WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

DEVELOPED BY THE CENTRAL
BLENDED LEARNING TEAM

Basic Standards

FOR BLENDED AND FULLY ONLINE LEARNING 2016

Basic Standards

The Basic Standards have been designed to be applicable to the diverse ways in which blended and fully online learning environments including *v*UWS, other University of Western Sydney supplied learning technologies and mobile apps are used.

The Basic Standards consists of the following:

1. ORGANISATION AND APPEARANCE
This Standard focuses on principles that support clear structure and presentation of the site (e.g. 'Site design promotes ease of navigation').

2. CONSISTENCY AND COMPLIANCE
This Standard emphasises institutional and legal aspects such as copyright, privacy, compliance with policies and consistency in documentation (e.g. 'Information in the site is consistent with the Unit Outline').

3. APPROPRIATE USE OF TOOLS, LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND MOBILE APPS
This Standard promotes using tools with clear purpose and responsible management (e.g. 'Expectations about use of communication tools are clear to students').

4. LEARNER RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS
This Standard focuses on ensuring students have access to appropriate supports and resources available from the site (e.g. 'Links to learning supports are contained in the site').

Within the Basic Standards there are two sections:

The first is a self review of blended and fully online learning environments. This section contains a description of each standard and related criteria. Each criterion is expanded with a rationale and design principles that relate to achieving quality in the relevant area. A rating scale is also included so that designers can review their site against each criterion.

The second section consists of development strategies. This section contains a description of the standards and criteria, and also includes tips and references to resources that can assist designers to improve quality in line with the Basic Standards.

Section 1: Self Review

STANDARD 1 - ORGANISATION & APPEARANCE

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
1.1 The online learning environment entry point is clear, simple and welcoming.	The entry point should look professional and be welcoming for students. If a Content Area is the entry point in your online learning environment, instead of the Dashboard, it should not look cluttered and the number of icons or links should be kept to a functional minimal.	*The entry point design is clear, simple and welcoming.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
1.2 The Unit Outline and Learning Guide are linked from the 'Unit Information' Content Area of your site.	The Unit Outline and Learning Guide are key documents and must be easily accessible at all times. They should be located in the 'Unit Information' Content Area.	*The Unit Outline and Learning Guide are linked from the 'Unit Information' Content Area.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
1.3 Text on e-pubs, e-books and the online learning environment site pages can be read easily.	The following elements should be used in ways that do not interfere with clarity and legibility: • Backgrounds - picture backgrounds can interfere with the legibility of text on the page. • Colours - a simple colour scheme enhances the professional appearance and legibility of the site. • Fonts - fonts used for text should have sufficient contrast to be clearly read.	*Text on pages can be read easily.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
1.4 The online learning environment design promotes ease of navigation.	Navigation refers to how students follow links to access learning resources and information. Design should make it easy for students to find and access information. Navigation refers to the number of 'clicks' students have to make to get to the information or resource they require. In general, the fewer the clicks (e.g. 3) the better. When adding a new 'File' or 'Item' it is recommended that the option not to open a new window is used unless the activity requires a new browser window. You should include instructions about where students can find resources and information.	*The online learning environment design promotes ease of navigation.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
1.5 File sizes enable efficient downloads.	Students should be able to download files efficiently. Student access to files linked online is compromised by large files that take a long time to download. Smaller files allow students easier, quicker, cheaper downloads with fewer problems (e.g. time outs), especially if they are using mobile devices. Consider using YouTube to stream video content. The recommended maximum file size is 1 GB. Some media files (audio or video) are large and can take students a while to download. Large file sizes can be indicated in text descriptors next to icons or links so students can choose when and where to download them. It is recommended that an 'Item' is used when adding a link to a file as it shows the file type and size.	*File sizes enable efficient downloads.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
1.6 File types and software requirements for opening them are specified.	Files can be of various types (e.g. pdf, flash, ppt, quicktime files) and students should be informed of those types through link descriptions or an appropriate general statement about any specific software that they require to open files.	*File types and software requirements for opening them are specified.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

STANDARD 2 - CONSISTENCY & COMPLIANCE: LEGAL & INSTITUTIONAL

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST

2.1 Information in the online learning environment is consistent with the Unit Outline and Learning Guide.	Information should be consistent with the Unit Outline and Learning Guide with respect to the University of Western Sydney format template and approved content and delivery.
	
