

1. TEN QUICK TIPS ON HOW TO BE A GREAT TEACHER

1. Know and love your subject

Keep up-to-date in your field, actively engage in research, and ensure your teaching shows your passion for your subject. Students can learn a lot from text books, but only you can share your discipline and industry experience with them.

2. Focus on student learning - always

Make sure you explain (repeatedly) the learning outcomes to your students, why they need to achieve them, and how they will be assessed. Students usually respond positively when they understand what they have to do, and why. Remind students that what really matters is their learning, and that your role is to help them achieve the learning outcomes. For more information on creating good learning outcomes, see pages 17 to 21.

3. Do less telling and be more engaging

Engaged students are more likely to participate in learning activities. Resist the temptation to tell students everything - get them to do things with information, to apply it to scenarios and case studies. As new graduates they will need to 'know their stuff', but they will also need social intelligence - how to work in teams, negotiate, solve problems, and so on—these things are rarely learnt from textbooks. For more information on how to engage students see, Chapter 8, page 52.

4. Assess the learning outcomes - nothing more and nothing less!

Assessment tasks are opportunities for students to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes (which should focus on higher order thinking skills, not memorisation). Assessments are not punishments or traps to catch students out, or ways to 'keep them working'. If you use group assessment, make sure it is justified (lightening your marking load is not an acceptable justification), and ensure that students have a chance to perform as individuals. For more information on creating appropriate assessment tasks, see Chapter 5, page 22.

5. Give effective feedback that stimulates deeper learning

We all learn better when we feel encouraged. When you mark students' work return it as soon as you can and give students rich directions for improvement in a variety of formats. For more information on techniques for giving constructive feedback, see Chapter 6, page 45.

6. Interact positively

Ensure your interaction with students is constructive and positive and in keeping with Curtin's Guiding Ethical Principles. Ensure you make time to be available to your students - advertise those times, and make sure you're available and contactable.

7. Be organised

Students must have clear, well-organised unit outlines indicating what will occur, when and why. Expect students to be punctual, and be punctual yourself, giving plenty of notice if classes need to be cancelled. For more information on how to prepare a unit outline, see pages 13 and 14.

8. Communicate your passion for your subject and be an inspiration!

You probably teach in a university because you have expert knowledge in a subject you love. Not all students will share your level of enthusiasm - some will love this subject, others will not. Even so, engage unwilling students by being enthusiastic and explaining how their learning might apply to some aspect of their lives. Reflect on what it was, and is, that inspires you to pursue your learning in your subject, and try to emulate that for your students.

9. Evaluate your teaching and act on student feedback

During the semester, regularly ask students what is helping their learning, and what is not. Formal student feedback (through **eVALUate**) is valuable in helping you improve your teaching skills. Respond to all feedback by telling your students about the changes you intend to implement, and why. For more information on evaluating teaching, see Chapter 11, page 65.

10. Get a peer mentor and keep a professional portfolio

Consider inviting a colleague to act as a critical friend to comment on or review your teaching and provide supportive feedback. Keep a portfolio - a collection of peer and student feedback as well as your own reflections on what worked and what didn't. You may even like to use the iPortfolio, see www.iportfolio.curtin.edu.au



A highly recommended quick and easy read with practical tips:

Race, P., & Pickford, R. (2007). *Making teaching work*, London: Sage Publications.