

HANDBOOK FOR ONLINE TEACHING PRACTICE

A Practical Guide for Teaching Staff



Fully Online Higher Education Institution

Operating under the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority (MFHEA)

Aligned with Malta's NQAF, the MQF/EQF and the European Higher Education Area

European Academy of Advanced Studies (EAAS)

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This handbook translates EAAS institutional policy into everyday online teaching practice. Where any conflict arises, the formally approved policies referenced above take precedence. This handbook does not replace those policies; it operationalises them for the virtual classroom.

Contents

Document Control	2
1. Introduction and Purpose	5
1.1 About this handbook	5
1.2 Purpose	5
1.3 Who this applies to	5
1.4 The EAAS teaching philosophy in brief	5
2. The EAAS Context You Teach Within.....	6
2.1 Mission and how teaching supports it	6
2.2 Regulatory and quality frameworks	6
2.3 Where you fit: governance and reporting	6
3.1 Teaching qualifications and eligibility	7
3.2 Core responsibilities of every EAAS teacher	8
3.3 Role-specific notes.....	8
4. Professional Conduct, Ethics and Academic Freedom	9
4.1 Expected conduct.....	9
4.2 Academic freedom	9
4.3 Raising concerns.....	9
5. Getting Started: Induction and Module Set-Up	9
5.1 Your Induction	9
5.2 Constructive alignment: design backwards	10
5.3 The assessment weighting model.....	10
5.4 Module readiness — what students must find on day one	10
6. Teaching Online: Delivery and Engagement	11
6.1 The blended-online rhythm	11
6.2 The flipped classroom.....	11
6.3 Running effective synchronous sessions.....	11
6.4 Active, constructive, cooperative and authentic learning.....	12
6.5 Building teaching presence	12
7. Communication, Availability and Student Support.....	12
7.1 Channels and expectations.....	12
7.2 Response-time commitments	12
7.3 Knowing the support you can refer to	13
8. Inclusive and Accessible Teaching	13
8.1 Design for accessibility from the outset	13
8.2 Reasonable adjustments.....	14
8.3 Supporting multicultural, second-language learners	14

9. Assessment and Feedback.....	14
9.1 Assessment methods you can use.....	14
9.2 Transparency and fairness in marking.....	15
9.3 Feedback that improves learning.....	15
9.4 Reassessment, attempts and mitigating circumstances	15
9.5 Grading, complaints and appeals	15
9.6 Supervising the Business Research Project / dissertation.....	16
9.7 Work-based / practical learning (virtual internships)	16
10. Academic Integrity and Secure Online Assessment.....	16
10.1 Design for integrity	16
10.2 Plagiarism detection with Turnitin.....	16
10.3 Secure online examinations.....	16
10.4 Responsible use of AI	17
11. Monitoring Engagement and Supporting At-Risk Students	17
11.1 What to monitor	17
11.2 Early intervention	17
12. Data Protection, Privacy and Digital Ethics	18
12.1 Your data-protection responsibilities	18
12.2 Recording, consent and privacy	18
12.3 Intellectual property.....	18
12.4 Acceptable use	18
13. Your Development, Appraisal and Workload.....	18
13.1 How your teaching is evaluated	18
13.2 Teaching performance benchmarks	19
13.3 Continuous professional development (CPD)	19
13.4 Workload and wellbeing	19
14. Quality Assurance and Your Role in It.....	19
14.1 The continuous-improvement cycle	19
14.2 How your teaching is quality-assured	19
14.3 Closing the feedback loop.....	20
15. Help, Contacts and Escalation.....	20
16. Quick-Reference Checklists	21
Appendix A — Module readiness checklist (before the module opens)	21
Appendix B — Weekly teaching-presence checklist	21
Appendix C — Assessment and feedback checklist	21
Appendix D — Key terms	22

1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 About this handbook

Welcome to teaching at the European Academy of Advanced Studies (EAAS). This handbook is your practical reference for delivering high-quality, student-centred education in a fully online environment. It sets out what EAAS expects of you as an online educator, the standards your teaching must meet, and the systems, routines and support that help you meet them.

EAAS is a fully online Higher Education Institution operating under the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). Because there is no physical campus, the virtual learning environment is the classroom, the corridor, the office and the library all at once. The quality of every student's experience depends directly on how deliberately and consistently each teacher works online. This handbook exists to make that consistency achievable.

1.2 Purpose

The handbook aims to:

- Set clear, shared expectations for online teaching, communication, assessment and feedback across all programmes;
- Help you design and deliver engaging, inclusive and academically rigorous online modules;
- Explain your responsibilities for academic integrity, data protection and student wellbeing in a digital setting;
- Connect your day-to-day practice to EAAS's quality assurance framework and to MFHEA requirements; and
- Show you where to find help and how issues are escalated.