	Information set out in the following sections of the Unit Outline is accurately reflected in the site.
	
	    A. General Information
	    B. Unit Details
	    C. Assessment Details
	    D. Assignment Cover Sheet
	    E. Important Information – Policies
	    F. Additional Information
		Information is consistent with the Unit Outline and Learning Guide.
		
		☐ *Yes*
		
		☐ *No*
		
		☐ *Working Towards*
		
		Comments:

2.2 All information has been updated and is current.	Learning materials and online learning environments that contain outdated information, blank pages or 'dead' links are frustrating for students.	*All information has been updated and is current.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
2.3 Readings and other resources provided are appropriately linked to avoid copyright infringements.	To avoid copyright infringements third party copyright content (e.g. text or graphics) must comply with the University of Western Sydney Copyright procedures. See appendix.	*Readings and other resources provided are appropriately linked to avoid copyright infringements.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

Developed by the Central Blended Learning Team, Learning and Teaching Unit | January 2016

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
2.4 Information provided to students complies with the Privacy Policy.	Files that identify student names and numbers (e.g. results of assessments) should not be provided.	*Information provided to students complies with the Privacy Policy.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
2.5 Learning resources comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Branding Digital Guidelines, university standards and guidelines.	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) make content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. Video and audio files should have a text based transcript accompanying the file. Videos produced should follow the University of Western Sydney guidelines. Content for mobile devices should be available as an PDF. If iBooks are used a PDF version should be provided to enable students access if they don't have an Apple mobile device. Flash should not be used as it is not widely accessible on mobile devices. HTML 5 should be used instead. Online, web and print elements should adhere and follow the Western Sydney University Brand Guidelines.	*Learning resources comply with relevant guidelines as articulated in the Design Principles.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
2.6 Prescribed templates have been applied.	Some courses, programs or Schools have design templates which may include an entry point banner, content items and University of Western Sydney approved colours.	*Prescribed templates have been applied.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* *Comments:*

STANDARD 3 - APPROPRIATE USE OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
3.1 Learning technologies, tools and mobile apps have a clear purpose and rationale.	Activities utilising learning technologies and mobile apps should be planned and should reflect how the Instructor wants students to use them in the context of the unit. Instructors should only use technologies, tools and apps that reflect a clear purpose and rationale and should be able to use them competently and appropriately. For example, students are confused when discussions, chat and assessment links are added but not used.	*Technologies, tools and mobile apps used to support learning have a clear purpose and rationale.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
3.2 Students receive instructions about how learning technologies, tools and mobile apps will be used.	The purpose and use of tools should be communicated to students so they can learn to use them effectively and efficiently. Specific criteria related to communication tools follow (i.e. 3.3 & 3.4). Other tools such as External Links, Assessments (including Tests) and Assignments should have clear instructions on how and when they are to be used by students.	*Students receive instructions about how technologies, tools and mobile apps will be used in the context of their unit.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
3.3 Communication tools are monitored and 'netiquette' standards reinforced.	Instructors are responsible for the communications in online learning environments and should provide instructions on appropriate communication (e.g.' netiquette'). Communications are monitored and breaches of 'netiquette' are dealt with promptly. It is recommended that the 'Online Netiquette Video' is made available to students if you are using online communication tools. If you are not using these tools then it is suggested that you hide the video until required.	*Communication tools are monitored and 'netiquette' standards reinforced.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
3.4 Expectations about use of communication tools are clear to students.	Communication tools made available to students should be used consistently for their intended purposes. Students are confused by communication links being added with no clear instructions about how they are to be used. Expectations regarding communications with the lecturer or tutors should be managed in terms of frequency and purpose. 'Interaction overload' (many messages being posted daily or weekly) is appropriately managed.	Expectations about use of communication tools are clear to students. ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

STANDARD 4 - LEARNER RESOURCES & SUPPORTS

CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
4.1 The relevance of online scholarly resources is clearly presented to students.	Students have been informed of the presence and relevance of online scholarly resources included on *v*UWS (e.g. library links, externally developed resources such as e-books, learning objects or courseware).	*The relevance of online scholarly resources is clearly presented to students.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
4.2 Students are provided with information about what learning supports are available and where to find them.	It is good practice to orientate students to online learning environments and to inform them, either online or in classes, of additional learning student support. All students have a link on their 'My UWS' to '*v*UWS Student Support'. This site contains information on the use of tools (e.g. communication and assessment), browser tune-ups and where and how to get support.	*Students are provided with information about what learning supports are available and where to find them.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

