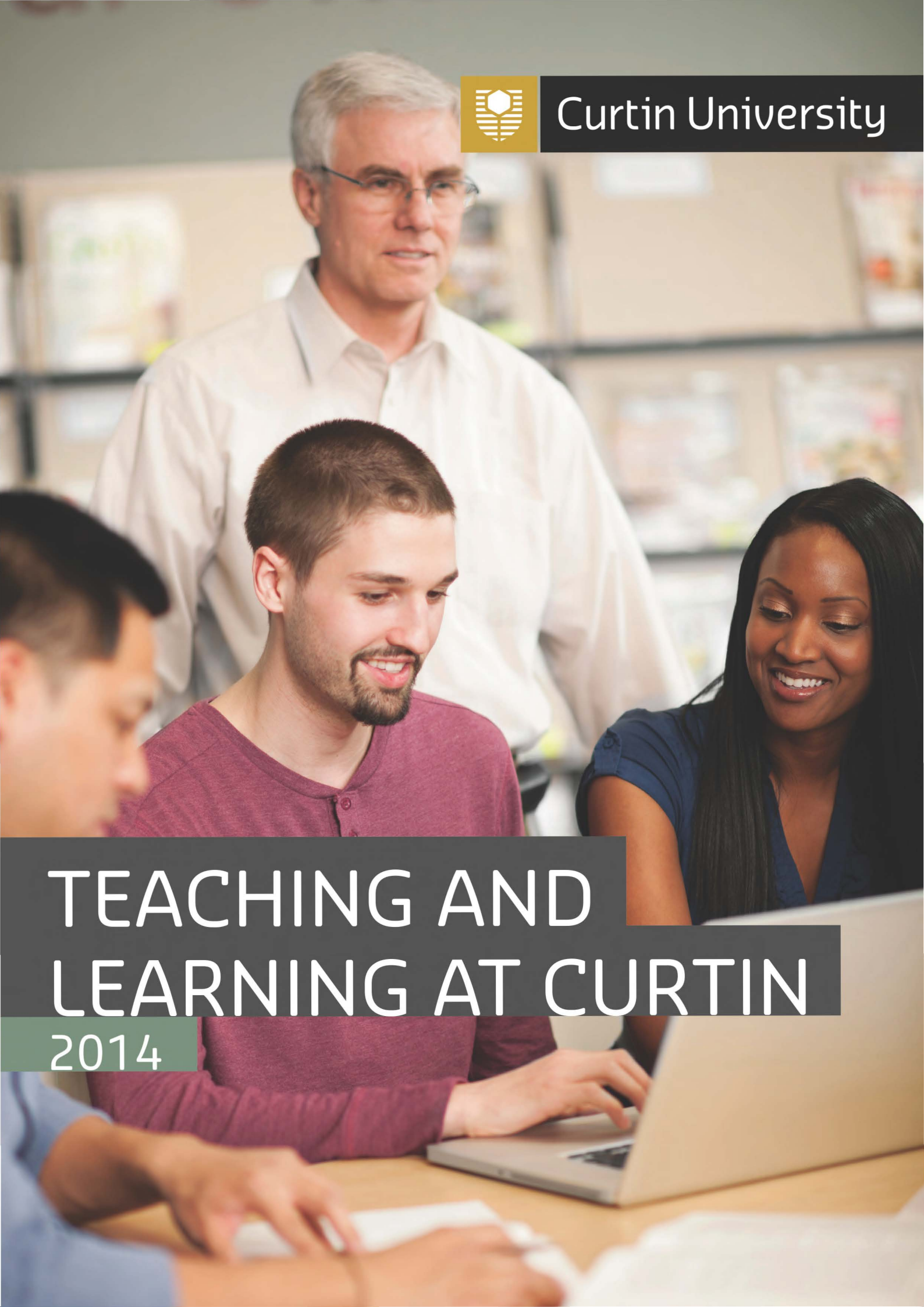

Curtin University

TEACHING AND LEARNING AT CURTIN

2014

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Teaching Excellence at Curtin

Curtin uses criteria to articulate *teaching excellence* to highlight capabilities and skills that guide the successful recruitment, development, recognition and retention of quality teaching academics. The Curtin Teaching Excellence criteria provide a single set of measures to underpin all relevant reward and recognition processes, so that teaching excellence is clear and consistent with the University's strategic goals.

The teaching excellence criteria are designed to assist individual academic staff, particularly new and early career staff, to clarify expectations, and provide guidelines to assist in the process of promotion and awards.

The criteria will be used by academic staff and their supervisors as a formative development tool to identify career objectives, and development needs, in addition to forming the basis for informing promotion and awards.

Curtin's Teaching Excellence criteria are designed to be broad and flexible, whilst providing a robust and valid definition of excellent teaching within the Curtin context. The criteria are aligned to the teaching roles within Curtin Expectations for Academic Performance (CEAP)[2] and the Curtin University Academic, Professional and General Staff Enterprise Agreement 2012–2016.

Curtin's Teaching Excellence Criteria

Curtin's Teaching Excellence Criteria mirror those developed in an Office for Learning and Teaching Project[3] and are informed by criteria and evidence employed by the Office for Learning and Teaching (http://www.olt.gov.au/awards), the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education 2012 (http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/UKPSF), the Higher Education Academy Benchmarking Project on Recognition of Teaching in Academic Promotion Project and an analysis of criteria developed in other Australian universities. Staff who show evidence of "excellence in teaching" will "contribute to systemic change in learning and teaching through ongoing knowledge sharing and dissemination, for example, presentations within the learning and teaching community, collegial mentoring, pairing and networking, and involvement in university and higher education committees" (Office for Learning and Teaching).

