

EDITED BY
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Open Education
International Perspectives in
Higher Education



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Patrick Blessinger and TJ Bliss, *Open Education: International Perspectives in Higher Education*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2016. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0103>

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The Hewlett Foundation (<http://www.hewlett.org>) has generously contributed towards the publication of this volume.

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-278-3

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-279-0

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-280-6

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-78374-281-3

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 978-1-78374-282-0

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0103

Cover image: Oditel, Uganda (2011). Photo by Brian Wolfe, CC BY-NC-SA, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mightyboybrian/6324873971>

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Printed in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia
by Lightning Source for Open Book Publishers (Cambridge, UK).

16. Open Education Practice at the University of Southern Queensland

Ken Udas, Helen Partridge and Adrian Stagg

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) has a strong social justice ethos. Based on this ethos, USQ is seeking to re-position and re-conceptualize itself as a university grounded in the principles of openness and open education. This chapter describes the experiences of USQ as it strives to build a culture of openness and agility and investigates the activities undertaken by USQ including the issues, barriers, challenges and opportunities faced. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the key lessons learnt from USQ's journey to more fully embrace Open Educational Practice and culture.

Introduction

This contribution describes the experiences of the University of Southern Queensland (USQ) as it strives to build a culture of openness and agility. The aim of this chapter is to give a comprehensive overview of one university's journey to re-position and re-conceptualize itself for openness, including the activities undertaken and the issues, barriers, challenges and opportunities faced. USQ is a regional Australian university offering a broad range of academic programming at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It has been a leader in distance learning since the 1970s and currently 75% of the University's 28,000 students undertake their studies via online or distance modes. The University has a strong ethos and reputation for serving people that are generally under-represented in higher education. Its student population includes part-time working students, people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, and from remote and rural areas. With a strong social justice ethos it is therefore not surprising that USQ is seeking to embrace the principles and practices of openness and open education. We begin with a brief review of relevant literature before providing an overview of USQ with specific focus on the evolving focus and support for Open Educational Practice. The chapter concludes by discussing USQ's key lessons learnt and the next steps.

Literature review

Open Educational Practice (OEP), like online learning, has the potential to transform higher education learning and teaching (Bossu, Bull and Brown, 2012). OEP refers to the teaching techniques that draw upon open technologies and high-quality open educational resources (OER) in order to facilitate collaborative and flexible learning (Beetham, Falconer, McGill and Littlejohn, 2012). OER, which are defined as "teaching, learning and research materials that make use of appropriate tools, such as open licensing, to permit their free reuse, continuous improvement and repurposing by others for educational purposes" (Orr, Rimini and Van Damme, 2015, p. 17) are a key mechanism for this collaboration. The broader term OEP includes Open Access Publishing (OA), Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), open policy, open textbooks, open data, open research and, more broadly, open education.

OEP has been perceived as response to the need for affordable, equitable access to education and as a way for institutions to meet the rising demand globally for university education (Bossu, Brown and Bull, 2012). Whilst open education can be pursued for on-campus degree programs, the benefits have been discussed primarily for distance and online education as a way of broadening access to students whilst potentially reducing the costs associated with studying at university (Scanlon, McAndrew and O'Shea, 2015). Open education could provide lower- or no-cost resources to support education in rural and remote communities, and also empower learner-centered educational approaches that build contextual cultural competencies within specific student cohorts (Willems and Bossu, 2012).

When compared to initiatives and engagement with open education in countries such as Canada, North America and the United Kingdom; Australian open practice is still maturing (Bossu and Tynan, 2011). The three current key focus areas arising from the global literature with particular application to the Australian context are (1) policy frameworks, (2) open textbooks and (3) formal support for staff capacity-building. It will be demonstrated that the University of Southern Queensland, through exploratory and developing initiatives, is addressing these priority areas.