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CRITERIA	DESIGN PRINCIPLES	SELF-RATING CHECKLIST
4.3 Students with disabilities have been informed about where to get support for learning accessibility issues.	Accessibility standards refer to design features that enable access by students with disabilities. Standard 1 – 'Organisation & Appearance' is also relevant for accessibility. This Standard does not list the Accessibility Standards but it is good practice to inform students that accessibility issues sites should be referred to the Unit Coordinator and/or the Disability Service.	*Students with disabilities have been informed about where to get support for learning accessibility issues.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:
4.4 Information about the location of student learning supports is provided in the online learning environment.	Your online learning site contains links to the Library, Help and under Student Tools a link to the Student Instruction Guide. Refer students to the 'Student Support' tab in *v*UWS where they can find learning and other student support services.	*Information about the location of student learning supports is available.* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No* ☐ *Working Towards* Comments:

Section 2: Development Strategies

STANDARD 1 - ORGANISATION & APPEARANCE

CRITERION 1.1
The online learning environment is clear, simple and welcoming.

Design Principles

The entry point should look professional and be welcoming for students.

If a Content Area is the entry point in your online learning environment, instead of the Dashboard, it should not look cluttered and the number of icons or links should be kept to a functional minimal.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Most sites will use the Dashboard page as the Course Entry Point. The Dashboard page shows modules such as My Announcements, What's New, Need Attentions, To Do, and Alerts.

Site design will depend on the unit and how instructors want their students to use the site. To help you plan your site please refer to *QiLT > Designing for Learning > Resources > SUNSET Tool.*

For most sites, six to eight links within any Content Area would be sufficient. As an example in a Group Presentation Content Area you may have: Presentation Group Instruction Guide, Group Presentation Collbaborate session, Group Presentation Schedule, Presentation Peer Review Marking Sheet, Submission of Group Assignment.

Notices should be added as Announcements using the 'Announcements' tool. Instructions for how to add announcements can be found in the Online Help available in *vUWS: Control Panel > Help > Instructor Guide > search for Announcements > select Announcements.*

To ensure that any branding (e.g. banner) you add to your site complies with the Western Sydney University brand, the Digital Brand Guidelines is available at *http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/976180/ UWS_Digital_Guidelines_1.2.pdf*

 Developed by the Central Blended Learning Team, Learning and Teaching Unit | January 2016

CRITERION 1.2
The Unit Outline and Learning Guide are linked from the 'Unit Information' Content Area of your site.
(Only applies to unit sites)

Design Principles

The Unit Outline and Learning Guide are key documents and must be easily accessible at all times. They should be located in the 'Unit Information' Content Area.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Use the 'Unit Information' Content Area to display the Unit Outline and Learning Guide and any other related unit information files.

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to your *v*UWS site so they are aware of what your expectations are in relation to online participation and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a Student Orientation.*

CRITERION 1.3
Text on e-pubs, e-books and the online learning environment site pages can be read easily.

Design Principles

The following elements should be used in ways that do not interfere with clarity and legibility:

Backgrounds - picture backgrounds can interfere with the legibility of text on the page.
Colours - a simple colour scheme enhances the professional appearance and legibility of the site.
Fonts - fonts used for text should have sufficient contrast to be clearly read.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Picture backgrounds should usually be avoided; however, if a picture background is used, a faint image (watermark) is less likely to impede legibility.

In *v*UWS, the Content Editor allows text to be edited in a similar way to a word processor. Instructions for how to use the Content Editor can be found in the Online Help available in *vUWS > any Instructor site > Control Panel > Help > Instructor Guide > search for Content Editor > select Using the Content Editor.*

When using the Content Editor:

- Reserve bolding of text for important headings or points but use it sparingly as overuse lessens its effectiveness.
- Sans-serif fonts, such as Arial and Verdana, are easier to read on the screen than serif fonts such as Times New Roman.
- Avoid underlining text as the text may appear to the user to be a link to another page.
- Whilst suitable for navigation, entire lines in all caps in the content body are more difficult to read.
- Italics are one way to draw *attention* to text, but it makes text harder to read.
- Avoid changing the text color from the default text color, as some colors can cause accessibility problems.
- Use the Math Editor tool where possible to insert mathematical formulas and scientific notations instead of creating flat formulas.

