**The impact of Open Textbooks on teaching practice and student outcomes: A pilot study**

Introduction. Financial pressures on students are forcing them to defer their studies, reduce their course load or withdraw altogether (Universities Australia, 2017). The cost of textbooks is “overwhelmingly the most difficult study-related expense to afford” (Universities Australia, 2013). Open Educational Resources (OER) are defined as free and openly licensed educational materials that can be used for teaching, learning, research, and other purposes (Creative Commons, 2016). Studies suggest that the use of open textbooks lead to higher student retention, better marks and greater literacy.

Aims. Facilitating the adoption, adaptation and development of open textbooks by academics for our students and broader audiences to increase access and outcomes for students.

Methods. A pilot program, based on the learnings of a successful proof of concept in 2019, will support academics in identifying units to adopt, adapt and create open textbooks with Library support to find suitable resources; with strategic adoption, evaluation and technology support from centralised learning and teaching.

Results. It is anticipated that the outcomes of the pilot will include a reduction in textbook costs; content that is more targeted at specific learning outcomes; lower barriers to accessing learning resources leading to enhanced learning outcomes; reputational benefit for authors; our standing as leaders in open scholarly innovation will be enhanced; and the work of our academics showcased to a wider audience.

Discussion. The adoption of open textbooks in North America is maturing. QULOC (Queensland University Libraries Office of Cooperation) has recently become the first Australian-based consortium to join the Open Textbook Network (OTN), a group of universities working to advance open textbook initiatives. Momentum is growing in Australian institutions to adopt, adapt, and create open textbooks. Our pilot program will provide a case study for other institutions planning to expand their commitment to open textbooks.

**References**

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