Handbook for Tutors

School of Humanities, University of Adelaide

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Introduction

Welcome to teaching in the humanities at the University of Adelaide! The first time you teach is an exciting time, and a busy one! This handbook will walk you through each step of the tutoring journey, and seeks to provide guidance for both when you are in the classroom and working hard behind the scenes.

This handbook is aimed at tutors that have accepted a contract and have completed their casual onboarding tasks. If you are still weighing up whether to take on some tutorial teaching, this is a decision you should consider carefully. Tutoring is a fun and rewarding experience, but it is also a time-consuming and emotionally demanding role. Before you accept a contract, it is good to consult those you trust and your supervisor to ensure you have the capacity to tutor. (Remember that to be considered for causal teaching roles in the School of Humanities you need to sign up to the University's casual register.)

This handbook provides an overview of each step of the tutoring process: from gaining an initial understanding of what a tutor does (sec. 1), to meeting with the course coordinator for the first time (sec. 2) to reflecting on your teaching experience and deciphering your Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) feedback (sec. 8). Along the way we touch on topics including practical ideas for the classroom (sec. 3), getting to grips with marking and assessment (sec. 4), ensuring inclusivity in your teaching practice (sec. 5), managing conflict (sec. 6), and keeping on top of your workload (sec. 7). Because a number of topics are relevant to several of these headings, there is some repetition of material; we thought it better to retain such repetition and make each broad section relatively self-contained. Throughout, we use the language of *tutors* and *tutorials*. This should be understood to proxy for all sorts of discussion-focussed smaller group teaching that a casual might be asked to run: seminars, workshops, discussions, or tutorials proper.

All the guidance given in this handbook should be understood as general advice rather than strict rules governing how to tutor. As every classroom is different, there may be some tips that are not suitable for the classroom in which you find yourself. Nonetheless, we hope this handbook will provide useful guid-

ance for first-time tutors, and serve as a helpful compendium of resources for more experienced tutors. We also hope it will serve to anchor expectations of course coordinators, who may be reminded of constraints on the time and capacity of tutor, and ensure equal treatment of tutors engaged in courses across the School.

The need for this handbook was initially flagged by Elinor Pryce, reflecting on her own experience as a beginning tutor. The idea of producing the substantial document you are now reading emerged from further discussion with Antony Eagle. The majority of this handbook was drafted by EP, with AE finalising the present version. The project was made possible by a 2023 Learning and Teaching grant from the Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Economics awarded to AE, which funded EP's time over several months to write and revise the manuscript.

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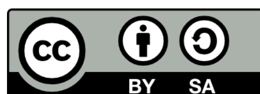

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Section 1

Responsibilities and Expectations of Tutors

1.1 The Role of a Tutor

As tutors, we play a crucial role in a wider system in which our students are participating. The students we teach will be taking multiple courses, often across disciplines, and will have contact with multiple teachers throughout their university years. The purpose of tutorials is to provide students with the opportunity to unpack and discuss their ideas in a small group. As such, tutors provide the rare opportunity within the vast university system for students to engage in learning environment tailored to, and hopefully driven by, their responses and ideas about the material they have been hearing about in the large lecture theatre (or online). Tutors work as part of a large team of academic and professional staff across the university to deliver education to students, and it is important to understand where the tutor fits and who they need to engage with in this ecosystem. Most directly the tutor will be managed by a course coordinator who is responsible for the overall delivery of a course. We say a bit more about the role of course coordinator later (sec. 2.1), focussing here on the narrower niche occupied by the tutor.

Tutorials are intended to supplement and to deepen engagement with content that has already been taught to the students. Unlike in lectures, we do not need to try to relay new information to the students but rather take the time to help them unpack the ideas and develop their own position on the material they've been taught recently. In the humanities, this often means tutors are responsible for cultivating the students critical thinking skills to evaluate and take a position on the debate that has been presented. As part of bolstering and

fostering student learning, tutors may also be asked to conduct some evaluation of student performance in class (perhaps marking participation, or work completed during class time).

It is vital to emphasise that tutors are not lecturers. We are not expected to have mastery over all the content presented in lectures or in the course readings; our teaching is not supposed to involve conveying new content to students or any sort of authoritative pronouncement on the readings or other course material. The tutor is like a mountain guide, broadly familiar with the area and able to direct students on interesting and achievable paths through the topics and ideas raised for discussion that week. Ultimately it is up to the students which paths they wish to take, and up to them too to do the work of actually traversing those paths. We are not there to carry the students on our backs and do most of the work for them. A successful tutorial will likely involve very little didactic instruction.

Tutors are often asked to take on the additional role of marking assignments outside of class time, and while that is separately remunerated at Adelaide, it is an important aspect of the full role of a tutor, and this guide deals with it too. In assessing student work, we are providing students with feedback and guidance to refine their academic writing and research skills. This work behind the scenes plays an indispensable role in assisting students communicate the ideas developed in tutorials and ensuring students are engaging in good academic practices.

1.2 Scope of tutors' responsibilities

It is important that we tutors are aware of what is part of our role, and what is beyond the scope of our responsibilities. This helps ensure our workload remains manageable, that we are only working the hours we are paid for, and – for many of us – ensures we have the time and capacity to move forward with our own scholarship and research. This last is obviously crucial for the many tutors who are taking on casual teaching while in candidature for a research degree.

Before anything else, tutors are employees of the University. That means all tutors need to be aware of the University's expectations on values and behaviours, including actively avoiding and discouraging unacceptable behaviour.

The most high-level constraint on the role and responsibilities of a tutor is provided by the University Enterprise Agreement. The current agreement specifies that a 'standard tutorial' is associated with two additional hours of work outside of the classroom to conduct 'directly associated non-contact duties in

the nature of preparation, reasonable contemporaneous marking and student consultation'.[1]

In practice, this means that the role of the tutor is to deliver an hour of tutorial teaching, supported by an hour of preparation (review of course material, particularly material intended for discussion in tutorial), and with an allowance for an hour for consultation with students. If the students are seeking clarification for something that was discussed in your tutorial, or needing general advice on assignment content or feedback, then as the tutor you are responsible for these queries. It is expected you will be contacted a few times with questions about the tutorial content or assignment preparation and feedback.

As a primary contact for the students that attend our tutorials, there is a risk that tutors take on responsibility for tasks that are beyond what the role requires. Obviously given these time allowances, there are many things that a tutor would ideally do that – in practice – tutors at Adelaide are not being employed to do. This includes many things that a tutor might themselves wish to do, things that exemplify diligence and care for students but which are strictly speaking supererogatory as the job currently functions. Often, students are not aware of the inner workings of the university, especially if they are in their first year. Given the rapport we have with our tutorial students, they will approach us with problems when they are unsure where to go. More often than not, it is the course coordinator's responsibility to resolve their concerns. When this is not possible, there are other services we can refer the students to rather than try to solve their query ourselves. The rest of this handbook will provide greater detail into the role of the tutor. For now, here are a few common examples of responsibilities that are beyond our role that you may encounter early in your teaching.

Lecture Attendance If you a tutoring in a course that may have two hours of lecture per week, your one hour of paid preparation time would not stretch to cover attendance at those lectures. Accordingly you cannot be required to attend lecture as part of your tutorial role. Indeed, course coordinators must be mindful of the allowances for tutorial preparation and should be packaging up the material needed for the tutorial in such a way that a suitably capable tutor can prepare within an hour to run a class.

Course Content With only an hour of preparation time, tutors cannot be expected to have complete mastery of the course material, especially if course content is regularly updated. This is, on reflection, probably a good thing, given the role of the tutor (sec. 1.1). See sec. 2.2 for some ideas about how

[1] A 'repeat tutorial' covers only one additional hour for consultation and marking, on the assumption that preparation is covered by the standard tutorial.

to approach course content.

Feedback Time allocated for marking and consultation preclude extensive individualised consultation on essays for each student, and you are not and cannot be expected to provide that. Nor do most students benefit from it: students (and future markers!) are typically better off with a few actionable 'big ticket' suggestions for improvement rather than line-by-line commentary on a their work.

Administrative matters Any questions regarding deadline extensions, essay grades, course enrolment, access plans and other administrative issues should be forwarded to the course coordinator as tutors do not have the authority to guide students on these topics. It can be as simple as forwarding the emails on to the course coordinator to reply, or if many students approach you with the same problem in a tutorial, sending a quick email to let the course coordinator know many students are encountering the same problem.

Enrolment issues Many students will be overwhelmed at the start of the year with the enrolment system and which modules they can take. Some students will be enrolled in advanced degrees and can become anxious about achieving the grade average required for them to stay in the advanced stream. As tutors we do not have the knowledge, nor are we expected to know, the requirements for each degree. When these questions arise, it is best to advise them to seek out their course advisors. Often, there are few advisors in the hub at Ask Adelaide who can answer students' questions.

Adjusting to Adelaide life International or interstate students may need more assistance with adjusting to the Australian system. It is important as tutors that we ensure our classrooms are accessible for the many international students that attend the University of Adelaide. However, if a student has more general concerns such as about accommodation, finding work, visa conditions, or ways to connect with other students, it is best to refer them to International Student Support or Accommodation Services who can provide them with the resources they need.

Pastoral Support For many students, the transition into university life can be difficult. Now adults in the education system, our students can be grappling with many difficult life events which can affect their studies. Your tutorial students may confide in you about current problems they are experiencing. In these instances, your role is to support their academic progress. As we will detail when we discuss students in distress (sec. 6.5), it is best to inform the student of the extension procedure and encourage them to disclose to the course coordinator the difficulties they are having. The university has a counselling service that is free for students to use,

which may need to contact in order to seek extensions for their assignments. As difficult as it may be, it is important that you do not become involved with the student's personal life as this goes beyond the scope of your professional duties. Rather, it is best to highlight the services that the university has to support our students in difficult times.

Plagiarism When marking, it is easy to get bogged down searching for signs of plagiarism or the involvement of generative AI (sec. 4.5). However, as tutors, we cannot implement any of the penalties that occur if a student has plagiarised. It is important that we do not try to either, as the accusation of plagiarism is very serious and there are elaborate and quite legalistic procedures in place to manage such accusations. There are academic integrity officers that must be called upon to ensure that the matter is handled in conjunction with the complex University policy. If you believe a student may have plagiarised or gotten impermissible human or AI assistance with their essay, it is best to make a note of their number and send a list of potential cases to your course coordinator to handle.

The rest of this handbook will focus on what the responsibilities of a tutor are, which are mainly to facilitate good discussion to aid the development of students' ideas. It is important to remember that we are part of system that we can use to ensure our workload does not become unmanageable. If you are finding that many students are seeking you out for issues beyond the tutorial content and assignment feedback, it may be worth clarifying in tutorials what your role is, and flag where they can seek other kinds of support. It is important to also keep the course coordinator in the loop as they can communicate with the whole student cohort if there are issues affecting many students. If you are unsure what is reasonable for your course coordinator to require you to do, as your line manager the head of department can clarify the scope of your responsibilities.

1.3 Students' legitimate expectations of tutors

Given the student-facing role of tutoring, and that tutorials are mostly small groups, tutors are encouraged to build rapport and foster a friendly relationship with their class. Having a good atmosphere within the classroom is undeniably important, however it is crucial to balance this alongside other teaching skills and expectations. You have been selected to be a tutor given your knowledge within your field. Therefore, it is important that we focus on meeting the students' educational expectations as well as trying to foster friendly relationships.

