



# TEACHING QUALITY

FRAMEWORK



AT WESTERN



The Golden Wattle | Artist: Aaliyah Kearney

*Artist Statement: My painting highlights the interconnectedness of giving and receiving through knowledge and shared journeys. The Golden Wattle (Wadanguli in Darug), once used for food, medicine, and tools, serves as the centrepiece representing resilience, harmony, and respect. The surrounding elements reflect a collective meeting place and reciprocal connections, portraying education as a means for honouring the past, strengthening the present, and shaping the future.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Dharawal, Gadigal, Gundungurra and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work on their lands (Greater Western Sydney and beyond).

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**THE PURPOSE  
OF TEACHING  
IS SIMPLE:  
IT IS TO MAKE  
STUDENT  
LEARNING  
POSSIBLE.**

**Ramsden, P. (2003).** *Learning to Teach in Higher Education*. NY & London: Routledge



# From the TQF Working Group Co-Chairs

It is perhaps no coincidence that our university's commitment to teaching quality appears as the first priority in our *Western 2030* strategy under the umbrella of Student Success. We know the important role teachers and educators play in uplifting and transforming the lives of our students and our region. While the Teaching Quality Framework (TQF) is on the one hand, a promise that student learning, retention and success must continue to lie at the heart of our efforts as an educational community, it also reminds us that there is work ahead to cultivate a robust, scholarly and public teaching culture that resources, recognises, rewards and sustains high quality teaching.

Anyone who joins a Working Group usually does so with the hope of contributing something meaningful and enduring that will improve the lives of those in our university community. Developing our first TQF has been an enormous responsibility, and as a Working Group, one that we have aimed to shepherd with collegiality and consultation as core values. We are keen that the TQF empowers teachers and educators to be seen, to narrate their achievements and impact with pride, and to get excited about collaborating with others in improving student learning. It is a misnomer to see teaching as primarily an individual task. Making student learning possible relies on a village, on the labour of

others, for example, on colleagues in the Library who complement our efforts at developing students' academic literacy skills, on those who provide reliable student data, those who co-design digital learning environments that are inclusive and accessible, those who offer students program advice, and on colleagues who set up the learning spaces and technical infrastructure for students to learn in. The list of people, teams, and systems that teachers rely on is endless. And, as teachers, we also want our students to step into an educational partnership alongside us. All these elements must align for quality teaching to flourish.

The TQF Working Group has been enriched by the experiences, expertise and leadership of many: Drs Rocco Cavaleri, Russell Daylight, Leisha du Preez, Ashlee Gore, Jessica Richards, Ana Rodas and Kristin Wiese; Caroline Lunt, Brittany Vermuelen and Alison Barclay; Associate Professors Rosalind Bye, Roger Dawkins and Chris Jones, and Professor Wendy Hu.

Special mention too to the hundreds of staff who engaged generously in consultation; Jen Alford and Chris Long, our Student Partners in this endeavour; the many WSU students who spent time in conversation with us; Samuel Suresh, Alex White and Colin Clark across the Division of Education and Students, and the executive sponsorship of Professor Maryanne Dever, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Education and Students.

## Professor Brian Stout and Associate Professor Tai Peseta

*March 2026*

# The Teaching Quality Framework in Context

The Teaching Quality Framework (TQF) brings together a suite of resources intended to describe the way our university develops, recognises and resources teachers and educators to support student learning, retention and success, across all our campuses and learning environments.

Its development draws inspiration from a range of sources: from the extensive consultation process with staff and students in our university community, from developments in the higher education sector, and from the research on higher education teaching, in particular, what is known about the relation between teaching quality and student learning.

The task of teaching quality is not only one for those at the coal-face with students. The work of supporting student retention and success requires the expertise and engagement from our professional staff too. It also relies on bringing our students and learners into a conversation about their reciprocal responsibilities as partners in the process of learning and teaching.