Global challenges for the open education movement are mirrored in the Australian environment, although some factors are of particular concern nationally. The lack of practitioner adoption globally has been attributed to low awareness, a perceived lack of quality in open resources, low interest in investing time to author OER, an absence of extrinsic motivators such as institutional reward and recognition programs, and a lack of formal institutional-level support to build staff capacity (Bossu, Bull and Brown, 2012).

In the Australian higher education sector, there is also a lack of regulatory frameworks or policy relating to, or supporting OEP (Bossu and Fountain, 2015), a lack of evidence- and practice-based research (Stagg, 2014) or empirical research about the impact of openness on the sector (Murphy, 2012), and a rising need to reconcile government and institutional copyright policy frameworks with the environment required to fulsomely engage with Open Educational Practice (Padgett, 2013).

In order to create an environment where taxpayers experience transparency in government processes (as appropriate) and access to publicly-funded research outcomes, the Australian Government has adopted open principles to license government data (ANDS, 2015), encouraged the selection of open source software in the first instance (Australian Government, 2011), funded open data sets (ANDS, 2015), a National Digital Learning Resource Network (Education Services Australia, 2012), and a nascent Open Access and Licensing Framework (AusGOAL, 2011).

Despite these initiatives, there has been no mandate, nor even a consolidated approach to open educational policy in Australian higher education. Some Australian institutions have enacted policy linking engagement with OEP to formal recognition and promotion (UTas, 2014) whilst many others have purely focused on open research outcomes and data with little attention to learning and teaching.

There is strong conceptual alignment between the goals of OEP and the recent “Keep it Clever” statement on education (Universities Australia, 2015), but, as yet, explicit discussion about this alignment has been absent. The “Keep it Clever” policy document contextualizes the discussion by stating that educational investment is directly linked to future positive economic growth and international competitiveness (Universities Australia, 2015). In order to do so, it calls for “a new *social contract* with the Australian public” (p. 4, own emphasis). If the term “social contract” is used in a historically philosophical sense, this policy document is both conceptually aligned and politically sympathetic with openness. The principles outlined in the statement refer to:

- Accessibility — that Australians should be able to readily access a university education;
- Affordability — that the cost of higher education should not be such that it excludes segments of Australian society;
- Quality — which refers to the international quality of both teaching and learning, and research endeavors;
- Research capability — in that universities have a broader societal role in the generation of knowledge;
- Resourcing — especially calls for sustainable models of education; and
- Accountability — infers not only accountability but transparency for the return on investment for taxpayer funds (p. 5).

Open education systems can be leveraged to influence positive outcomes indexed against all these criteria, however the systems are not referenced within the document. This perhaps illustrates a stark gap in national advocacy and political lobbying for open education in the Australian landscape.

The use of “new social contract” in the preamble (p. 4) invites deeper exploration of the status of open education in the proposed educational future. The foundation of the social contract is that, in order to achieve security and a civil good, citizens willingly cede some individual freedoms to the state (Hobbes, 1651) — although Hobbes did admonish citizens to be wary of submitting to systems that did not serve the ideal of “public good”. In this way, the social contract is further aligned with Bakunin’s collectivist anarchy movement of the mid-1800’s, which respected the differences of individuals within society, but called for societal equality and equity of access to “social rights” that included education (Masters, 1974). If one considers the assertion by open practitioners (McKerlich, Ives and McGreal, 2013) that current educational models and copyright policy frameworks are insufficient to meet the demands of equitably-accessible twenty-first century education, then the “new social contract” needs to strongly incorporate aspects of openness.

One could even posit that national openness is a response to ideals that do not reflect those ideals of “social good”, and that the change enacted by open practitioners is an approach consistent with Hobbes’ admonishment, by opening a traditionally closed and opaquely accountable sector. These goals are consistent with both the policy statement and open education overall and exploring these in more detail provides a basis — both practically and philosophically — for policy-supported practice.

