

Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Course Guide 2025

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Welcome!

On behalf of all of us at Centre for Education and Innovation (CEI) it is a privilege to warmly welcome you to the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (GCHE).

The GCHE has been specifically designed for you. You are either an academic with a direct teaching role or a learning and teaching (L&T) professional with a role in learning and teaching. The purpose of the GCHE is to help you to develop a theoretical and scholarly basis to inform the progressive development of your academic and L&T practice. As such, the course is primarily designed for ACU staff.

You will find the course has a strong developmental narrative. The first micro-credential in the course links with the next, allowing you to develop your learning and skills progressively. The course is structured in a way to improve student access, engagement and learning by offering **Mandatory** and **Elective** micro-credentials. This offers you greater choice of micro-credentials by offering all the micro-credentials concurrently in each professional term and paves the way for greater options for academic staff and providing greater efficiency with course progression.

The course aims to be relevant to you whether you are an academic of some years' standing or just starting out. It is designed so that you can draw upon your experience and apply what you learn to exploit synergies and maximise the links between work and study. The final two micro-credentials of the course in particular support you to undertake a scholarly project that integrates what you have been learning through the course.

The course is also entirely online, so you can access the course no matter where you are, and study at times that suit you, without the inconvenience of physical attendance requirements.

In keeping with its developmental narrative, the course has a theme running through which is to help you develop your own research and scholarship in learning and teaching. In this way the course aims to further equip you for ongoing learning and development.

I am confident you will enjoy this course, and that you will benefit from doing it for many years to come. My colleagues and I look forward to working with you, hearing about how the course helps you in your work, and seeing you graduate!

Dr Joe Campana
Course Coordinator

Course description

The GCHE is made up of eight micro-credentials. These are **each** 5 credit points in value, each taking nominally 75 hours of study time.

The eight micro-credentials must be studied in sequence, one at a time. We have designed each micro-credential to build on the ones that precede them. Each micro-credential period comprises eight teaching weeks. Each micro-credential includes only one summative assessment task. Your ability to do this well is scaffolded by formative assessment. You should plan on committing approximately 10 hours a week to study. There is a three/four-week break between each professional term to allow us time to finalise the marking of the summative assessments and grade entry in *Student Connect*.

The term dates for 2025 are:

Term	Term dates	Latest enrol date	Census Date	Micro-credentials offered
Professional Term ¹ 2	20 January to 14 March	9 February	10 March	UNMC510 UNMC520 UNMC530 UNMC540 UNMC550 UNMC560 UNMC570 UNMC581
Professional Term 4	14 April to 6 June	20 April	19 May	UNMC510 UNMC520 UNMC530 UNMC540 UNMC550 UNMC560 UNMC580 UNMC582
Professional Term 5	7 July to 29 August	22 June	21 July	As per PT2
Professional Term 8	22 September to 14 November	5 October	3 November	As per PT4

¹ When you enrol in a micro-credential, you will need to know the **Professional Term** number

You will find that there is some overlap with the standard semester 1 and 2 dates, but also that the study periods gives you longer to engage with your GCHE study than a standard unit. It is expected that this will provide you with options that allow you to engage more effectively. Full details of each micro-credential appear later in this guide.

Admission, course progression and course completion

When you start the course, you will need to enrol in the first micro-credential, UNMC510. At that time you should also enrol in the second micro-credential, UNMC520. To apply for admission, you should go to: <https://www.acu.edu.au/course/graduate-certificate-in-higher-education>

Please note: The application process assumes that you will pay tuition fees. Fees will be waived for your study in the first half of a year provided you are employed by ACU for 12 or more weeks between 1 January and 30 June of that year (usually through semester 1 and the subsequent marking period). Similarly, fees will be waived for your study in the second half of the year provided you are employed by ACU for 12 or more weeks between 1 July and 31 December of that year (usually through semester 2 and the subsequent marking period). If you have insufficient employment with ACU (or none), you have the choice to pay the fees or to defer your study to a later time when you do have employment with ACU. This applies even if you are part-way through the course.

A student has a maximum of 4 years from start to finish to graduate. Doing four micro-credentials each year means you will finish the certificate in two years (over eight professional terms).

