

- 1. Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education Report compiled by Angela Murphy Australian Digital Futures Institute 19 September 2012
- 2. Table of contents: Survey Background Sample Details Institutional Landscape Involvement in OER initiatives OERu Evaluation Success factors and obstacles to participation in OER initiatives Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 2
- 3. Survey Background 3
- 4. Open Education: Resources to Practice Successful implementation of open education approaches creates unprecedented possibilities for all countries to provide free learning opportunities for their students, especially those learners currently excluded from the formal sector (Mackintosh, 2012). • The Open Educational Resources (OERs) movement and increasingly open educational practices seemed set to change the future landscape of higher education. • The potential of OER to transform educational practice has not been realised and use in higher education has not yet reached critical threshold (Stacey, 2010) due to a lack of focus on policies and practices required to support the development and use of OERs in higher education (Ehlers, 2011). • Open Educational Practices are the second wave of the OER movement aimed at supporting the creation, use and management of OER through institutional policies, which promote innovative pedagogical models, and respect and empower learners as co-producers on their lifelong learning path (Andrade et al., 2011). • The OER university (OERu) is one of these initiatives that aims to provide free learning to all students worldwide using courses based solely on OER, with pathways to gain credible qualifications from recognised education institutions (Mackintosh, 2012). • The survey was created to explore the extent to which higher education institutions have embraced open education practices and enable benchmarking against the practices implemented by members of the OERu network (also known as the OER Ten partner institutions). Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 4
- 5. The OER university The OERu is based on a conceptual framework that provides a structure for enabling free learning opportunities for students who lack the means to access traditional higher education (Taylor, 2007). • The OERu signifies a step towards developing a feasible framework for integrating available OERs into assessable online courses. • The OER Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that works internationally to support mainstream adoption of OER in the formal education sector (Mackintosh, 2012). • The OER Foundation co-ordinates the OER Tertiary Education Network, an innovation partnership of accredited universities, colleges and polytechnics from around the world that are collaborating on the implementation of the OER university (Mackintosh, Taylor, & McGreal, 2011). • The OERu network consists of 15 founding anchor partners, 13 education institutions and 2 public organisations). The 13 education institutions are as follows: University of Southern Queensland Australia NorthTec New Zealand University of Wollongong Australia Nelson Marlborough Institute of Athabasca University, Canada Technology New Zealand Thompson Rivers University Canada The University of Canterbury New Zealand Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University India University of South Africa South Africa Open Polytechnic New Zealand Southern New Hampshire University USA Otago Polytechnic New Zealand Empire State College (State University of USA New York) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 5