[2] CEAP outlines expected performance in teaching for a Teaching and Research Academic and a Teaching Focussed Academic.

[3] University Teaching Criteria and Standards Framework project

Curtin's Teaching Excellence criteria aim to:

1. Support the initial and continuing professional learning of staff engaged in teaching and supporting learning.
2. Foster dynamic and culturally inclusive approaches to teaching and learning in transforming Teaching and Learning at Curtin through creativity, innovation and continuous development in diverse academic and/or professional settings.
3. Acknowledge the variety and quality of teaching, learning and assessment practices that support and underpin student learning.
4. Facilitate individuals in gaining formal recognition for quality-enhanced approaches to teaching and supporting learning.

The seven teaching excellence criteria are:

1. design and planning of learning activities, units and courses
2. teaching and supporting student learning
3. assessment and providing feedback to students
4. developing effective learning environments, student support and guidance
5. integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of student learning
6. evaluation of practice and continuing professional learning, and
7. professional and personal effectiveness.

Evidence of teaching excellence at Curtin

The Curtin Teaching Excellence criteria underpin all relevant reward and recognition processes, so that teaching excellence is clear and consistent with the University's strategic goals. The evidence for each criterion is outlined in the following Table 9.

Table 9: Evidence of Teaching Excellence at Curtin

Teaching 1. Design and planning of learning activities, units and courses 2. Teaching and supporting student learning 3. Assessment and giving feedback to students 4. Developing effective learning environments, student support and guidance	
Evidence	eVALUate Unit Summary Report including unit coordinator response eVALUate Teaching Evaluation Report Student learning outcomes (retention and pass rates, student projects) Peer Review of Teaching – Reflective Statement Peer Review of Teaching – Assessor(s) Report Report from community partners and feedback on outcomes Faculty, University or national teaching awards Peer recognition of quality teaching, e.g. invitations to teach in other universities

Scholarship of teaching 5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of student learning 6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional learning	
Evidence	Certificate of completion of Professional Learning program e.g. FOLT, ALUCP, ALCCP, ALFCP Formal teaching qualification in higher education e.g. Grad. Certificate in Teaching Attendance at internal or external teaching-related workshops Training and experience from the relevant industry/profession/discipline. Invitation to present, design or evaluate a teaching and learning workshop Peer reviewed publications/citations University or national teaching and learning grants Details of grants, awards (successful and unsuccessful) and outcomes
Service and Leadership in Teaching and Learning (including Community Engagement and Professional Practice) 7. Professional and personal effectiveness	
Evidence	Independent reports from mentees Peer review/reviewer of curricula demonstrating engagement with the teaching/research nexus Peer review of curricula as an expert Leadership in supporting colleagues' teaching through peer support and review. Outcomes of committee leadership Professional Association Awards that validate leadership and expertise in teaching and learning External Reports from the relevant industry/profession/discipline Invitation to present, design or evaluate a teaching and learning workshop Invitations to present keynote at Teaching and Learning and disciplinary conferences on teaching and learning Membership of senior advisory groups to government Leadership in external professional networks / interest groups in teaching and learning Recognition by national or international professional bodies (awards, fellowships, honorary memberships etc.) Leadership of professional bodies Contribution to the review and development of national and international professional practice standards Leadership of a school, faculty, university or national teaching and learning initiative

The Dimensions of Curtin's Teaching Excellence for each Academic Level (A,B,C,D and E) and the evidence required for achieving each dimension outline how teaching excellence is evaluated.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning** (SoTL) for Curtin represents systematic inquiry, critique, research and development in teaching, learning and the broader educational context that advances and publicly provides educational benefit to students, staff and the higher education sector. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, which underpins the teaching excellence criteria, is taken from the definitions first proposed by Boyer (1990) and later adapted by the University of Queensland (2007).

The scholarship of teaching develops from a basis of scholarly teaching in a discipline but is not the same as excellent teaching. It involves exploring, testing, practicing and communicating improved pedagogies, learning processes, curricula, policies and learning materials. It meets the following additional criteria in the context of promoting student learning:

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

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

- consulting and applying the literature on teaching and learning
- investigating their own teaching
- adopting innovative teaching approaches
- formally communicating their ideas and practice to peers through publication and other formal means, and
- seeking and obtaining peer recognition for their ideas and practice.

Scholarly teaching

Scholarly teaching in a discipline involves all of the following:

- striving for a high level of proficiency in stimulating students and fostering their learning in a variety of appropriate ways
- being familiar with the latest ideas in one's subject
- being informed by current ideas for teaching that subject, and
- evaluating and reflecting on one's teaching practice and the student learning that follows.

Educational research

Like other social science researchers, educational researchers are guided by theoretical and methodological paradigms. A research academic in the field of education deploys theoretical perspectives to understand educational practice. Educational research includes psychological and philosophical inquiry; historical, policy and cultural analysis; and empirical research on a range of areas including learning and teaching processes, pedagogy and curriculum studies. Such research tests the assumptions and worth of theory in terms of whether it provides adequate explanations of the data and evidence. The aim of educational research is to expand our understanding of all aspects of education and to contribute to theoretical debates and developments in the area. The questions addressed are broader than those focused on in the area of teaching innovation and involve stakeholders beyond the context in which the innovation takes place (Research Assessment Exercise Guidelines, 2008).