Because the TQF assumes that “the purpose of teaching is simple: it is to make student learning possible” (Ramsden, 2003, p.7), the evidence and outcomes of our teaching efforts should be, in principle, oriented towards student learning and success consistent with the focus of our Western 2030 strategy.



# The TQF is intended to support **FOUR PURPOSES**



## **RECRUITMENT**

The TQF supports the university to appoint talented teachers and educators who are passionate about supporting our students to learn and succeed. Our processes for recruitment will become strengthened by a common language for teaching quality that makes our expectations and support transparent.



## **PROBATION**

For supervisors who set probationary requirements for teachers, and for teachers seeking clarity about how to meet those requirements, the TQF will drive the suite of professional learning opportunities and resources designed to uplift, support, evidence and improve teaching capability.



## **PERFORMANCE**

For staff with supervision responsibilities, the TQF Domains and Expectations support the design of targets, address improvement, identify quality teachers, and can be used by Schools and Faculties to resource and sustain high impact practices that scale, and that also recognise, celebrate and reward teaching.



## **PROMOTION**

For staff applying for academic promotion, for those mentoring intending applicants, and for promotion panels making evaluative judgements, the TQF describes the qualitative distinctions and accompanying evidence that are the basis for compelling teaching claims and achievements.

# THE DOMAINS OF TEACHING QUALITY



## Whose involved in 'teaching'?

The TQF encapsulates a broad definition of teaching, and it also recognises that teaching, learning and education happen in a range of contexts, including:

- staff who teach undergraduate and postgraduate coursework students
- staff engaged in the mentoring and supervision of HDR students
- staff responsible for the design, delivery, evaluation and improvement of co-curriculum activities for students
- staff who work directly with university teachers and researchers to support their practice
- staff who work in educational partnership with industry and community partners

In each of these contexts, while there is usually a 'learner', they are not always our conventional Western Sydney students experiencing a formal curriculum. Recognising this, the TQF can help to frame how we design educational encounters to ensure the best possible conditions for successful learning.

## Domain 1

### Prepare

Being well-prepared to support student learning, retention and success is crucial to teaching quality. Effective preparation involves understanding your subject, teaching approach and context, systems, knowing who your students are—their needs, backgrounds, and aspirations—and determining how best to teach and support their learning. If you coordinate a subject or lead a program, this responsibility extends to preparing your teaching and professional staff teams too, ensuring they are capable, equipped, aligned, and set up for success.

## Domain 2

### Design

Alongside subject-matter expertise, designing effective curricula requires a broad understanding of how learning environments are structured to enable student learning and success. Intentional curriculum design brings together the subject, the teaching approach, students' needs, learning resources, outcomes, activities, feedback and assessment, and arranges them in a coherent and purposeful way so that students can demonstrate the work of learning. This alignment matters at every level—within the classroom and subject, across Programs and Schools, and throughout Faculties and the University.

## Domain 3

### Engage & Support

Creating an environment in which students can fully engage in the work of learning requires teachers and educators with the knowledge and capability to connect with students in responsive, relational, proactive, transformative, and systemic ways. That support can happen directly in the classroom, through analysing and using data to enhance student participation and success, by leading teams of colleagues, or by designing, reviewing, and transforming policies, processes, and systems that support student success at scale.

## Domain 4

### Evidence & Improve

While teachers are often encouraged to gather student feedback primarily through surveys, a more holistic evaluative judgement draws on multiple sources of evidence—including insights for example, from peers and colleagues, input from community and industry partners, or guidance from accrediting bodies—to demonstrate improvements in learning and teaching. A crucial element of this process is working collaboratively to communicate both the judgements and the resulting actions, particularly to students, as part of an ethical commitment to building a transparent and robust feedback culture.

## Domain 5

### Continuous Learning

Our students should feel assured that they are learning alongside educators who are both subject-matter experts and actively committed to refining and sharing their teaching practice by participating in workshops and courses to deepen their expertise, presenting at internal and external conferences, or dedicating time to advance teaching-focused scholarship. Teachers and educators learn in and from different contexts—formal, informal, individual, and collective. The most compelling evidence of continuous professional learning lies in its impact: in improving teaching, enhancing student learning, and contributing that knowledge back to wider educational and scholarly communities.