A student can take a leave of absence / suspension of enrolment to extend the 4-year timeframe, but they must have these absences approved by the Course Coordinator, and they must be recorded on our records.

Mandatory micro-credential descriptions

Students must complete **all six** of these micro-credentials:

UNMC510 Foundations for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC510
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education
PREREQUISITES	NIL
INCOMPATIBLE UNITS	UNHE500 Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

Tertiary educators and (L&T) professionals (such as Academic Skills Advisers, Librarians, Placement supervisors etc) are responsible for supporting learning by creating intellectually stimulating, engaging, safe and responsive experiences, using all modes of delivery. They do this in a way that advances the goals of an institution in accordance with its policies and legislation. To do this effectively, educators and L&T professionals need to combine the knowledge of learning and teaching foundations and concepts with skills of critical reflection and reasoning and be able to draw on the scholarship of learning and teaching in higher education. Therefore, this microcredential aims to support students to reflect on their professional setting and practice as a teacher and L&T professional informed by reflective practice, and scholarly learning and teaching concepts. Other considerations include the needs and circumstances of learners, institutional mission and policies, and other governance requirements in the higher education sector.

UNMC520 Improving Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC520
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	IMPROVING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education
PREREQUISITES	UNMC510 Foundations for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
INCOMPATIBLE UNITS	UNHE500 Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

In higher education, it is important that academics and learning and teaching (L&T) professionals (such as Academic Skills Advisers, Librarians, Placement supervisors etc.) continuously reflect on their practice to improve the student experience. To do so, these tertiary educators need to combine an advanced knowledge of learning and teaching concepts and theories with skills of critical reflection and draw on the scholarship of learning and teaching in higher education to evidence their practice. This microcredential aims at students' teaching or L&T professional practice through the consideration and application of scholarly theories and concepts, and the needs and circumstances of higher education students. Other considerations also include the institution's Mission and its teaching and learning policies, teaching standards frameworks, and other governance requirements in the higher education sector.

UNMC530 Good Practice in Higher Education: Curriculum Design

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC530
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	GOOD PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CURRICULUM DESIGN
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education
PREREQUISITES	UNMC520 Improving Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
INCOMPATIBLE UNITS	UNHE501 Curriculum Design, Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education

As a higher education academics or learning and teaching (L&T) professionals (such as Academic Skills Advisers, Librarians, Placement supervisors etc.) knowledge, comprehension and skills in curriculum design are important. Along with critical reflection, these skills are vital in developing a higher education academic or L&T professional's scholarship of learning, teaching and academic leadership. Building upon a student's understanding of adult learning and teaching foundations and improved practice from UNMC510 and UNMC520 respectively, in this microcredential students will consider the role of curriculum as it relates to their role in higher education. In doing so, this will make students aware of the principles of curriculum and curriculum design. Students will examine, reflect on and justify the use of curriculum design principles in relation to their own curriculum and that of others in order to help better develop, design and implement their own curriculum. This microcredential aims to develop knowledge, comprehension and application of curriculum and curriculum design, and gain an understanding of educational evaluation practices.

UNMC540 Good Practice in Higher Education: Assessment Design

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC540
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	GOOD PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: ASSESSMENT DESIGN
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education

PREREQUISITES **UNMC530 Improving Learning and Teaching in Higher Education**

INCOMPATIBLE UNITS **UNHE501 Curriculum Design, Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education**

For higher education academics or learning and teaching (L&T) professionals (such as Academic Skills Advisers, Librarians, Placement supervisors etc.) knowledge, comprehension and skills in understanding the role that assessment design plays in higher education and its design are important to the role. Building on the students' understanding of learning and teaching foundations and concepts in higher education and principles of curriculum design from preceding microcredentials (UNMC510, UNMC520 and UNMC530), in this microcredential students will evaluate, (re)develop and/or implement assessment activities as it relates to their role and context. In doing so, it will make students aware of the principles of assessment design, and how this extends from the principles of curriculum design. Students will examine and reflect on these principles in relation to assessment tasks in order to further develop their understanding.