The *Keep it Clever* policy statement, like the previous *Review of Australian Higher Education* (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, and Scales, 2008) espouses values that are conceptually and practically aligned with open education — although the latter was far more proscriptive in setting targets for the Australian sector in terms of participation and inclusion. If the *Keep it Clever* principles are examined through an open lens, the potential for OEP to be woven into national mechanisms becomes explicit.

Accessibility and *affordability* are conceptually underpinned by social inclusion and the removal of barriers to a university education.

Participation in higher education (especially for indigenous, rural and remote, and low socio-economic status students) has featured in public educational policy since the early 1990's, and arguably there has been little overall success during this time period (Gale and Mills, 2013). OEP provides a way to leverage reduced-cost or free learning resources (especially in terms of textbooks), which addresses a significant access barrier for Australian students. Likewise, authentically open courses can provide students with a transparent view of university education and even assist students to transition into their first year by "demystifying" "university education — a key component of nationally recognized transitional pedagogy (Kift, Nelson and Clarke, 2010).

There are claims that by providing international access to OER that the *quality* of learning and teaching resources can be improved. A transparent teaching environment provides access to others' work, which can be translated and synthesized into local teaching practice contexts by both educators and students (Bossu and Tynan, 2011).

Australian *research capacity* can be enhanced by opening access to research data and published output with the realization that data sets and publications can become OER when used for learning and teaching purposes. Increased access to Australian research and data has the potential to broaden collaboration (especially internationally and cross-discipline), provide replicable or comparative data sets and also build a strong foundation for future research.

The aforementioned need for sustainable educational systems in the face of rising demand will need appropriate *resourcing*. Whilst open business models are still maturing (Butcher and Hoosen, 2011), open institutions are re-evaluating the balance between open content and commercialization. Additionally, the notion of reputational capital in higher education — gained through transparency and openness — is gaining traction. Whilst universities have traditionally focused on commercializing research output there is a growing acceptance of the societal role of universities in knowledge construction. The traditionally espoused value of knowledge construction and dissemination is transitioning to an enacted value — in part due to the role of openness.

Given the publicly funded nature of education, a level of *accountability* should be expected in both research and learning and teaching. Open

education systems have the potential to make the teaching resources and, in a small part, the learning experience, transparent to the sector.

The current weakness in open rhetoric internationally has been practicality (or a lack thereof). Evidence exists demonstrating that OEP is, after ten years, neither widespread nor well-known (Conole, 2013), and is far from mainstream practice (Lane and McAndrew, 2010). This is certainly the case in Australia.

One of the key areas requiring significant development is internal staff capacity building. Staff capacity development is essential to successful engagement with OEP as there are inherent complexities that have been mostly unexplored through empirical research (Stagg, 2014).

A review of institutional websites shows that many universities currently have a general information webpage about open resources — accessible to both staff and students — and that enquiries are directed to the library. Open access to research and providing information supporting open publishing models appears far more frequently. The University of Southern Queensland and the University of Tasmania were the only institutions that had visible resources contextualized for the learner (whether staff or students) to explicitly guide the user through the use of open resources and the possible benefits to teaching and learning practices. This approach mirrors the maturation of the open discourse internationally; initiating intended change through a focus on access to resources and the subsequent realization that this was an insufficient catalyst alone.

This perception is perhaps exacerbated by open education research, which often over-simplifies the practitioner experience in (re)using OER by either presenting the activity as a linear process or using lead-in fictional use cases that exemplify “best experience” rather than ones grounded in the complex reality of reuse (Wenk, 2010). This further illuminates a professional development gap at the institutional and sector level in Australia.

Any attempt to promote sustainable engagement with open education needs to acknowledge staff learning challenges and offer a mechanism to frame strategic responses grounded in institutional needs, which has yet to occur in an holistic, integrated manner in Australian higher education.