In later sections sec. 2.3, we will detail some exercises you can use at the

start of a new class to compile and make explicit the expectations you have of the students, and what they expect of you as their tutor. This is important as this transparency should quash any unreasonable expectations students may have of you, as well as assist in ensuring students meet one another's educational needs. However, there are some more general principles that tutors can follow to ensure they are delivering adequate tutorials and satisfying student expectations.

Clear communication Often the key to ensuring you meet students' expectations is to provide clearly structured tutorials, and to flag the rationale behind the exercises and discussions you will be having in a tutorial. Especially if students are adjusting to a new learning style such as discussion-based learning, it is important to flag throughout the tutorial the main aims and key takeaways of the activities.

Managing a safe and inclusive classroom As tutors, we are responsible for ensuring each and every student is comfortable in our classroom. If a conflict or uncomfortable comment is made, your students will look to you to diffuse the situation. This means that whilst teaching it is important to tune into the dynamic of the classroom and lead with a level of authority that means you are able to gain control if a classroom becomes hostile. You should try not to take sides in cases of academic disagreement, but you may need to make a firm intervention in cases where comments in class stray into personal hostility or harassment. If nothing else, calling out sexist or racist remarks (for example) will help keep learning on track; doing so consistently will set clear expectations on the importance of collaborative behaviour in class and help underscore your distinctive position as the manager of class discussion, not merely another participant within in.

Understanding of the overall structure of the course content and assessment As already noted (sec. 1.2), it would be unrealistic for your course coordinator and your students to expect you to have extensive knowledge of the topics in the course. Rather than trying to educate yourself on matters of detail, it is better to focus on the overall structure of the course, and how the content of the tutorials is relevant to the assessment. This way you can refine the knowledge you need to confidently lead a tutorial and provide students with a focused and relevant explanation of the key ideas throughout the course.

Useful comments and academic guidance When contributing in a tutorial, students will look to you for a response to their contribution. This could be reassurance that they have understood correctly, it could be a follow up question to develop their thinking further, or a correction of an error

or a critique. Whatever the response, students are expect a response that signals they have been understood and that you have carefully considered their contribution.

1.4 Tutors' legitimate expectations of students

If you are tutoring a first-year course, which is often the case for first-time tutors, the majority of your students most recent educational experience was their secondary school education. It is important to recognise that each individuals schooling will have been different, however, often lessons in secondary education are highly structured and fairly prescriptive so that students can obtain a qualification. As a result, many students will be expecting a similar level of guidance in the tutorial. This means they can find it a difficult to adjust to a university tutorial which is intentionally designed to allow students to explore a topic more freely. To help with this transition, it is important to clarify what the role of a tutorial is, and what as tutors we expect of students.

Generally, in the humanities, tutorials are an opportunity to workshop and explore ideas. They are often discussion based, but in certain areas they may be a chance to go over complex content. Given the small class size, whatever the activity, tutorials provide a space where students can be active participants in their learning, unlike in lectures where students play a passive role. This shift from passive to active participation can be difficult for students at first, but clarifying our expectations of the students can help them engage proactively with the content and take a lead in the discussions. Here a few general expectations that it is reasonable for tutors to have of their students.

Completed the prepared reading/exercises Students should know that they are expected to have completed the prepared reading and exercises. Nonetheless, it can important to mention this in the first tutorial in case the message got lost. This is also a good opportunity to bring up MyUni and show the students where they can access the tutorial materials as sometimes they are not familiar with the system.

Taken time to try to understand the material Students can often be reluctant to share in discussions in case they are wrong. It is useful to clarify that we are not expecting students to come in to tutorial with a finalised position or perfect answers to the activity. (Often we prefer they do not have such a firm opinion.) Rather, we expect they will have spent some time to try understand and develop the beginnings of the tutorial to be able to participate in discussion, and that they retain some open-mindedness

about the topic which can make for a more fruitful and collaborative environment.

Listen and respond to their peers Sometimes students mistake tutorials as a time to listen to the tutor give their thoughts and ideas on a topic. From the first tutorial, make clear the purpose of tutorials: for the students to actively engage with clarifying and understanding the course content through discussion with each other. Making this clear from the start can help students feel more comfortable to actively contribute rather than rely on the tutor to give impromptu lectures throughout the class.

Communicate when they're unsure Acknowledge at the start that there may be times that your explanations or directions for an activity might not make sense. In these instances, let students know that it is important that they communicate if they are unsure, because if one student is confused usually they all are.

Maintaining a safe and inclusive classroom Every student has a responsibility to their peers to ensure that the classroom is a productive and welcoming environment. Students should not belittle or harass other students in class. Every student in their own actions must ensure that when participants in class make mistakes or expose ignorance on some factual matter, those contributions are met with openness and constructive remedies, rather than disdain. That does not mean no one should disagree – far from it. But disagreement needs to target the views expressed, not the individual expressing them. Moreover, each student has a responsibility to come to tutorial with an openness to changing their own mind; antecedently fixed views rarely make for productive intellectual exchange.

Section 2

Getting Started

2.1 Communicating with the Course Coordinator

Throughout this handbook, we have and will continue to refer to what at Adelaide is called the *course coordinator*. It is important we briefly clarify the role of the course coordinator. In a nutshell, the course coordinator is responsible for managing all aspects of delivery of a particular iteration of a course in a given year or semester. In a typical case, the course coordinator may have designed the course — its content, components, and how it is to be delivered – and they may be responsible for any lectures (or their pre-recorded equivalents). But it is not infrequent that courses might be delivered by a team of lecturers; and for some courses coordination responsibilities may be undertaken by someone who was not involved in the design of the course. In rare situations it may even be that a course coordinator is themselves appointed on a casual contract.

The course coordinator may have support in the delivery of components of the course from colleagues, but ultimately the successful delivery of the course and the submission of course grades falls to them. When there is funding (either from the school or through grant support), a course coordinator may have support from casual staff in the delivery of components of the course, most frequently tutorials and marking. Technically, the School is responsible for hiring tutors, though this is typically delegated to heads of department. However, as the course coordinator is responsible for delivering the course, if you are appointed to one of these supporting roles, then you will be working closely with the course coordinator, and at their reasonable direction, to ensure a successful offering. Likewise, course coordinators are responsible for providing tutors with guidance and support throughout the semester as they contribute to the various activities within the course that they have been employed to support.

If you are weighing up whether to tutor a course, meeting with the course coordinator beforehand can help with the decision as they'll be able to talk you through the specifics of the role as it will manifest in that particular course. If you decide to take up an offer to tutor or mark in a course, you should be issued a contract by the school. Once you have accepted the offer and signed your contract, it is a good idea to arrange a meeting with the course coordinator. They may initiate the meeting, but do not rely on this! The way contracts are organised there is a chance they may not have your details until just before the first tutorial. It is quite likely you will already know the course coordinator, particularly if you are a current HDR candidate. If not, it is good to briefly introduce yourself in the email with details of your previous teaching experience and current research.

In that first meeting, the course coordinator should provide an overview of the course and the overall teaching aims. They should help you understand what they are hoping your contribution to the success of the course will be, and also give you a firm idea of what the role will involve. You should expect to gain a broad overview of the course content, including whether there might be any course content you would need to get up to speed on. You should get guidance on how tutorials are to be delivered and any desired outcomes from tutorials. You should also be given an indication of the types of assessment and the assignment deadlines, so you can see how the marking load fits with your other responsibilities. The course coordinator should also be able to provide more background into the kinds of students that take the course – for example, is it a core course for a certain major, or an elective taken by a diverse cohort of students? All of this information is useful for you in calibrating your own approach to those parts of the course you are now responsible for.

Course coordinators would at one time have been tutors themselves, so they should be able to provide you with relevant background to the course. However, do not hesitate to ask any questions you might have about tutoring on their course! They may have simply forgotten to mention something, or perhaps your question concerns an issue they might not have had to consider themselves when they began teaching.

The course coordinator should talk you through the typical structure of the tutorials and how they expect the tutor to deliver the tutorial outline. Depending on the course coordinator, some tutorials will have a rigid structure to reflect a certain learning model, whereas others may take a looser approach of having a broad set of discussion questions to work through. Whatever their approach to tutorials, it is important to establish what their overall aims are for the tutorial and how you as a tutor can assist in achieving these aims. This should also include such practical information as whether attendance is required, or

whether there is a mark for participation (and how you are expected to assess that). You should be informed if there is anything unusual or distinctive about the expected tutorial activities, and if the course coordinator expects a significant degree of autonomy from you in how you approach the classroom and the course material. We do not wish to be prescriptive here, but it would be considered poor practice to leave the format and topics of tutorials up to the tutor, and it is wholly reasonable for you as a tutor to request the course coordinator provide you with some ideas about the intended content and structure for each tutorial.

After your first meeting with the course coordinator, it is important to continue to communicate frequently. Some course coordinators like to debrief after each tutorial, whereas others expect you to reach out when you need guidance. Some prefer meeting in person, others communicate predominantly via email. Whatever medium is adopted, it is important in the first meeting to establish the best way to keep in contact. Keep in mind that you are only paid for a certain number of hours for tutorial preparation, so if you are meeting regularly, make sure you account for this time when planning how to use your paid hours to prepare for the tutorials.

Throughout the semester, the course coordinator continues to be your first port of call. If a tutorial has taken an unexpected direction, the course coordinator is there to debrief and advise you. If a student is distressed, the course coordinator will assist you with the procedures, and should themselves take responsibility for liaising with any university services they deem necessary. If you are confused by a tutorial outline, they will help clarify what they intended by that particular part of the outline. If you come across a suspect essay when marking, the course coordinator will investigate. Although some course coordinators may be more enthusiastic than others in their attempts to delegate work to their tutors, it remains ultimately the course coordinator's responsibility to assist tutors in making the course a success throughout the semester. As this handbook will repeatedly emphasise, hopefully in a way that will be reassuring to first time tutors: *if in doubt, talk to the course coordinator*.

2.2 Navigating course content

It can be tempting when preparing for the first tutorial to do a deep dive into the content and spend hours reading up on the topics to be discussed in your tutorials. However, not only would this mean that you are dedicating unpaid time to prepare for the tutorials, as a tutor it is not necessary for you to have an extensive knowledge of all the topics in the course. A broad and deep knowledge

base is for the course coordinator and/or lecturers to worry about. A tutor's role is quite different (sec. 1).

Rather than aiming for in-depth knowledge of the course, it is better to begin with a general understanding of the course structure. Once the course coordinator has talked you through the broad structure of the course, the next step is to look at the information provided to the students on the learning management system, aka MyUni. You will doubtless need to navigate MyUni throughout the course, so if you are unfamiliar with it – especially in the tutor rather than the student role – you should take some time to familiarise yourself. Let the course coordinator know promptly that you need to be added if you do not have access to the MyUni pages for the course.

There are few things to look for in MyUni that will help streamline your preparation:

Tutorial outline The course coordinator will have designed a tutorial outline or similar. This may just be a set of topical discussion prompts, or it could be a series of activities to facilitate. The priority when preparing for the tutorial is to ensure that you understand the content needed to guide the students through the outline, such as the reading or the details of the case study being used. Knowing the details of these outlines before the first tutorial will help ensure that the discussions you have in the classroom remain relevant, and help prevent going down a rabbit hole when preparing.

