

Places and spaces for online students: Connecting students with local libraries

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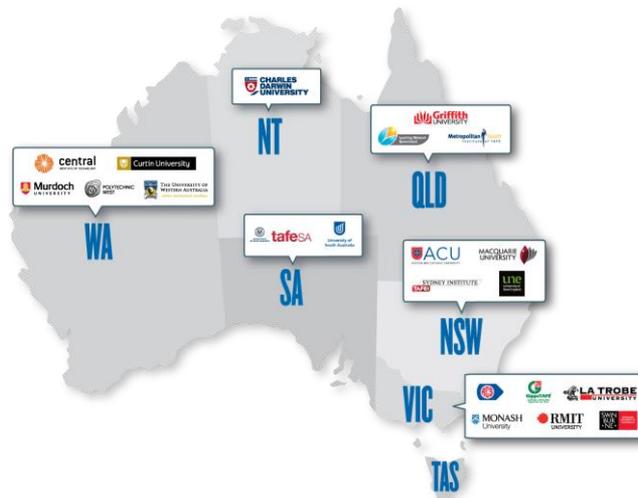
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About Open Universities Australia

- Offers open entry, online higher and tertiary education
- Over 250,000 students across Australia since 1993
- Owned by 7 Australian universities (Curtin, Griffith, Macquarie, Monash, RMIT, Swinburne, UniSA)
- Offers over 1700 units and 180 qualifications from more than 20 higher education and VET providers
- Qualifications awarded by the university or tertiary institution
- Qualification is identical to that awarded to an on-campus student

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The OUA family



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How and what do our students study?

- **FEE-Help**
 - Commonwealth scheme which allows deferred payment of fees.
 - Over 70% of OUA students use FEE-HELP
- **Wide range of units and courses:**
 - Arts & humanities
 - Business
 - Education
 - Health
 - Information Technology (IT)
 - Law & justice
 - Science & engineering
- **Most common study pattern**
 - Students enrol in individual undergraduate units and can track towards a full qualification.

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**Our students
are a very diverse
bunch!**



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OUA students “non-traditional”

- Relatively few come straight from school to study with OUA
- Mostly mature-age (>21), in paid employment and/or caring for children
- Around half of OUA students are first in family to come to university

OUA students have multiple responsibilities, often with little prior educational experience, combined with lack of time, money or both....

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'OUA Connect' Pilot - 2012

- Promoted 4 local libraries in NSW (Wyong & Shellharbour) as places where OUA students could:
 - access library resources
 - learn about library resources and access to other services
 - network with other OUA students
- Delivered a training session and provided information about OUA, its study patterns etc to library staff to better assist OUA students
- Evaluated the program based on student attendance as well as student and library staff satisfaction

Roles and responsibilities

Libraries

- Information sessions for OUA students
- Information about OUA & provider resources and how to access them
- Introduction to library resources and how to access them
- Basic level IT assistance to navigate the online educational environment

OUA

- Provided training session and ongoing contact and support to library staff
- Supply of OUA information and resources to libraries
- Provision of data collection sheets
- Publicising library sessions to OUA students via eDMs & social media
- Evaluation, analysis and reporting on outcomes of pilot

How did the pilot operate?

- Program advertised and promoted to all enrolled OUA students whose postcodes fell within the Wyong and Shellharbour regions
- Information sent by email to each student individually at start of study period, with reminder a few weeks later
- Use of social media (OUA Facebook and Twitter) to remind students about the program and encourage them to attend

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Facebook posts

Open Universities Australia shared a link.
Thursday

We're pleased to announce that all OUA Connect sessions at Lake Haven library will now be held each SATURDAY starting tomorrow on Oct 20 from 10am to 12pm! Stop by to meet other OUA students and get one-on-one help with the OUA Connect librarians.

<http://www.open.edu.au/about-us/student-news/oua-connect-goes-on-trial-in-NSW>

OUA Connect - a new service for OUA students goes on trial in NSW - Open Universities Australia
www.open.edu.au

We're pleased to announce that Open Universities Australia is trialing an exciting new service in the Wyong and Shellharbour Shire Libraries. OUA Connect will be commencing in Week 2 of Study Period 3, Monday 3

Like · Comment · Share

Open Universities Australia shared a link.
September 25

Did you know students can access four hours of free expert tutoring support for each unit undertaken in a wide range of undergraduate, postgraduate, TAFE and preparatory units? To find out more follow this link <http://tiny.cc/smarthinking>

Smarthinking - help with assignments - Open Universities Australia
tiny.cc

You are not alone in your learning when you study through OUA. We know the pressures you face when studying and offer free access to an on-demand tutoring service called Smarthinking.

Like · Comment · Share

Open Universities Australia
September 11 via Allin1Social

Just a reminder that OUA offers an in house counselling service to support you with your studies. If you are having trouble with time management or stress, contact the counselling service for a confidential appointment - 1300 923 804 or counselling@open.edu.au.

