms used in describing sustainability in their own field of study.
- Understands the basic objectives of sustainability in their field of study and can recognise obvious interactions, contradictions and imbalances between economic, social and environmental outcomes.
- Links discipline knowledge/practice to ecological, social and economic issues.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the greater context of the discipline and how the discipline connects to one or all of the three realms: social, environmental and economic.

**DEVELOPING**

- Has the ability to frame discipline specific issues in the context of sustainable development.
- Has the ability to use established methods to evaluate how alternative actions contribute to or impede explicit sustainability objectives.
- Recognises some of the differences between how sustainability is viewed in different fields of study and in different cultural contexts.
- Considers the impact of the specific medium of communication and how social, cultural, economic, environmental values are implicit in its construction.

**GRADUATE**

- Collaborates across disciplines to revise and expand methods against which sustainability will be measured.
- Identifies and describes barriers to sustainable practice in a discipline.
- Recognises the contested nature of sustainable development definitions and interpretations.
- Develops solutions based on adaptive principles that anticipate and overcome barriers to the introduction of sustainable practices, considering all associated ecological, social and economic factors.
- Identifies path dependent decision points and ensures that future sustainable outcomes will not be impeded by current decisions.
- Makes sophisticated linkages between discipline and wider sociocultural and environmental contexts.
Generic Skills

Generic Skills are transferable skills that are valued by the University as being important outcomes of a University education. These skills are those identified as important by employers, government and the higher education sector.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides multiple opportunities across related contexts for students to develop the skill of communication.

Communication

What is it and why is it important?

Communication is the sharing of knowledge and understanding. It is a complex skill due to the variety of modes and media available for its delivery and the level of expertise that different communicators employ. In general, communication methods are spoken, aural, written and visual or a combination of two or more. To be an effective communicator requires the use of a range of techniques and strategies, some of which relate specifically to particular methods.

Common to all methods of communication is the need for the communicator to:

• Provide a clear viewpoint (what).
• Know the intended audience (who).
• Have a purpose (why).
• Know the context (where).
• Select a relatable form of communication (how).
• Choose the most appropriate time or position (when).

The skill of accurately comprehending information (input) and accurately conveying its content and intent (output) is vital for successful communication. Communication is a skill required in all areas of life and is considered to be essential in today’s workplace as employees are expected to interact positively and efficiently with clients, and each other, to the benefit of their organisation.

How is it shown?

An effective communicator:

• Conveys ideas clearly and fluently, in both written and spoken forms
• Clearly communicates results of research in a format suitable to the task
• Interacts effectively with others in order to work towards a common outcome
• Utilises discipline-specific terms accurately
• Analyses and applies confidently a range of communication formats, strategies and technologies that are dependent on content, purpose, audience and context
• Recognises that choice of content and method of communication manipulates the message to represent a particular viewpoint and, where applicable, justifies information with credible evidence and sources

The Graduate Outlook Report 2011 – indicates that the most important selection criteria when recruiting graduates was:

Interpersonal and communication skills
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Chooses appropriate forms of communication for the context of an assignment.
- Clearly conveys ideas.
- Understands format, text type, audience and basic conventions of the discipline.
- Creates a communication product using a modelled or scaffolded approach.
- Recognises how different technologies impact the transfer of information.

**DEVELOPING**
- Analyses and reflects on communication strategies observed during Work Integrated Learning.
- Hones ability to communicate using a range of communication methods and integrated technologies pertinent to future profession.
- Expresses clearly reasoned viewpoints supported with credible evidence.
- Demonstrates confidence in applying strategies of coherency, succinctness and accuracy.
- Analyses and evaluates explicit feedback on quality of own communication methods.

**GRADUATE**
- Applies communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas.
- Applies a variety of communication methods effectively and proficiently across a range of contexts including professional, peer and community groups.
- Values methods of delivery and related technologies for effective transference of information; justifies selections of methods.
- Analyses and evaluates communication methods used in Work Integrated Learning and consolidates own proficiency levels in their implementation.
Collaboration

What is it and why is it important?

Collaboration is a skill that requires working with other people to achieve a desired outcome. Collaboration within a team situation requires a shared goal and an ability to negotiate roles, responsibilities and contributions. Successful teamwork values and respects individual contributions while each member carries out their agreed responsibilities and is accountable for the quality of their input.

Collaboration is valued as an important attribute that enables people to work well in teams in a synergistic and respectful manner. In today's workplace, collaboration is considered an essential skill that provides an avenue for flexible thinking, problem solving, sharing of knowledge and determining future direction.

