








Scaffolding language and learning for online students

As ECU prepares to deliver units online for short periods of time due to possible COVID19 disruptions, Unit Coordinators need to consider how students will be supported to learn in this context. Many international students in particular may not speak English as a first language or have previous experience learning online. This guide provides practical steps you can take to make the language in your unit more accessible, and develop students' confidence in short periods of online learning.

Make discipline language accessible

Action	How
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduce important concepts and unfamiliar terms	 Provide a weekly glossary to aid student engagement with the learning materials. Include key concepts and any challenging terminology from the readings or lectures. The glossary should be in alphabetical order with succinct meanings, and should appear at the beginning of each week/module. Setting pre-reading activities can also help students engage in learning before starting to read key texts.
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate expectations clearly	 Record a short Panopto video unpacking each assessment task and the marking criteria. Start assessment instructions with verbs (e.g. 'analyse' rather than 'for this assignment you need to'...) and bold any keywords.
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate using illustrations	 Keep slides and presentations focused on key concepts, and use images and concrete examples to support written and verbal explanations. Provide exemplars of assignments in which the strengths are annotated and explained, so students have clear examples of what they need to produce.

Use student support strategies

Action	How
<input type="checkbox"/> Engage with students	 Use this practical guide for sustaining student engagement to help students feel connected to you and other students in the Unit. Check in with students regularly to see how they are going.
<input type="checkbox"/> Adjust for cultural diversity	 Use examples from beyond the Australian context, and provide opportunities for students to relate the Unit content to their own contexts.
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide links for learning online	 Direct students to the ECU guides for learning online, including this introductory video and the SLIDE library modules .
<input type="checkbox"/> Promote support	 Promote ECU learning support links, including the Academic Skills Centre and the Library . Include this link in your unit for where students can book an online appointment with a learning adviser.

For further ideas on supporting online students contact your [School's Senior Learning Adviser](#).