Student counselling - Open Universities Australia
www.open.edu.au

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Twitter feeds

Tweets

Open Universities AU @OpenUnisAu
 OUA Connect sessions at Lake Haven library will now be h
 each SAT starting from Oct 20 from 10am to 12pm!
open.edu.au/about-us/stude...
 Expand

Open Universities AU @OpenUnisAu
 First time studying? Feeling anxious? OUA is here to support.
 Email counselling@open.edu.au for a confidential appointment
 Collapse Reply Retweet Favorite

5
 RETWEETS






6:30 AM - 9 Sep 12 · Details

Open Universities AU @OpenUnisAu 20 Sep
 The OUA Connect Library Project is in full swing! If you live in
 the area, drop by to say hello: tiny.cc/i49wkw
pic.twitter.com/WCuZC2cJ
 Hide photo Reply Retweet Favorite



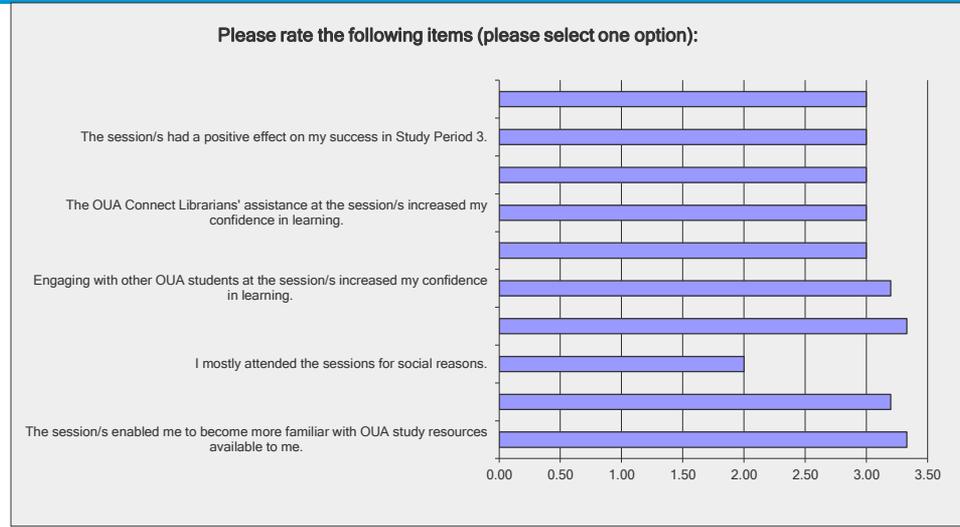
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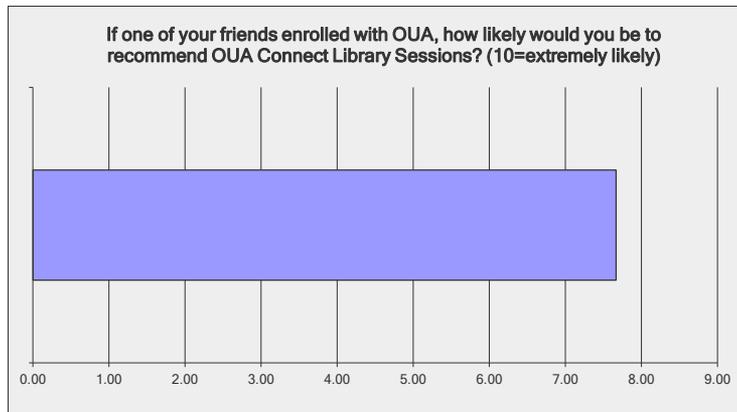
Student Feedback

- Was great to get feedback from other students on helpful tips to assist with databases etc.
- Great having face-to-face contact and talking with other students about their experiences.
- As a new online student I had found the research aspect of learning very overwhelming. My session today helped me understand how to look up and navigate around for my required articles and journals.
- I have found this helpful and encouraging especially the advisors and other students helps to keep you focus and aware there are other online students experiencing the same issues or have found ways to overcome these issues. Love the communication.
- A great way to meet other students and discuss matters of study.

Survey Results



Survey Results



Where to in 2013?

- Expanding partnerships across other libraries in NSW
 - Lithgow
 - Newcastle
 - Kiama
 - Parramatta
 - Auburn
- Libraries are offering a range of services for online students including:
 - Regular drop-in sessions
 - One-off Library Information sessions
 - Promotion of existing services/programs to online students
- OUA provides information/resources pack and training

Where to in 2013?

We are hoping to extend this program across Victoria and are now seeking interest in participation from Victorian local libraries.

We will promote to our students whatever resources/services each library is willing to offer!

- Via website: www.open.edu.au/libraryconnect
- And by targeted communication to students within the postcode regions of participating libraries.

Questions & Discussion