The University of Southern Queensland

The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) is based in Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia, with campuses also in Springfield and Ipswich. The institution was established in 1967 as the Queensland Institute of Technology (Darling Downs). In 1971, it became the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education, then the University College of Southern Queensland in 1990 and finally the University of Southern Queensland in 1992. In less than fifty years, USQ has become a prominent teaching and research institution providing education worldwide. In its short history, USQ has grown rapidly in size and complexity.

USQ consists of five divisions: (i) Academic Division has overall responsibility for the University's academic program portfolio; its continuous improvement, and its quality delivery across all campuses; (ii) Academic Services Division supports the learning, teaching and research needs of the University; (iii) Research and Innovation Division coordinates the University's research agenda; (iv) Students and Communities Division is responsible for supporting the student experience and building relationships with current, future and past student communities; and (v) University Services Division has oversight of University finance, human resources, sustainable business management and improvement and campus services.

USQ's Academic Division consists of two faculties: the Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts (BELA) consists of six schools: (i) School of Arts and Communication; (ii) School of Commerce; (iii) School of Law and Justice; (iv) School of Linguistics, Adult and Specialist Education; (v) School of Management and Enterprise; (vi) School of Teacher Education and Early Childhood. The Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences (HES) consists of six schools: (i) School of Agricultural, Computational and Environmental Sciences; (ii) School of Civil Engineering and Surveying; and (iii) School of Nursing and Midwifery; (iv) School of Health and Wellbeing; (v) School of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and (vi) School of Psychology and Counselling. In addition, USQ has three colleges: the Open Access College, College for Indigenous Studies, Education and Research, and the Queensland College of Wine Tourism. The University has three research institutes:

- Australian Digital Futures Institute (ADFI).
- Institute for Agriculture and the Environment (IAgE).
- Institute for Resilient Regions (IRR).

USQ has a diverse student population, including undergraduate and postgraduate students from more than 100 countries, with more than 80 nationalities. The current student enrolment is approximately 28,000 and, of this total, more than 20,000 study off-campus by online/distance learning. Just over 54% of the students are female, over one quarter are classified as low socio-economic status and only 10% are first school leavers.

In 2013, 496 Higher Degree Research students, 4,433 Higher Degree Coursework and 14,930 Bachelor level students were enrolled at USQ. In 2013, over 5,000 international students were enrolled, with 1,797 students studying on-campus and the remainder studying outside Australia either through USQ Education Partners or directly with USQ.

The *USQ Strategic Plan 2016-2020* is built on three pillars – Education, Research, Enriched and Enterprise. The Plan guides the University in delivering its mission, which is “to lead in economic and social development through higher education and research excellence”:

- **Education:** USQ successfully blends access with excellence and is a leading university for student experience and graduate outcomes.
- **Research:** USQ is internationally recognized for high impact research in our areas of research focus.
- **Enterprise:** USQ is a socially responsible and well managed enterprise with a work culture that promotes high performance and is reflective of our values.

USQ and the Conundrum of Openness

The topic of OEP can seem counter-intuitive. After all, it seems natural that the University would create value through limiting access to data, information and knowledge generating a market based on constraint. The internet of ideas makes information markets based on restriction very expensive to create and protect, while contributing and using the open market of ideas and artefacts potentially reduces a range of costs and may increase margins for the University's core product offerings.

As will be mentioned in the coming paragraphs, Openness is not an all or nothing proposition. Although one might argue that there is value that the University can derive from limitation (its credentials and patentable discoveries, for instance), but not from unnecessarily limiting access to the information it uses for the purposes of learning and teaching. Openness need not simply be accepted as an article of faith, but it must be accepted in the spirit of the principles that provide the contours of open practice. USQ has found an easy alignment between the historical mission (based on the notion of social justice and access) and the contemporary Open Educational Practice. For any institution, the question of *why* openness is an attractive proposition is a critical first step for purposeful engagement. In recent years, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) were a high profile example of international engagement with perceived openness that was often neither connected nor beneficial to institutional goals or the enhancement of learning and teaching practice.