1.3 Who this applies to

This handbook applies to everyone who teaches, supervises or assesses EAAS students online, including full-time and part-time lecturers, adjunct and sessional faculty, teaching assistants, dissertation and Business Research Project supervisors, module coordinators, and invited guest or industry experts. Some sections (for example, supervision or moderation) apply only to specific roles; these are flagged where relevant.

1.4 The EAAS teaching philosophy in brief

EAAS teaching is built on a student-centred, constructivist approach: students learn by actively doing, solving problems, analysing real cases and collaborating with peers, rather than by passively receiving content. Your role is less "sage on the stage" and more designer, facilitator and mentor of learning. The following principles run through everything in this handbook.

Principle	What it means in your practice
Student-centred	Design around what students will do and produce, not only what you will cover. Build in interaction, choice and application.

Principle	What it means in your practice
Active & authentic	Use problem- and project-based tasks, case studies, simulations and real industry scenarios so learning transfers to practice.
Present & responsive	Maintain a visible, regular teaching presence online and reply to students within published response times.
Inclusive & accessible	Design for a diverse, international cohort and for learners with additional needs from the outset.
Fair & transparent	Publish criteria and rubrics in advance; assess consistently; give feedback that helps students improve.
Evidence-informed	Use LMS analytics and student feedback to notice who is struggling and to improve your teaching.

2. The EAAS Context You Teach Within

2.1 Mission and how teaching supports it

EAAS's mission is to provide quality education that equips students with the knowledge, skills and innovative mindset needed for a successful future, delivered through flexible, accessible and affordable online learning. As a teacher, you are the mission in action: the clarity of your materials, the quality of your feedback and your care for each learner are what turn that mission into a lived student experience.

2.2 Regulatory and quality frameworks

Your teaching operates within several frameworks. You do not need to memorise them, but you should know they shape what is expected of you:

- **MFHEA & Malta's NQAF** — the national regulator and quality assurance framework EAAS is accredited against.
- **MQF and EQF** — the Malta and European Qualifications Frameworks. Programmes and modules are pitched at defined levels (the Bachelor of Arts in Tourism and Hospitality Management is MQF Level 6). Your teaching and assessment must match the level descriptors.
- **EHEA and the Bologna Process** — European standards supporting recognition and student mobility, including the ECTS credit system.
- **GDPR and Maltese data protection law** — govern how you handle student information (see Section 12).
- **Education Act (Cap. 327)** — the legal basis for EAAS's governance.

2.3 Where you fit: governance and reporting

EAAS operates a layered governance structure. The bodies most relevant to your teaching are summarised below.

Body / Role	Relevance to you as a teacher
Management Board	Sets institutional strategy and financial direction and upholds overall governance, compliance and standards.

Body / Role	Relevance to you as a teacher
Rector and Head of Institution	Leads the institution, its guiding vision and day-to-day operation; ultimate authority for academic standards and owner of this handbook.
Vice-Rector – Academic Affairs	Oversees academic delivery, learning outcomes, accreditation and quality improvement — your senior reference point for programme standards.
Controller of Examinations	Manages examination scheduling, secure question papers, marking logistics and the release of results.
Dean – Admissions	Oversees admissions and enrolment; relevant when you need context on intake, cohorts and entry standards.
Dean – Quality Assurance (QA) Cell	Runs quality monitoring, peer observation, surveys and reviews, and handles complaints and appeals routed to the QA Cell; supports you to meet MFHEA standards.
Registrar / Academic Records Office	Registers students, maintains academic records, and issues progress and withdrawal alerts.
Module / Programme Coordinator	Your first point of coordination for a module: content alignment, assessment briefs, moderation and consistency.
Student Support Services Office	Academic advising, counselling, careers and wellbeing — your referral partners for at-risk students.
VLE / Technical Support Helpdesk	Assists with access to the LMS/VLE and learning resources, plus digital tools and technical training (24/7).

Your normal line of support

For most teaching matters, start with your Module or Programme Coordinator. Escalate academic-standards questions to the Dean; quality, peer-observation and survey matter to the IQAC; technical/LMS matters to the E-Learning Support Unit; and student-welfare concerns to Student Support Services. Section 15 gives the full contact and escalation map.

3. Your Role, Eligibility and Responsibilities

3.1 Teaching qualifications and eligibility

EAAS maintains clear qualification standards to protect academic rigour. Generally, you must hold at least one qualification higher than the level of the programme you teach — a master's degree to teach undergraduate modules, and a doctoral qualification to teach postgraduate modules or to supervise research. For the Bachelor of Arts in Tourism and Hospitality Management, this means a relevant Master's as a minimum, with a PhD preferred for advanced modules and research supervision.