How is it shown?

A person who collaborates effectively:

- Works successfully with people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Shows appreciation for the contributions of others.
- Productively contributes to the group.
- Defines roles and responsibilities and negotiates own position.
- Networks with identified strengths of others to reach a desired outcome.
- Keeps other participants informed as to progress towards achieving goals.
- Accepts intellectual criticism, applies conflict and resolution strategies, compromises and negotiates with group members.
- Reflects on own contribution, provides evaluative feedback to others involved in a collaborative process and accepts feedback on own performance from them.
- Contributes to a supportive environment that fosters collaboration.
Collaboration

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

INTRODUCTORY

- Identifies and defines roles and responsibilities of a team/group.
- Follows modelled and scaffolded group strategies
- Works in pairs or small groups with a prepared task.
- Uses courteous and tactful communication with group members.
- Delivers outputs to the group that enable the completion of a set project.

DEVELOPING

- Identifies the value of collaboration.
- Works effectively in a group.
- Cogenerates a solution or justification to a problem.
- Evaluates collaborative performance of self and peers.
- Accepts feedback on collaboration techniques from peers/lecturer/tutor.
- Analyses and reflects on observed collaboration strategies within Work Integrated Learning contexts.

GRADUATE

- Shows advanced characteristics of effective team work strategies.
- Employs collaboration in Work Integrated Learning settings with professional proficiency.
- Analyses and evaluates collaborative processes in work place settings and suggests improvements.
- Extends ability to work effectively in a group, recognises own strengths and develops confidence in being a lifelong contributor to achieve common goals.
Problem Solving

The University of the Sunshine Coast provides multiple opportunities across related contexts for students to develop the skill of problem solving.

What is it and why is it important?

Problem solving uses thinking skills that are critical, lateral and creative by utilising comprehension, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, logical reasoning and the design of alternative courses of action. It depends on a basis of sound contextual knowledge and understanding. Problem solving is a process that uses a methodological approach which varies depending on the context and goal. A systematic approach provides a framework to structure problem solving and effective approaches have steps or stages in common:

1) Identifying and defining the problem.
2) Collecting and analysing data.
3) Identifying and formulating potential solutions.
4) Assessing and synthesising solutions for plan of action.
5) Applying plan of action.
6) Evaluating results.

Problem solving affects each aspect of everyday life, be it private or public, individual or groups and is considered as a fundamental skill for use in today’s work place. A natural extension of a focus on problem solving is problem-based learning in which students begin with a problem (rather than input from the lecturer or tutor). Students utilise their prior knowledge to understand the problem before beginning to research the problem and potential solutions until new understandings are reached.

How is it shown?

An effective problem solver:

- Analyses a task using a systematic method selected from a range of approaches.
- Applies knowledge and is prepared to construct new knowledge during the problem solving process.
- Combines a variety of strategies and techniques to resolve problems.
- Analyses, generates and transmits solutions to unpredictable, real world and sometimes complex problems.

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.
Albert Einstein
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Identifies and defines minor problems in given case studies.
- Applies problem solving strategies that have been modelled.
- Solves basic discipline specific-problems.

**DEVELOPING**
- Applies and justifies effective reasoning strategies.
- Reflects and elaborates on the range of problem solving strategies and techniques applicable to different contexts.
- Chooses from a range of strategies a method to solve discipline specific problems.

**GRADUATE**
- Hypothesises and designs strategies that solve identified, complex, open-ended problems.
- Draws on research and best practice to propose new solutions to contemporary problems.
- Demonstrates well developed judgement in analysis and synthesis of information and transmits solutions.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides multiple opportunities across related contexts for students to develop the skill of organisation.

**Organisation**

What is it and why is it important?

Organisation is a skill that encompasses several aspects - time management, information recording and retrieval, planning and goal setting, and being systematic in approaching the accomplishment of tasks. Central to effective organisation is being in control – control over internal factors such as resolve and motivation to complete tasks and control over external factors such as commitments and interruptions. This requires self-management and responsibility to take steps towards successful achievement of an identified goal.

Organisation is a skill that has been identified as essential when in the work place. Employers and their businesses rely on their employees to be capable of undertaking and completing tasks successfully within a given period of time and with given resources. Developing the skill of organisation improves confidence and motivation, develops professional conduct and leads to lifelong learning in personal and professional lives.

How is it shown?