The Readings Often in the humanities, the tutorials will be based around some reading the students are assigned to read in preparation. The readings, alongside the tutorial outline, should be the main focus of your preparation. It is advised you dedicate most of your preparation time to looking over the assigned piece, especially the parts that are referred to in the tutorial outline. Again, a deep knowledge of the different interpretations of any set texts is not the aim; still less would you be expected to familiarise yourself with any secondary literature. Your focus in reading the set texts should be on the likely pinch points for your students, so you can be prepared for what they might ask you to help clarify.

Weekly or Topical Modules Seeing how the course progresses each week is a good indicator of what the main concepts or ideas the students need to learn in each week before moving on to the next topic. Knowing the sequence of modules can help contextualise the planned tutorial activities and clarify the focus of the tutorial.

Lecture Slides If you wish, you can attend any live lectures (or watch any recordings) on a voluntary basis. Course coordinators cannot expect this of

you, as it would likely exceed your bundled preparation time. You may however wish to make sure you have a good grasp on the course material for your own piece of mind and your own intellectual development. Even if you do not have time to view the lectures, it is worth quickly looking over any lecture slides so that you are aware of what the students have been taught that week. It is likely students will refer to the lecture material throughout their discussions, and you will be able to manage that discussion more successfully if you have a passing familiarity with that material.

Assessment tasks You should also familiarise yourself with any upcoming assessment tasks, such as essays, which may draw on material discussed in tutorial. For example, if the set essay question on topic X has a particular focus, that can help structure your preparation and your management of scarce classroom time.

It can be tempting to over-prepare, especially if you are nervous or uncertain. Yet, the role of a tutor is different to that of a lecturer. We are there to facilitate discussion and help students develop their own ideas in response to the content that has already been taught to them. In fact, one benefit of graduate student tutors is that we can recall and model to students how to work through complex texts and ideas and demonstrate how to acquire knowledge, rather than seeming to have it all at our finger tips. When preparing, it is best to focus on how to deliver the tutorial and how it fits into the overall course, rather than trying to make sure you know everything.

2.3 The first day

The first day of teaching is an exciting day but you may also be quite nervous. Fortunately, the first tutorial is usually lighter on content and more about getting to know everyone. It may take you a moment to get comfortable in the classroom, but usually the students are friendly and enthusiastic and the nerves quickly subside. It is always a good idea to arrive early so you have time to check all the equipment you need is working and to arrange the classroom how you'd like it. (You may even want to check out the room before semester begins just to get comfortable with the space.) Feel free to rearrange furniture – often tutorial rooms are set up in rigid rows which may not conduce to group discussion. If AV equipment isn't working, information is posted in every classroom about how to get help from an AV technician remotely – you may need to call, so bring your phone.

There a few activities you can do on the first day that will help set a welcoming tone for the rest of the semester. As for all the advice in this handbook, these should only be taken as suggestions and may not fit with your particular tutorial set-up. The list is not extensive: there may be other activities and exercises that are more fitting. Nonetheless, they are good starting point for helping yourself and the students feel more comfortable in the classroom:

Name tags Learning every student's name can be difficult. Luckily, as tutors, we can access a list of names and photos of our students on MyAdelaide. To help the students learn each other's names, for the first few sessions it can be useful to bring some sticky labels and markers for the students to write their names, pronouns, and any other relevant details on.

Introductions Introductions are useful for the students to get to know you a little better and it helps you as a tutor gauge the demographic of the class. When introducing yourself, you do not want to overshare or take up too much time covering your academic history. Your name, your research area and your interest in the course is usually sufficient. Once you've introduced yourself, the students can give a similar introduction such as sharing what their major is and why they picked this course.

Icebreakers There are many different icebreaker activities you can do to help create a relaxed mood to begin the class. A classic is sharing two truths and a lie and everyone has to guess what the lie is. Icebreakers can be fun but it is important to use your judgement. Sometimes they can backfire and make students feel more uncomfortable than at the start; some classroom groups will resist, seeing icebreakers as trivial or infantilising. Choose any icebreaker carefully.

Share expectations In the next section, we will detail some shared expectation exercises. It is useful on the first day to make clear to the students what you expect of them in the tutorial, and learn (and perhaps correct) what they are expecting of you. This helps ensure everyone is on the same page and can quash any future confusions later in the semester.

2.4 Shared expectation exercises

The expectations outlined in secs. 1.3, 1.4 are just some examples of reasonable expectations for you and the students to have of each other. It can be a fruitful activity to spend time in the first tutorial working together to draw out some of these shared expectations. This helps make the expectations explicit and ensure they're understood, and gives students a chance to voice what they are needing from the tutor. Further, by involving the students in the process, means they

are more likely to take the expectations seriously as they have been properly consulted. It can also provide an opportunity for you to nip any misconceptions in the bud.

There are a few different ways you can facilitate a shared expectation exercise:

A class constitution In the classroom, you can write up a class constitution together. Typically, you'd begin with the students discussing in small groups what some of the basic tenets of a class constitution would look like, before coming together as a whole class to write up a document that details expectations of students and of the tutor.

'Bad' tutorials Sometimes students find it hard to articulate the positive expectations they can have, but they will all have ideas of what they don't want in the classroom. Starting from the negatives can be a good jumping off point to establish what we would like each other to do in order to keep the tutorials enjoyable and productive.

Post-it note brainstorm Students may be shy to share. Handing out post-it notes and pens and getting the students to list any expectations they may have and stick them on the board/wall can encourage participation. The post-it notes can then become prompts for a whole class discussion about tutorial expectations.

Section 3

Teaching Methods and Styles

3.1 Teaching in the humanities

Humanities is a diverse school, and one that encompasses many different teaching styles and techniques. To the extent that there is anything in common across our disciplines, perhaps what unites the humanities is the shared aim of understanding the intricate workings of the human world. We look to the past, present and future to consider ways in which human beings, human societies, and our cultural products emerge from and illuminate the world, and facilitate meaningful change.

When teaching in the humanities, we are asking our students to adopt a critical lens, to open the *status quo* up to question, and to engage with ideas in a creative and unique way. Often, there is excitement in our classrooms when students are introduced to a theory which frames their existing world in a new way, or a text whose viewpoint enables them to see parts of the world they hadn't previously encountered or noticed. This can also feel threatening, as students who may have been comfortable in existing ways of thinking and being are forced to reckon with alternatives.

Our tutorials are the perfect opportunity for students to practice and hone their critical thinking skills. Already provided with an overview of a new theory or new text or new phenomenon from the lectures, they can now explore this new material in a classroom to help organise and develop their ideas. As tutors, we are there to nourish their ideas: present them with challenges or counter-examples to strengthen their argument, help them consider applications of their thinking, or push them to engage with translating theory into action.

3.2 Purpose of discussion

As we have seen, tutorials main function is for students to actively engage with the course content and develop their own ideas. One of the most effective methods for active learning is facilitating discussions around a reading or case study related to the concepts covered in lectures. The main purpose of discussion is that it is students communicating with one another, working through difficult ideas and developing critical positions. Unlike lectures where the main focus is to relay course content, the purpose of discussion is for students to engage and apply the knowledge they have gained from the lectures.

Discussion is one of the most effective strategies to develop students thinking and writing skills. Discussing ideas and problems in a group environment requires students to engage with the content beyond simply being able to recall the content. Discussions encourages students to evaluate and analyse academic texts, whilst elevating their ability to communicate complex ideas. Discussion aids the ability to logically approach a problem and generate coherent responses which are the key skills that students require to develop their academic writing skills. Although we may not be explicitly teaching students how to construct an argument, engaging in the course content in this way prepares them to be able to structure their essays coherently.

Classroom discussion further serves the purpose of assisting students with negotiating and responding to positions they may be unfamiliar with and potentially disagree with. Often in the humanities we are discussing ideas that our students feel passionate about, and our students may enter the classroom with an initial position on the topic. Via discussion, students can work together to unpack their views, and challenge dominant positions that typically go uncritiqued outside of academia. Working through ideas in this way is highly effective way for students to develop their critical thinking and ability to respond constructively to opposing ideas.

Whether in small groups, or a whole class discussion, discussions help students to connect with one and other and experience the benefits of a strong academic community. This can be especially helpful when deadlines start to build as students can support each other by reading drafts and brainstorming ideas. It also helps reinforce the idea that our students are leading the way as the potential next generation of researchers and academics. Classroom discussions allow students ideas and conversations with each other take centre stage, and in turn instil confidence in our students.

3.3 Fostering discussion

Although you should be equipped with an outline for the tutorial and a list of questions to ask your class, engaging students in meaningful discussion can require more work than clearly posing questions to the class. In fact, often when we ask students a question, our students respond by staring silently back at us. In some cases, one overly confident student will respond but it can be difficult to encourage the rest of the class to offer their own thoughts. This is a very common phenomenon: even the most talented tutor will have experienced blank stares and long silences when trying to begin a discussion. Luckily, there are a few ways we can structure our classroom and engage students so that they feel comfortable to offer their reflections and discuss difficult ideas.

Use names Not only does knowing your students name facilitate a more personalized learning experience for the students, it is can be helpful to actively involve each student in the discussion. Once you know names, you can refer back to what a student said previously more easily, and it is more likely to encourage them to expand on what they said. For example, if John says something that builds upon Sarah's point made earlier you can explicitly state this and engage John and Sarah in conversation with one and other. It can be difficult to remember every student's name, fortunately you can access a class list of student's photo and name via Access Adelaide.

Small Groups Often students are nervous to speak to the whole class. Especially in the first few tutorials, it can be productive to have the students discuss the questions/activity in small groups before feeding back to the whole class. This way each student has a chance to share and participate if they find speaking in front of large groups difficult. Usually towards the end of the semester the students will be more familiar with each other and it can make sense to transition to whole class discussions. (Numbers may well have declined over the semester too, making whole class discussion more feasible.)

Remind students of the purpose of discussion-based learning Students can be hesitant to participate in discussions because they are afraid of 'getting it wrong'. It can go a long way to remind students that discussions are an opportunity to try out new thoughts and ideas which are still developing, so it is the ideal time to try out an initial argument that may need refining. Further, as a tutor, we are not expecting our students to have a perfected understanding of the topics but rather are looking to see that they are thoughtfully engaging.

Speak less Due to the awkwardness of long silences, it can be tempting to be-

gin answering the questions yourself to fill the silence. However, it is partially the students' reliance on lectures which hinders their ability to engage in discussion. Therefore, continuing to lecture in the tutorials can put the students back in listening mode rather the encourage them to actively contribute. It can also make them more nervous to share their ideas if the tutor's position is offered first – if they disagree, they may take this to mean that they're mistaken. So it is often best to endure the silence and give the students time to think about their response.

Rephrase the question Sometimes students don't respond because they don't understand what they are being asked. Here it can be useful to rephrase the question or use an example to help them situate the theoretical question in a familiar real-life case. If they are still unsure, it can be useful to break the question down into incremental steps, giving them a chance to slowly digest the complex idea.

It is important to remember that the purpose of discussion is for the students to engage and have the opportunity to develop their own thoughts and ideas, or as the literature calls it to be co-creators of knowledge. At first this can be understandably intimidating for the students and it can take a fair bit of trial and error to discover what techniques work best for your class, and what works for one class may not for another. Don't be afraid to switch things up when a previous method hasn't worked, but always keep in mind that the main aim is for the students to contribute rather than tutors to lecture.

3.4 Reading guidance

For most tutorials in the humanities, students will be expected to have read a text and completed a brief preparation exercise such as answering some discussion questions in advance. As tutors, it is reasonable to expect the students to have a general understanding of the text they have been asked to read. However, understanding academic readings can take practice and often students need a few tutorials to adjust to a critical approach of understanding academic work.