- 6. Research Aims and Objectives The aim of the study was to identify the extent to which open education practices are adopted and institutionalised by higher education institutions globally. • This study had two objectives: 1. To identify key institutional policies and practices that support the successful implementation of formal assessment and accreditation services for informal learning based solely on open educational resources (OER), with reference to recommendations provided by an “experts” group within the OER university network. 2. To enable institutions that are not members of the OERu to determine their compatibility with the OERu concept, in other words, to identify aspects of current policies and practices at their institutions that would hinder or support the implementation of sustainable assessment and accreditation initiatives based on OERs, in collaboration with other institutions. • The survey is targeted at two groups of participants: → Higher education institutions that are officially members of the OERu network (also known as the OERTen partner institutions). → Higher education institutions that are not members of the OERu. • The research survey was jointly created with Gabi Witthaus from the Beyond Distance Research Alliance (University of Leicester) and Wayne Mackintosh from the OERu Foundation. • The project was partially funded by a grant from USQ’s Early Career Researcher Program Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 6
- 7. Research Method and Process This presentation contains the results from the total sample. A capability index is under development using the results from the OER network participants and will be released shortly. • The survey was programmed and hosted using an online survey tool. • A link to the survey was disseminated using social media such as Twitter and Facebook and through newsletters and discussion forums, including the OERu (detail). • A total of 110 responses were retained for analysis - these included complete responses as well as partial responses that had completed a significant component of the survey. • Participants included 12 higher education institutions that are officially members of the OERu network and 98 that are not partner institutions. • Many of the questions were derived from a series of interviews carried out by Gabi Witthaus with individuals from institutions participating in the OER university (OERu) network. • Participants from the United Kingdom are overrepresented in the sample and UK institutions were excluded from a number of questions as a further aim of the survey was to contribute to the TOUCANS project completed by Gabi Witthaus to identify reasons for low participation in the OERu concept in England. • The results from this research are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported License. • For more information on the project visit the ORION project page at [http://adfi.usq.edu.au/projects/orion/Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 7](http://adfi.usq.edu.au/projects/orion/Benchmarking%20OER%20Use%20and%20Assessment%20in%20Higher%20Education)
- 8. Sample Details 8
- 9. Institution / Organisation Information The majority of respondents were from the United Kingdom, followed by North and South America. The sample was mostly made up of practitioners, yet there was representation from management levels as well. Continent Level United Kingdom 40% Executive management 11% North America 17% Senior manager 14% South America 15% Manager 8% Australia/New Zealand 9% Europe 6% Practitioner 48% Asia 5% Researcher 13% Other Africa 5% Other 6% South Africa 4% Continent (Aggregate) (n=110) Which of the following categories best describes the capacity in which you are responding? (Select one) (n=184) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 9
- 10. Institution / Organisation Information Participants mostly represented universities or 4-year community colleges, yet public and not- for profit organisations were also

represented due to the significant involvement of these organisations in the OER network. Type of organisation University or 4-year Community College 64% Public organisation 12% Not-for profit organisation 10% Institute of technology / TAFE / Polytechnic university 9% Secondary institution 8% Vocational training provider 6% Non-teaching organisation 5% 3-year Community College 2% Other 7% How would you classify the organisation or institution that you work for? (Select all that apply) (n=107) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 10

- 11. Geographic Representation Country where your institution is located (N=110) 11
- 12. Tertiary Institution Information Higher education institutions who participated all offer a range of qualifications. Type of institution Postgraduate Degree (including Masters, Doctorate) 77% Bachelors Degree 77% Postgraduate Certificate 71% Certificate 71% Diploma 66% Postgraduate Diploma 65% Advanced Diploma 48% Associate Degree / Foundation degree 47% Other 4% Other (specify): Which of the following credentials does your institution have the authority to confer in accordance with local • PLA recommendations for college level learning gained accreditation requirements? (Select all that apply) outside of HE Sample : Teaching institutions only (n=95) • Professional accreditation in collaboration with external bodies e.g. CISCO, CPD for professions such as nursing and midwifery 12 Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education
- 13. Tertiary Institution Information Higher education institutions with on-campus students formed the majority of the sample, followed by distance learning institutions. Category of institution Number of students On-campus institution 62% 100 001+ 7% 60 001 - 100 000 1% Distance learning institution 41% 40 001 - 60 000 8% Open university (open entry 17% policy) 20 001 - 40 000 28% Not an open institution but have open entry policy for 14% some courses 10 001 - 20 000 22% Other 18% Less than 10 000 34% Which of the following apply to your institution? Approximately how many students are enrolled in your institution? Sample : Teaching institutions only (n=95) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 13
- 14. Institutional Landscape
- 15. Accreditation Activities One in two participants noted that their organisations had policies and procedures in place for recognition of prior learning, yet few participated in challenge exams. How actively does your institution currently participate in the following accreditation activities? Unsure Policies and procedures in place for recognition of 20% 13% 18% 32% 17% 21% prior learning Collaborates with employers to provide 19% 22% 22% 22% 14% 14% workplace-based assessment for learners Challenge Exams 67% 10% 12% 6% 6% 23% No participation 1 2 3 4 5 Central to my institution These next questions ask you to provide information on current policy. Please answer as best you can. Confidence 6% 9% 23% 33% 29% Total Sample (n=90) How confident are you that your answers to the previous questions reflect your organisations policies and practices? Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 15 Not very confident 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident
- 16. Student Support Very few organisations utilised initiatives such as analytics, social network platforms and volunteers to provide support to students. How actively does your institution currently participate in the following activities to support learners? Unsure Relationships with workplace or community organisations that support learners in their 5% 26% 26% 29% 13% 10% studies Open access and externally hosted social networking platform(s) to enable peer learning 14% 47% 18% 16% 4% 10% support Uses analytics to enable the provision of 36% 36% 14% 10% 4% 17% automated support to students Uses volunteers to provide certain aspects of 42% 22% 27% 4% 4% 13% student support No participation 1 2 3 4 5 Central to