Students will progressively learn in a scholarly way basing this on assessment principles literature, and evidence a real-world imperative. Along with critical reflection, these skills are invaluable in underpinning the development of their scholarship of teaching. Therefore, this microcredential aims to develop knowledge, comprehension and application of skills in assessment design, while also gaining an understanding of the role of educational evaluation practices.

UNMC570 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in Higher Education: Ethics and Methods

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE **UNMC570**

MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE **SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (SoTL) IN HIGHER EDUCATION: ETHICS AND METHODS**

CREDIT POINTS **5**

DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER **4 Education**

FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE **070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education**

PREREQUISITES **Nil**

INCOMPATIBLE UNITS **UNHE503 Scholarship in Higher Education**

To be professionally capable and progressive as a tertiary educator, students need to ensure their practice is informed by an understanding of scholarship in learning and teaching. This micro-credential is designed to engage with and build on the knowledge and skills developed in preceding micro-credentials of the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education through the completion of a personalised SoTL project. Throughout the project, Students will learn the key principles of research design appropriate to the higher education context and properly reflect on the ethical considerations and constraints involved in researching with humans as defined and regulated by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). As part of the project, students will develop a research question that seeks to investigate an innovative, interesting, or troublesome aspect of their practice that is theorised by adult learning and teaching principles. Students will plan and justify a research approach that is founded on relevant literature and contributes to their own professional learning as well as the understanding of other practitioners in their field. Completing this micro-credential will develop the

knowledge and skills students need to complete an application for ethics approval to implement their planned research. Therefore, the aim of this micro-credential is to develop foundational knowledge and skills in SoTL and prepare students for applied research of their practice in teaching and learning in higher education.

UNMC580 Demonstrating Scholarly Practice in Higher Education

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC580
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	DEMONSTRATING SCHOLARLY PRACTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education
PREREQUISITES	UNMC570 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in Higher Education: Ethics and Methods

To be professionally capable and progressive as a tertiary educator, students need to ensure their practice is informed by an understanding of scholarship in learning and teaching (SoLT). This micro-credential builds on foundational SoLT knowledge, skills, and project planning developed in the previous micro-credential (UNMC570) by providing resources and processes that support reporting of scholarship. Students will continue the development of their project by reviewing a range of approaches to the analysis of qualitative and/or quantitative data and describing and justifying an analytical method suitable for that data that students have (or anticipate) in their SoLT project. Students will apply an analytical method to a data set in order to report and discuss findings from research including the implications of these findings for the higher education sector, integrate relevant scholarly literature (including higher education, professional and/or disciplinary sources) that informs the research question/s. Therefore, the aim of this micro-credential is to develop the student's skills in the demonstration of scholarship.

Elective micro-credential descriptions

Students must select **2 electives** from the following micro-credentials.

UNMC550 Evaluating Technology-enabled Learning in Higher Education

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC550
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	EVALUATING TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	070111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education
PREREQUISITES	Nil
INCOMPATIBLE UNITS	UNHE505 Technology Enhanced Learning in Higher Education or HLSC663 Simulation Design and Delivery in Higher Education

As a tertiary educator you need to support your students' learning in a digital space that is transformative, engaging, and flexible. To do this, you need to be able to identify and take advantage of what technology-enhanced learning can offer and critically evaluate these options. This unit helps meet this need by encouraging you to extend your scholarship of higher education into blended and online learning environments to evaluate teaching technologies and digital resources. Using evaluative perspectives on technology can help you select and modify the environment and support you offer all the students you teach and prepare them for digital workplaces and communities.

UNMC560 Designing and Implementing Technology-enabled Learning Activities in Higher Education

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC560
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING TECHNOLOGY ENABLED LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	079999
PREREQUISITES	Nil
INCOMPATIBLE UNITS	UNHE505 Technology Enhanced Learning in Higher Education

As a tertiary educator you are working with your students in a learning environment that blends networks and digital technologies with the physical classroom/lecture theatre/lab in ways that are increasingly flexible and permeable to the workplace and society. When you plan a learning sequence for your students, you are likely to draw on technology for learning activities and resources: this unit will help you consider the design and implementation of these sequences more deliberately. Using scholarly evidence, you will make use of learning design approaches to plan learning sequences that address a teaching challenge that you identify and then develop a prototype of the digital elements that you would need to implement this learning sequence. This unit aims to improve the learning outcomes of all the students you teach and help prepare them for digital workplaces and communities through the pedagogically informed selection and implementation of technologies for learning and teaching.

