2017 OER universitas mid-year report

August 2017

To: Vice chancellors, Presidents, and Chief Executive officers of the OERu

Planning for the implementation of the OERu 1st year of study is well underway. Consistent with the 2016 decision of the Council of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) to proceed with a "soft-launch", we are announcing the phased launch of selected courses with micro-credential options, that are likely to have wide appeal. Pursuing realistic but conservative targets, OERu is aiming to build brand awareness and to collect data from the process evaluation to inform future decision-making.

We request your review of, and feedback on, the OERu credit transfer agreement. Please nominate a staff member to complete a short survey to indicate whether your institution will provide assessment services and/or recognise transfer credit for the courses nominated for the proposed launch schedule:

Phase 1: **Learning in a digital age** (4 micro-courses) focusing on the development of digital and learning literacies necessary for enhancing academic success in the 21st century.

Phase 2: **Introduction to Entrepreneurship** (3 micro-courses); **Principles of Management** (3 micro-courses); and **Introduction to Project Management** (4 micro-courses).

The context for this request for feedback is provided by the following summary of key outputs to date:

1. **OERu courses.** 15 full online courses (45 micro-courses) have been completed, with an additional 3 courses (9 micro courses) nearing completion to be available by October 2017 (Note: 10 courses are required for the OERu 1st Year of Study).

2. **OERu credit transfer agreement.** The OERu partners directly involved with assessment services and credit recognition for the launch schedule have developed a Credit transfer and Course Articulation Agreement. The agreement has been reviewed by the respective Registrars. We are now widening consultation for additional feedback and comment from partner institutions interested in participating actively in the OERu 1st year of study. (See details on how to contribute below.)

3. **Marketing and communications.** The OERu has established a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) Marketing Team comprising marketing and communication professionals from partner institutions. This team will prepare a marketing strategy for the 1st year of study, incorporating existing marketing collateral designed for institutional branding: see for example: the University of Southern Queensland's branded student video, and Otago Polytechnic's branded rackcard. The OERu has also implemented marketing automation software (Mautic) for lead management.

4. **Micro-credentials**. The OERu has partnered with [EduBits](), a new micro-credentialing initiative established by Otago Polytechnic. EduBits is part of a national pilot recently [announced]() by the New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, and Employment. Otago Polytechnic's Academic Board has approved 26 OERu micro-courses in business studies to enable the provision of micro-credentials. Learners who successfully complete the corresponding micro-courses for the full course equivalent will qualify for transcript credit towards the OERu 1st year of study.

5. **Minimum Viable Product Technology platform.** To avoid dependency on any learning management system platform, the OERu has assembled a unique component-based system utilising "best-of-breed" open source technologies. All courses are published on the OERu course site ([WordPress]()) and integrations incorporating a range of interaction technologies have been implemented, including: [Discourse](), modern forum software; [Mastodon](), a decentralised social networking system; [SemanticScuttle](), social bookmarking software used for sharing resource links; [Hypothes.is]() for annotating and discussing webpages and facilitating personal blogs so learners can manage their own e-portfolios. The OER Foundation (OERF) publishes [technical recipes]() for partners interested in replicating these solutions for local adoption. During September, the OERF will host an open webinar for partners interested in learning more about the OERu platform.

Next steps

Kindly designate a representative from your organisation to:

1. Review and provide feedback on the [Credit transfer and Course Articulation Agreement]()**.** Please note that OERu partners retain decision-making authority over all aspects relating to local course approvals, assessment and credit transfer in accordance with the approved [OERu guidelines for credit transfer and credit accumulation schemes.]() (See **instructions for providing feedback**).

2. Please complete the online survey **before 30 September 2017** to indicate whether your institution is planning to offer assessment services and/or recognise transfer credit for the courses identified in the phased launch schedule above. This feedback is needed for publishing accurate information on the [oeru.org]() website. (See **instructions for online survey**).

Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to your continuing support and hope that your institution will be represented at the [upcoming meetings]() in Toronto.