If the tutorial discussion is based on a reading, the tutorial discussion can help students navigate academic texts quicker, especially as they come to understand certain structural features and techniques that academics use to make a point. It is the students' responsibility to take the time to do the reading, and dedicate enough time to understand the text as best they can, but there are a few things we can do as tutors to help the students develop their reading ability. It is important to note that these are ways in which you deliver the tutorial

outline, and should not be taken as additional work that you as a tutor need to take on.

Project the text One simple thing can be having the text up on the projector and you can scroll through so that the relevant sections are on the board for each discussion point. (Keep the projector on but raise the screen if your room permits it, to allow for annotation on the whiteboard.) Or if a student quotes the text, you can put the quote up on the screen for the other students to see. This can help students follow at their own pace, and an easy way to have a prompt if they are unsure how to respond to a discussion point. If the discussion gets off track, having a specific passage on the board that the students need to respond to can help refocus the class.

Highlight/Annotate as a class It can be useful to highlight sections of the text with the class, or annotate alongside on the white board. It can be a good move to have members of the class to come up themselves to this to keep them active. This is only relevant depending on the activity, but if you are compiling evidence or searching for examples, this can be a good way to have all the students engage.

Question the author's intent Asking questions throughout the discussion such as 'why did the author make this distinction or choose this example?' can help students start to think through how academics structure their writing. This can help the students shift from reading passively to reading with a critical lens, questioning the text throughout.

Take it chronologically Most tutorial outlines will follow the text in order to help illustrate the steps the author has made to reach a conclusion. It is good to try to keep students on this logical track of understanding the paper in succession, although they may be excited to get to the juicy conclusion, to help elevate their understanding of essay structure.

Recap At the end of the tutorial, recap the main takeaways from the reading. The students can compare how they processed the extract compared to how you did. This can gradually develop their ability to select key points rather than get hung up on minute details.

These are some supplementary ideas of how to use the readings throughout the tutorial to assist students in when reading academic texts. It is important that the focus of the tutorial remains on the activities outlined, rather than walking students through a close reading of the text – unless of course that happens to be the focus of the tutorial. As tutors, it is reasonable to assume that the students have completed the reading and have a general understanding of the content with assistance from the lecture. In which case, you do not need to

adapt tutorial content *per se* to help students with the reading, rather these are ways you can reinforce and demonstrate how to navigate academic readings whilst delivering the tutorial outline.

3.5 Online tutorials

Many courses will now offer the option of an online tutorial, and some courses are run wholly online. So you may be offered the opportunity to teach an online tutorial. Typically, the online tutorial is run in the same way as an in-person tutorial, with the only difference being that the students are attending online – typically via Zoom or Teams or similar. Even in these instances, the guidance in this handbook will still apply but there are few differences and challenges facilitating online tutorials that are important to flag. It is very important when teaching an online tutorial that the course coordinator has set up the Zoom meeting with you as the host; it's worth checking that Zoom works as intended (and your installation is up to date) in the week before classes formally begin.

Breakout rooms Rather than physically dividing students into groups, online you can use the breakout room function. You can either manually place students into certain groups or Zoom can automatically arrange students into groups. When you choose, the students will be placed into their groups in separate zoom rooms. You can enter any of the virtual rooms to see how students are doing and students can contact you via chat if they need additional support or have any questions. Once the group activity time is complete, you can end breakout rooms and the class will have 30 seconds to rejoin the main zoom room.

Cameras Often, students are reluctant to turn on their camera, especially, if others have their cameras off. As some students may have good reason to only join via audio, making cameras mandatory raises many problems around student's autonomy, accessibility and privacy issues. (Students may not wish to reveal their private living spaces to everyone in the class, for example.) However, during the first tutorial you can set having the camera on if possible as a shared class expectation. Explaining to students that it helps you respond better to the class such as seeing when something you have said is confusing can encourage students to turn their cameras on. If you do find yourself talking to a screen of black boxes, try not to be discouraged: this is a problem almost all tutors are experiencing!

Higher risk of lecturing When having to teach to a gallery of little black boxes, and it isn't possible to respond to the students' non-verbal cues, it can be easy to fall into the habit of doing all the talking. If you are really getting

little traction, sometimes this is all you can do. But there are a few things you can try such as using breakout rooms more, encouraging students to use the chat and reaction functions or putting up polls for the students to use.

Attendance It is a common trend that online tutorials have a lower attendance rate than in-person. This is for a myriad of reasons, including that if students are at home they may be less motivated to join an online tutorial than if they have already made the journey to be on campus and are nearby the physical classroom. The reasons why students stop attending online tutorials are often beyond a tutor's control. If you find the number of students attending reduce – and sometimes it can happen rapidly after the first tutorial – remember it is likely due to the widespread difficulties of delivering an online class rather than your teaching. But do consult with the course coordinator about whether they have any advice to improve attendance and engagement.

3.6 Handling controversial topics

There will be times when you have to facilitate discussion on controversial topics. These discussions require careful mediation, especially as controversial topics can ignite strong emotive responses from our students. It can be difficult to ensure that students engage with a mindset of open enquiry, especially if they already have a position on the topic being discussed. This can result in two potentially trying scenarios: the students are all in agreement and resistant to exploring contrary views; or there are difficult and potentially volatile disagreements happening within the class.

Typically, you won't be discussing controversial topics until later in the course so your students should have adjusted to the format of academic discussion. However, when a topic elicits strong emotions students can easily fall into 'bad' academic habits. They may be resistant to hear others ideas if they do not align with their view, or become overly argumentative in response to another student's position. When these habits emerge, some students will be afraid to contribute, and the academic discussion can fall to the wayside whilst a few individuals battle it out.

This scenario can be difficult for every member of the classroom, but it is especially worrying if there are groups of students in the classroom that are disproportionately affected by the topic at hand. For example, it may be easy to challenge the concept of gender equality if you are not someone whose gender is marginalised. Some students may see this as a fun academic game, relishing

playing devil's advocate, but for our students whose lived experience is negatively impacted by these views, allowing other students to dominate the space with these ideas can be harmful.

Fortunately, with careful facilitation there are techniques we can use to stop our discussions from degenerating:

Situate the topic within an academic framework Your course coordinator should have already introduced the framework in lectures, and the reading and tutorial outline should model how to engage with controversial topics responsibly. It is important at the start of the tutorial to reinforce the academic motivations for examining the topic at hand, and make explicit the aims of the discussion. This is a good moment to reinforce that the discussion is not intended to be conclusive: controversial topics are controversial because they are difficult to reach consensus. Rather, they are important cases to explore how academic work can help us navigate divisive topics, and test our ideas.

Set expectations for respectful disagreement Before the discussion begins, it can be useful to acknowledge that there may be disagreement within the room, and that these disagreements may be uncomfortable. At this moment it can be useful to revisit the expectations that were set at the beginning of the semester and as a class consider whether there are any additional ground rules that should be invoked before beginning the discussion.

Agree on inclusive language Students can hesitate to share during discussions on controversial topics if they are unsure of the language to use. Addressing this at the start of the discussion can make those unsure students more comfortable and it can prevent inappropriate language being used if the discussion becomes heated.

Stay focused on the reading and lecture content In the instance that students enter the classroom with a strong position on the topic, they may have read sources or use justifications that are not academically sound. In these cases, it is important to not dismiss the student but rather explore these ideas in light of the academic content covered in the lecture and reading.

Even the deployment of these strategies may not prevent the classroom from fragmenting, or stop a determined bad actor from derailing the conversation. We discuss managing conflict in sec. 6.

Section 4

Marking and Assessment

When marking is delegated to tutors, our responsibility is to mark in accordance with the marking criteria provided by the course coordinator. It is the responsibility of the course coordinator to design the overall assessment regime for the course and to ensure reliable and valid marking practices (including moderating marks between different tutors to ensure comparability). As different course coordinators and different tutors may have quite varied judgments about the relative merits of various qualities present in student work, it is important for the robustness of assessment that course coordinators provide clear and unambiguous guidance about marking to tutors. It is not a tutor's responsibility to somehow figure out for themselves the criteria being applied in a given course. Best practice too would be for any marking criteria to be supplied also to students to guide them in the preparation of assessment tasks. If you're ever unsure or need clarification on the marking criteria, it is best to contact the course coordinator. As you mark, you should note down any assignments you are unsure of and send them over to the course coordinator to double check.

4.1 Purpose and types of assessment

There are varying views about the overall pedagogical purpose of assessment amongst academics. As tutors, our main purpose when marking assignments is to ensure we are marking consistently and in accordance with the criteria set by the course coordinator. As well as providing students with a grade to measure their academic progress against, we provide feedback on pieces of work to assist with students' academic progress.

It is commonplace to have a series of assignments throughout the semester leading up to a final assignment, typically an essay, or perhaps a final exam.

Some of this assessment will be *formative*, aiming to build student awareness of their own progress, and some *summative*, contributing to the final grade. Final essays or exams are typically only summative; any other piece of assessment through the semester that contributes to the student's grade will be both formative and summative. Most purely formative assessment is informal: e.g., comments on tutorial contributions. You may be contracted to mark some or all of these pieces of assessment.

Sometimes students have to submit a page of notes or answers to the tutorial questions prior to the tutorial. These may not be marked at all. If they are, it is often on the basis of the effort demonstrated by completion of the task, rather than its content. (So such activities are often graded on a 'Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory' or 'Complete/Incomplete' basis.) The main purpose of this kind of assessment is to encourage students to do the readings and think about the tutorial content prior to attending so that they can fully participate and experience the benefits of tutorial-based learning. You may be asked to mark these, particularly if the course coordinator thinks it would be helpful for you as the tutor to be aware of issues that are coming up in students' thinking. But often course coordinators will mark these themselves – in part because it is something of a grey area how to account for such marking work, as marking hours are generally calculated on the basis of close reading of submissions and the provision of specific feedback.

In many courses, the first substantial assessment is due in the middle of semester. In the humanities this is generally a written assessment, perhaps a shorter essay. As a tutor, this is likely the first major block of marking you will do in the course. In most courses, the skills assessed in the first substantial task are the same as the skills required to perform well in the final assessment task. Therefore, the most useful kind of feedback on this assessment is that which serves to help the students develop their skills over time, and more concretely to improve their performance on the final assessment. This emphasises the essentially formative role of these assessment tasks, the summative component being present principally to motivate students to take the task seriously. Often, students will be more concerned with feedback on this task than that on any of the other assignment throughout the course. Feedback on the first major assignment is also a clear indicator to the student of their progress and level of achievement in the course, and some course coordinators may use this information to target the provision of additional support to some students.

The final assignment is generally an essay or a longer piece of writing. The students should be well versed in the assessment process following earlier pieces of assessment. Students might be nervous for this assignment as it is usually worth the highest percent of their grade. However, unlike the

mid-semester assignment, they will generally be more concerned by the final number than the feedback. In which case, when marking these pieces, it is best to focus on marking consistently than overloading with feedback. This is especially true if the course coordinator has designated the final piece of assessment as purely summative, since the purpose of such tasks is to evaluate student learning at a point in time, not to scaffold its further development.

Some marking is not separately contracted, being covered under the 'reasonable contemporaneous marking' clause in the tutorial contracts (sec. 1.2). This might include giving immediate feedback on work completed during class time, or assigning complete/incomplete grades to tutorial preparation activities that are submitted in the tutorial. Any assessment task requiring dedicated concentration on the part of the marker to properly evaluate it, or where substantive feedback on submitted work is expected, would not fall under the heading of 'reasonable contemporaneous marking'.