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CRITERION 1.4
The online learning environment design promotes ease of navigation.

Design Principles

Navigation refers to how students follow links to access learning resources and information.
Design should make it easy for students to find and access information.

Navigation refers to the number of 'clicks' students have to make to get to the information or resource they require. In general, the fewer the clicks (e.g. 3) the better.

When adding a new 'File' or 'Item' it is recommended that the option not to open a new window is used unless the activity requires a new browser window.

You should include instructions about where students can find resources and information.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

An item in an online learning site should not be more than 3 clicks from the homepage.

Use learning modules rather than folders inside other folders to flatten the navigation structure. For more information on how to use learning modules please refer to the QiLT *http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/qilt*

URL should be set to open in a new browser window whilst PDF, Word and other files should open in the same browser window. When adding a URL select the 'open in new window' option during the URL creation process.

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session to *v*UWS which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a Student Orientation.*

CRITERION 1.5
File sizes enable efficient downloads.

Design Principles

Students should be able to download files efficiently.

Student access to files linked online is compromised by large files that take a long time
to download.

Smaller files allow students easier, quicker, cheaper downloads with fewer problems (e.g. time outs), especially if they are using mobile devices. Consider using YouTube to stream
video content.

The recommended maximum file size is 1 GB. Some media files (audio or video) are large and can take students a while to download.

Large file sizes can be indicated in text descriptors next to icons or links so students can choose when and where to download them.

In *v*UWS, it is recommended that the Item tool is used when adding a link to a file as it shows the file type and size.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Tips on the use of different file types and file sizes can be found at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > Content and Learning Resources > Graphical-based resources.*

PowerPoint files can be very large. Before uploading your PowerPoint file remove any unnecessary slides and graphics, sounds and animations. If you have added images or photos to your slides it is a good idea to use a graphic software program to compress the image to a lower resolution before adding them to your PowerPoint file. A digital photo could be taken at 600 dpi whereas 150 dpi is suitable in a PowerPoint file. Media files such as audio or video can be compressed in quality to reduce file size. MP3 is the smallest conversion for audio files. An alternative is to break the file down into smaller files. Large documents can be broken into smaller chunks, as can movies or PowerPoints (e.g. Part 1 of 2).

Compression of the file size significantly reduces the download time for students. If your file is over 100 MB please contact the IT Service Desk for advice on how to decrease its size.

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CRITERION 1.6
File types and software requirements for opening them are specified.

Design Principles

Files can be of various types (e.g. pdf, flash, ppt, quicktime files) and students should be informed of those types through link descriptions or an appropriate general statement about any specific software that they require to open files.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

If your site contains content that requires a plug-in (e.g. Flash or other media files, PDF etc) refer your students to the *Student Support tab in vUWS > Software you may need module*

It is recommended that an 'Item' is used when adding a link to a file as it shows the file type and size.

When adding a link to a file using the File tool, include in the name field, the file type and size in brackets, eg Week 5: Ethical Issues in Business (PPT, 20Mb). When using the *Item* tool this information will be automatically added.

It is good practice to choose one format to deliver all audio and/or video in the online learning environment so that students won't need to download additional software or plug-ins to play the attached files. If you need help in converting the audio or video file, please contact the IT Service Desk for further advice.

For more information about working with audio and video files and adding to your *v*UWS site, please refer to *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > Content and Learning Resources > Audio-based resources.*

STANDARD 2 - CONSISTENCY & COMPLIANCE

CRITERION 2.1
Information in the online learning environment is consistent with the Unit Outline and Learning Guide.

Design Principles

Information should be consistent with the Unit Outline and Learning Guide with respect to the University of Western Sydney format template and approved content and delivery.

Information set out in the following sections of the Unit Outline is accurately reflected in the site.