Documented, time-limited waivers exist for industry practitioners, language teachers and specialist instructors whose professional expertise is the core value they bring; these are approved through the proper institutional process. All teaching staff, regardless of route, are expected to demonstrate competence in online pedagogy and to complete the digital-teaching induction before delivering to students.

3.2 Core responsibilities of every EAAS teacher

Whatever your contract type, when you teach at EAAS you are responsible for:

- **Course readiness** — preparing your module in the LMS so it is complete, accurate and available to students on time (Section 5).
- **Teaching presence** — maintaining a regular, visible presence: facilitating discussions, running or recording synchronous sessions, and being reachable (Sections 6 and 7).
- **Active learning** — designing and running interactive, applied activities rather than one-way lectures (Section 6).
- **Inclusive delivery** — teaching in ways that work for a diverse, international cohort and for students with additional needs (Section 8).
- **Fair assessment and timely feedback** — assessing to published criteria, participating in moderation, and returning feedback within agreed timescales (Sections 9).
- **Academic integrity** — designing integrity-resilient tasks, using Turnitin and secure-assessment tools correctly, and following the AI-use rules (Section 10).
- **Monitoring and early intervention** — watching engagement data and reaching out to students who fall behind (Section 11).
- **Data protection and professional conduct** — handling student data lawfully and modelling the Code of Ethics (Sections 4 and 12).
- **Continuous improvement** — acting on feedback, taking part in peer observation, and pursuing your own professional development (Sections 13 and 14).

3.3 Role-specific notes

Role	Additional expectations
Module Coordinator	Owns overall module design and alignment, coordinates any co-teachers, organises internal moderation, and submits marks to the Registrar's Office.
Adjunct / sessional / part-time lecturer	Same teaching standards apply. You are given a clear contract, LMS and pedagogy orientation, and are included in module and committee communication. Your student and peer feedback feeds your appraisal.
Teaching assistant	Supports senior staff, runs tutorials, and marks under supervision. Completes LMS-tools induction and ongoing training.
Guest / industry expert	Brings authentic practice through guest sessions and case input. Receives session-specific briefing and follows

Role	Additional expectations
	integrity, recording and data-protection rules for the session.
Dissertation / Business Research Project supervisor	Guides topic, ethics, research skills and academic writing; holds scheduled meetings; logs milestones in the LMS; follows moderation rules (Section 9.6).

4. Professional Conduct, Ethics and Academic Freedom

EAAS's Code of Ethics applies to all staff. Online delivery raises the stakes on professional conduct because so much of what you do is recorded, written and traceable. Model the standards you expect from students.

4.1 Expected conduct

- **Integrity and fairness** — treat every student consistently and impartially; avoid conflicts of interest in assessment and supervision.
- **Respect and inclusion** — foster a respectful, harassment-free virtual environment; use inclusive, gender-neutral language; be sensitive to cultural and linguistic diversity.
- **Professional communication** — keep all channels (LMS messages, email, forums, live sessions) courteous, clear and on-record appropriate.
- **Reliability** — be present and punctual for scheduled sessions, meet your own deadlines for feedback and marks, and give notice if you cannot.
- **Confidentiality** — protect student information and never discuss identifiable student matters outside authorised channels (Section 12).

4.2 Academic freedom

EAAS supports your academic freedom to teach your discipline, select scholarly materials and express reasoned professional judgement, exercised responsibly and within the approved curriculum, learning outcomes and institutional policies. Academic freedom is a professional responsibility as much as a right: it is paired with fairness to students and adherence to quality standards.

4.3 Raising concerns

If you witness or experience misconduct, or have an ethical concern, you can raise it confidentially through the institutional reporting mechanisms overseen by the Ethics and Compliance Committee, without fear of retaliation. Grievance and appeals mechanisms also exist for disputes about performance evaluation, promotion or policy.

5. Getting Started: Induction and Module Set-Up

5.1 Your Induction

Before you teach, you complete a role-based induction. For online teaching this covers, at minimum:

- The Learning Management System (LMS) and its student-engagement dashboards (logins, participation, submissions);
- How to run and record synchronous sessions, and how to structure asynchronous content;

- Digital engagement tools — polls, quizzes, discussion forums, reminders and participation records;
- Assessment and feedback tools, including Turnitin and the secure assessment / proctoring workflow;
- How to recognise disengagement early and the referral routes to student support (academic advising, counselling, IT, careers);
- Data protection and acceptable-use rules for the VLE and AI-assisted tools.

