

# Learning and Teaching Standards Project Inter-University Peer Review and Moderation of Coursework OLT (ALTC) Project

## User Guide

### VERSION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

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# User Guide Overview

Project Overview .....	2
Key Terms & Timeline.....	3
Attachment A: Checklist – Home University Materials .....	4
Attachment B: Coversheet – Home University Materials .....	5
Attachment C: Feedback Form – completed by each Partner University.....	6
Attachment D: Checklist – Partner University Materials .....	9
Attachment E: Coversheet – Partner University Materials.....	10

## Project Overview

The Learning and Teaching Standards (LaTS) Project addresses the Government's search for a valid and efficient way to assure sector standards in relation to academic achievement, whilst assuring appropriate diversity and responsiveness. It seeks to identify a collegial approach for reviewing unit/subject 'inputs' such as unit outlines, learning objectives and assessment items, along with actual samples of student assessment outcomes. This approach is based on 'blind' peer review among disciplinary experts in partner universities. It uses a sampling approach and is not unduly onerous.

*Our goal is to provide opportunities for academic staff with disciplinary expertise to 'calibrate' their ability to judge student work and to support one another to ensure that their approaches to assessment are valid and reliable.*

This use of peer review will be underpinned by a common evaluation framework. In the project, discipline specialists from partner universities will compare:

- the learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and assessment tasks used in common units of study; and
- the reliability of marking in these units.

This means that the project gives focus not only to comparing assessment outcomes – in particular the reliability of marking – but also to comparing the nature and validity of a range of assessment inputs – including the specified learning outcomes, assessment tasks, and grading criteria in common units of study across partner universities. This process will be used to identify, critique and consolidate the indicators being used to identify the standards for learning outcomes, assessment processes, assessment tasks and marking in common areas of provision and specific disciplines across the partner institutions.

The project deliverables will include:

- A range of discipline-specific moderation strategies developed through peer review for adaptation and use within or between universities to assure the quality of academic achievement standards in specific fields of education.
- A validated, reliable and cost-effective method that could be used to assure the quality, relevance and assessment of student outcomes in Australian universities, whilst at the same time promoting sector diversity and responsiveness.

The results from the participating universities will be consolidated and circulated to all participants for feedback. The enhanced report will then be discussed at a meeting of relevant project team members from the partner institutions with a view to determining if the approach is efficient, productive, relevant and scalable. Peer reviewers will also be asked to provide their feedback on the process, suggesting enhancements where appropriate.

National roundtable discussions will be conducted to review the veracity and implications of what emerges. We will also link up with parallel projects, including those supported by the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) and international developments in the area of standards and assessment.

## Key Terms Used in this Guide

**Unit of study** – may also be referred to as a *subject* or *course*. This is normally a one semester (or equivalent) unit of study and forms part of a degree program.

**Unit guide** – in most universities this is the main guide for students. It often includes assessment information and learning objectives, as well as information about assessment.

**Learning guide** – this term may be used in some universities. It involves a self-teaching package on how to undertake the assessment tasks and associated learning activities that inform them.

**De-identified** – a sample from which any identifying institutional information, student details, and marks have been removed.

**Home University** – the university in which assessment materials/unit guides are selected and de-identified for peer review.

**Partner University** – agrees to take part in the ‘blind’ peer review exercise and provides feedback on de-identified assessment materials/unit guides from the Home University. In this project at least three universities share the de-identified assessment inputs and the agreed sample of assessment products for blind review by peers with appropriate disciplinary expertise in another university.

**Unit Coordinators** – individuals with primary responsibility for convening a unit of study. We expect that Unit Coordinators will do some or all of the peer review of unit outlines and ‘blind marking’/moderation of sample assessment items from Partner Universities, but they may nominate colleagues (see Peer Reviewers).

**Peer Reviewers** – a Unit Coordinator may wish to nominate one or more colleagues to assist with reviewing unit outlines and moderating sample assessment items. This is optional. Unit Coordinators may choose to do all review activities themselves.

*Timeline to be negotiated among partner universities.*

# ATTACHMENT A CHECKLIST

Please paste the relevant information in the sections below or refer to the appropriate document.

- All materials should be *de-identified*, i.e., free from identifying institutional information, unit codes, student details, marks, or written comments.

## A – Brief rationale for unit design and approach (optional)

## B – Degree

- Information about degree program structure in which unit is located
- List of degree-level learning outcomes
- Specification of the unit selected, including where it fits into the degree program (including core or elective status) and a brief outline of how it is linked to degree level outcomes

## C – Unit/Subject

- Unit title
- Unit outline
- Unit learning guide (if applicable)
- Unit learning objectives/outcomes

## D - Assessment tasks

- Description of specific assessment tasks being used in unit (including copies of essay and exam questions)
- Weighting for assessment tasks

## E – Grading

- Brief details of the grading system and nomenclature used for the unit concerned
- Copies of grading guides/criteria sheets that accompany the samples of student work to be submitted (see F, below).  
If no grading guides/criteria sheets are used, please provide an explanation of how student work is graded.

## F – Sample of student work

De-identified samples of student work from *one* of the assessment tasks in the unit (preferably worth 25% or more of final grade) which represent the:

- bottom of the range (fail or equivalent)
- minimum requirements for a pass (low pass or equivalent)
- middle of the range (credit or high credit)
- top of the range (distinction/high distinction or equivalent)

This will equate to a *total* of 4 samples of student work – i.e., one from each grade band.

