

Open Education Licensing: A toolkit for achieving openness in the global education market

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The adoption of open education resources (OER) by Australian higher education can enhance innovation, as well as increase access to teaching and learning in the digital environment. But without a clear understanding of the copyright and licensing challenges inherent in adoption of OER, Australian educators will not be able to create education resources, or disseminate them globally. This panel session will explore the potential impact of copyright and licensing decisions on Australia's creation and use of OER and their global reach. It will provide a forum to introduce the audience to a new Open Education Licensing toolkit, developed by the Open Education Licensing project; the project has been funded by the Australian Office for Learning and Teaching. Panel members will deal with four main topics: copyright licensing in Australia, how open licensing can transform education in Australia, the different ways copyright material can be used, and the toolkit developed by the OEL project. Panel members will discuss the research and development process underpinning the OEL toolkit and ask audience members to see the toolkit interface and explore the benefits it can provide for their own activities.

Keywords: Copyright, Open Educational Resources, OER in Australia, Open Education Licensing project, OEL, open licensing

The OEL Project

The Open Education Licensing project is nationally significant because it addresses a critical challenge for the higher education sector – the use of open content. It does this by surveying practitioners around Australia, and building on this work to create a practical, usable toolkit. The toolkit will enable Australian higher education teachers, policy makers and other staff to create a body of open content which will enhance Australian higher education and have a global impact.

There is a rapidly-developing global online education market. Despite our experience in international education, Australia is not well positioned to participate in this market, because we have not addressed unresolved issues of copyright. The move to open practices in higher education is a key strategic change in enhancing learning and teaching. Institutions and individuals implementing OEP in Australia need clear information and practical tools to ensure that best practice open licensing solutions are adopted.

Australian copyright law is not as flexible as that of the United States and other competitor countries (Harris, 2013), and the impact of this on OEP has not been widely analysed. Unlike the US, Australian copyright law does not contain exceptions which would permit even limited open publication of copyright material for educational purposes (Wyburn, 2006). Therefore to include copyright material, such as text, images and audiovisual content, in open course offerings, Australian universities must understand the limitations of existing copyright exceptions. Not only must they be able to source content which meets their needs, but they must make important decisions about how to license their own open courseware for student users and further re-use by other teachers (Butler, 2012). Australia will benefit by maximizing access to open content.

The OEL project aimed to empower Australian universities to understand and implement effective licensing practices for opening accessible educational content. The OEL toolkit provides a practical mechanism for Australian universities on how to deal with copyright within their own OEP initiatives and make business and licensing decisions around the deployment of open course material.

About this panel

This panel will explore key elements of the OEL project, funded by the Australian Government Office of Learning and Teaching. In particular, this panel will present and discuss its main deliverable; the Open Education Licensing toolkit, which is a web based online tool that will enable Australian higher education teachers, instructional designers, educational developers, policy makers and other university staff to create a body of open content which will assist to enhance learning and teaching within higher education in Australia and globally. Importantly, this panel session will be used as a channel to disseminate and formally launch the OEL toolkit.






Format of the Session

The panel session will be chaired by Dr Carina Bossu (University of Tasmania) and will include these components:

- A brief introduction to copyright licensing in Australia in the context of higher education (Derek Whitehead).
- The transformational impact of a move to open licensed education resources and policy issues for universities and the way they have underpinned the OEL project (Carina Bossu)
- Using copyright material in education: provisions within the Copyright Act (Robin Wright)
- Demonstration of the OEL toolkit, which provides a straightforward approach to creating and using open resources in education. The toolkit will be in final form by this time. (Tony and Beale)

The audience will be engaged in discussion and activities at different stages of the panel presentation. These discussions will invite participants to critically reflect on their current learning and teaching practices and how the toolkit can be useful to them and their institutions. The panel would like to ask participants to bring their own device to this session.

Biographies of Panel Members

<p>Robin Wright</p> 	<p>Robin Wright is a copyright lawyer with an interest in the intersection of copyright and digital technologies within the education and cultural sectors. She is currently Copyright Manager at Swinburne University of Technology and project Leader of the research project, <i>Effective open licensing policy and practice for Australian universities: making online education really work</i>.</p>
<p>Carina Bossu</p> 	<p>Carina is a Lecturer (Learning and Teaching) with the Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching at the University of Tasmania. Dr Bossu current work and research are primarily focused on Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Educational Practices (OEP) in higher education, more specifically issues related to learning, teaching and professional development</p>
<p>Derek Whitehead</p> 	<p>Derek Whitehead is an Adjunct Professor in the Swinburne Institute for Social Research, at Swinburne University of Technology. His interest in copyright is long standing, and he is currently the chair of the Australian Digital Alliance, a copyright organisation. Derek was previously Director of Information Resources at Swinburne, and Chief Information Officer and Director, IT.</p>
<p>Tony Carew</p> 	<p>Tony Carew designs and develops innovative online teaching and learning offerings. He led the technical development of the University's first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), Understanding Dementia, from inception to delivery in its first two offerings. Tony is currently developing new ways to deliver online education, building on the knowledge gained from the MOOC experiment.</p>
<p>Beale van der Veer</p> 	<p>Beale van der Veer has spent most of her career working concurrently in visual instructional design roles within creative industries, and as a teacher within educational institutions. She now works as an Educational Designer at TILT, in which she utilises both her unique creative and technical skillset. She has a particular interest in the intersection of accessibility and usability, and designing learning materials which engage visual learners, while adhering to accessibility guidelines.</p>

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