

Learning and Teaching Matters
16 July 2026

Overview from Interim Director, CEI
Professor Amanda Telford

Dear colleagues,

As we prepare for Semester 2, it's worth taking time to think deliberately how our units, assessments, learning environments and support services help students engage confidently from the first week of teaching.

This edition highlights professional learning opportunities, key teaching updates and important dates to support your Semester 2 preparations. The sharing of ideas, examples and practice across faculties, schools and directorates is an important part of how we continue to strengthen learning and teaching at ACU.

Thank you for your ongoing contribution to learning and teaching at ACU, and best wishes as you prepare for the second half of the academic year. If you have any questions or need support with your learning and teaching preparations, please contact CEI@acu.edu.au.

Semester 2 2026 Professional Learning Series

Prepare for Semester 2 with the HELTA Professional Learning Series, an online Orientation Week program focused on practical, peer-led learning.

Running across **27–30 July**, the series features short, interactive sessions delivered by ACU colleagues from across disciplines, providing timely insights and ideas to support teaching in the semester ahead.

Centred on the theme “**Assuring learning across the lanes**”, the series explores innovative assessment approaches, including alternatives to traditional exams, assessment of different “lanes”, and the use of AI to support teaching and learning.

Sessions also showcase outcomes from Teaching Development Grants and other faculty-led initiatives, creating opportunities for staff to share practice, reflect on emerging evidence, and learn from peers.

[Register via the Learning Hub](#) to have your participation recorded on your staff record. This can be used as evidence for performance review, professional development and promotion.

Canvas Foundation Template drop-in sessions

As part of the *Your Voice Matters* initiative, the Canvas Foundation Template has been applied to scheduled Semester 2 units to support a more consistent student experience in Canvas.

Unit Leads are reminded to review their Semester 2 Canvas units and complete the required setup steps by **Friday 17 July**:

- follow the [support guide](#) to import 2025 content into your 2026 Canvas shell
- use the **select specific content** feature to transfer only the required content
- review the [Readiness Checklist](#) to ensure that your unit is set up properly

CEI drop-in sessions are running until **Thursday 30 July** to support staff with the Canvas Foundation Template and general Canvas questions. All sessions are delivered via Teams. Join us at the scheduled time using the links below.

Canvas Foundation Template support: Every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 1–2 pm

[Join the Canvas Foundation Template support drop-in session](#)

General Canvas support: Every Wednesday, 11 am–12 pm

For support with quizzes, assignments, Canvas setup and general questions.

[Join the General Canvas support drop-in session](#)

If you encounter any issues, please log a [Service Central request](#) for assistance.

New Canvas Feature: Enhanced Rubrics

Canvas has introduced Enhanced Rubrics, a new feature that provides a more flexible and streamlined way to create, manage and use rubrics in assignments. The updates are designed to make it easier for staff to build and apply rubrics, while supporting clearer feedback for students.

With Enhanced Rubrics, staff can:

- use a modern rubric editor with drag-and-drop criteria management
- choose from multiple grading views, including traditional, horizontal and vertical
- import and export rubrics using CSV for easier reuse and sharing
- archive rubrics to help manage them across units and courses
- enable student self-assessment, allowing students to assess their work against the rubric before grading

How to enable Enhanced Rubrics

Enhanced Rubrics is not enabled by default. Staff can turn it on in their unit by navigating to **Course Settings → Feature Options → Enhanced Rubrics**, then changing the state to **Enabled**. Once enabled, existing rubrics will appear in the new enhanced mode.

For step-by-step guidance, view the Canvas guide: [How do I manage rubrics in a course using Enhanced Rubrics?](#)

Interim SELT reports and QILT data now available

ACU's Semester 1 interim Student Evaluation of Learning and Teaching (SELT) reports were distributed to relevant teaching staff on 9 July 2026.

More than 40,800 student responses were received from over 108,000 invitations, representing an approximate response rate of 37.5%. In total, 2,464 individual reports were distributed to teaching staff.

With the release of the interim SELT reports, the Quality Assurance (QA) Team is refreshing the [Course Monitoring \(Schedule A Benchmarks\) Dashboard](#) with Semester 1 2026 data. This is expected to be complete by 24 July 2026, providing Course Monitoring Committees meeting from mid-July onwards with timely access to ACU's first-half benchmark data.

National reports have also been published for the Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS). Among Australian universities, ACU ranked:

- No. 4 for full-time employment among postgraduate coursework graduates.
- No. 4 for overall employment among postgraduate coursework graduates.

- No. 1 for full-time and/or overall employment for multiple study areas across both undergraduate and postgraduate coursework graduates.

Staff can explore ACU's QILT data all by visiting the [Educational Analytics page on DataHub](#). For questions or feedback, please contact Evaluations.CEI@acu.edu.au.

Apply for a 2026 ACU Citation

Applications for ACU Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning close on **Monday 24 August 2026**. The citations recognise staff and teams who have made an outstanding contribution to student learning at ACU, with \$5,000 awarded to successful applicants.

Five citation categories are available, recognising:

1. contributions to student learning
2. teaching focused on the Catholic intellectual tradition
3. contributions to Indigenous education
4. early career teachers
5. casual staff

ACU has also introduced the ACU Award for Teaching Excellence, recognising the most outstanding ACU Citation recipient. No separate application is required, and the recipient will receive an additional \$5,000, bringing the total award value to \$10,000.

Staff are encouraged to review the guidelines and application requirements on the [Citations and Award webpage](#) before preparing their submission. Those seeking feedback on draft applications can submit them to [Susan Brooman-Jones](#) by **Monday 3 August 2026**. For further information, contact CEI@acu.edu.au.

Cost-of-Living assistance for students

Staff are reminded that ACU's Cost-of-Living Assistance program is still accepting referrals.