Not all assessment needs manual marking. In some courses, students will be set weekly quizzes about the material covered in the lectures, often multiple choice or similar. These quizzes are typically not intended to be difficult or time-consuming, rather serving to ensure students engage with the lecture content, or perhaps to give them opportunities to practice elementary or routine skills. Such quizzes are usually designed to be marked automatically using the features built into MyUni.

4.2 Assigning Marks and the Grading system

The University uses several different marking and grading schemes, but by far the most common is M10 ('Mark Scheme 10'), illustrated in tbl. 4.1 which assigns five grades to student attainment in a course, determined by their underlying marks.

Table 4.1: Principal grade categories of the M10 scheme.

Grade	**Mark**
High Distinction	85—100
Distinction	75—84
Credit	65—74
Pass	50—64
Fail	1—49
Fail No Submission	No work submitted for assessment

There are grade descriptors associated with these classifications, that are intended to guide the interpretation of these grades. More importantly, they are intended to guide course coordinators and designers in the construction of an appropriate assessment regime, so that a student who achieves a certain mark and corresponding grade should by and large satisfy those descriptions.

As a general rule of thumb, if a course is representative of the whole student population, we would expect about 5–10% of students to attain a high distinction; 20-30% to attain a distinction; 25-35% to attain a credit, and 20-30% to attain a pass. No more than 10% will fail and submit work, and no more than 20% in total will fail for any reason. (These figures do not count students who formally withdraw from a course.) For one reason or another, many courses turn out to be unrepresentative – they may be too small to be a reliable sample, or they may be selective entry, or differentially attractive to more or less able students. But absent such factors, and especially in large courses where tutors may be involved, course assessments should be expected to produce final grade classifications in those bands.

This is all by way of preamble: grades are assigned at the level of the course, not the individual assessment, and the grade descriptors may not apply straightforwardly to every piece of assessment. But in many courses in the School of Humanities you will be marking significant pieces of work (perhaps a substantial essay), where those pieces of work make a distinctive contribution to the final grade. So your own marks may well need to reflect these broader constraints, to the extent possible, and of course subject to guidance from the course coordinator.

In practice, that means most pieces of work will sit around a credit, with better assignments receiving a distinction, and assignments that meet the minimum marking criteria will pass. It can be useful to track the distribution of your grades to see if your marking tracks the typical grade distribution. However, it is ultimately the course coordinators responsibility to calibrate the marks and ensure that each essay has been marked consistently throughout the course. So, unless you find yourself failing everyone, do not worry too much about the grade distribution.

Generally, if a piece of writing meets the marking criteria to a high degree with very few errors, the essay is most likely a high distinction. If it meets most of the criteria but make a few errors throughout, the piece if writing will be a distinction. If it has met some of the criteria, or fulfilled most of them but only partially, it is likely a credit. And the piece has not demonstrated many or only

minimally the skills detailed in the assessment criteria, it will be a pass. If the piece is far below the word count or is unreadable, it is most likely a fail.

When you first start marking, it can seem overwhelming trying to match a number to a piece of work. It's best to not focus too much on the numerical value of the marks, as these are somewhat arbitrary. It is easier to think about which category the submission falls into, and then decide whether if it has only just met the criteria required for that bracket or if they almost made it into the next category. From there it is easier to decide if the piece of work is a higher or lower number within that bracket and award a specific number. As you mark more and more assignments, you will be able to evaluate fairly early on what grade that assignment is, and this process will become easier.

Ideally, the course coordinator will have provided a *rubric* for you to mark with. A rubric is a scoring system which breaks down the maximum number of marks that can be awarded for each grading criterion. The students should be provided with the rubric when their assignments are set; if so, they are entitled to be marked on the criteria specified. If marking on MyUni, the course coordinator may set up the marking system so that as you fill out each section of the rubric, the final grade is automatically calculated. This is helpful for both you and the student as marking by a rubric highlights the specific areas where the student needs to improve and where their strengths lie. It also avoids a certain degree of arbitrariness in the determination of a final numerical grade, and helps keep tutors calibrated with one another.

The first few essays will take you the longest and can be the hardest to mark. However, by the fifth or sixth essay you will have a better idea of how to mark the assignment for that particular course. If you are unsure on the grade, sometimes it can be useful to begin with writing the comment. This will help you see how strong the essay was and where the weaknesses lie. You can also highlight and annotate the essay itself. This can be useful to do quickly as you read the essays so you can look back over to see how they have done overall, but try not to get too hung up on providing specific feedback for every line of the essay. Think to yourself: *what would benefit this student the most?* For the average student, a couple of key pointers in the final comment is a more helpful indicator of what they need to work on than detailed line-by-line commentary on their writing.

4.3 Marking aims and standards

When marking as a tutor, our responsibility is to reliably mark assignments following the assessment criteria that the course coordinator has set. It can be

confusing as a tutor when you mark for different course coordinators as sometimes course coordinators have slightly different approach to grading assignments. For example, some coordinators will factor in the effort a student has put into their assignment, whereas others will strictly mark on the academic skills demonstrated in the submitted piece. These should be captured in the assignment rubric, in which case it is important to remember that different coordinators will make use of different rubrics. Coordinators may also ask you to balance your level of stringency in marking over the course of the semester – they may come to recognise that students are struggling across the board with a particular assignment, and request that you mark generously so that, in aggregate, student performance across all assessment tasks achieves a certain distribution. It can be difficult to know how to mark when there are differences in grading standards.

If you encounter differences in grading approaches, it is best to focus on what has been communicated to the students. When marking for a new course coordinator, rather than applying expectations from any previous courses you may have taken or tutored for, it is important to establish what their expectations for marking are in that particular course, and most importantly the expectations that are communicated to the students. In turn, you will be able to mark each assignment in that course consistently and fairly.

4.4 Written feedback tips

The numerical grade indicates to the student their overall academic progress. If using a rubric, this helps show them where their strength and weaknesses lie. It is the written comment which provides the student with personalised feedback. The comment should be fairly brief as it is intended to be a succinct way to summarise how the student has done in the assignment, and how they can improve in future. It need not be an essay in itself.

It can be tempting to try to give extensive, detailed feedback for every aspect of the assignment you are marking. Not only is this unfeasible given the strict time limits we have to complete our marking, but a deluge of feedback does not always help students in the way we intend. Especially for our first-year students, they may not understand how to implement feedback in the way that we intend. In which case, rather than trying to address every area that the student could improve, it is better to identify one or two areas the student could work on and detail ways to help them improve in those areas. Usually, one overall summative comment, a specific critique and specific area the student has done well is sufficient.

It is often good to operate on the 1:1 principle. For every constructive critique, try to also provide some praise. This is important for the student's morale and it can help them understand how to improve if they can contrast the stronger parts of the piece to the weaker parts. Sometimes the praise can feel contrived if it is a weak essay, but usually there is something they have done well even if the essay is poor. Don't underestimate the importance of morale either. Big improvements in student performance are often more closely linked to positive changes in their mood than to any other factor.

If you are marking using Turnitin or Speedgrader in MyUni, you can annotate and highlight the piece of work you are marking. This is a useful tool to make quick notes as you go, or to highlight grammatical errors and spelling mistakes. It can also be a slippery slope to overwhelming the student with too much feedback — and exceeding your allocated paid time per essay. A common technique to avoid this is to only proof-read the first page to flag some mistakes the student makes. Or you can prioritise the most pressing errors and only highlight these errors and let the minor errors slide.

If a student needs assistance with writing assignments, the Writing Centre is an excellent resource for students. They provide 1:1 help for students on any writing related matters including how to structure an essay, which as you'll soon see many of our first years struggle with. You can suggest to the student to contact the Writing Centre in person when teaching but also in your written comment if it is clear they need further support. The University Library also provides a useful series of 'How Do I?' guides that cover some of the basic elements of assessment task preparation, including writing essays, identifying sources, and managing referencing.

4.5 Plagiarism and AI

Currently, there are many discussions occurring about academic integrity, particularly given the development of generative artificial intelligence and the possibility of students using such tools to write or assist with their essays. Although these are important discussions, as tutors we are not in the position to determine whether an essay has been plagiarised or otherwise violates academic integrity guidelines. The issue of plagiarism is complex and it is a serious accusation which must be handled carefully. If you come across any suspect essays when marking, flag them to the course coordinator. Once you've sent the coordinator the student name or number, it is up to them to decide whether there is any preliminary case to answer and whether to initiate a formal investigation of whether academic misconduct may have occurred. In advance of any such

decision by the course coordinator, you should not impose mark penalties or even mention your suspicions in comments on the student's work. (However a course coordinator who decides not to proceed with an academic integrity investigation may well ask that you mention in general terms to the student some risks of academic integrity violations and some pointers about how to manage such risks better in future work.)

While the course coordinator is responsible for managing such cases, all staff including casual tutors have responsibilities under the University academic integrity policy. You as a marker are required to be alert to potential cases of academic misconduct, and to assist in the collection of any evidence relevant to the determination of whether any violation of the academic integrity policy has occurred.

Section 5

An Inclusive and Respectful Teaching Environment

5.1 The need for inclusivity and respect

Universities are now attended by a diverse group of students from different backgrounds. This means that you will be teaching students with varying preferences about learning, diverse educational experiences, and a spectrum of social and economic resources to draw upon in supporting their study. You will also very probably have students with disability in your classes: some visible, some not. Some students will come from schools who have intentionally taught their students to be the perfect fit for traditional university education. However, many students will have capabilities and needs that are not an ideal fit with traditional teaching techniques. When teaching, it is important that we consider the diversity of our students and are mindful to of ensuring that all students have access to the tutorial content. You are there to support student learning, not to act as a mere conduit of content – that means recognising that students are individuals, with varied backgrounds that mean they need different things to end up mastering the course content. The university provides some general resources around diversity and inclusion that all teachers ought to be aware of.

When teaching we are building upon the existing knowledge base of our students, and connecting with their purposes in being in class. The previous educational experience and educational opportunities directly impact the ability of students to engage. If we teach as if our students are homogeneously well-prepared with an extensive prior knowledge base, we will exclude students who have experienced educational barriers. If we teach as if everyone is motivated by an intrinsic love of the subject, we might exclude those who

come to class with a very different conception of the aim of higher education. The pressure placed on our classroom in these respects is only intensified by the very high fees that students are now paying to study in the humanities.

It is predominately the course design which ensures that the course accounts for different capabilities and experiences. All course coordinators should be intentionally designing with inclusivity in mind. As a tutors, we are limited by the tutorial outline and the course content with which we are provided. If a course isn't designed inclusively, there isn't much that a tutor can do, within the confines of their role, to remediate that. A tutor cannot control whether lecture notes are supplied for students who need to engage with course material in written form (perhaps because their oral English capabilities are not as strong as their facility with written English), or they are supplied but not in a format that can be interpreted by a screen reader, or whether a course is poorly organised in a way that differentially impacts students living with anxiety or who have caring responsibilities. Often the only thing a tutor can do is to sympathize with students, suggest they raise the issues in SELTs, and offer to bring them to the attention of the course coordinator. Even this level of sympathy can help students feel seen and understood and improve engagement.

Many complex issues faced by students fall even outside the sphere of influence of the course coordinator. A need to undertake employment alongside study, complex family and home situations, disability or serious physical or mental illness, or being an Aboriginal or international student all impact on a student's ability to study effectively, and require the involvement of services at the University level. You are not required to manage these issues yourself, but it is important that tutors are aware of the support for learning provided by the University: able.adelaide.edu.au/student-support.