The following Openness Principles¹ are therefore guiding USQ's OEP endeavors:

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- 1 The following are some of the resources that influenced the development of the proposed Openness Principles at USQ.
- AACU: Academic Freedom and Educational Responsibility (<http://www.aacu.org/about/statements/documents/academicfreedom.pdf>)
 - AAUP: 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (<http://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>)
 - AAUP: Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications (<http://www.aaup.org/report/academic-freedom-and-electronic-communications-2014>)
 - Coase's Penguin, or Linux and the Nature of the Firm (<http://www.benkler.org/CoasesPenguin.html>)
 - EDUCASUE Openness (https://net.educause.edu/elements/staff_web_pages/doblinger/openness.pdf)
 - Free Cultural Works (<http://freedomdefined.org/Definition>)
 - Future Learn (<https://about.futurelearn.com/terms/openness>)
 - Human Rights Initiative (http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/programs/ai/rti/articles/handbook_intro_to_openness_&_ai.pdf)
 - Oxford Scholarship Online: The Information Society and the Welfare State: The Finnish Model (<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199256990.001.0001/acprof-9780199256990>)
 - Open Government (<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/open-government-declaration>)
 - Openness Index (<https://wiki.jasig.org/display/2398/Openness+Index>)
 - Open Science Commons (<http://sciencecommons.org/resources/readingroom/principles-for-open-science>)
 - Principles on Open Public Sector Information (http://www.oaic.gov.au/images/documents/information-policy/information-policy-agency-resources/principles_on_psi_short.pdf)
 - Unisa Open (<http://www.unisa.ac.za/default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=27755>)
 - WikiEducator (http://wikieducator.org/The_right_license/Free_cultural_works)

1. **Openness as Core to Education and Social Justice:** As an actor in the twenty-first century, USQ understands that education is practiced in a data, information, and knowledge ecosystem that is supported by technical and social networks. Our principal role as a university is to grow knowledge from more to more, while promoting social progress and social justice. Open access is a principal factor in the efficient and effective distribution of information for the growth of knowledge and promotion of critical and reflective education leading to civic capacity. We optimize our contribution to the open education ecosystem by supporting the use and creation of free cultural works that provide:²
 - a. the freedom to use the work and enjoy the benefits of using it;
 - b. the freedom to study the work and to apply knowledge acquired from it;
 - c. the freedom to make and redistribute copies, in whole or in part, of the information or expression; and
 - d. the freedom to make changes and improvements, and to distribute derivative works.
2. **Respect for the Traditions of the Academy:** Openness is a fundamental tenant of academic freedom and responsibility for the academy and the professoriate, striking at the very purpose of the University and its singular role in free societies.
3. **Do the Right Thing:** Opening up educational resources for use, re-use, and modification is a moral good and our academic, professional, and managerial staff along with our partners should look to contribute to the stock of open educational resources.
4. **Think of our Students:** Whenever possible the University should default to OEP to reduce the overall cost of receiving a high quality, accessible, and affordable education including the use of open textbooks, journals, course materials, other supplementary content, and technologies.
5. **Access and Distribution with Respect:** Individual learners, faculty, and visitors to our sites must feel confident that they can participate in a safe and secure environment for learning, which respects the content they generate as part of their learning.
6. **Default to Open:** We believe that opening access to educational resources is a moral good, and when permissions allow, we will contribute any content or translations generated by our academic,

2 <http://freedomdefined.org/Definition>

professional, and managerial staff and community for the purposes of learning, teaching, and scholarship as OERs under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license.