A. General Information
B. Unit Details
C. Assessment Details

D. Assignment Cover Sheet
E. Important Information – Policies
F. Additional Information

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Unit Outline and Learning Guides Policy available online at: *http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00154*
Unit Outlines are available online at: *http://library.westernsydney.edu.au/uws_library/resources/unit-outlines*

CRITERION 2.2
All information has been updated and is current.

Design Principles

Learning materials and online learning environments that contain outdated information, blank pages or 'dead' links are frustrating for students.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

If you are re-using a previous version of a *v*UWS site it is important that you update your site before the start of the new teaching session.

If the online learning site is based on a previous site, dates should be updated and links checked.

CRITERION 2.3
Readings and other resources provided are appropriately linked to avoid copyright infringements.

Design Principles

Third party copyright material used in developing blended and online learning resources must comply with legal requirements of the Australian Copyright Act 1968 and the obligations of the University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide to minimise the risk of Copyright Infringement.

Third party copyright material used in developing blended and online learning resources must comply with:

Part VA Statutory Copyright Licence and the University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide, when using Broadcasts for Educational Purposes;

Part VB   Statutory Copyright Licence and the University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide, when using Text and Images for Educational Purposes, including the development of eBooks or similar resources. Readings for Units of Study must be sent to the University of Western Sydney Library's Readings Direct Service for processing;

The Commercial Music Licence, University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide, when using Sound Recordings for Educational Purposes;

Section 200AB Copyright Act 1968, University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide when using clips of commercial DVDs and You Tube videos for Instructional Purposes;

Other provisions in the Copyright Act 1968 and obligations in the University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide.

In developing blended and online learning resources for MOOCS, You Tube, Social Media , iTunes and other Sharing Web Sites, only original material that you create, Creative Commons or similar Licenced Material, Open Education material, out of copyright material and material that you have explicit permission to include, must be used.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Contact the University of Western Sydney Copyright Officer (Frank Hill, email *f.hill@westernsydney.edu.au*) for advice when using copyrighted material for educational purposes or designing educational resources.

University Copyright Policy: *http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00148*
University Copyright Guide: *http://library.westernsydney.edu.au/uws_library/guides/copyright*

CRITERION 2.4
Information provided to students complies with the Privacy Policy.

Design Principles

Files that identify student names and numbers (e.g. results of assessments) should not be provided.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

The University Privacy Policy is available at: *http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00108*

By using the Grade Centre you will have one secure place to record all your student's grades and other relevant information during the semester.

Once the grades are in the Grade Centre you can release them to students via the My Grades tool thereby ensuring that students have access to their own grades and not the grades of
other students.

Instructions for how to use the Grade Centre can be found in the Online Help available in *vUWS > any Instructor site > Control Panel > Help > Instructor Guide > search for Grade Center > Select Grade Center.*

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CRITERION 2.5
Learning resources comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), university standards and guidelines.

Design Principles

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) make content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these.

Video and audio files should have a text based transcript accompanying the file. Videos produced should follow the University of Western Sydney guidelines. Content for mobile devices should be available as an PDF.

If iBooks are used a PDF version should be provided to enable students access if they don't have an Apple mobile device.

Flash should not be used as it is not widely accessible on mobile devices. HTML 5 should be used instead.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

All images should have an 'ALT Tag' which describes the image, allowing the screen reader software to read it aloud so the user is aware of image content.

All Flash, video and audio files should have a text based transcript accompanying the item when in *v*UWS for students with disabilities or for those that may have problems accessing.

PDF files cannot be read by a screen reader so a Word file or Rich Text Format (RTF) file should accompany the PDF file when in *v*UWS.

Information about ensuring the content in your site is compliant with WCAG Guidesline is available in *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Accessibility for websites.*

CRITERION 2.5
Prescribed templates have been applied.

Design Principles

Some courses, programs or Schools have design templates which may include an entry point banner, content items and University of Western Sydney approved colours.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

For advice on setting up a template for your course or School contact the IT Service Desk.

STANDARD 3 - APPROPRIATE USE OF LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES

CRITERION 3.1
Learning technologies, tools and mobile apps have a clear purpose and rationale.

Design Principles

Activities utilising learning technologies and mobile apps should be planned and should reflect how the Instructor wants students to use them in the context of the unit.

Instructors should only use technologies, tools and apps that reflect a clear purpose and rationale and should be able to use them competently and appropriately.

