Purpose of this Document

The University supports the joint endeavours of teachers and learners to further the understanding of our world, test the quality of knowledge and ideas, and to harness these to improve the capability of our society.

The Teaching and Learning Committee has produced this document to identify qualities of teaching and learning practice espoused by the University of Canterbury. The document will be kept under review – comments on both the document’s usefulness and the ideas it contains are welcome.

The document is in two sections, one on being a teacher and the other on being a student. It is intended for use at three levels:

• University level, as a framework for weighing decisions with respect to teaching by committees (for example the Teaching and Learning Committee and the Academic Programmes Committee)

• Department and/or group level, as a guide for discussion in a disciplinary context

• Individual level, as an aid for organising professional reflection, development and the recounting of achievements.

The items in this document have been developed from the experience of teachers in the University and from international studies of effective teaching and learning practices in higher education¹. Departments and groups are invited to contact the Teaching and Learning Committee or the Director of ERAU for assistance in arranging discussions of teaching around this document.

¹ Contributing sources are held in ERAU

Comments on this document should be addressed to:

The Secretary
Teaching and Learning Committee
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch, NZ

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Being a Teacher at the University of Canterbury

University teachers are active in scholarship through their involvement in research, their awareness of contemporary developments in their disciplines, and their desire to support and encourage students in academic endeavours. The engagement of teachers and learners within a disciplinary context is the basis for maintaining practical linkages between teaching, learning, and research.

Effective teachers value their teaching roles, seek to build relationships with students, encourage learning, foster the development of scholarship and design teaching to meet the learning needs of their students.

In these endeavours teachers:

**Demonstrate commitment by**
- modelling self-directed enquiry and enthusiasm for the discipline
- seeking understanding about teaching and learning in the University
- communicating high expectations to students
- using feedback from students to develop teaching
- critically reflecting on their teaching practices

**Build relationships by**
- facilitating contact with students, individually and as groups
- respecting and responding to differing backgrounds and to cultural diversity
- seeking to build trust and mutual respect with and between students
- working with colleagues in the development of teaching and learning

**Encourage learning by**
- posing questions of significance
- arranging learning activities to enhance the involvement of students
- building an environment that welcomes conceptual challenges
- acknowledging student endeavours and achievement
- promoting cooperation and the exchange of ideas

**Align teaching so that**
- teaching practice, learning activities and assessment methods match learning objectives
- individual learning needs are considered

**Promote good learning practice by**
- providing opportunities which encourage intellectual independence
- fostering skills and strategies appropriate to the discipline
- encouraging productive use of time in learning
- negotiating realistic expectations of workload
- encouraging students to develop self-critical skills
- providing constructive feedback

Being a Student at the University of Canterbury

Students at the University are part of an academic community that values its international reputation for scholarship and which identifies with the past and present achievements of its members.

Successful university students enter into their studies with an inquiring attitude. Students value opportunities to interact with recognised scholars, to develop as self-directed learners and to gain sound knowledge as a base for their future endeavours.

In their academic studies students:

**Participate in a community of learners where they**
- respect the interests of peers
- communicate interests and needs
- use opportunities to comment on teaching and courses

**Exhibit commitment through**
- striving to fulfil academic potential
- disciplined study
- critical reflection on progress

**Value intellectual challenges by**
- adopting a critical approach to knowledge
- interacting with new ideas
- using feedback to advance understanding

**Take opportunities by**
- exercising intellectual curiosity
- choosing course options to match academic interests
- seeking advice to build a coherent course of study

**Seek a foundation for the future by**
- setting goals
- developing personal skills in the university setting
- becoming self-directed learners