7. **Lawful Practice:** Our partner publishers and content suppliers need to be able to make their own decisions about how their materials and contributions are used. For partners who request that we restrict free access to their content to a limited number or type of user, we respect their requirements and manage their content with the appropriate Digital Rights Management technology.³
8. **Alignment with Public Good:** The University of Southern Queensland is aligned with the broad goals and application of the Australian Governments Open Access and Licencing Framework (AUSGoal)⁴ and Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's Eight Principles on Open Public Sector Information in the context of course materials and information management broadly:
 - a. Open access to information — a default position.
 - b. Engaging the community.
 - c. Effective information governance.
 - d. Robust information asset management.
 - e. Discoverable and useable information.
 - f. Clear reuse rights.
 - g. Appropriate charging for access.
 - h. Transparent enquiry and complaints processes.
9. **Agility and Agile Practice:** The University of Southern Queensland strives to be an "agile" organization through the adoption of agile management practices, for which Openness is an essential precondition.

Openness and Opportunities at USQ

The Openness movement is creating opportunities that challenge traditional business and education models and may accelerate the use and impact of information and communication technologies (ICT), new media, online education and distributed learning. Although USQ was an early leader in the OER movement, it has not taken full advantage of

3 <https://www.libraryforall.org/openness-principles>

4 <http://www.ausgoal.gov.au>

that position. That being said, it is still in a position, with appropriate leadership, to take uncommon advantage of opportunities and assert an international leadership position in a new order. This will take fortitude, bravery and willingness to experiment small, and fail early and often, while succeeding with confidence and making those successes really matter. Although OEP is a long-term journey that keeps renewing itself, we need to recognize that others have taken steps by formalizing open policies at the institutional level. Notable institutions include Lincoln University (NZ), Otago Polytechnic (NZ), Athabasca University (CA), the State University of New York (US) and many others.

By experimenting with and adopting open practice, we are practicing in ways that optimize the value we create through the generation, curation, use and reuse of information and knowledge assets. We will also promote meaningful collaboration that brings tangible benefits to the University, its learners, alumni and broader stakeholders. It helps us better engage with our social justice mission and, as a public university, provides us with a natural mechanism to maximize the value that every Australian can receive from their publicly funded university sector. Research among universities participating in some form of OEP has indicated that the priority of the benefits of openness are as follows:

1. participating in an international network of like-minded partners;
2. philanthropic mission/social justice; and
3. new business opportunities.

According to almost every education report available today, twenty-first century education will be different from the past. Our learners and our funders will expect (if they do not already) and we will witness increasingly (if we have not already) personalized, data driven and technology-enabled learning opportunities. We will participate in the continued disaggregation of educational services on the institutional level, and we will facilitate the re-aggregation of education on the personal level.

Although still under iterative development indicative of agile methodologies, unique educational processes enabled through Open Educational Practice are emerging within the OERu. This is evident in the growing embrace of OER and of courses collaboratively designed and developed by teams including content area specialists, educational

technologists and instructional designers who are forging new approaches to learning and teaching scholarship. This same approach, supported through the pedagogy of discovery⁵ lends itself to courses effectively designed through crowdsourcing, affinity grouping and distributed educational activities. OERu has proposed a formal program of Academic Volunteers International⁶ that was used during USQ's first OERu course offering. The course was intended to support peer mentoring through critique and reflection and, more broadly, reflect a gradual shift toward learner-centered pedagogies and competency-based, outcomes-oriented approaches. Participation in twenty-first century education will require agile organizational management and governance, digital fluency and transparency that can only result from open processes and practices and freely available content. The internet and its presentation environment, the web, were architected to liberate information, not to impose barriers. The corporatization of the University demands creative and innovative approaches to a "market" that feeds on agility. Open education is the natural consequence of and catalyst for delivering education in such an environment and delivering in such an environment sits at the very center of USQ's learning and teaching strategy.