For example, students are confused when discussions, chat and assessment are added but not used.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

The tools that you and your students use will depend on the unit and how you want your students to use the site.

If your *v*UWS site has a tool added to it that you are no longer planning to use, it is recommended that you delete the tool or hide it from student access.

To view an easy-to-use guide on how to select the right *v*UWS tools to best achieve each of the seven principles in undergraduate education, refer to *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS> Seven Principles Tool Guide for vUWS*

CRITERION 3.2
Students receive instructions about how learning technologies, tools and mobile apps will be used.

Design Principles

The purpose and use of technologies supporting student learning should be communicated to students so they can learn to use them effectively and efficiently.

Specific criteria related to communication tools follow (i.e. 3.3 & 3.4). Other tools such as External Links, Assessments (including Tests) and Assignments should have clear instructions on how and when they are to be used by students.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

To help you decide on what technologies and content students will need to support their learning, develop a plan of the structure of your site. To help you plan your *v*UWS site please refer to *QiLT > Designing for Learning > SUNSET Tool.*

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session to *v*UWS which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a Student Orientation.*

CRITERION 3.3
Communication tools are monitored and 'netiquette' standards reinforced.

Design Principles

Instructors are responsible for the communications in online learning environments and should provide instructions on appropriate communication (e.g.'netiquette').

Communications are monitored and breaches of 'netiquette' are dealt with promptly.

It is recommended that the 'Online Netiquette Video' is made available to students if you are using online communication tools. If you are not using these tools then it is suggested that you hide the video until required.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

When requiring students to communicate online in *v*UWS ensure that they have access to the Online Netiquette resource. If your site does not have it added under Discussions in the Course Menu, please contact the IT Service Desk to add the resource to your site.

Information and guidelines on using communication and collaboration tools are available in *QiLT > Designing for Learning > Using Technology > Synchronous communication* and *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > Asynchronous Communication.*

It is important not to add the discussion tool to your site unless you make a commitment to monitor the discussion. If there are breaches of guidelines or complaints from other students please contact the IT Service Desk for advice. Information and guidelines about e-moderating are available at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > e-Moderating.*

Instructors should be selective when choosing similar communication tools across different learning platforms (i.e. in *v*UWS and outside *v*UWS) and should use them consistently throughout the unit delivery. For example, the *v*UWS Discussion Board should not be used together with the Discussion Forum activity block in the LAMS learning platform, as it is hard to monitor discussions all over the places.

Interactions should be guided by existing policies on student-staff communication:

Teaching and Learning Fundamental Code online at :
http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00139

Student Academic Misconduct Policy online at:
http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00051

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided.

CRITERION 3.4
Expectations about use of communication technologies are clear to students.

Design Principles

Communication technologies made available to students should be used consistently for their intended purposes.

Students are confused by communication technologies links being added with no clear instructions about how they are to be used.

Expectations regarding communications with the lecturer or tutors should be managed in terms of frequency and purpose.

'Interaction overload' (many messages being posted daily or weekly) is appropriately managed.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Information and guidelines on using communication technologies and ensuring that your students are aware of your expectations on how they should be used are available in *QiLT > Designing for Learning > Asynchronous Communication.*

To help you decide on which communication technologies your students will need to support their learning, develop a plan of the structure of your site. To help you plan your site please refer to *QiLT > Teaching Resources > SUNSET Tool.*

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session to *v*UWS which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a Student Orientation.*

Set up your discussion area with relevant forums. When adding a forum, also add a description so that students are aware of the purpose of the forum. Relevant forums will also help you monitor the discussions and will help students focus on forums related to learning activities. To help you administer the unit, provide forums such as 'Unit Related Questions', 'Assignment Questions' etc.

If you require students to discuss a topic or an issue through online discussion it is suggested that you break a large class up into smaller discussion groups so that the discussion is not exhausted quickly and there are not too many posts. Instructions on creating groups and strategies to foster group work amongst students is available at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > Asynchronous Communication > Study Groups*

STANDARD 4 - LEARNER RESOURCES & SUPPORTS

CRITERION 4.1
The relevance of online scholarly resources is clearly presented to students.

Design Principles

Students have been informed of the presence and relevance of online scholarly resources included on *v*UWS (e.g. library links, externally developed resources such as e-books, learning objects or courseware).