my institution These next questions ask you to provide information on current policy. Please answer as best you can. Confidence 4% 7% 30% 40% 20% Total Sample (n=84) How confident are you that your answers to the previous questions reflect your organisations policies and practices? Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 16 Not very confident 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident

- 17. Credit Transfer Awareness of policies with regard to credit transfer was low, yet only one in two participants maintain that their institution can award credentials to students who have obtained more than 60% of their credits at another institution. Which of the following options best describe your institutions practice with regard to credit transfer? My institution can award a credential even in cases where more than 60% of the credits have been obtained from 20% other institutions that are recognised by my institution My institution can award a credential, as long as at least 50-60% of the credits are awarded by my institution 16% My institution can award a credential, as long as more than 60% of the credits are awarded by my institution 16% My institution does not recognise transfer credit for credits obtained at other institutions 14% I dont know 35% These next questions ask you to provide information on current policy. Please answer as best you can. How actively does your institution currently participate in the following accreditation activities? (Select all that apply) Confidence 9% 10% 19% 22% 40% Total Sample (n=81) How confident are you that your answers to the previous questions reflect your organisations policies and practices? Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 17 Not very confident 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident
- 18. Involvement in OER initiatives Open Educational Resources (OER) are materials used to support education that may be freely accessed, reused, modified and shared by anyone (Downes 2011). For the purposes of this study, the concept of OER is inclusive of Open Educational Practices (OEP) associated with the design, development and delivery of courses based solely on OER. The OER university or OERu is a global partnership in which several higher education institutions are collaborating to offer free learning using courses based solely on OERs and low-cost assessment and accreditation services towards formal academic credit on a mass scale.
- 19. Knowledge about OERs Participants in the research study had a high level of awareness and knowledge about both open educational resources in general and the OERu. Before today, how knowledgeable were you about 1% 19% 2% 27% 51% Open Educational Resources (OERs)? Before today, how knowledgeable were you about 8% 13% 12% 36% 31% the OER university (OERu)? Not very knowledgeable 1 2 3 4 5 Very knowledgeable Before today, how knowledgeable were you about... Please rate your awareness on a scale from 1-5 where 1 = not at all (never heard of before today) to 5 = to a large extent (very knowledgeable) Total Sample (n=90) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 19
- 20. Participation in the OERu Although awareness of the OERu is high, participation in the OERu network is low with only 23% of institutions actively involved. 63% 14% Yes No 23% DK Is your institution actively involved in the OERu network? i.e. an OERu anchor partner or a member of the OERten Sample excludes respondents unfamiliar with OERs (n=84) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 20
- 21. Interest in OERs Interest in the OERu initiative as well as the mainstream adoption of OERs in the formal education sector is high with over 90% of respondents interested in these topics. To what extent are you interested in the mainstream adoption of OERs in the formal 8% 21% 71% education sector? To what extent are you interested in the OER 2% 6% 32% 60% university initiative? Not at all 1 2 3 4 5

To a large extent Sample excludes respondents unfamiliar with OERs (n=84) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 21