Current Openness Activities at USQ

During the past five years, the University of Southern Queensland has been building momentum in support of its commitment to OEP and OERs. Although OEP is not an *all or nothing* strategy, it is one that requires thoughtful engagement throughout the University. Fortunately, successful OEP adoption tends to have low reputational risk because adoption tends to be agile and incremental, so OEP can be integrated into existing operations without incurring additional and significant cost. However, because of its somewhat counter-intuitive nature, OEP requires discipline about how we make important strategic as well as

5 http://wikieducator.org/Kenya_national_symposium_on_open_education/The_pedagogy_of_discovery:_Using_OER_to_enable_free_range_learning

6 OERu Proposal for action for Academic Volunteers International http://wikieducator.org/OERu/2011.11_OERu_Proposal_for_action_for_Academic_Volunteers_International

operational decisions, the types of questions we ask of ourselves, and how we structure those questions. For example:

- how we build our intellectual property and copyright policy is important.
- how we identify, select and prescribe textbooks and whether we put the onus on explaining why we would assign an expensive proprietary text or other resource when open and free alternatives are available of similar quality.
- assuming open licensing first of all and then only retaining all reserved rights when there is a strong argument to doing so.
- assessing accurately the costs and risks associated with closing content and managing proprietary intellectual property.
- how can we incentivize high quality open scholarship and publication as appropriate.
- how can we recognize and incentivize creative reuse, sharing and the creation of high-quality localized or internationalized works.
- clearly stating and practicing our values relative to our use and distribution of publicly funded intellectual assets.

Although these are not the types of questions historically asked or the standards adopted and set, they have recently become much more clearly articulated in our work on an University IP policy, open textbook proposal and early stages of a green paper prompting an “open first” posture on educational content and learning technologies. We are recognizing that simply asking the questions, publicly and with conviction, helps promote critical thinking on the topic of openness, creativity and innovation. Fortunately, USQ was an early adopter of some aspects of open practice, which has generated a common identity for a small group of academic and professional staff that have been experimenting somewhat “under the radar”. The open practice that has been pursued, although not fully embraced at the University, has been enough to garner a small reputation for USQ as being a progressive practitioner in the area.

The University’s current initiatives and activities fall under five classifications:

1. Open Educational Resources
 - a. active participation in the OERu.

- b. the first Australian university to join and contribute courses to the Open Courseware Consortium (OCWC).⁷
 - c. faculty driven creation of an open textbook on Sports Physiology that includes contributions from dozens of internationally leading scholars who have made their contributions open for the text.
 - d. participation on an Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) Seed Grant along with colleagues at the University of Tasmania to experiment with the development of micro Open Online Courses (MOOCs).
 - e. introduction of a USQ Open Textbook Grant Scheme in which, through a competitive process, university academics receive funds to use or develop an open text book.
 - f. introduction, in 2015, of a USQ eLearning Objects Repository (eLOR) that helped reduce barriers to sharing content internally within the University.
2. Open policy and practice
 - a. building a new capacity in open education environments to improve authoring and delivering quality through investment in better content management, intellectual property, licensing control and enhanced discovery.
 - b. establishment of a working party with representatives across the university to explore and articulate recommendations regarding open content licensing practices.
 - c. Launch of the USQ Open Practice website (<http://www.usq.edu.au/open-practice>) to provide a space to formally articulate and share USQ's commitment to openness.
 - d. having proposed and now developing a workflow and content management environment supporting open licensing for course materials.
 3. Open research
 - a. building a new capacity to discover and index the discovery of open research reports on a global scale through investment in technology and expertise, taking advantage of structured repositories of public research and teaching materials that have not been adequately indexed by major search engines.

⁷ <http://www.ocwconsortium.org/news/2007/07/university-of-southern-queensland-opencourseware>

- b. having developed relationships with USQ researchers to openly publish open research outputs that can be used across the curriculum for learning and teaching.
 - c. having a USQ ePrints repository to enable the sharing of research outputs to the broader national and international community.
4. Open source software
- a. leadership in a collaborative project with the Open Source Initiative (OSI), Opman Group, Origin International Technology Law Group and the OER Foundation to develop and deliver an open course on Free, Libre and Open Works project management course.
 - b. first higher education affiliate with the OSI.
5. Open community participation
- a. active participation in and creation of openly available resources for Open Access Week, OER Week and Information and Library Studies Week.