An effective organiser:

- Completes tasks on time and identifies the organisational requirements to do so such as delegation, timelines, resources, research.
- Follows procedural guidelines to produce a product.
- Organises materials needed to perform, conduct or produce a set task.
- Analyses and evaluates strategies being used to approach tasks and is prepared to change ways of working to adopt strategies more likely to lead to successful completion.
- Recognises when support is required to effect positive change in organisational methods and systems.
- Reflects on the effectiveness of their organisational skills in augmenting their own personal and professional performance.

*Now I’m a pretty lazy person and am prepared to work quite hard in order to avoid work.*

Martin Fowler

(Thoughtworks)
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Identifies and applies methods of effective note taking and data management.
- Organises, and regularly reviews schedule according to work and life commitments.
- Collaborates with peers to plan, study and prepare.
- Locates avenues of support to seek assistance (e.g. Student Services for academic, social, emotional and financial advice; academic staff; family).
- Is provided with modelled and scaffolded activities deconstructing planning stages of tasks (what) and tools to complete task (how).
- Reflects on effectiveness of implemented organisational techniques and strategies.

**DEVELOPING**
- Sets goals and monitors performance.
- Develops action plans to complete a task.
- Discusses and shares strategies with peers to use time wisely.
- Plans and prioritises using a variety of strategies e.g. SMART goals; Do, Dump or Delegate; CUSP model for positive outcomes.
- Analyses and reflects on effective organisational strategies and practices observed in use during Work Integrated Learning.
- Predicts implications of poor quality organisational skills in the work place.
- Researches organisational practice in their chosen field.

**GRADUATE**
- Creates and implements detailed action plans to achieve successful outcomes; analyses and evaluates to determine effectiveness.
- Demonstrates professional organisational practice.
- Demonstrates autonomy in planning and implementing projects.
- Analyses and evaluates organisational methods used in Work Integrated Learning and consolidates own proficiency levels in their implementation.
- Demonstrates commitment to applying organisation skills as part of developing professional conduct and of being a lifelong learner.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides multiple opportunities across related contexts for students to develop the skill of applying technologies.

Applying Technologies

What is it and why is it important?

Being capable in applying relevant technologies in the workforce is considered an essential skill as it determines efficiency and effectiveness in professional performance. Applying technologies is a broad term that encompasses skills in using information and communications technologies (ICTs) as well as discipline specific technologies and equipment. This attribute focuses on the development of expertise in the specific technological need and skill set of the field or industry of practice. Applying technology is an active process that is manifested in knowledge, use and proficiency with a tool.

How is it shown?

An effective user of technologies:

- Creates a product or outcome.
- Stores, organises and manages knowledge and data.
- Performs field or industry related practice.
- Communicates and shares information.
- Selects a technology based on most efficient and effective result, or against a set of predetermined requirements.
- Is open to using new and germane technological advances and emerging technologies.
- Analyses and evaluates applicability and effectiveness of technologies, recognising advantages and limitations.
- Continues development of technological knowledge and skills to remain current in their application.
- Reflects on the effectiveness of selected technology and its purpose.
- Applies ethical responsibilities and rules of etiquette to technology use.
- Incorporates technology within personal and professional practices and recognises the need to remain current in their application as part of lifelong learning.

...a technology, for better or worse, extends or leverages natural ability.
The Book of Informatics (2011)
Applying Technologies

PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**
- Locates and understands how to access university network, online services and IT resources e.g. online access to library, online research tutorials.
- Locates avenues for technological support e.g. network tutorials, IT Help desk, discipline based equipment.
- Retrieves course information including guidelines, assessment tasks, teaching materials, assessment feedback.
- Submits assessment tasks online.
- Participates in online forums and discussions for formative and summative assessment tasks.
- Develops understanding in applying discipline-based technologies through modelled and scaffolded learning opportunities.

**DEVELOPING**
- Demonstrates a broad and coherent technical knowledge in area of practice.
- Transmits knowledge, skills and ideas to others through a well-developed understanding of technology.
- Compiles final electronic portfolio of discipline-based achievements for assessment.
- Designs and creates product solution by applying a range of technology to an identified problem.
- Proficiently applies technologies required in Work Integrated Learning setting.

**GRADUATE**
- Competently engages in online tools and media for course completion.
- Operates Work Integrated Learning technologies where permitted and under supervision to develop levels of expertise.
- Critically analyses effectiveness of technological procedures and practices in discipline.
- Compiles electronic portfolio of discipline-based achievements.
- Designs or creates products using a range of technologies.