- 22. Participation in the OERu One in two participants are presently interested observers in the OERu and many consider becoming more actively involved in the future. Current participation in the OERu Future participation in the OERu Institutional representative of a OERu 26% 13% anchor partner Institutional representative of a 4% 28% prospective OERu anchor partner In my individual capacity as active 21% 56% OERu volunteer As an interested person contributing 23% 56% to OERu planning discussions Interested observer 43% 41% Not currently participating in the 4% 0% OERu Other 13% 3% In which of the following capacities are you currently participating in the OERu? (Select all that apply) In which of the following capacities are you potentially interested in participating in the OERu in future? Sample excludes UK participants (n=90) Select all that apply) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 22
- 23. Institutional participation in the OERu The opportunity to participate in an international network of accredited institutions is considered to be the most important driver of institutional participation in the OERu. To what extent did/would the following factors impact on your institutions decision to join a collaborative OER accreditation initiative such as the OERu Network? Unsure % Participation in an international network of accredited institutions 3 10 17 30 39 8 Potential to reduce cost and save time associated with the development of learning materials 5 16 21 25 33 8 Using OER collaboration models as a learning environment for improving teaching practice in online learning at my institution 6 14 25 23 31 14 International marketing of my institution 10 9 28 22 31 11 Philanthropic, widening access to affordable education for learners excluded from the post-secondary system 1 15 19 37 28 11 Retain competitive advantage as OER collaboration models becomes more mainstream 10 13 17 35 25 17 Opportunity to increase local student enrolment from learners who start out by studying using free learning courses 13 8 26 29 24 14 Testing OER collaboration models as a low risk project in a rapidly changing market 8 14 26 29 23 14 Opportunity to diversify revenue streams by incorporating value-added services associated with free learning courses 14 20 23 21 23 13 Low risk innovation strategy 10 13 29 26 21 13 % No Impact 1 2 3 4 5 Significant Impact Confidence 1% 15% 28% 40% 15% Sample excludes UK participants & respondents selecting not applicable (n=80) How confident are you that your answers to the previous questions reflect your organisations views? Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 23 Not very confident 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident
- 24. Involvement in OER initiatives Fewer than three in ten institutions currently participate actively in the activities to support the development of OERs. How actively does your institution currently participate in activities to support the development and use of Open Educational Resources? Unsure My institution publishes open educational resources 31% 25% 15% 13% 16% 5% (OERs) Collaborative development of OERs with people in 19% 29% 28% 14% 10% 11% other institutions Use of OERs developed by other institutions or 8% 30% 39% 14% 8% 11% organisations Provision of courses based solely on OERs 60% 19% 12% 3% 5% 8% No participation 1 2 3 4 5 Central to my institution These next questions ask you to provide information on current policy. Please answer as best you can. Confidence 4% 4% 27% 43% 22% Sample excludes UK participants & respondents selecting not applicable (n=80) How confident are you that your answers to the previous questions reflect your organisations views? Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 24 Not very confident 1 2 3 4 5 Very confident