These efforts have built a sufficient capacity for the University to take the next step, but without committing to do so, the USQ academics will eventually run their course/s as open educators, find alternative pursuits at USQ or gravitate to universities and other organizations that value openness as a principle and innovate in their practices.

Change and Change Processes

As already mentioned, USQ has been involved with open educational resources and open education more broadly for longer than a decade. Some of our notable “firsts” included participation in the Open Courseware Initiative in 2007, the OERu in 2011 and, most recently, our affiliation with the Open Source Initiative in 2015. In very many ways, early involvement in openness by people like Professor Emeritus Jim Taylor on behalf of the University points to a very keen insight. He saw that openness potentially strikes directly at the core purposes of a university like USQ, which is committed to enhancing access to learning. OERu provided a perfect pilot for USQ. It provided a need to engage teachers in designing courses for an open environment, use of open content and serious consideration of an educational model based on credentials distributed among partner universities, course and

content “owned” by a particular university, but freely available, and without a clear sustainability model. USQ initially sought to engage with openness through a series of small-scale, diverse projects. This approach was designed as a multi-pronged capacity-building and experiential learning strategy aiming for longer-term institutional normalization. The actualization of this strategy has been a more complex and resource-intensive undertaking.

We have become more active to incentivize engagement with a variety of openness activities, some of which have been described to simply illustrate how openness can liberate creativity. We have worked with a handful of teachers to rethink the idea of a textbook so it is not only open but is something fundamentally different than what proprietary distributors of texts are willing to provide. We have come to grips with the fact that it is difficult to *reposition* or *re-conceptualize* a university that is growing, financially sound and well led like USQ, principally because things are generally going well and there is a low sense of urgency. What we can do is reduce the barriers to experimenting with openness, use its language liberally, increase the viability of open options and make decisions that place open first.

Lessons Learnt and Next Steps

It is not good enough to simply espouse openness as an “institutional good”. Openness needs to be useful, as well, and its value needs to be discovered and internalized locally, and in many cases individually. If openness can help teachers more easily design their course, students more affordably study, or the University be more creative and impactful in its curriculum, program design and course offerings then openness and open resources will more likely be adopted. We have learned that open practice by academic staff needs to be an individual decision but the University can reward and recognize open behavior and support experimentation.

In addition to sponsoring projects which are designed to promote open practices, making it easier to use open resources for course design and promoting open distribution through modelling our own practices, we are also ensuring that relevant university policies, such as Intellectual Property, explicitly recognize open practice and that software

procurement processes are open source friendly and consideration is given to open technology standards and the consumption and creation of open file formats. The coming year will see an active effort to engender a university-wide dialogue about open practice as we launch a “green paper” for open consultation, which will lead to more formal statements about University commitment to open practice.

Conclusion

The University of Southern Queensland’s approach to openness has been a decade-long steady march guided more by principle than opportunity. As a university we have for the most part stayed away from organizations and efforts that we perceive as “*fauxpen*” or engaging in “*open washing*”. We do not want to confuse the core meaning of open by introducing predatory marketing into the community. As an institution, we have also been rather pragmatic and are normally guided by efforts that we think will either have direct positive outcomes for students and members of the faculty, meet our educational goals, or promote a broader open culture at the University. The University has found that simply participating in genuine open activities and working with open organizations like the OER Foundation, OERu and the OSI help us refine our understanding of openness and our practice.

We believe that it is through thoughtful and methodical engagement that we are developing a culture in which openness is a natural impulse and those activities that promote closed culture and restrictions on the free flow of information, knowledge and culture are understood for what they are. The open impulse not only guides our decision-making as institutional leaders charged with crafting policy and resourcing decisions and as individual actors, but also promotes a culture with the capacity to continuously improve our practice and seriously consider the implications of agility.

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