Before day one — confirm you can

- *Log in to the LMS and locate your module shell and class list;*
- *Start, record and share a synchronous session;*
- *Post an announcement, open a discussion forum and set up a quiz;*
- *Open Turnitin and view a similarity report;*
- *Find the engagement dashboard for your cohort.*

5.2 Constructive alignment: design backwards

EAAS modules are designed by constructive alignment — everything points to the module learning outcomes. Design in this order:

- 1. Start from the module learning outcomes** as defined in the approved module specification and mapped to the MQF level.
- 2. Design the assessments** that will let students demonstrate those outcomes (see the 40/60 model below).
- 3. Design the learning activities** (readings, recorded lectures, live sessions, tasks) that prepare students to succeed in those assessments.
- 4. Publish the criteria and rubrics** up front so students know exactly how they will be judged.

5.3 The assessment weighting model

Unless a module specification states otherwise, EAAS modules use continuous formative assessment weighted at 40% and a final summative assessment weighted at 60%. Confirm the exact scheme in your module specification and publish it to students before the module begins.

5.4 Module readiness — what students must find on day one

Your LMS module shell must be complete and accurate before it opens. Every module should contain, as a minimum:

Element	Requirement
Module overview & outcomes	Clear statement of what the module covers and its learning outcomes, mapped to the programme.
Schedule / study plan	Week-by-week or cluster-by-cluster plan showing topics, live-session dates and submission deadlines.
Teaching materials	Recorded lectures, slides (e.g. PowerPoint) and supplementary readings (papers, reports, book chapters) for each cluster.

Element	Requirement
Synchronous session details	Dates, joining links and a note that sessions are recorded and live attendance is not compulsory.
Assessment briefs & rubrics	Full briefs, weightings, deadlines and marking rubrics published in advance.
Academic-integrity & AI-use rules	Turnitin requirement and the module's specific rules on permitted and prohibited AI use.
Support & contact	Your contact details, virtual office-hour times, response-time commitment, and links to student support and VLE support.
Accessibility provisions	Captioned/transcribed video, accessible documents and any alternative-format arrangements.

6. Teaching Online: Delivery and Engagement

6.1 The blended-online rhythm

EAAS delivery combines asynchronous and synchronous learning. Most learning is asynchronous so students can study flexibly around work; synchronous sessions add real-time interaction, are recorded, and do not require compulsory live attendance. Your job is to make these two modes reinforce each other.

Mode	What it is	Your role
Asynchronous	Recorded lectures, readings, self-paced tasks, discussion forums, quizzes.	Curate and sequence content; set clear tasks; facilitate forums; give timely written feedback.
Synchronous	Live webinars, tutorials, Q&A, group discussion.	Run interactive sessions (not read-aloud lectures); record and post them; use polls, breakout tasks and discussion.

6.2 The flipped classroom

EAAS makes frequent use of the flipped-classroom model: students engage with recorded content and readings before a live session, and the live time is spent on discussion, problem-solving and application rather than transmission. To flip well:

- Assign a clear, manageable pre-session task and tell students what to prepare;
- Open the live session by activating that prior learning (a poll, a question, a short problem);
- Spend live time on cases, application, misconceptions and student questions;
- Close with a summary and a bridge to the next asynchronous block.

6.3 Running effective synchronous sessions

- **Plan for interaction every 10–15 minutes** — polls, chat prompts, breakout tasks, think-pair-share.
- **Use the tools** — polls, quizzes, shared documents, whiteboards and reactions keep a remote room alive.

- **Record and caption** — always record, then post the recording (and where possible a transcript) promptly for those who could not attend.
- **Be inclusive of time zones** — because live attendance is not compulsory, make sure non-attendees can fully follow from the recording and materials.
- **Manage the room** — set norms for cameras, mics and chat; protect a respectful space; keep sessions on schedule.

6.4 Active, constructive, cooperative and authentic learning

EAAS expects online activities that exploit active, constructive, cooperative and authentic learning, with strong student-to-tutor and student-to-student interaction. Draw on the institution's established repertoire:

- **Problem- and project-based learning** — consultancy briefs, problem-solving tasks and projects drawn from real tourism and hospitality scenarios.
- **Case studies and simulations** — virtual case analysis and simulations that connect theory to practice; VR/AR where available for hospitality contexts.
- **Collaborative tasks** — structured group work using shared documents, wikis and collaborative mind-mapping so students co-create knowledge.
- **Discussion and debate** — moderated forums, webinars and debates that build reasoning and communication.
- **Authentic industry input** — guest speakers, industry lectures and virtual work-based tasks.
- **Gamification** — knowledge checks, scenario challenges and digital badges for milestones to sustain motivation.

6.5 Building teaching presence

In an online programme, students learn best when they can feel a teacher who is present. Small, regular signals of presence make the biggest difference:

- Post a weekly announcement that orients students, highlights what matters and responds to common questions;
- Participate visibly in discussion forums — reply, probe, summarise and acknowledge good contributions;
- Hold and honour virtual office hours; offer bookable one-to-one sessions for students who need them;
- Personalise where you can — use names, reference student work, and close the loop on questions.