*Suggestion for sending student work*

Hard copies of student work can be scanned and emailed to [insert your email contact here].

## G – Assessment coversheet

- A completed coversheet (*Attachment B*) for each sample of student work. Please save the completed editable *Home Uni Coversheets – Attach B* document and email as an attachment to [insert your email contact here].

**Please EMAIL this completed document to [insert your email contact here].**

# ATTACHMENT B COVERSHEET

Home University Materials

(Completed by: Unit Coordinators and/or Support Person at Home University)

*Please use editable pdf version provided to you*

University: \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student work sample number: 1      2      3      4      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit code: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of assessment (e.g., Final exam): \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment weighting: \_\_\_\_\_% of final grade

Actual marks (if relevant): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Grade awarded (please select)\*: Fail      Pass      Credit      Distinction      High distinction

*\*Please indicate and select equivalent if a different grading system is used*

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Comments and suggestions for improving this process:

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# ATTACHMENT C PEER FEEDBACK FORM

(Completed by: Unit Coordinator and/or Peer Reviewer/s in each Partner University)

*Please use editable pdf version provided to you*

## SECTION A: YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE UNIT OUTLINE

In reviewing the unit outline/learning guide:

1. To what extent does the curriculum content for this unit cover all that a final year undergraduate unit on this topic should cover? *(Please select the description that best represents your view)*

<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please list up to three *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate.

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2. a. To what extent does the unit outline/learning guide explain how the assessment tasks relate to the unit learning outcomes? *(Please select)*

<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please list up to three *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate.

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- b. To what extent does the unit outline/learning guide explain how the assessment tasks relate to the overall graduate outcomes of the degree program? *(Please select)*

<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please list up to three *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate

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ATTACHMENT C PEER FEEDBACK FORM *continued*

3. To what extent does the unit outline/learning guide explain clearly (preferably with examples) the requirements for achieving at various grade levels (e.g., what is required to achieve a credit, distinction etc.)? *(Please select).*

<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please give *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate.

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4. What, briefly, are the **best aspects** of the unit outline/learning guide?

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5. Do you have any suggestions for **further enhancing** the unit outline/learning guide?

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**Comments**

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**SECTION B: YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE GRADING GUIDELINES**

**In reflecting on the assessment grading guidelines provided for the samples of student work that you are reviewing:**

1. To what extent is it clear how student work will be awarded grades at different levels for that assessment task? (Please select)

<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please give *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate

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2. To what extent are the grading criteria at an appropriate level for a final year undergraduate unit of study in this field of education? (Please select)

<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please give *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate

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**SECTION C: YOUR FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENT TASK/S**

**In reviewing the list of assessment tasks which students have to complete in the unit of study:**

1. To what extent is the range of assessment tasks suited to assessing the key learning objectives listed in the unit outline? (Please select)

<i>Not at all</i> 1	<i>Somewhat</i> 2	<i>Adequately</i> 3	<i>Very Well</i> 4	<i>Completely</i> 5

Please *explain* your rating. Please give *specific suggestions for improvement* where appropriate

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**SECTION D: YOUR OVERALL FEEDBACK ON THIS PROCESS**

Please provide brief feedback on this peer review process as a collegial way to monitor and assure standards in common units of study between different universities.

1. What, briefly, are the **best aspects** of this peer review process?

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2. Which aspects of this peer review process **do you think we could improve** and how might this be achieved?

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Please save the completed editable *Peer Feedback Form – Attach C* document and email as an attachment to [insert your email contact here].

*Many thanks for your valuable input.*

# ATTACHMENT D CHECKLIST

*Please use editable pdf version provided to you*

**Partner University Materials**  
**(Completed by: Unit Coordinators and/or Support Person in each Partner University)**

**A – Feedback on peer reviewed samples of student work**

- Completed grading guides/criteria sheets (if supplied). Please email to [insert your email contact here].

**B – Partner university feedback coversheet**

- A completed coversheet (*Attachment E*) for each peer reviewed sample of student work. Please save the completed editable *Partner Uni Checklist + Coversheets – Attach D&E* document and email as an attachment to [insert your email contact here].

Explanatory Comments (*optional*):

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*Thank you for your significant contribution to this project*

# ATTACHMENT E COVERSHEET

## Partner University Materials

(Completed by: Unit Coordinators and/or Peer Reviewer/s in each Partner University)

*Please use editable pdf version provided to you*

**Partner university number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(as labelled in the files you have received)

**Student work sample number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(as labelled in the files you have received)

**Discipline:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment item reviewed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g., Final exam)

**Peer reviewer/s:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your home university:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Mark (if relevant):

The mark I would allocate this piece of work  
(using the marking guide that came with it) \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

### Grade (if relevant):

The grade I would allocate to this piece of work (using the grading guide that came with it)

(please select)\*:      **Fail**    **Pass**    **Credit**    **Distinction**    **High distinction**

*\*Please indicate and select equivalent if a different grading system is used*

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### Comments:

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Please also email the completed grading guides/criteria sheets (if supplied)  
to [insert your email contact here].