## Domain 6

### Drive Transformation

Teachers and educators with inquiry, reflection and transformation at the heart of their practice are likely to see their classrooms, subjects, and programs as spaces for experimentation. They take responsibility for driving change and improving student learning within their sphere of influence. Those teachers' efforts are supported by visionary educational leaders who create the conditions and systems for success in an open and robust culture of scholarly collaboration. Across all these opportunities and contexts, the outcome of these transformation efforts is evidence of improved student learning, retention and success.

# TQF EXPECTATIONS

The TQF Expectations define the levels at which staff engage with and evidence their practice across the six Domains. They clarify how teachers demonstrate their thinking, teaching approaches, evidence, outputs, outcomes, and impact - and how their practice develops in depth, coherence, and influence over time.

## Entry

Our newest teachers actively apply their disciplinary and professional expertise to advance student learning and success—bringing enthusiasm, curiosity, energy, and a growth mindset and a commitment to learning about teaching.

## Foundation

Teachers and educators who purposefully engage students in learning, recognising the full range of diversity students bring. Teachers know why and how to design learning environments that respond to students' needs.

## Established

Teachers and educators who understand that student learning and engagement are shaped by multiple drivers and they actively champion collaboration. Their teaching practice is intentional, reflective, and focused on continuous improvement.

## Accomplished

Teachers and educators who build the capacity of others to enhance student learning, retention, and success through evidence-based, open, and shared practice, fostering a collaborative culture of innovation and improvement.

## Leader

Teachers and educators who act as change agents aligning vision, people, policy, evidence, systems, and resources to advance quality teaching and student learning.

It may be assumed that each Expectation aligns directly with academic appointments - from sessional staff (Entry) through to Professor (Leader). While there can be overlap, this is not necessarily the case. High-quality teaching is not confined to senior academic ranks. Many sessional and early career academics are leading some of the most innovative and impactful teaching practices across the university, particularly in relation to evidence of student outcomes. The TQF therefore requires the application of informed academic judgement, rather than reliance on title or position alone.



# What does the TQF do for teachers and educators?

**1** It **provides a language** to describe teaching quality and its increasing complexity and impact on student learning.

**2** It offers guidance on the **types of evidence** that convincingly align with a teaching narrative, a set of claims, and teaching achievements.

**3** It will enable teachers to collect and curate different kinds of evidence to **communicate the story of their teaching** in a compelling way to others via an ePortfolio.

**4** It will align with a suite of **professional learning** opportunities that support reflection, inquiry, learning and improvement.

**5** It showcases examples of **awarded Western educators** and highlights their teaching practice for others to learn from.

**6** It will provide examples of collective practices and tactics that **uplift and sustain cultures** of teaching quality in Schools and Faculties.

Teaching Quality Framework

# CONSULTATION PROCESS



# GATHERING INSIGHTS

1

April - May 2025

**Launch TQF Discussion Paper and Video**

20 responses

June - July 2025

**Staff Focus Groups**

12 Focus Groups with 92 staff

2

3

August - September 2025

**Online Staff MakerSpaces**

9 MakerSpaces with 170 staff

September 2025

**Student Focus Groups & Interviews**

13 Focus Groups with 70 students and 10 in-depth interviews

4

5

November - March 2026

**Schools, Institutes, Divisions, and The College**

17 presentations

# WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAID ABOUT TEACHING

Of the 70 Western students who participated in focus groups, and the 10 who were interviewed in depth about quality teaching, the eight themes below were common among them.



## 1 Purpose and relevance

Clear direction and purpose that students can see, relate to, and imagine a future for themselves.

## 2 Expertise and Personality

Educators that bring real-world context and genuine enthusiasm, helping students see how theory translates into practice and future careers.