7. Communication, Availability and Student Support

7.1 Channels and expectations

Use official EAAS channels only (the LMS, institutional email and approved conferencing tools) so that communication is secure, on-record and GDPR-compliant. Keep personal accounts and unmonitored apps out of teaching.

7.2 Response-time commitments

Publish and honour clear availability. As a baseline, unless your module states otherwise:

Interaction	Expected response / turnaround
Student message or email	Acknowledge within 1–2 working days.
Discussion-forum questions	Monitor and respond regularly across the working week.
Virtual office hours	Scheduled weekly; publish times and joining details; offer bookable slots.
Assessment feedback	Return within 2–3 weeks of the submission deadline (Section 9.3).
Pre-submission guidance	Offer reasonable opportunity to consult before deadlines.

If you will be unavailable

Tell your Module Coordinator in advance and arrange cover so students are never left without support. EAAS maintains continuity through backup instructor assignments and handover templates — use them.

7.3 Knowing the support you can refer to

You are not expected to solve everything yourself. Know these referral partners and use them early:

- **Student Support Services** — academic advising, careers guidance and general student support.
- **Counselling / wellbeing** — for mental-health and personal difficulties.
- **E-Learning / VLE Support (ELSU)** — for students' technical and platform problems.
- **Disability / additional-needs support** — to arrange reasonable adjustments (Section 8).
- **QA Cell / Dean's Office** — for formal academic complaints and appeals.
- If a student discloses distress or you have a safeguarding or wellbeing concern, respond with empathy, avoid trying to counsel beyond your role, and refer promptly through the proper channel.

8. Inclusive and Accessible Teaching

EAAS serves a diverse, international student body that differs in culture, language, learning approach and career experience, and includes learners with additional needs. Inclusive design is not an add-on for a few students — it improves learning for everyone. Build accessibility in from the start rather than retrofitting it.

8.1 Design for accessibility from the outset

- **Captioning and transcripts** — caption and, where possible, transcribe recorded lectures; provide audio versions of key information.
- **Accessible documents** — use readable structure, headings and screen-reader-compatible formats; support text-to-speech and alternative keyboards.
- **Mobile-friendly materials** — ensure content works on multiple devices for students studying on the move.

- **Multilingual awareness** — teach in clear English (the language of instruction), define terms, and be mindful of second-language learners; provide multilingual materials where available.
- **Choice of demonstration** — where appropriate, allow students to select among assignment options that let them best show their understanding.

8.2 Reasonable adjustments

EAAS provides information, guidance and support for a range of needs and disabilities, which may include autism spectrum conditions, mental-health conditions, mobility and sensory impairments, dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, and unseen or chronic conditions. Adjustments can include amplified/enlarged materials, extra time in assessments, alternative assessment formats, tailored tutoring and mentoring, and adjusted timelines. Long-term conditions are planned for in advance of assessment.

Your part in adjustments

Adjustments are arranged through the institution's support process, not improvised case-by-case. When a student has approved arrangements, apply them fully and discreetly (many VLE features — extra time, alternative assignments — are simple to configure). If a student mentions a difficulty but has no arrangement in place, encourage and refer them to the support service rather than deciding alone. Never disclose a student's condition to others.

8.3 Supporting multicultural, second-language learners

Manage multicultural virtual classrooms with awareness: vary examples across contexts, avoid idioms that may not translate, allow processing time in live sessions, and use asynchronous channels (forums, written prompts) that give second-language learners space to compose considered contributions.

9. Assessment and Feedback

Assessment at EAAS is transparent, fair and competency-based, evaluating both understanding and the ability to apply knowledge. Assessment tasks are mapped to module learning outcomes and reviewed for coherence with institutional, professional and accreditation standards.

9.1 Assessment methods you can use

EAAS uses a wide range of digital assessment methods. Choose methods that authentically test the outcomes and that are resilient to misconduct:

- Project-based assessments and consultancy-style reports;
- Case-study analyses and problem-based tasks;
- Online examinations (with secure proctoring where required);
- Digital coursework, quizzes and e-portfolios;
- Peer and self-assessment;
- Presentations and, where specified, oral examinations (two examiners for orals);
- Dissertation/Business Research Project and work-based-learning deliverables (Sections 9.6–9.7).

9.2 Transparency and fairness in marking

- **Publish in advance** — briefs, criteria, rubrics and deadlines are posted on the LMS before the module starts and reinforced at orientation.
- **Mark to the rubric** — apply criteria consistently for every student.
- **Multiple eyes on key assessments** — significant assignments are double- or second-marked, and internal moderation sessions review samples for consistency; external examiners provide impartial reference points.
- **Constructive alignment** — reassessments are set against the original learning outcomes, not a harder or easier target.

