

OEL Case Study: 07 October 2016

Queensland University of Technology



QUT is part of the Australian Technology Network (ATN) and one of four universities in Brisbane. With some 47,000 students, including 8,000 from overseas, QUT offers over 300 courses in six faculties: QUT Business School; Creative Industries; Education; Health; Law; Science and Engineering.

Positioned as a 'university for the real world', QUT delivers authentic, real-world learning and assessment in all units, and offers work-integrated learning to at least 60% of its undergraduates. Significant emphasis is placed on learner connectedness and support, and graduate employability. Teaching practice aims to be personalised, flexible, adaptable, and enhanced through the use of educational and social technologies and tools, to better meet learners' ongoing learning needs.

QUT is a strong Open Access advocate and was the project host for the OAK Law Project.¹ QUT also hosts Creative Commons Australia.²

1. Institutional Practices and Policies around OER

QUT recently implemented a specific policy for Open Educational Resources (OER).³ It was developed with input from: the University Copyright Officer; Learning and Teaching Unit; Technology, Information and Learning Support; eLearning Services; and various academics interested in OER and open education practices.

This OER policy emphasises QUT's commitment to widen access to education, and improve teaching quality, learning outcomes and cost-efficiency. It encourages the use and sharing of high-quality OER. Staff wanting to make available teaching and learning material, such as OER, need to obtain endorsement from their Head of School before seeking approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Technology, Information Learning Support)

1. <http://www.oaklaw.qut.edu.au/>

2. <http://creativecommons.org.au/>

3. http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/C/C_07_02.jsp

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2. Current (or planned) OER initiatives

QUT has a range of OER initiatives across various faculties, schools and services. These include:

- A number of MOOCs delivered via FutureLearn available through QUT's Open online learning ⁴ - with 124,000 students enrolled since 2015
- Video tutorials on iTunesU ⁵
- Diverse individual pieces of material e.g. on YouTube
- Open textbooks, e.g. on IP Law ⁶
- Self-study material developed by the library:
 - o [StudyWell](#); [StudySmart](#); [AIRS](#)

QUT has involved students in the production of OER through the education elective, the Global Teacher. This subject forms part of the undergraduate degree program for pre-service teachers at QUT. As part of their assessment the students create 3 minute digital narratives. The students are confined to the use of self-made and Creative Commons licensed content to construct the narratives. At the conclusion, the narratives are uploaded and hosted on QUT's Media Warehouse under a Creative Commons Licence (CC-BY-ND). The digital narratives are located here: <https://mediawarehouse.qut.edu.au/QMW/>.

Initiatives driven by individual lecturers also provide students with a variety of opportunities to be involved in the production of OER.

3. Interpretation of 'openness'

OER activities at QUT are diverse. They are informed by a variety of motivations and driven by individuals with varying interests and degrees of knowledge about what 'openness' means. Under the new OER Policy, QUT refers to the OER definition used by the OER Foundation and promotes the use of Creative Commons licenses, particularly CC-BY, for OER.

MOOCs are exempted from the OER policy, as they run on a customised platform and are 'open' only in so far as they are free of charge and have no entry requirements. They are run in a conventional way with registration requirements and copyrighted material. Self-learn material by the library is freely accessible to all students, but not openly licensed.

YouTube videos contain different licenses, however, some have CC-BY or CC-BY-SA licences. The open textbooks are licensed under CC-BY-SA.

4. <https://www.qut.edu.au/study/open-online-learning>

5. <https://itunes.apple.com/au/itunes-u/centre-for-emergency-disaster/id961865728?mt=10>

6. <https://www.penflip.com/nicsuzor/australian-ip-law>

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4. Motivations and/or barriers to engage with OER

QUT has been a strong and long-time advocate for Open Access. Engaging in OER is a constructive next step. OER are seen as important components in providing flipped classroom experiences, and accommodating more flexible learning needs.

Other motivations include anticipated marketing benefits, and developing QUT's international reputation through carefully selected, high quality MOOCs.

Barriers identified to engage more fully with OER include:

- Individuals' (e.g. lecturers) limited or inconsistent knowledge about OER and complex licensing issues
- The relatively recent creation of an OER policy
- Investment (e.g. in MOOCs)
- Uncertainty about transition to new business models

5. Envisaged outcomes of involvement with OER

The use of OER in combination with flipped classroom experiences has been shown to lead to higher student engagement and improved learning outcomes, however the impact of OER more broadly is less clear.

The impact of MOOCs is easier to measure. The first two robotics courses alone attained a global reach with over 20,000 students enrolled. Once created OER can be repurposed for other QUT courses. Additionally, learning analytics can be applied to massive datasets. Participant demographics, motivations, and engagement data have been collected to inform design and further understanding of learning.

6. Insights and Recommendations for other institutions

7. This unit is co-ordinated by Dr Erika Hepple, Senior Lecturer in QUT's Faculty of Education, School of Cultural and Professional Learning. Dr Hepple's disciplines are, Specialist Studies in Education, Cultural Studies and Language Studies.

The OEL Project is a joint research and development project between Swinburne University of Technology and the University of Tasmania. Supported by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.