- Demonstrates a broad and coherent technical knowledge in area of practice.
- Transmits knowledge, skills and ideas to others through a well-developed understanding of technology.
- Compiles final electronic portfolio of discipline-based achievements for assessment.
- Designs and creates product solution by applying a range of technology to an identified problem.
- Proficiently applies technologies required in Work Integrated Learning setting.
The University of the Sunshine Coast provides multiple opportunities across related contexts for students to develop the skill of information literacy.

Information Literacy

What is it and why is it important?

The information literate person uses a range of skills to make sense of information and to construct new understandings. Having identified the need for information, its form and extent, the information literate person locates relevant information effectively and efficiently using a diverse range of appropriate sources and methods.

A successful outcome to the information gathering process relies on a fundamental ability to critically evaluate and analyse the information collected to discern its usefulness and relevance. Both the information gathered and the strategies used in its collection require continued evaluation, synthesis and reflection to ascertain their effectiveness. The process is a cyclical one as it repeats stages to define and refine information and strategies.

Proficiency in information literacy skills is essential for USC graduates as it enables them to be critical, informed and discerning citizens. It is also integral to professional competency.

How is it shown?

An information literate person:

- Identifies that information is needed and defines what and how much is required.
- Understands quality sources and how to access these effectively.
- Determines appropriate and effective strategies to search for and manage relevant information.
- Critically evaluates, analyses and synthesises information as to its relevance, value and credibility.
- Uses information strategically.
- Uses information resources ethically and references appropriately.
- Applies information literacy skills to personal and professional practices and understands that their continued development and application is essential to being a lifelong learner.

Information saturates our personal and professional lives. It not only affects our experience, it pretty much is our experience. Music is information, language is information, numbers are information and pictures are information. Information, just as much as energy and matter, is even considered to be a basic element of the universe itself.

The Book of Informatics (2011)
PROGRESSION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A student:

**INTRODUCTORY**

- Understands the basic practice of topic analysis and identifying the scope of research.
- Identifies several databases and information resources for a particular assignment.
- Locates, understands and accesses appropriate information sources.
- Finds relevant research that supports a claim, a research question or thesis statement.
- Accurately follows specific referencing guidelines.
- Avoids plagiarism.
- Discerns credibility of sources.

**DEVELOPING**

- Uses a range of information resources for a research topic.
- Critically analyses effectiveness, accuracy and rigour of information sources.
- Demonstrates accurate referencing and citation practice.
- Analyses, evaluates and synthesises information for an authentic discipline based problem.
- Demonstrates understanding of copyright laws and plagiarism.
- Demonstrates information literacy skills in context.
- Analyses and evaluates peer reviews of information summaries on discipline based research, according to a set of criteria; reflects on quality of information and process.

**GRADUATE**

- Uses a combination of research and evidence based resources to provide background and direction for authentic research project (intra- and interdisciplinary inquiry).
- Collaborates with professionals, industry experts and peers to review current and future discipline practices requiring information literacy skills.
- Makes judgments concerning the ethical, legal and moral values associated with sources and use of information.
- Demonstrates commitment to developing proficiency in using information literacy skills and technologies in Work Integrated Learning.
- Produces new discipline knowledge through well-developed research practices.
Blackline masters

*Use these reproducible sheets when engaging in your own curriculum renewal.*

1. **Constructive Alignment:** Complete the table beginning in any column to ensure that there is constructive alignment between all elements. Note that the alignment continues through to assessment criteria and standards, which is picked up in a later table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Qualities</th>
<th>Renewed program learning outcomes</th>
<th>Specific course learning outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates of USC programs will have had opportunities to be...</td>
<td>On successful completion of the program you should be able to:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. Write or renew your course learning outcomes: remember that course learning outcomes have three elements:

a) the verb that describes the appropriate level of understanding  

b) the content or the topic that is to be learnt  

c) the context in which the verb used is to be deployed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The specific <strong>learning outcomes</strong> that you will achieve by successful completion of this course:</th>
<th>You will be assessed on the learning outcome in task/s:</th>
<th>Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Eg. Define, describe and apply professional practice codes and ethical theory to authentic scenarios.** | **Task 1: Response to case study**  
**Task 2: Essay** | **Ethical, acting with integrity in intellectual, professional and community pursuits.** |

1.  

2.  

3.  

4.  

Write or revise some of your own course learning outcomes
3. Design your own assessment task in the new format:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
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<table>
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<th>Generic skills assessed in Assessment Task 1:</th>
<th>Introductory</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
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