9.3 Feedback that improves learning

Feedback is where much of the learning happens. EAAS's standard is feedback that is timely, specific and developmental:

- **Timeliness** — return feedback within 2–3 weeks of the deadline, through the LMS so nothing is missed.
- **Linked to criteria** — tie comments directly to the rubric and to the assessment criteria.
- **Balanced and actionable** — acknowledge strengths and give concrete, step-by-step suggestions for improvement.
- **Dialogue** — offer virtual feedback sessions and invite students to discuss feedback so it becomes a learning cycle, not a verdict.
- **Pre-submission help** — let students consult you before submitting to resolve uncertainties early.

9.4 Reassessment, attempts and mitigating circumstances

- **Attempt limits** — students may normally attempt an assessment up to three times (original, re-sit, third), each mapped to the original outcomes, with feedback and academic support provided after each unsuccessful attempt.
- **Mitigating circumstances** — students facing unforeseen, unpreventable events affecting an assessment may claim mitigation through the formal policy. Decisions are made by the Didactic Board together with the responsible lecturer; accepted claims lead to a no-penalty re-sit. Direct students to the policy rather than granting extensions informally.
- **Long-term conditions** — handled through planned adjustments before assessment (Section 8), not the mitigation route.

9.5 Grading, complaints and appeals

Each programme has a defined grading scheme; students are informed of it before the module begins. If a student raises an academic complaint or appeal, do not adjudicate it yourself: complaints are routed through the QA Cell / Dean's Office, which acknowledges receipt (within 24 hours) and follows defined timelines, with escalation to an external expert panel and, ultimately, the Office of the Ombudsman of Malta available to the student. Appeals are reviewed by staff who were not involved in the original decision. Cooperate fully and keep clear records.

9.6 Supervising the Business Research Project / dissertation

Research supervision is a distinct responsibility. Supervisors guide topic selection, research questions, methodology, ethics, academic writing and originality within the programme's outcomes, hold scheduled meetings, and log feedback and milestones in the LMS. Expectations scale with level — research and writing skills at undergraduate, industry-relevant research at Master's, publishable innovation at doctoral level.

Marking and moderation of the research project follow a strict process: the tutor and a second reader mark independently on separate forms. Where their marks differ by more than 20%, the Research Committee triggers moderation and, if needed, a third evaluator; failures are moderated; and agreed joint feedback is returned to the student with the final mark submitted to the Registrar's Office. Follow the documented dissertation policy precisely, including re-sit pass thresholds and the student's right to appeal.

9.7 Work-based / practical learning (virtual internships)

Because EAAS is fully online, work-based learning is delivered virtually through industry-linked projects, simulations and online workshops. Each student has an academic supervisor from EAAS and, where applicable, an industry mentor. Assessment typically combines an applied report or project, a reflective logbook, and an oral defence (viva) consistent with the MQF level. Provide clear briefs, rubrics and feedback, and use the digital supervision and feedback tools for remote guidance.

10. Academic Integrity and Secure Online Assessment

Upholding integrity in a fully online setting is a shared, active responsibility. EAAS combines integrity-resilient assessment design, detection tools and secure delivery — and expects teachers to use all three.

10.1 Design for integrity

The strongest defence against misconduct is authentic, hard-to-copy assessment. Favour tasks such as real-world projects, case studies, reflective journals and problem-centred assignments over generic essays that are easy to plagiarise or outsource.

10.2 Plagiarism detection with Turnitin

- All student submissions are screened through Turnitin; review the similarity report using academic judgement, not the percentage alone;
- Combine automated screening with a manual secondary review where similarity is flagged;
- Teach integrity proactively help students with citation, referencing and research conventions so they can write originally;
- Where misconduct is suspected, follow the institutional academic-integrity procedure; corrective actions can include resubmission, re-marking, grade reduction or failure, with the student's right of appeal preserved.

10.3 Secure online examinations

For proctored online assessments, EAAS's standard controls include two-factor authentication and secure LMS login, biometric / facial identity verification, AI-driven proctoring with webcam and microphone monitoring and environment scanning, lockdown/secure browsers, randomised question banks and time limits. Apply these as specified for your assessment and brief students in advance so they know what to expect.

Proctoring, privacy and fairness

Some students have legitimate privacy concerns about remote proctoring, and EAAS is actively improving transparency here. Explain to students what data is collected and why, follow GDPR, and be aware that GDPR-compliant alternatives — such as oral or alternative assessments — may be arranged through the proper process for students who cannot be proctored fairly. Never improvise proctoring outside approved tools.

10.4 Responsible use of AI

EAAS distinguishes acceptable from prohibited AI use, and you must make the rules explicit in every module. As a general institutional position for assessed work: AI tools may be used to support tasks such as literature searching, brainstorming and structuring, but AI generation of the assessed content itself is prohibited. State your module's specific rules in the brief, require students to acknowledge AI use where permitted, and address suspected AI-generated submissions through the integrity procedure.