- 25. Assessment services for courses based on OERs Only 6% of institutions currently provide assessment services for courses based solely on OERs and only 18% are likely to provide them in the near future. Current assessment services Future assessment services 10% 8% 12% 5 Very likely 22% 6% 4 73% 3 2 25% 1 Not at all likely 21% Unsure Yes No 24% Unsure or DK Does your institution currently provide assessment services for courses based solely on OERs? Includes assessment services for courses to be used in the OERu How likely is your institution to provide assessment Sample excludes respondents unfamiliar with OERs (n=84) services for courses based solely on OERs in the future? Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education Sample excludes respondents with current services (n=51) 25
- 26. OERu Evaluation 26
- 27. OERu Evaluation - OERTen Participation in OERu concept Half of the twelve OERTen representatives were nearing completion in the development of open courses to be used for the OERu and a third have obtained support that has been agreed to and institutionalised within their organisation. Which of the following best describes your Institutions current stage in the development of open courses to be used for the OERu? Have the principles and policies of the OERu already been agreed to by your organisations executive leadership and institutionalised within Undergoing development but nearing 45% the organisation? completion for piloting the OERu model Early stages of development 27% Yes, agreed to by executive leadership 36% Not providing courses for the OERu at Yes, agreed to but not 9% yet institutionalised 36% this stage Not yet conceptualised but No 0% participation discussed or agreed 0% Other 18% Conceptualised but not yet undergoing development 0% n=2 Unsure or DK 9% Complete and ready for piloting the OERu model 0% Other specify: • Agreed that current principles and polices need Other 18% to change to be more OER friendly Sample only institutional n=2 Other Specify: • Recent institutional changes will reopen therepresentatives of OERu anchor • Service organization discussion but overall there will be continuedpartners (n=11) • Course is designed but depending support on finding open textbook Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 27
- 28. OERu Evaluation - OERTen Participation in OERu concept A third are experiencing issues with availability of resources including technical development resources and time. Are you currently experiencing any issues hindering participation in the OERu concept? No 64% Please describe the problems you are experiencing: • Availability of resources. Clarity of process - because it is new to Yes 36% us, we have to work it out as we go. • Organisational maturity and experience with open development models. This is a cultural barrier -- many individuals do not have experience in the open source approaches of collaborative development. • Technological development resources are limited • Time it takes to convert and redesign courses Sample only institutional representatives of OERu anchor partners (n=11) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 28
- 29. Policy changes A third of respondents are unsure as to the extent to which policy change will be required to implement the services required for the OERu, yet a further third feel that none or only minor revisions will be required. To what extent will your institution be required to change existing policies to successfully implement assessment services for courses based solely on OERs (including courses offered through the OERu)? 0% Insights into existing policies that support assessment 13% services for courses based solely on OERs: 13% • Already have RPL and accreditation services. For RPL where the knowledge is obtained is irrelevant, as long as 25% it can be demonstrated. Extensive policy revision 5 • Existing RPL policy,

accelerated assessment for many required programmes 4 13% • Advanced RPL policy in place. The OERu model is designed 3 to operate within existing policy frameworks. We already 2 have a Creative Commons Attribution intellectual property 1 No policy revision required policy and are integrating OER and OERu into the learning 38% Unsure and teaching policy currently under revision. We anticipate minor refinements to accommodate operational aspects of the OERu model. • RPL policy provides an opening for alternative access and accreditation. Sample only institutional representatives of OERu anchor partners (n=11) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 29

- 30. Assessment services for OERu courses Portfolio and automated assessment measures are considered to be the most likely to be used in the future by OERu partner institutions. In your opinion, which of the following assessment methods are most likely to be used in the future by OERu partner institutions or institutions assessing learning outcomes of courses based solely on OERs for formal assessment towards credentials? Unsure Recognition of prior learning portfolio assessment 10% 30% 60% 0% Course-based portfolio 10% 40% 50% 9% Automated online assessment 11% 22% 22% 44% 18% Practicums (e.g. Art portfolio, lab work, trades practicums for plumbers, carpenters etc.) 33% 44% 22% 18% Proctored examinations 11% 22% 44% 22% 18% Same assessment as for fee-paying students 33% 44% 22% 18% Use of volunteer assessors 30% 30% 30% 10% 9% Workplace assessment (in partnership with employers) 22% 56% 22% 18% Sample only institutional representatives of OERu anchor partners (n=11) Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Extensively used Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 30
- 31. Effectiveness of Student Support Options The student services option that the majority OER Ten members consider to be the most effective is the integration of peer-to-peer learning support models. How effective do you consider each of these student support options to be for students participating in OER courses? Unsure Integrating peer-to-peer learning support models 20% 20% 60% 9% Granting official credit through community service learning courses for supporting OERu learners 20% 30% 20% 30% 9% Volunteer support from professional bodies 30% 20% 30% 20% 9% Retired academic volunteers 40% 40% 20% 9% Designing systems for senior students to volunteer support for junior students 40% 40% 20% 9% Use of volunteers for general learning support and study skills 10% 40% 30% 20% 9% Institutional recognition in staff appraisals for providing volunteer support 10% 20% 20% 40% 10% 9% Use of volunteers for providing content specific support 10% 50% 30% 10% 9% Use of volunteers for technology support 9% 45% 36% 9% 0% Use of volunteers for assessment of courses 56% 33% 11% 18% Sample only institutional representatives of OERu anchor partners (n=11) Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Extensively used Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 31
- 32. Success factors and obstacles to participation in OER initiatives 32
- 33. Success factors to participation in assessment of OER based courses Although the majority of institutions consider collaborative development of OER courses, the remix of existing OERs and release under an open license to be an effective solution, there is still a great deal of uncertainty and doubt as to the effectiveness of these approaches. How effective do you think each of the following approaches will be for developing OERu Courses? Unsure Collaborative development of OER courses where 2% 8% 24% 21% 45% 7% institutions share the development responsibility A remix or assembly model building courses from 5% 11% 19% 21% 44% 13% existing OERs Developing or releasing the OER course contribution under an open license (eg, single institution 3% 15% 22% 23% 37% 17% development model) Not at all