If a student mentions they are struggling with everyday expenses such as groceries, rent or fuel, staff can refer them through the [Cost-of-Living Assistance form on UniHub](#).

Within two business days, the Student Experience team will issue a \$50 e-gift card redeemable at Woolworths, BIG W or EG Ampol fuel stations. Staff can also use the form to connect a student directly with the Student Experience Team for broader support.

Students can be referred more than once, and the program will continue while funds remain available. For questions, contact StudentExperience@acu.edu.au.

Save the date: 2026 Showcase of Teaching and Learning

CEI, in partnership with Student Experience and Enhancement, will host the 2026 Teaching and Learning Showcase on **Thursday 3 December, 9.00am – 3.30pm**.

This year's theme, **Students as Partners**, will explore how students can help shape learning and teaching at ACU. The program will include a morning session hosted from North Sydney, livestream access for most campuses, and student-led campus breakout sessions after lunch.

While registrations are being arranged, staff are encouraged to save the date in their calendars and keep the day clear to join ACU colleagues for this year's Showcase.

Join the FEA Assessment Showcase

The Faculty of Education and Arts, in collaboration with CEI, will host the FEA Assessment Showcase on **Wednesday 30 September, 1–4 pm**. The event will be held online via Microsoft Teams.

The showcase will bring staff together to share good practice and emerging approaches to assessment redesign, including creative approaches to secure and open assessment in face-to-face and online settings.

The program will include short presentations from FEA staff, grouped by theme, as well as presentations from CEI staff and learning designers on effective assessment design in Canvas.

All academic and professional staff are welcome to attend. Please [download the calendar file](#) to add the event to your Outlook calendar.

Enrolments and Student Records Information Sessions

Enrolments and Student Records are hosting information sessions for Semester 2 2026. These sessions are open to academic and professional staff, including Course Advisers, National Unit Leaders, school and faculty staff, and anyone who would like to better understand student enrolment processes.

Topics will include:

- amendments to enrolment
- credit and Recognition of Prior Learning
- disengaged students and Clause 34
- Late Addition of Unit
- re-enrolment
- Unit Enrolment Waiver Requests, including bulk waivers
- key systems and reports, including Banner, Student Connect and Argos

Staff will also have the opportunity to ask questions and connect with the E&SR team.

Session details

Register for your preferred session using the links below. Once registered, open the confirmation email and select Accept to add the session to your calendar.

1. [Monday 3 August 2026, 11am – 12pm](#)
2. [Wednesday 5 August 2026, 2.30–3.30pm](#)

A recording and handbook will be made available on the [E&SR SharePoint site](#) for staff unable to attend live.

Promote Semester in Rome 2027 to students

Applications are now open for ACU's Semester in Rome program for Semester 1, 2027. Learning and teaching colleagues are encouraged to promote this opportunity to eligible undergraduate students.

Students can study at ACU's Rome campus, experience Roman life, build global connections and gain credits towards their degree. The program uses intensive study blocks, with students completing one unit at a time and between one and four units overall.

The [2027 Rome Academic Calendar](#) now includes Business units for the first time, alongside offerings in Education and the Humanities.

A range of [financial support options](#) are available, including the ACU Vice-Chancellor and President's Learning Abroad Grant and OS-HELP funding.

Direct students to the [Global Learning Portal](#) for program information, eligibility requirements, application details and the 2027 academic calendar. A promotional slide with a QR code is also available to share in class.

Applications close on 31 July 2026 and places are limited. Students are encouraged to register their interest early to secure their place. For enquiries, contact globallearning.outbound@acu.edu.au.

Academic Development support for faculty staff

The Academic Development Team supports teaching excellence across ACU by helping staff apply evidence-based learning and teaching approaches into practice.

The team works closely with faculties on curriculum design, course and unit reviews, and professional development initiatives, including the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (GCHE). They also provide advice and support on:

- learning and teaching approaches
- assessment design
- curriculum development
- learning and teaching policy matters

Each faculty has a dedicated Academic Developer to make it easier for staff to access tailored support. Staff are encouraged to contact their faculty's Academic Developer to discuss support needs or explore opportunities to enhance learning and teaching practice.

FACULTY	ACADEMIC DEVELOPER
Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS)	Ms Mary Huynh (Mary.Huynh@acu.edu.au)
Faculty of Education and Arts (FEA)	Dr Louise Maddock (Louise.Maddock@acu.edu.au)
Faculty of Law and Business (FLB)	Dr Vikki Pollard (Vikki.Pollard@acu.edu.au)
Faculty of Theology and Philosophy (FTP)	Dr Joe Campana (Joe.Campana@acu.edu.au)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) modules returning in July

The HERDSA Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Modules will be available again to registered ACU staff from late July.

Following significant redevelopment after the Canvas cyber incident, the modules will once again provide staff with opportunities to build their understanding of SoTL principles and practice.

To support collaborative learning, ACU Campus Communities of Learning Advancement (CCoLA) meetings will be scheduled throughout Semester 2 for staff interested in working through the modules with colleagues.

Associate Deans Learning and Teaching – Contact Details

Associate Professor Jennifer Carpenter	Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching, Faculty of Education and Arts	Jennifer.Carpenter@acu.edu.au
Dr Ian Elmer	Acting Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching, Faculty of Theology and Philosophy	Ian.Elmer@acu.edu.au

Professor Stephen Guinea	Associate Dean, Learning, Teaching and Professional Experiences, Faculty of Health Sciences	Stephen.Guinea@acu.edu.au
Professor Bhavani Sridharan	Associate Dean (Learning Teaching and Accreditation), Faculty of Law and Business	Bhavani.Sridharan@acu.edu.au