Tips & Resources for Site Development

For advice on integrating library resources, contact your School's Liaison Librarian:
https://library.westernsydney.edu.au/uws_library/help/contact-us/school-librarians

For advice on integration of e-packs and other publisher materials contact the IT Service Desk.

CRITERION 4.2
Students are provided with information about what learning supports are available and where to find them.

Design Principles

It is good practice to orientate students to online learning environments and to inform them, either online or in classes, of additional learning student support.

All students have a link on their 'My *v*UWS' to '*v*UWS Student Support'. This site contains information about the use of tools (e.g. communication and assessment), browser tuneups and where and how to get support.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Include information in the Unit Outline about how students are expected to use the online learning site. If there are assessment tasks that students are required to complete in vUWS, provide detailed information on how to do this in the Unit Outline.

Refer students to the vUWS Student Support Site and other support links available within *v*UWS under the Student Support tab.

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session to *v*UWS which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a student orientation.*

CRITERION 4.3
Students with disabilities have been informed about where to get support for learning accessibility issues.

Design Principles

Accessibility standards refer to design features that enable access by students with disabilities. Standard 1 – 'Organisation & Appearance' is also relevant for accessibility.

This Standard does not list the Accessibility Standards but it is good practice to inform students that accessibility issues sites should be referred to the Unit Coordinator and/or the Disability Service.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Synchronous tools like Chat and Blackboard Collaborate have lower accessibility levels than asynchronous tools such as blogs and threaded discussion topics. Users with disabilities may not be able to participate in real time without assistance. For online interaction, use tools such as Discussions, Email or Course Messages to improve accessibility rather than Chat.

Tools which use Java applets can also cause issues for students using assistive technologies, for example the Blackboard Collaborate tool, which can be overcome by using a screen reader like JAWS. Similarly, Flash should not be used as it has accessibility issues. HTML 5 should be used instead.

Information about ensuring the content in your site is compliant with WCAG Guidesline information about Accessibility is available in *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Accessibility for websites.*

Students with a disability may need additional time to complete an online quiz. A copy of a quiz can be created with additional time set in and made available only to individual students through selective release options. Ask the IT Service Desk about these options.

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session to *v*UWS which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a Student Orientation.*

CRITERION 4.4
Information about the location of student learning supports is provided in the online learning environment.

Design Principles

Your online learning site contains links to the Library, Help and under Student Tools a link to the Student Instruction Guide.

Refer students to the 'For Student' tab in *v*UWS where they can find learning and other student support services.

Tips & Resources for Site Development

Provide students with details within your site about the location of learning supports available.

To help you decide on the learning supports your students will require, develop a plan of the structure of your site. To help you plan your site please refer to *QiLT > Designing for Learning > SUNSET Tool.*

It is suggested that at the beginning of each teaching session students are given an orientation to the online learning environment so they are aware of what you expect of them in using and participating online and how you want them to use the learning materials and activities provided. A guide is available on conducting a student orientation session to *v*UWS which you can use or edit for your own site requirements at *QiLT > Teaching with Technology > vUWS > Conducting a Student Orientation.*

Developed by the Central Blended Learning Team, Learning and Teaching Unit | January 2016

APPENDIX

Criterion 2.3

Third party copyright material used in developing blended and online learning resources must comply with:

Part VA Statutory Copyright Licence and the University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide, when using Broadcasts for Educational Purposes;

Part VB Statutory Copyright Licence and University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide, when using Text and Images for Educational Purposes, including the development of eBooks or similar resources.
Readings for Units of Study must be sent to the University of Western Sydney Library's Readings Direct Service for processing;

The Commercial Music Licence and University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide, when using Sound Recordings for Educational Purposes;

Section 200AB Copyright Act 1968, University of Western SydneyS Copyright Policy and Guide when using clips of commercial DVDs and You Tube videos for Instructional Purposes;

Other Provisions of the Copyright Act 1968 and obligations of the University of Western Sydney Copyright Policy and Guide.

In developing blended and online learning resources for MOOCS, You Tube, Social Media , iTunes and other Sharing Web Sites, only original material that you create, Creative Commons or similar licenced material, Open Education material, out of copyright material and material that you have explicit permission to include, must be used.