Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards - Minimum Standards for Online Presence Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) The Minimum Standards for Online Presence Procedure is designed to ensure that students have a consistent experience across a program of study and access to essential information, and that online materials comply with University and Government regulations.

(2) All online spaces must meet the Minimum Standards.

(3) It should be noted that these are threshold standards; it is expected that many units will incorporate additional features over and above those articulated here.

(4) Instructors who believe that they have an exception to any of these standards, and can provide academic justification for the exception, should contact their College Director of Learning and Teaching for approval.

(5) Supplementary documentation justifying the minimum standards and providing pointers to relevant procedures and other information is available at the VU Collaborate Help site.

Section 2 - Scope

(6) These Standards apply to all Higher Education coursework units.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(7) Learning and Teaching Quality and Standards Policy

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Overview

(8) A high-quality online experience for students is a key component of VU's Learning and Teaching Strategy. This online experience will often be blended, supplementing face-to-face engagements on campus and providing access to essential learning materials and information.

(9) The Minimum Standards are contained within the following categories:

Consistency	Ensuring that all online spaces provide students with standard navigation and resources, and provide a consistent student experience overall
Materials	Ensuring that materials meet legislative requirements, are up to date and accessible

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Recordings	Ensuring that students have appropriate access to lecture recordings for future review
Assessment	Ensuring that assessment submissions and feedback use online systems where this is appropriate
Communications	Ensuring that student communications are managed effectively
Behaviours	Ensuring that appropriate behaviour is maintained in the online environment

(10) These Minimum Standards are further supplemented by guidelines and learning resources for staff that highlight good practice across a range of online activities.

Part B - Minimum Standards

Standard 1: Consistency

(11) Each instance of unit delivery must include a unit space within VU Collaborate.

(12) The use of learning management systems other than VU Collaborate is not permitted.

(13) All unit spaces must be populated and made available to enrolled students at least one week prior to start of the teaching period.

(14) Units also delivered by partners should be accessible by the relevant TNE Unit Convenor or equivalent.

(15) All unit spaces utilise the relevant college template to ensure consistency across all units within the college. This will automatically ensure that students have access to the following information:

a. Academic and other student support
b. Relevant policies and procedures
c. Information about how to automatically forward emails from the student account to a private account
d. Advice about online etiquette

(16) In each VU Collaborate space, the placeholder information contained within the College template is updated to include:

a. A welcome to the unit from the Unit Convenor and/or lecturer, including key information about expectations and how to engage with the space
b. The (PDF) unit outline, which reflects the information held on CAMS and acts as the formal agreement between the University and the student
c. Contact details of the Unit Convenor and relevant teaching and administrative staff
d. Schedule of proposed learning activities
e. Summary of Assignment/Assessment details, including due dates and submission details

(17) Information and materials provided to students are consistent with the approved unit outline on the Course Approval & Management System. (Any amendments to what is in CAMS must be made in a timely manner via the appropriate College and Academic Board committees (depending on scope of change).

(18) Unit information and learning materials are consistent across all spaces created for the unit (eg if there are separate spaces created for the same unit taught in different locations).

(19) Information contained within a space is retained intact for ongoing student use and archiving. If information is to be rolled over to a new teaching period, it must be copied into the new space first and modified there.

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Standard 2: Materials

(20) Wherever possible, learning materials are provided electronically in the unit site.

(21) All learning materials are up to date and relevant for the current delivery period.

(22) All online materials adhere to accessibility guidelines.

(23) All learning materials comply with copyright regulations, and make use of eReserve wherever possible.

(24) Where student contributions from previous teaching periods are used as learning resources, informed consent is provided via the Student Consent Form for Online Use.

(25) Where non-VU-supported software or applications are needed to access or use materials/files, this is clearly articulated to students in the introduction to the module and the unit guide. Software or applications requiring purchase by students is not to be used excepting where this is clearly indicated in course fee requirements, available to students prior to course enrolment.

Standard 3: Access to recordings

(26) All lectures held in ReVU-enabled venues are recorded. Any exceptions must be approved by the relevant College Director of Learning and Teaching, and will be granted based on appropriate academic grounds. Other types of activities, including tutorials, may also be recorded.

(27) All lecture materials and recorded lectures are available online via a link in the unit's VU Collaborate space within one week of delivery.

Standard 4: Assessment

(28) Assessment is conducted in adherence to the rules established in the Standards for Assessment Procedure, supporting the Assessment for Learning Policy. This includes standards for:

a. Online submission of assignments within VU Collaborate
b. Use of Turnitin for all relevant assignment types
c. Use of Gradebook and management of results

Standard 5: Communications

(29) Communications with students about the unit use the system communications tools within VU Collaborate or, if privacy is required, official VU student email addresses.

(30) Unless otherwise indicated to students, all student queries regarding units receive a response within a maximum of four (4) working days.

(31) Lecturers and Tutors monitor student progress and participation in the online environment, and should communicate with students directly where there are concerns about a student's engagement with or progress in the unit.

Standard 6: Behaviours

(32) All staff and students are entitled to work and learn in a safe environment. Online environments are therefore regularly moderated by teaching staff.

(33) Breaches of online etiquette are addressed through an initial educative approach, for example, directing students

to relevant resources. Inappropriate communications are to be copied to a file and then removed from the unit site.

(34) Serious cases of inappropriate behaviour, such as online harassment, bullying, and attempted cheating, will attract formal action under the University's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention and Management Policy, Sexual Harassment Response Policy, the Bullying Prevention and Management Policy and the Student Misconduct Regulations.

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(35) HESF: Standard 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment; 2.1 Facilities and Infrastructure; 3.1 Course Design; 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support.

(36) Outcome Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2025: Standards 1.2 Training; 1.3 Assessment; 1.8 Facilities.

Section 6 - Definitions

(37) Nil.

Status and Details

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