UNMC581 What works in higher education: Evidence-based teaching practices in the 'classroom'

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC581
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	WHAT WORKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES IN THE 'CLASSROOM'
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	071111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education

The creation of effective learning environments involves designing for learning. Designing for learning requires consideration of learning processes and the learning context. Learning processes comprise strategies that directly impact on the student experience of learning. Some examples include, teaching, multimedia presentations, learning activities, and assessment rubric design. The learning context

comprises strategies and practices that indirectly impact on the student experience of learning. These interact with direct approaches to create the holistic learning experience. Examples of indirect approaches include initiatives to enhance student engagement, well-being, purpose and belonging.

To ensure create effective learning environments, educators in higher education need empirical evidence about what works, how to interpret evidence, and how to apply evidence to their own teaching practice. The focus of this micro-credential is on the direct approaches, strategies and techniques that impact on the student experience of learning. The micro-credential UNMC582: What works in higher education: Evidence-based teaching practices that surround the classroom focuses on the indirect teaching practices that contribute to student learning.

In this micro-credential, students will learn skills related to sourcing, interpreting and applying evidence-based teaching practices within the 'classroom'. Students will first learn about evidence-based practice including what it is, and the different forms of evidence. Students will then learn how to find, critique, and interpret evidence relative to their context. Finally, students will learn how to translate evidence into practice. This will include balancing highest-level evidence alongside information from other sources.

UNMC582 What works in higher education: Evidence-based teaching practices that surround the 'classroom'

MICROCREDENTIAL CODE	UNMC582
MICROCREDENTIAL TITLE	WHAT WORKS IN HIGHER DUCATION: EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES THAT SURROUND THE 'CLASSROOM'
CREDIT POINTS	5
DISCIPLINE/FUNDING CLUSTER	4 Education
FIELD OF EDUCATION CODE	071111 Teacher Ed: Higher Education

The creation of effective learning environments involves designing for learning. Designing for learning requires consideration of learning processes and the learning context. Learning processes comprise strategies that directly impact on the student experience of learning. Some examples include, teaching, multimedia presentations, learning activities, and assessment rubric design. The learning context comprises strategies and practices that indirectly impact on the student experience of learning. These interact with direct approaches to create the holistic learning experience. Examples of indirect approaches include initiatives to enhance student engagement, well-being, purpose and belonging.

To ensure create effective learning environments, educators in higher education need empirical evidence about what works, how to interpret evidence, and how to apply evidence to their own teaching practice. The focus of this micro-credential is on the indirect approaches and strategies that impact on the student experience of learning. The micro-credential UNMC581: What works in higher education: Evidence-based teaching practices within the 'classroom' focuses on the direct teaching practices that contribute to student learning.

In this micro-credential students will learn skills related to sourcing, interpreting and applying evidence-based practices relating to teaching and learning in the 'classroom'. Students will first learn about evidence-based practice including what it is, and the different forms of evidence. Students will then learn how to find, critique, and interpret evidence relative to their context. Finally, students will learn how to translate evidence into practice. This will include balancing highest-level evidence alongside information from other sources.

Mode of delivery and structure

In 2025 each micro-credential uses the University's learning management system (LMS) **Canvas**. This capitalises on the maturity and capability of the students, but also provides equitable access to a full provision of learning experiences within which a community of scholars can be developed.

Each micro-credential, and/or the course as a whole, is structured with a progressive, constructive, developmental narrative that supports students' learning through a sequence of overlapping learning stages. In each stage, the nature of the learning and the nature of the teaching supports provided are different but complementary. Each stage builds on the next so that learning from one acts as necessary foundation for the next.

Reading and forwarding your course communication

You will be engaging in the GCHE study as a student. This includes the way you access the LMS: you will access Canvas as a '**student**' not as a staff member. This has consequences when you are also a staff member of the university.