Many students can feel excluded or overlooked in the university classroom. As the university structure was historically built on serving a certain kind of person, classroom conventions that have emerged that have not been subject to any shaping influence from outside a limited, privileged group. Now that universities serve a wider range of students, it is not surprising that some of these conventions turn out to have been successful only because of the unrepresentative features of past student populations. A class format might work amazingly well when delivered to a cohort of students who can attend regularly, do all required preparation, have a shared understanding of their purpose in being there, can read the whiteboard and feel no hesitation about expressing themselves to the class. That same class format might fail dismally as soon as you have students whose medical condition mean they can't always attend, or whose caring responsibilities prevent them from preparing as much as they would like, or who are in the class only because it is a core course, or whose

sight precludes them from reading the whiteboard, or whose social position makes them feel unwelcome in contributing, or unheard when they do speak.

Our classrooms are not immune to the unequal dynamic of wider society – in fact, as the classroom is a social environment, these dynamics are often prevalent. Mary Armstrong describes classrooms as 'small worlds' that inherit the complex social dynamics and inequalities within the wider world.[1] It is crucial that we are aware of the unequal social dynamics that can easily be perpetuated in the classroom if efforts aren't made to facilitate an inclusive and respectful environment.

5.2 Inclusion in the classroom

In the tutorial, being sensitive and receptive to the engagement of students, and trying different ways to communicate the tutorial content, goes a long way in ensuring every student feels included within the classroom. The following suggestions are some ways to make a space inclusive and respectful but it is not an exhaustive list. There may be accommodations that a student requires that are not included in this list, and there may be cases where the advice does not appear suitable. Therefore, this list should be viewed as a starting point rather than rigid rules.

Address your students how they wish to be addressed The way in which we speak to and refer to the students in the classroom is the first step to establishing a respectful environment. If a student has a name that you are unfamiliar with, take the time outside the classroom to practice saying the name correctly. If a student wishes to be referred to by a name different to that listed on their official enrolment record, acquiesce to their wishes. When doing introductions in the first tutorial, ask students to state their pronouns in their introductions, or to write them on their nametag, and then refer to each student by the pronouns they identify with. Singular 'they' is a good fallback if you don't know someone's pronouns and you need to refer to them when speaking to the class. And don't forget to model all this yourself, letting students know your pronouns and how you would prefer to be addressed.

Be aware of your own assumptions None of us are immune to the stereotypes that are prevalent in society and we can make assumptions about our students unknowingly. Your own experience of the classroom, given that you have ended up teaching in it, was probably more positive and more

[1] Mary A Armstrong (2011) 'Small world: Crafting an inclusive classroom (no matter what you teach)', *Thought and Action: the NEA higher education journal*, pp. 51–61.

supportive than the experience of most of the students in your class. You may have formed certain assumptions about 'what it takes' to succeed in class that not all of your students will live up to. When teaching, these assumptions can lead to imbalanced treatment of students. These might reflect prevalent broader cultural stereotypes, such as viewing the contributions of men as more rigorous. Or they may be morel local to the classroom environment, such as seeing those who attend more regularly as *de facto* better students. It is important before you step into the classroom and throughout the semester to examine the assumptions that you may be making when interacting with the class and consider ways to counteract any implicit (or explicit!) biases. This can be an uncomfortable process. As you teach, you may discover you hold certain expectations of student success that you did not realise you held. It is important to reflect on how we may be perpetuating harmful stereotypes and find ways to ensure fair treatment of everyone in the classroom. This does not mean compromising on standards – but it might mean re-evaluating which behaviours are really essential to high performance. It might also mean developing some cultural sensitivity. For example, a bold willingness to disagree that we may value greatly in a student contribution or essay may be very difficult for some students to perform if their cultural background is one that prizes consensus and respect for elders over intellectual individualism. As a tutor you may need to make explicit that disagreement is welcomed and encouraged – you cannot assume that all students have already internalized the norms of high performance that may now be second nature to you.

Meet your students where they are The primary role of the tutorial is to facilitate discussion of course content, but that doesn't mean you should be driven by course content alone – you also need to match your delivery to the knowledge and skills of the students. It is pointless teaching content that students are not ready to absorb and reflect on. Start your tutorial discussions with basic and elementary questions to gauge the level of prior engagement. Students need to feel comfortable admitting that they do not understand, or that they need further support, without feeling that you as a tutor are judging them. To that end, try not to let the discussion be carried away by one or two highly motivated students, while the rest of the class become mere bystanders. While it can be more enjoyable for you as a tutor to engage in a high-level academic discussion, that may not be serving the needs of the broader cohort very well.

Choice of examples When we teach, we will often use off the cuff examples to demonstrate an idea. We need to carefully consider the examples we use.

Ill-chosen examples can reinforce stereotypes or, if we are only drawing on our own personal experience, the examples may only be a relevant reference to certain groups. Sometimes tutors can be tempted to use a controversial or potentially upsetting examples to capture the attention of students. However, as mentioned above in sec. 3.6, controversial cases need to be carefully scaffolded, not used offhandedly. This might especially apply when examples touching on potentially traumatic events are used; while references to violence or sexual assault are unavoidable in some of the texts we must seriously engage with, they can be distressing for students, especially if handled too casually.

Awareness of the historical situation of course material Some texts, particularly historical texts, may display racist or sexist assumptions that are inessential to the argument of the text or the purpose for which it is being read, but that are nevertheless at least distracting and potentially distressing to students. It is important not to brush aside any student discomfort around these assumptions, and to acknowledge the limits those assumptions may place on the application or success of those texts. But it is also important to help students see that the value of a text need not be undermined by the fact that its author may have held problematic views on other matters. It is unlikely that a course coordinator would not have considered these aspects of the text and decided to use it anyway, so you need as a tutor to do your best to help students find value in those texts that may not be free from every blemish.

Small group selection If students choose their own groups you may find they have formed groups with students like themselves. Intentionally selecting groups so that there is a diverse mix of students can help students communicate with a range of people and be exposed to different views and ideas. If you choose to select groups, make sure that you assist with the group dynamic, otherwise students can feel even more excluded. One way of doing this is to prescribe particular roles to each student in the group with clear instruction of everyone's responsibilities. Be aware of especially of gender dynamics in assignment of roles; it is dispiriting how often a supposedly neutral assignment ends up with women in pseudo-secretarial roles.

Listen to your students It is rare that a student will directly raise that they feel excluded in the classroom but there are others ways this may be communicated. For example, if a certain group is dominating discussion, this may suggest that other students are not being engaged. Or when a discussion fails to address the varying impact of a topic on different groups, students may share personal experiences to address this limitation. This

is of course fine for the student to do, but it does flag that the academic material or examples have a limited scope. Tuning into the direction and rhythm that discussions take in your classroom can help inform any adaptations that might be needed in your classroom.

Reflect and adapt Curating an inclusive and respectful environment requires ongoing attention. After each tutorial, reflecting on how the class has gone and the students' engagement levels is a good indicator of how comfortable your students are in your classroom, although keep in mind that there may be other factors that can impact student engagement that are beyond your control. If you ever have reason to believe that students are feeling excluded, it is important to consider ways you can alter the classroom dynamic. Sometimes, it is factors outside of your control because it is due to the way that a course has been designed, but other times it could be something as simple as rearranging the groups in the classroom, or being sure to call on 'volunteers' outside the regular contributors to discussion.

5.3 Accessibility and Access Plans

By law, the university must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that students with disability can participate in learning and teaching and assessment on an equivalent basis to other students. Disability Support works with students with disability to put together an *access plan*. An access plan is a document that provides details of relevant adjustments which a student can refer to when contacting staff for specific requests. It is clearly stated that it is the course coordinator who is responsible for ensuring that the reasonable adjustments are made and the rights of students with disability are respected, but sometimes as a tutor you will be sent an access plan by the student if it addresses supports they need in the classroom.

The access plan is a confidential document that supports students to be able to seek accommodations without having to disclose personal information about their disability or health condition. This means that you must not talk about the plan to anyone other than the course coordinator nor draw unnecessary attention to the adjustments being made. It is up to the student to decide whether to they disclose the details of their disability or health condition. Therefore, do not approach the student for more detail than in the access plan. If you have any queries, you should talk to the course coordinator or disability support who can provide general advice.

As well as implementing the reasonable adjustments detailed in individual

student's access plans, there are some adjustments we should make in our classroom even if we have not received an access plan. These are good habits to get into because they can support students with disability who are undiagnosed or who, for whatever reason, do not wish to formally identify themselves to disability services. Moreover, designing for inclusion from the start can benefit all the students in the room. This list is in no way complete, and it is important to continue to be receptive to the reasonable needs of your individual students in the classroom.

- Closed captions (subtitles) on videos;
- Using high contrast (black and blue) whiteboard pens;
- Facing forward when speaking – be especially mindful of this if you are writing on the board;
- Providing time to digest complex information;
- Informing students in advance of talking about difficult topics;
- Using a large and simple font, with a simple and uncluttered design, on any slides projected on screen;
- Minimise multiple people talking at once during whole class activities.

Section 6

Conflict and Resolutions

6.1 Conflict of interest and close relationships

Tutors and markers are required to act professionally and respectfully in their interactions with students. They must avoid close personal relationships with students for whom they have professional responsibility. Any conflict of interest or close personal relationships with students must be disclosed to the course coordinator and managed in compliance with the relevant policy. Tutors and markers are in an unbalanced power relationship with their students and must not exploit that position.

Likewise, tutors themselves have a right to fair and unbiased treatment by their managers and other university staff, including course coordinators: see sec. 6.6.

6.2 Classroom management

Although tutorial classrooms are intentionally more hands off than a high school classroom, they do still require a certain level of active management by the tutor. Hopefully, classroom management is mostly organising classes into groups, explaining the tutorial activities and encouraging students to contribute. However, it is important that as a tutor you have established a certain level of authority in class in case the rare event of classroom conflict occurs.

Many of the methods to manage the classroom seem small but they add up to ensure you have a structured and safe classroom. The more you tutor, these tips will become habitual but for your first semester teaching it is important to intentionally orchestrate a structured and safe space for the students:

Classroom layout Depending on the activities, certain layouts work better. If you are aiming for a whole class discussion then having the tables arranged in a horseshoe so the students are facing each other works well. Or if small groups discussion is more suitable, have the tables arranged in blocks with enough space for you to move around. Throughout the semester you can always change the layout if certain layouts turn out to be less productive than others. This is a subtle way to manage students' interactions with each other.

Clear tutorial aims Stating at the start of each tutorial what the aims of the session are means students are more likely to stay focused. It is also helpful if the discussion falls off track as you can reiterate the aims stated at the start. It can help to rough out an agenda, and communicate that to students, indicating how much time you intend to spend on each activity in the class. (If your agenda is, 'discuss the text for 50 minutes', you are very likely to run out of time.)

Professional boundaries Rapport and being friendly with students are important for a comfortable classroom. However, it is important that you always maintain a professional boundary. First and foremost, you are their tutor. It is important to not let this slip, especially if you have to intervene with uncivil behaviour. Integrity of the assessment process also requires that you not foster particular friendships with individual students.

6.3 Grade disputes

Some students may dispute their grades. If this occurs, you should refer them to the course coordinator and they can follow the procedure to request a remark. If you marked the essay, the course coordinator may consult you. However, ultimately, the final grade is the course coordinator's responsibility. Once you've referred the student, the course coordinator should handle the dispute including managing any correspondence with the student.