effective 1 2 3 4 5 Very effective Total sample (n=72) Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 33

- 34. Obstacles to participation in assessment of OER based courses The greatest perceived obstacles to the successful implementation to OERu models is the lack of availability of volunteers and the lack of support at the senior leadership level. To what extent do the following factors hinder successful implementation of the OERu model or similar initiatives within your institution? Unsure Lack of availability of volunteers 2% 16% 17% 28% 38% 11% Lack of support at the senior leadership level 13% 9% 17% 25% 36% 4% Cost of redeveloping courses 3% 9% 22% 32% 34% 10% Lack of availability of committed staff members 2% 11% 21% 35% 32% 8% Lack of integration with current workflows or processes 3% 12% 18% 37% 30% 6% Lack of alignment with organisational strategy or policy 9% 5% 17% 40% 29% 10% Lack of availability of examiners or markers 21% 13% 27% 14% 25% 13% Lack of a supportive community within the institution 10% 10% 26% 28% 25% 4% Lack of availability of training and support 9% 16% 24% 28% 24% 6% Perceived lack of demand for open courses 8% 22% 30% 17% 22% 13% Negative perceptions towards OERs or open course delivery 15% 11% 28% 28% 18% 10% Lack of evidence for the enhancement of student learning 21% 16% 18% 28% 16% 7% Concerns about existing technologies or infrastructure 13% 16% 25% 29% 16% 6% Total sample (n=72) Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 To a large extent Benchmarking OER Use and Assessment in Higher Education 34
- 35. Names of institutions represented by the results Acharya Narendra Dev College, University of Delhi Open University Amity University, Noida, UP, India Otago Polytechnic Athabasca University pedagogy.ir BCCampus SA Institute for Distance Education Blackboard Saint Michaels College (VT; USA) Bournemouth University School District 46 Sunshine Coast Charles Sturt University SEAMEO RETRACOswald de Andrade Southampton Solent University Coventry University ST PATRICK EDUCATION DISTRICT, Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago CSP scarl SUNY/Empire State College De Montfort University Supten Institute Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Gujarat, India The Open University Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art Design and Technology The Open University of Sri Lanka Ghana-Inida Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT The University of Manchester GOVT. INTER COLLEGE BHOJPUR Thompson Rivers University, Open Learning Govt. inter college Bhojpur Moradabad Universidade Federal Fluminense ICTEDU Learning Centre University of Mumbai, India Imperial College London University of Bath Institute of Education University of Cambridge K12 Next Generation University of Cape Town Kerala University University of Huddersfield Kings College London University of Hull Leeds Metropolitan University University of Leeds Likeminds University of Leicester London South Bank University University of Mauritius Loughborough University University of Northern British Columbia Middlesex University University of Nottingham Nancy George & Associates University of Oxford Newcastle University University of South Africa NorthTec University of Southampton OER Foundation University of Surrey OER-Brazil Project University of Swaziland Open Education Resource Foundation Wawasan Open University Open Polytechnic of New Zealand Reproduced only for institutions where permission was provided by respondents 35
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