11. Monitoring Engagement and Supporting At-Risk Students

In an online programme, disengagement can be invisible unless you watch for it. EAAS uses LMS learning analytics precisely so teachers can spot and support struggling students early. Treat monitoring as a duty of care, not surveillance.

11.1 What to monitor

Signal	Where to see it	What it may indicate
Logins activity &	LMS engagement dashboard	A drop-off may signal disengagement or personal difficulty.
Content access	Module analytics	Not opening lectures/readings before a deadline or live session.
Participation	Forums, live sessions, polls	Withdrawal from discussion and interaction.
Submissions	Assignment / quiz tracking	Missed or late formative tasks — an early warning before the summative.
Performance pattern	Grades & analytics	A declining trajectory across assessments.

11.2 Early intervention

Set a reasonable engagement baseline for your module and act when a student falls below it:

- Reach out early and supportively a brief, personal message often re-engages a student before a small problem becomes a withdrawal.
- Offer a concrete next step a bookable one-to-one, a catch-up plan, or signposting to a specific resource.
- Refer promptly connect the student to academic advising, counselling, IT/VLE support or careers as appropriate.
- Record your action note the intervention so support is coordinated and consistent.

A principle for at-risk outreach

Lead with care, not accusation. Validate the student's situation, avoid assumptions about the cause, and keep the door open. Your goal is to help the student re-engage and to connect them with the right support — not to diagnose or to police attendance.

12. Data Protection, Privacy and Digital Ethics

Everything you do online generates and handles personal data. EAAS operates under the GDPR and Maltese data-protection law, and you are personally part of that compliance. The core rule is simple: use student data only for legitimate teaching purposes, keep it secure, and share it only with those who need it.

12.1 Your data-protection responsibilities

- Use only approved, secure EAAS systems for student communication, records and assessment;
- Access and process student information only for legitimate academic purposes;
- Keep credentials secure, use institutional accounts, and never store student data on unauthorised personal devices or services;
- Treat learning-analytics data responsibly — for supporting learning and improving teaching, not for any other purpose;
- Report any suspected data breach immediately through the institutional process.

12.2 Recording, consent and privacy

Follow institutional policy on recording lectures and live sessions. Let participants know when a session is being recorded, use privacy-respecting settings so students can participate without exposing personal information unnecessarily, and store and share recordings only through approved channels.

12.3 Intellectual property

EAAS maintains clear policies on intellectual property to protect academic work and digital content created by staff and students from misuse or unauthorised commercial exploitation. Respect third-party copyright in the materials you use and understand the institutional position on ownership of the content you create.

12.4 Acceptable use

Acceptable-Use Policies govern the VLE/LMS and AI-assisted tools. Model responsible, secure and ethical use of institutional resources, and hold students to the same standard.

13. Your Development, Appraisal and Workload

13.1 How your teaching is evaluated

EAAS uses a transparent, 360-degree appraisal model conducted annually. It draws on multiple sources so that no single measure defines you:

- **Student feedback** — course evaluations and satisfaction data.
- **Peer review / observation** — peer observation of your online teaching.
- **LMS metrics** — participation logs, activity tracking and course outcomes as indicators of engagement and delivery.

- **Self-assessment** — your own reflection on the year.
- **Supervisor review** — against agreed responsibilities and KPIs.

Results are discussed with you in a one-to-one meeting and feed into an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with measurable goals, followed up mid-year.

13.2 Teaching performance benchmarks

EAAS defines performance benchmarks across domains including instructional effectiveness, course and curriculum design, digital-pedagogy skills, assessment and feedback, research and scholarship, professional development, student support and mentoring, and leadership. Use these as a guide to what excellent online teaching looks like and where to grow.

13.3 Continuous professional development (CPD)

EAAS expects and funds ongoing development. All online faculty complete digital-pedagogy training, and CPD opportunities include online course design, teaching in online and blended modes, digital assessment and integrity, active-learning strategies, research-skills development, and leadership. Engagement in CPD is monitored annually, and completion of the digital-teaching course is expected of every online teacher. The E-Learning Support Unit provides mentoring and training in digital tools and instructional design.

13.4 Workload and wellbeing

Workload is allocated transparently and covers teaching, preparation, marking, mentoring and research. Online teaching carries a real risk of burnout — the always-on nature of digital communication blurs boundaries. Protect your wellbeing: set and publish clear availability windows rather than being permanently reachable, use asynchronous tools to batch responses, and raise workload concerns with your Coordinator or Dean. Regular staff meetings exist to surface and resolve such issues collaboratively.

14. Quality Assurance and Your Role in It

Quality at EAAS is not a separate compliance exercise done to you — it runs through everyday teaching, and you are one of its main engines. Understanding how the cycle works helps you contribute to it purposefully.

