



OTEN

Capability Statement

July 2016



The Open Training and Education Network (OTEN), Western Sydney Institute, TAFE NSW delivers distance and online education and training services.

The Open Training and Education Network (OTEN)

As a leader in the use of technologies and media in distance and online education, OTEN is the largest non-classroom based education provider in Australia with over 100,000 enrolments in approximately 250 courses. The flexible nature of course delivery by OTEN provides students with the opportunity to study at a time and place of their convenience.

OTEN quality assurance and quality enhancement policies and processes are linked to the concepts of continuous development, improvement and accountability, and are in accordance with Australian and NSW legislative and reporting requirements. OTEN became a Registered Training Organisation (RTO - 90004) in 1998 and it holds ISO 9001:2008 certification.

OTEN has over 100 qualified full-time teaching staff, 200 part-time teachers and approximately 400 offsite teachers. Staff have advanced technological skills as they work in a highly technological environment. OTEN's purpose-designed site, opened in 1995, is located at Strathfield, Sydney.

TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute

TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute provides education and training programs for students enrolled in the Institute's colleges and through on-the-job training in their own workplaces.

In addition to OTEN, the Institute has campuses in 10 locations in western Sydney, as well as the Building Industry Skills Centre at Nirimba and the purpose-built sustainability centres - the GreenSkills Hub at Nirimba and the Eco Skills Centre at Richmond.

International students, from more than 30 countries including the Philippines, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Hong Kong, Mauritius and China, are studying at Western Sydney Institute.

The Institute has very strong links with industry. Courses provide skilled, work-ready graduates, who can look forward to increased employment and career opportunities.

Many of the Institute's qualifications link to university degrees. Three of the colleges in Western Sydney Institute share campuses with the University of Western Sydney (UWS) and, under a credit transfer agreement with Australian universities, students who successfully complete a TAFE Diploma in certain areas qualify for credit transfer in some undergraduate degrees. In addition, through the Institute's strong partnerships with schools, the Institute supports articulation pathways from school to TAFE to tertiary education.

Western Sydney Institute prides itself on being at the cutting edge. It provides flexible and responsive training in many new and emerging industry areas.



OTEN Facts at a Glance

- Online and distance education
- Enrol anytime
- Over 100,000 students from all over Australia and overseas
- Approximately 250 courses
- Over 700 professional staff
- Registered Training Organisation (RTO)
- ISO Certification

Administrative and student support mechanisms

OTEN has developed sophisticated systems to manage large volumes of students whilst providing highly individualised and learner centred approaches. A unique system of "Help Desks" provides telephone, email and web support. The Help Desk network runs on a continuous roster of full and part-time staff, 50 weeks of the year with extended business hours to ensure that there is always a qualified person to respond to student needs.

This is facilitated by two key systems.

Student Administration and Management System (SAM) enables OTEN to efficiently manage its students and onsite and offsite teachers. It provides a comprehensive, auditable event and contact history for every student.

The Online Learning Support (OLS) website is an integral part of OTEN's blended delivery and e-business strategies. It contains general information about studying by distance education and more specific and comprehensive information and support at the course and unit level.

The OLS provides a personalised, communication gateway and online assignment submission facility for OTEN students, 24 hours a day. Over 80% of student assignments are now submitted via the OLS thus ensuring a faster turnaround time for assignment marking which is important for students studying by distance education. In 2015, over 150,000 assessments were submitted online.

The OLS also provides personalised services for onsite and offsite teachers who can access student assignments and marking guides as well as other relevant resources from the OLS from anywhere and at any time.

Assessment practices and procedures

OTEN assessment procedures sit within the national Australian Quality Training Framework principles. OTEN has developed highly evolved and creative assessment methodologies applicable to online and distance learning modes including assessment online, by Adobe Connect sessions, telephone, video as well as assignments, work based projects and central examinations. Most learners are assessed by a combination of the above.

Print and Media – in-house publishing capability

Print and Media manages the reproduction, duplication, manufacture, storage, distribution, ordering or purchasing processes for learning resources used by OTEN distance learning students. It is responsible for the packaging and distribution of these learning resources directly to distance students.

OTEN programs

OTEN works closely with industry and government to provide national qualifications and customised courses and delivery that meet the vocational education and training needs of industry. OTEN provides access to vocational education and training for many groups in the community who are unable to access on-campus study and would otherwise be unable to undertake vocational education and training, including isolated and remote students, students with a disability and disengaged youth.

Making a Difference to Oral Health in Local Indigenous Communities

Fourteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students recently graduated with qualifications in dental assisting in a special partnership seeking to improve the oral health of Indigenous Australians. There are currently only 35 Indigenous dentists practising in Australia so the program's aim is to increase the number of Indigenous people working in the dental industry. The program was sponsored by the University of Sydney's Poche Centre for Indigenous Health, Sydney Rotary and the Centre for Oral Health Strategy, Westmead.

The program included distance learning as well as face-to-face sessions, facilitated by OTEN's dental teachers and the NSW Australian Dental Association Centre for Professional Development. Students completed the Certificate III and the Certificate IV in Dental Assisting and are now using their skills in their local dental clinics and communities.

After completing the Certificate IV in Dental Assisting, students have the opportunity to complete a Bachelor of Oral Hygiene or Bachelor of Dentistry at university.

Medical Care Training at Sea

The Maritime Teaching section has been delivering training in "Medical Care on Board Ship" at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney. The course is based on the training of ambulance paramedics on shore that combines medical knowledge, practical skills and simulation training. Participants complete a pre-course assignment by distance learning, with the face-to-face component being approximately 75 hours over two weeks. Much of the training consists of simulator exercises at the Don Harrison Simulation Centre where they drill the class in medical first aid emergency procedures. In addition, participants are also placed on a 12 hour (day) shift with the NSW Ambulance Paramedics Service.

The Virtual Classroom

iSee is an Australian built video collaboration tool. Through the use of live video feed lots, students can meet simultaneously in a customised, immersive environment and dynamically form and reform small or large groups as they would in a physical learning environment. This software has been piloted with select cohorts of OTEN students who have enjoyed synchronous learning and high level teacher-learner engagement within the collaborative environment of iSee.

SEEK Learning

Through a partnership established in 2006 between SEEK Learning and OTEN, SEEK Learning now actively markets streamlined national high level qualifications for OTEN through its website www.seeklearning.com.au. Qualifications are tailored to SEEK's job-seeking market, and are offered commercially across Australia and New Zealand. The success of the partnership has resulted in increasing commercial enrolments in distance and on-line education.



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