Occasionally, a student may challenge your expertise in an attempt to be granted a higher grade. If you are a postgraduate student, a student may request to be marked by someone of a higher academic status. If you are a member of a marginalised group, studies have shown students are more likely to challenge a mark, and unfortunately can invoke discriminatory tropes when expressing the complaint. This is unacceptable behaviour from the student and should not be endorsed by the course coordinator. It is important to pass this student on to the course coordinator who will handle the misbehaviour.

6.4 Disruptive students and classroom behaviour

Often misbehaviour occurs because a student has not fully adjusted to the university classroom and may not have understood the expectations. Some forms of neurodiversity or mental health struggles may manifest themselves in unwelcome classroom behaviour, perhaps coming across as aggressive or in violation of other norms of politeness. It is rare that a student is intentionally trying to undermine the culture of the classroom, but it is crucial that you gently address misbehaviour when it occurs.

Sometimes you may wish to relax your expectations – for example, many neurodiverse students find being able to move around the classroom regulating, and you may simply wish to permit students to stand and move – or perhaps even leave the room – during discussions if they can do so without unnecessary interruption to others.

There are many ways a student can be disruptive even if that is not their intention. Disruption counts as any behaviour that interrupts the tutorial. This can be:

- Talking over you or other students;
- Being on their phone;
- Packing up early;
- Consistently late;
- Returning to irrelevant topics;
- Overly critical of you or other students;
- Questioning your ability/authority.

This list is in no way exhaustive: if a student is behaving in a way makes it difficult to teach, and they can easily alter their behaviour, they are a disruptive student. It is important to keep in mind that the student is probably not being disruptive intentionally. A common disruptive behaviour is when an enthusiastic student is dominating the discussion because they are keen to explore their ideas. This is a very well-intentioned student who requires some guidance around discussion etiquette.

Most of the time politely asking the student to alter their behaviour is sufficient for them to realise that they are not behaving appropriately. If you do not want to draw too much attention to a particular student, you can remind the class as whole of the classroom expectations.

If the student continues to be disruptive, the next step would be to have a quiet word with them either during or after class. Sometimes students need expectations which are implicitly assumed to be made explicit for them to be able to alter their behaviour. In the case of the overly enthusiastic student who

is dominating discussion, you may agree on explicit conditions such as waiting until another student has spoken before contributing. You should only speak to a student directly if you feel comfortable. If you are unsure or nervous talking to this student, you should seek support before pursuing further interventions.

If speaking to the student hasn't remedied the behaviour, or their behaviour makes you uncomfortable, the next step is consult with your course coordinator. Your course coordinator will have experienced disruptive students before and will be able to provide useful guidance. Having their guidance and support will ensure that you are confident that you are intervening in an appropriate manner. Sometimes, the course coordinator will choose to talk to the student themselves if they feel it is an issue they will be able to resolve successfully.

If a student persists in being disruptive or their behaviour begins to escalate, they are procedures in place to support you. To assist with these, it is helpful to regularly communicate about the student causing difficulty and keep a written record via email with you course coordinator. There are a few avenues you can go through:

Behavioural Incident Report Form This is a form designed for staff to report incidents of concern. It is intended to be used both when you need further intervention, in which case the early intervention group will recommend an action plan. It also functions to be a means to record behavioural incidents even if they have been resolved so that the university can monitor students who show a pattern of repeated misbehaviour.

Early Intervention Group (EIG) The EIG is a central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing inappropriate, concerning, intimidating or threatening behaviour by students. You can seek advice from the EIG without having to act upon the advice given but they will support you through the process if you choose to follow their recommended action plan. The EIG predominantly provides assistance when the student's behaviour has crossed the disruptive threshold and is now student misconduct.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) The EAP provides psychological assistance if you are experiencing stress which can affect your work, including if a particular student is very difficult to deal with and this is starting to cause much frustration or stress. The team of psychologists can provide general advice of how to approach the particular situation and provide pastoral support.

Security If a student is intimidating you or other students, you can ask that student to leave the classroom. If you feel unsafe or other students are worried, it is advised that you call security to assist you. If you decide

to ask a student to leave your classroom you must inform the course co-ordinator as they may wish to pursue further interventions themselves such as moving the student to a different class.

6.5 Students in distress

Let's start before students are in distress, with student wellbeing. This is a topic which is beginning to get some belated attention from the institution. All students, undergraduate and postgraduate, are encouraged to participate in Being Well, Living Well, an online self-paced course aiming to support student wellbeing. If you are interested in other resources to foster student wellbeing in your courses, there is a 'Wellbeing Champion' in the school who, while not having a professional background in mental health, is there to help build and strengthen a campus culture in which students feel safe, valued and well-equipped to engage in their studies. The current Wellbeing Champion in the School of Humanities is Dr Edilene Lopes McInnes, +61 8 313 5296

Our students are often having to balance the many stresses of life. Adjusting to university alone can overwhelm our first-year students. On top of starting a degree, many of our students are juggling university alongside paid work and caring for their families. Many students are having to navigate a new space which may lack the accessible features needed to make it an easy transition. For some students, this may be their first time in an English-speaking environment and they can feel isolated as they adjust to the Australian educational norms. The start of tertiary education can be a steep adjustment period for our students, and alongside other pressures such as the cost of living crisis, many of our students are navigating a great deal of stress.

As the students get to know you, they may approach you for help with the issues they are experiencing. When we are in a position of students disclosing personal problems to us it is important we respond carefully, both to protect the student and ourselves. The first thing to remember is that our role as tutors is to facilitate and deliver tutorials. Ideally, we would be viewed solely in an educational capacity. Yet, as students often do not know who to approach for help, it is understandable that students will seek pastoral care from their tutors.

When a student discloses a personal problem, it is a matter of referring students to the services within the university where there are staff that are professionally trained in delivering pastoral care to our students. It is important to communicate to the student that you are concerned for them and to listen with an empathetic ear so the distressed student does not feel ignored. Once they have disclosed, it is important to let them know where they can seek help

within the university. The counselling service summarises 5 steps for responding to a student in distress:

1. Stop;
2. Listen;
3. Summarise emotion: 'I can see you are really upset';
4. Summarise practical concern;
5. Action.

It is crucial that you refer the student in question to the appropriate university services rather than attempt to intervene yourself. It can be hard when you have a rapport with the student to resist getting involved. However, involving yourself with the student's personal life can place you at risk and oversteps your professional boundary. It can also pose a risk to the student as you are not professionally trained to provide emotional support to our students. In which case, it is in the best interest of the student and yourself to refer them to the trained professionals.

For any issues where the student requires emotional support, it is best to refer them to the Counselling Service. In cases where the student seems to be coping, you can suggest to them to reach out to the counselling service themselves via the online form, or they can make use of the Talk Campus app for immediately accessible online support.

However, if you are concerned for a student's wellbeing you can reach out to the counselling service directly or support the student to do so. The counselling service gives the following advice if you are worried about a student:

- Please call us as soon as possible within office hours (9am-5pm Monday to Friday) on 8313 5663.
  - If an issue has arisen outside of business hours, either you or the student can make use of the University Crisis Line, which is available at all times the counselling service is not: Call 1300 167 654 or text +61 0488 884 197.
- Ask to speak with the Triage and Assessment Advisor.
- Please inform the Triage and Assessment Advisor of what your concerns are about the particular student. Your conversation is confidential. However, if a student is at risk of harming themselves or another person then risk overrides the needs for confidentiality.
- The Triage and Assessment Advisor will talk you through what steps you can take or what they will do as follow up.

If a student appears a risk to themselves, you need to take immediate action. The counselling services advises that you let the student know that you are

concerned about them; that their safety is your priority; and as part of your responsibility you will need to contact professionals who can assist them. Once you have communicated this to the student, you must contact the counselling service via phone on [8313 5663](](tel:+61883135663) or the mental health triage service if it is out of hours on 13 14 65.

In cases where a student is posing a risk to others, our responsibility is to try and calm the situation. It is advised that we use non-threatening body language, listen to their concerns, and let them know you want to help. If possible, calmly advise other students to leave the area. When it feels safe to, contact the Police 000 and then Security Services 8313 5444.

Responding to students in distress can be emotionally difficult. It is important to ensure that you seek support for yourself after the event. Do not hesitate to let your course coordinator know what happened and if you are feeling distressed so that they can help you seek appropriate support. If you are a postgraduate student, you can also access the counselling service for free.

The university has produced a flowchart to summarise the different steps. When you begin teaching, print this out and pin it to your office wall.

6.6 Problems with course coordinators

As will now be clear, when you tutor on a course you work closely with the course coordinator. This setup works well when you have a supportive course coordinator. However, as with any professional relationship, occasionally problems can arise.

Sometimes, problems arise because there has been a failure in communication when establishing the expectations for the working relationship. A good start if you are struggling, is to try to communicate this to your course coordinator as they may be unaware that they are not providing adequate support. Of course, this may not always be an option if you are uncomfortable or the coordinator is unreceptive, nor may it remedy the situation. In which case there are other avenues you can pursue.

If you are requiring more support than your course coordinator is providing, it can be useful to reach out sideways. If you are a postgraduate student at the university, it is likely there are members of staff that you have a mentoring relationship with who will be able to provide guidance. They may not understand the intricacies of the course you are teaching but if they are an academic member of staff they will have teaching experience and be able to provide general advice. They can also provide support if you were wanting to raise with the course coordinator some of the problems you may be having. Most import-

antly, reaching out to staff members that you trust can provide the support you need to navigate a complex professional situation.

The next step would be to speak to the head of department. They may well be named on your contract as your line manager. The head of department can assist with any clarifications or supports required for your role that you may be relucant to ask the course coordinator. They can also help with any mediation required to help remedy any problem between you and the course coordinator. If the head of department is not providing the assistance you need, you can speak to the head of school who is their immediate line manager and responsible ultimately for staff within the School – make an appointment with them if needed through the School office.

Like for other university employees, human resources can assist with any problems you may have. They are a good option if you want to seek confidential advice or do not feel comfortable approaching academic staff members in the School. Depending on the situation, human resources will talk you through different ways to handle the difficulties you are having with the course coordinator. HR has an Employee Assistant Program which can help with a myriad of problems that may arise including interpersonal conflict and the manager assist service which provides help if a particular staff member is very difficult to deal with and this is starting to cause much frustration and stress.

Section 7

Managing Workload and Priorities

7.1 Appropriate workload

As already noted (sec. 1.2), tutors are paid for 3 hours for a first tutorial in a course in a week, and for 2 hours for any subsequent tutorials in that same week and course.

As tutors, we can often choose how to use our paid hours to prepare for tutorials. If you are teaching a course with which you are familiar, or a course you've taught before, you may not need to do any significant preparation. However, most of us will want to look over the content we are teaching that week. When preparing, keep in mind that as tutors we only require enough familiarity of the content to facilitate discussion, and we should have a tutorial outline that highlights the key points to focus on. This means we are not expected to undertake a close analysis of the set reading nor generate new points for discussion. Rather, we just need to dedicate enough time for a quick overview of the reading and understanding of the key discussion points to be able to direct discussion.