14.1 The continuous-improvement cycle

EAAS's Internal Quality Management System follows an OPDCA continuous-improvement cycle — Observe, Plan, Do, Check, Act. In practice, for you this means observe how your students are learning, plan and deliver your teaching, check outcomes and feedback, and act on what you find to improve the next cycle.

14.2 How your teaching is quality-assured

- **Student surveys and feedback** — course evaluations, surveys and focus groups feed institutional review; expect to see and act on your students' feedback.
- **Peer observation** — structured observation of online teaching supports development and consistency.

- **Internal moderation and external examining** — safeguard marking standards across the programme.
- **Annual review of assessment** — the QA Committee and Academic Council review assessment methods, mapping and analytics each year.
- **Benchmarking** — programmes are compared with reputable online providers and international standards.

14.3 Closing the feedback loop

Students value seeing that their feedback leads to change. EAAS is strengthening this through visible "you said that we did" responses. When you make a change in response to student feedback, tell your students — it builds trust and models a genuine culture of quality.

Your quality checklist each cycle

- *Are my outcomes, activities and assessments still aligned?*
- *Did feedback go back within 2–3 weeks and link to criteria?*
- *What did engagement analytics and results tell me about what worked?*
- *What will I change next time, and have I told my students and Coordinator?*

15. Help, Contacts and Escalation

Use this map to route questions to the right place. Contact details for named post-holders and units are maintained on the staff portal.

If your issue is about...	Go to...
Module content, briefs, deadlines, co-teaching, moderation	Module / Programme Coordinator
Academic standards, programme delivery, industry relevance	Dean — Hospitality Management
Academic policy, curriculum or assessment approval	Senate / Academic Council (via the Dean)
Quality, peer observation, surveys, MFHEA/accreditation matters	Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC)
Examinations: scheduling, secure papers, results release	Controller of Examinations
LMS, digital tools, instructional design, technical faults	IT & E-Learning Support Unit (ELSU)
Student wellbeing, advising, careers, referrals	Student Support Services
Ethics concerns, misconduct, whistleblowing	Ethics and Compliance Committee
Data protection questions or a suspected breach	Data Protection point of contact (via institutional process)

If your issue is about...	Go to...
Student academic complaints and appeals	QA Cell / Dean's Office
Your contract, appraisal, development, grievance	Human Resources / your line manager

16. Quick-Reference Checklists

Appendix A — Module readiness checklist (before the module opens)

	Item
☐	Module overview and learning outcomes published and mapped to the MQF level.
☐	Week/cluster study plan with live-session dates and deadlines.
☐	Recorded lectures, slides and readings uploaded for each cluster.
☐	Assessment briefs, weightings (e.g. 40% formative / 60% summative) and rubrics published.
☐	Academic-integrity and module-specific AI-use rules stated.
☐	Turnitin and any proctoring set up and explained to students.
☐	Captions/transcripts, accessible documents and adjustment provisions in place.
☐	Contact details, office-hour times and response-time commitment posted.

Appendix B — Weekly teaching-presence checklist

	Item
☐	Weekly announcement posted (orientation + common questions).
☐	Discussion forums monitored and responded to across the week.
☐	Live session run/recorded, then recording and (where possible) transcript posted.
☐	Virtual office hours held; bookable slots available.
☐	Engagement dashboard checked; at-risk students contacted.
☐	Student messages answered within 1–2 working days.

Appendix C — Assessment and feedback checklist

	Item
☐	Assessment maps to module learning outcomes.
☐	Brief, criteria and rubric published in advance.
☐	Task designed to be authentic and integrity resilient.

	Item
☐	Marking applied consistently to the rubric; key assessments moderated / second-marked.
☐	Feedback returned within 2–3 weeks, linked to criteria, with actionable next steps.
☐	Reassessment and mitigating-circumstances routes handled through policy, not informally.
☐	Marks submitted to the Registrar's Office on time.

Appendix D — Key terms

Term	Meaning
MFHEA	Malta Further & Higher Education Authority — the national regulator EAAS operates under.
NQAF	National Quality Assurance Framework (Malta).
MQF / EQF	Malta / European Qualifications Frameworks defining qualification levels.
EHEA	European Higher Education Area.
LMS / VLE	Learning Management System / Virtual Learning Environment — the online classroom.
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.
IQAC	Internal Quality Assurance Cell.
OPDCA	Observe–Plan–Do–Check–Act continuous-improvement cycle.
IDP	Individual Development Plan arising from appraisal.
CPD	Continuous Professional Development.
ELSU	E-Learning Support Unit.

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 This handbook is reviewed annually by the Quality Assurance (QA) Cell and the Vice-Rector – Academic Affairs, under the authority of the Rector and Head of Institution.