First, as a staff member you will access Canvas using your staff login details. When you leave Canvas, you should formally log off before seeking to login as a student. Your alternative is to use two browsers – for example Chrome while accessing Canvas as a staff member, and Firefox while accessing it as a student.

Second, all formal communications about your study will be sent to your student email account – not your staff email account. Rather than having to check your student email account each day, you can set up a "forward" for your student email to be automatically redirected to your preferred email account (your staff email address for example). Given this you may want to redirect your student email to your staff (or other preferred email). Here are some guidelines on how to forward your student email <https://support.office.com/en-us/article/Forward-email-to-another-email-account-1ed4ee1e-74f8-4f53-a174-86b748ff6a0e>

Portfolios and ePortfolios

The GCHE provides you with a structured opportunity to collect and reflect on evidence for a teaching portfolio or ePortfolio. This is not a course requirement – but you might consider it a smart move because it is clear that ePortfolios are increasing in importance and also an efficient way to collate, store, organise and present information about yourself to multiple audiences for multiple purposes. You'll find guides to help you to progressively produce and refine your portfolio in the various Canvas pages for each micro-credential.

A portfolio may assist you in different ways at different points in your career, for example:

1. meeting probationary requirements;
2. reporting to your supervisor in performance review and planning meetings;
3. preparing applications for promotions; or
4. supporting applications for teaching awards, grants and scholarships.

For example, if you prepare a useful portfolio by the time you graduate, it could help you with applying for a Fellowship with Advance HE. You'll find that the GCHE is consistent with the UK Professional Standards Framework. The UKPSF is the basis of Advance HE's Higher Education Academy (HEA) Fellowship scheme. The HEA Fellowship scheme helps you to demonstrate a personal and institutional commitment to professionalism in learning and teaching in higher education. It provides individuals with recognition of their practice, impact and leadership of teaching and learning. HEA Fellowships have been adopted by increasing numbers of higher education institutions globally, including most universities in Australia.

Fees

ACU teaching staff are eligible to have their tuition fees waived. To qualify, you must be employed by ACU in a role that involves direct teaching, supporting learning and teaching, or a leadership role in teaching for five or more weeks of the professional term. The fee waiver is awarded one professional term at a time. Provided you remain an ACU teaching staff member, fees will be waived.

If you are awarded a fee waiver, you are respectfully requested to recognise its value by undertaking to keep to the expectations and time commitments of the course.

You should direct your fee enquiries to the course coordinator (Dr Joe Campana, joe.campana@acu.edu.au).

The purchase of textbooks (if any) and any equipment needed to access the online course materials is your responsibility.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy and procedures

<https://policy.acu.edu.au/document/view.php?id=235>

If you are applying for RPL, you are invited to liaise directly with the Course Coordinator for assistance in preparing your application. This is optional, but recommended.

Please note the following five points of ACU policy carefully:

1. Together with a completed RPL application form, it is your responsibility to write a 'case' that provides convincing evidence that your prior learning is equivalent of the learning outcomes of the unit you are applying for
2. ACU policy requires that your case relate to the whole of a specified unit of study (credit cannot be granted for parts of a unit). This is termed "specified credit"
3. You can submit an application for a maximum of two units. It is not possible to be given RPL for more than two units in the GCHE. In practical terms, you can submit two 'cases' prefaced by one RPL form, but each case and its supporting evidence needs to be able to stand alone so that each can be submitted for independent assessment
4. Each case must demonstrate a minimum 80% match with the content and learning outcomes of the unit you are seeking credit for
5. Policy also requires that the evidence you provide will be assessed according to the same standard as a student undertaking that unit. This means that there needs to be an appropriate level of detail in your case, along with supporting evidence

Points 4 and 5 above protect you and the institution by ensuring that credit is only given when the evidence presented sustains the argument that your prior learning is the equivalent of the units of study you apply for.

Course completion and Graduation

In your final professional term, as you undertake your final micro-credential, you must complete an *Application to Course Complete form* in order to be assessed for course completion, see <https://www.acu.edu.au/student-life/graduation/how-to-graduate>

This is an important last step to take before you can actually graduate.