As well as preparation prior to the tutorials, it is important to reserve some of your paid hours for associated tasks like answering student emails and meeting with the course coordinator. When answering student emails, keep in mind that many of the emails should be forwarded to the course coordinator to respond to. Tutors are only expected to respond to emails if the question is a quick answer such as confirming the time of your tutorial or the deadline for an upcoming assignment. If the student requires significant in person support or to adequately respond is time-consuming, then this is an email to send over to the

course coordinator. At different times in the semester, you may not get many emails, but especially at the start and when deadlines are looming, you may receive an influx of emails. Note that you are not expected to give feedback on written assignment drafts or make yourself available to discuss student ideas about assignments prior to submission.

At first, especially as a new tutor, it can be difficult to try to limit your preparation work to the 2-3 hours we are paid for. It is undeniably a balancing act and it can take practice to be able to prepare for tutorials in a relatively short time frame. It can be tricky to know whether you are being asked to do too much by the course coordinator or if it is an adjustment period as you learn the ropes of being a tutor. However, if you find yourself exceeding your paid hours regularly, then you should raise this with the course coordinator.

7.1.1 Marking

The number of hours allocated in marking contracts are based on standardized Faculty calculations of the number of words tutors are expected to mark per hour. Currently in the Humanities we expected to be able to mark 5000 words an hour: this is the typical workload for an undergraduate in the whole of an upper level course. This means the number of assignments we are expected to mark an hour can vary depending on the word count of the assignment. Your course coordinator will then use this calculation to allocate you a certain number of assignments to be marked within the university set time frame. You should never be asked to mark more than 5000 words or equivalent an hour.

Marking within this time frame is challenging, especially when marking for the first time. It can take time to learn how to judge the quality of a piece of work and the first few assignments may take you longer than the hour to mark. Once you've marked a few pieces of work, hopefully you will feel more confident marking that particular assignment and the time spent on each assignment may reduce the more you mark. If you find that you are exceeding the time frame, it is important to communicate this to the course coordinator. They should provide more guidance on ways to streamline marking, including being judicious in the volume of feedback given.

You may also find yourself taking time to revisit your marking to ensure you are consistent. This is understandable when you are first starting out. However, the course coordinator is responsible for moderating your marking standards. Usually, they will read a selection of essays you have marked and provide feedback as to whether the grades being given are appropriate. It can be useful to ask the course coordinator to look at this before you mark all your share of assignments so that you do not need to spend too much time rehashing your

marking. And remember, it is the course coordinator's responsibility to calibrate the marks so do not spend too much time going over essays you have already marked.

Giving feedback can be the most time-consuming aspect of marking. The course coordinator should clarify the expected level of feedback per assignment. If you are unsure how much depth they are looking for, do not hesitate to seek clarification. If they are requesting you provide more feedback than is plausible to do in the paid hours, or once you begin marking find it is taking too long, let the course coordinator know and they should reconsider how they would like the marker to implement the feedback in the expected time frame.

Further, as we discussed earlier (sec. 4), when giving feedback, less really is more. As markers we are not meant to be proof-editing the piece of work, nor trying to unpack every claim the student makes. Rather, the feedback given should hone in on where they've done well and highlight one or two areas to improve. If you find yourself going beyond this, you are probably trying to give too much feedback.

Do keep track of the hours you spend marking and if you find yourself exceeding the hours you are paid, talk to the course coordinator. If the course coordinator is not receptive or you feel you are being expected to complete tasks that are beyond your role's responsibility, this may be an issue to flag to the head of department or follow the other avenues highlighted in the problems with the course coordinator section (sec. 6.6).

7.2 Balancing teaching whilst studying

Many tutors are postgraduate students. This means that we are having to balance teaching commitments alongside our research. Therefore, not only is the workload model detailed above useful to be aware of because it can prevent us from doing unpaid work, but it also helps ensure that tutoring is not detracting from the time needed to focus on our postgraduate studies.

We should view our tutor work as a supplementary activity that is additional to our main work: our thesis. This can be difficult in reality, and it is easy to let the thesis slide when you are balancing many other activities. It can be useful to pencil in more frequent meetings with your supervisor(s) as a motivation to keep on track. Or before you commence teaching, discuss with your supervisor(s) what is a realistic amount of work to get done whilst taking on tutoring and then you can set an internal deadline to make sure you get some thesis work done.

It is a requirement of candidature to inform your supervisor if you take on

any paid work exceeding 10 hours a week, including casual teaching. This is a good opportunity to discuss with your supervisor(s) how tutoring may affect your studies. Your supervisor(s) should have an understanding of your working habits, especially if you have been working together for a while, and may provide more tailored advice about how to balance tutoring and studying.

Like any paid work, it should not take up more than 10 hours whilst in candidature without explicit permission. Given the professional development that tutoring provides, you supervisor may sign off on you tutoring on multiple courses which will exceed the 10 hours a week. This is a decision that you should make carefully. If you have taught the course before it may be possible to balance multiple courses in one semester, but if the course is new to you then you need to be realistic about how much time this might take up.

7.3 Pastoral Support

After the initial nerves, people tend to really enjoy the tutoring experience. Yet, just like when you take on anything new, it is important to look after yourself and your wellbeing. Given the many new skills we have to develop when tutoring for the first time, tutoring can be stressful. Tutors have to negotiate a new professional relationship with a course coordinator; regularly speak in front of a group of people; manage a group of students; develop teaching skills; and all this alongside the other stresses of life.

The course coordinator should be sensitive to the stresses that tutoring can bring. As you work with the course coordinator, they may become a source of pastoral support who you can go to if you are finding tutoring stressful or difficult. If you feel comfortable, it can be good to inform the course coordinator of any other difficulties you may be experiencing that may make working tricky at times. This is in no way mandatory, and you should only disclose if you feel comfortable. Most of the time, they will be sympathetic and find ways to alleviate stress as much as they can. You can also speak to any other staff member that you have a mentoring relationship with such as your supervisors or a member of staff you work closely with.

It is important to remember that many other tutors will be experiencing the same stresses. If you know others tutoring, it can be helpful to meet up for regular debriefs to support one and other. If you are new to the department, the head of department or course coordinator will be able to put you in touch with the other tutors. This of course won't resolve all the stresses, but having a network of other tutors goes along way in feeling supported.

If you are a postgraduate student at the university, you can access the coun-

selling service. They provide short-term counselling and can facilitate referrals to other services in Adelaide if you need further support. As a staff member, you can also access the Employee Assistance Program which is a team of psychologists there to support you throughout your employment.

Section 8

Reflecting on your teaching performance

8.1 Throughout the semester

The more you tutor, the more you will have a sense of when a class has done well and when a session has not taken off in the way intended. If you teach multiple courses and classes, over time you will have a better gauge of when your teaching needs changing or whether factors outside of your control meant the tutorial did not go as planned. One of the most overwhelming parts of being a new tutor is understanding when a session has gone well, and when there are areas to improve on.

As it is a social environment, the dynamics between the students can influence how quickly a class starts to work together well. For some classes the students hit it off quickly and start engaging with each other from the get go, and for other classes it can take longer. It is important to keep in mind that it can take time over the semester for a class to warm up. The first tutorial is typically quite stilted but by the second or third class you should have found a rhythm.

When reflecting on how a class has gone, it is important to only reflect on the aspects of the tutorial that we are responsible for. Here are few suggestions of questions you could ask yourself:

- Did I explain ideas briefly and clearly?
- Did I ask questions that built on the student discussion?
- Did I cover all the key points of the tutorial outline?
- Did I contribute my time evenly amongst the students?
- Did I give students time to respond and develop their ideas?
- Did I deliver the outline in an engaging manner?

Sometimes, we may take responsibility for occurrences in the classroom that are out of our control and have more to do with how a course has been designed or general difficulties that most tutors experience. The two most common things that tutors mistakenly interpret as a negative reflection of their teaching is students having issues with the tutorial content and dwindling attendance, neither of which is generally attributable to the conduct of tutors.

As tutors, we only have influence over our delivery of the tutorial outcome. If students having misgivings about the tutorial structure or content, as tutors, we are limited by the tutorial outline and the course content designed by the coordinator. Therefore, if students have issues with the content and structure of a tutorial, this is likely to do with the design of the course rather than your delivery.

It is a common trend that tutorial numbers reduce over the semester. This happens in most courses, often quite precipitously, no matter how interesting your delivery may be. For some students, this is because they have discovered it is not mandatory to attend classes. For others, they are juggling study with other commitments and it isn't possible to regularly attend. Sometimes students have not adapted to the level of organisation needed to keep up with all their university commitments. Whatever the reason, it is typical that students become less diligent at attending tutorials as the semester goes on.

8.2 SELTs

The main way that the university collects student feedback on courses is via the Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) system. Students are asked to submit answers to an online questionnaire about their experience of each of their courses. In the questionnaire, which covers their experience of the course more generally, there is a section about how they found the tutorials and provides the opportunity to give feedback about their tutor.

SELTs are the only way we receive formal feedback about our teaching from the students. They are a useful document that can influence future tutoring opportunities and if applying for academic roles, it is expected that you include your SELTs in your teaching portfolio. However, they also have some limitations and like any feedback require careful interpretation. Strictly speaking, SELTs only indicate student experience of your teaching – they are not, formally, a measure of teaching quality at all, but only of perceived teaching quality. The response rate is typically very low which also means that these quality of the data is poor.

The best way to accurately understand your SELTs and your overall teaching

performance is to have an end of semester debrief with the course coordinator where they can help you interpret the feedback. In the meantime, here are few things to consider when interpreting your feedback:

The number of responses If you receive few responses, it is unlikely you are receiving a holistic overview. It can go along way to request students submit their SELTs or even give them time in the classroom to submit them in order to receive a representative number of responses. Otherwise, typically only the keen or frustrated students submit a response.

You or the course? Students are not always aware of the difference between a tutor and a course coordinator; nor are they always clear on whether it is the tutor or the content that they have an issue with. There is a risk that they will direct critique towards the tutor on the basis of matters which are the responsibility of the course coordinator.

Student biases It has been well documented that feedback can be swayed by students' biases. For example, if the instructor is a woman, students are more likely to describe your demeanour and whether you are caring rather than whether you were a knowledgeable tutor. If English is your second language this can lead to students underestimating your expertise. These are just a couple of examples of how a tutor's identity and background can infringe on the accuracy of SELTs as a measure of teacher and course quality.

Is it within your control? Sometimes students may critique you for aspects that are outside of your control such as the length the tutorial or the room it is in. Other times, students will have identified a genuine weakness. In these cases, it is useful to debrief with the coordinator to understand what you can do in future to improve in that area.

It’s time to teach!

This handbook has provided an overview of every part of the tutoring process. Whilst you teach, you can refer back to the handbook as and when you need. You can use this handbook as a prompt to talk with your course coordinator about any questions you may have.

If you would like to explore any of the concepts discussed in this handbook in greater depth, there are many resources out there. A good place to start is the page of resources for educators maintained by the Learning and Teaching team in the Division of Academic and Student Engagement. These are important for anyone commencing teaching at the University to take a look at.

One external source that might be particularly useful if you want to start learning more about the scholarship of higher education in practice is Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge, and Stephanie Marshall, eds., (2009) *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice*, 3rd edition, Routledge, which contains useful chapters on teaching in small groups, supporting student learning, assessment, and specific advice for teaching in arts, humanities and social sciences.[1]

Most importantly, we hope this handbook means that you can enjoy teaching as much as possible. It is a wonderful experience to help students explore their ideas and watch them academically flourish with your guidance. It will be busy, and at times stressful, but overall teaching is a fun and fulfilling experience! Enjoy!

1 Later editions are also available which update things in some respects but omit some of the more useful chapters from the third edition.