## 3 Engaging learning experience

Classroom experiences that are engaging and encourage students to show up and succeed.

## 4 Care, flexibility, and consideration

Being supportive, empathetic, and responsive to students' need for flexibility.

## 5 Inclusion and diversity

Recognising difference and welcoming diverse perspectives means students feel safe to speak up.

## 6 Assessment clarity

Assessments with clear expectations, explicit explanations, and contextualised marking rubrics and exemplars to reduce uncertainty.

## 7 Timely and useful feedback

Students value feedback that is personal, actionable, and human. Tone and timing matter more than format.

## 8 Impact

Teachers who push without punishing; scaffolding students' independence and empower them to be excellent.

**“It wasn’t just a grade,  
they explained how to  
grow. That’s why I cared  
about improving.”**

**From the student consultation**



## What staff told us

# What should a TQF do?

1. Carry our values as a university.
2. Appreciate our diverse student cohort as partners.
3. Elevate the visibility of impactful teachers and teaching practices.
4. Accept that quality teaching is complex and requires time, resource, judgement, flexibility and responsibility.
5. Recognise that teaching happens in different ways, in different contexts.
6. Realise student learning and success as a collaboration between academic and professional staff.
7. Encourage risk, curiosity, growth, innovation, scholarship and improvement. Reward it.
8. Ensure that any teaching measures are sufficiently broad, are derived from multiple data sources, and encourage well-being.
9. Support staff engage in purposeful career planning.
10. Be embedded in our policies, procedures and systems.
11. Focus on developing and sustaining a robust teaching culture, not just individual excellence.

**“The TQF is a welcome and timely initiative that rightly elevates the visibility and value of teaching, providing clearer recognition and structured support in pedagogy.”**

From the staff consultation





Scan **QR code**

# Learn more at **Education HQ**

Explore the TQF Domains and Expectations, hear how our award-winning teachers bring the TQF to life, and discover how to evidence your teaching practice through curated case studies.

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**TEACHING QUALITY FRAMEWORK**

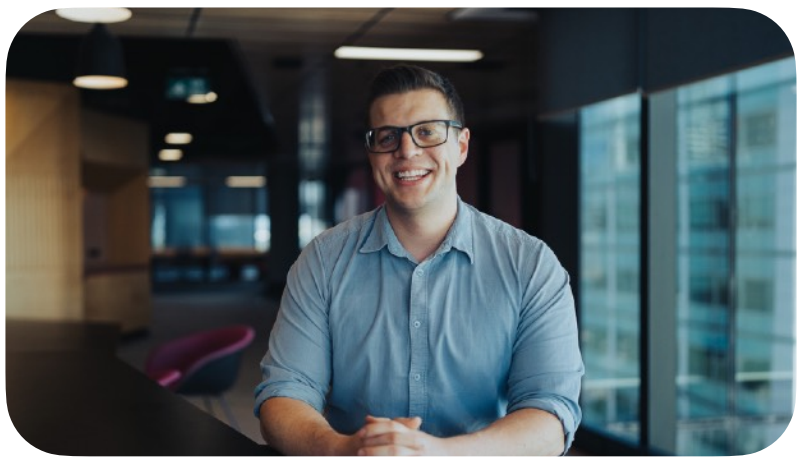
Introducing the Teaching Quality Framework...  
Watch on YouTube

[Download TQF Strategy PDF](#)

**Why do we need a TQF?**

Developed through an extensive year-long consultation with staff and students, the Teaching Quality Framework (TQF) is our university's statement about what quality teaching looks like, and how we aim to develop a robust and scholarly teaching culture that is supported, valued, recognised and rewarded.

Its development is a key part of our Western 2030 Strategic Plan, and particularly, our mission to strengthen student retention and success. At the heart of the TQF, is a recognition that evidence of student learning and success must lie at the core of our teaching efforts.



 **TEACHING  
QUALITY  
FRAMEWORK**





## **LEARNING & TEACHING**

Division of Education and Students

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