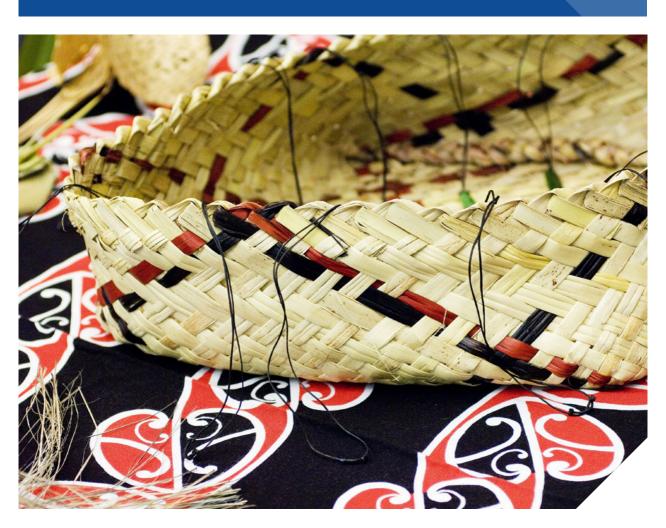2016

Distance Learning
at the University of Otago

A Handbook for
DistanceEducation Staff

Introduction

This Handbook is designed to help you, as a staff member involved in teaching or administering distance education programmes and papers, to locate the resources available at the University of Otago to support distance course development and teaching. It is not a Course Writer's Guide, nor is it a Manual for Course Development. It is a directory that points you towards the range of facilities and people who are able to support your work as a distance educator.

Facing the need to engage in distance teaching and/or administration for the first time can feel somewhat daunting. Regardless of why you are going to be involved in distance education at the University, it is quite likely that you will suddenly feel that the lead time available to develop a distance course, to find out how to teach at a distance, or to develop processes to enable distance courses to run well, is much too short. Questions that come to mind might include:

- Who should I talk to first? Who else knows how to do this?
- Should all resources and teaching be online?
- Should there be a residential component? A CD-ROM? An audio or video-conference?
- What about textbooks, library resources, other teaching materials?
- Will all the students have personal computers and internet access? Will all the students have smartphones and/or tablets? Will they be familiar with the online learning environment we'll be using? What online learning environment should we use?
- Who does all the non-teaching, administrative stuff?
- How does material get sent to students?
- How do they know about examinations?

Over the past 30 years, the University has acquired considerable expertise in the field of distance education and has developed an extensive infrastructure for supporting students and staff.

The Otago distance model is essentially Department-based; therefore it isn't always easy for staff to know where to find the expertise and infrastructure available in the University as a whole.

I hope this Handbook will answer some of your questions and also introduce you to many of the people who constitute the University's distance learning community. For this reason, where available, actual names and personal email addresses are given rather than those of sections or departments.

For those of you wanting a bit more background, Appendices 1 and II explain a little about the nature of distance education and its background and recent history at the University of Otago.

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Contents

Developing my Distance Course

WHERE DO I START?

You may be developing a distance paper because it has never been taught at a distance before, or because you are re-designing or maintaining a course that has been taught previously. In either case, the distance course you are developing will have already been through a formal University approval process (see Appendix III). As part of that process, you or one of your colleagues will have created a document that sets out at least the following for the paper:

- a prescription;
- the learning aims and outcomes, including University (and if appropriate, specific professional) Graduate Attributes emphasised in the paper;
- a broad course outline;
- student workload expectations;
- assessment procedures – both formative and summative; and
- the form of internet-based learning, if any.

This document, usually available through your Department, is a good starting point for the development process. Ask your Course Coordinator, Departmental Manager, or Departmental/Divisional Teaching and Learning Committee chair for the Course Approval document for the paper you will be developing.

Being consistent

While you may be developing only one paper within a programme, remember that it is essential to develop that paper to be consistent with other papers in the programme, as much as possible. It is easier for the student if there is a consistent approach to the design and layout of materials, referencing style, assessment guidelines and procedures, and the technologies used. Also, it makes sense in terms of the goals of the whole programme. All papers, together, contribute to the goals of the whole programme. They do not operate as completely separate and discrete entities.

UNDERSTAND YOUR STUDENTS

Having a clear profile of your likely students is important to effective instructional development and design. Knowing your students helps you to plan instructional activities more effectively and to plan the most appropriate course and student administrative and support strategies.

The following is a general profile of distance students at the University. University of Otago distance students tend to:

- be older than the typical undergraduate student;
- typically be seeking professional development, a "second-chance", a career change, or lifelong learning;
- have limited available time, usually because of work, family and community commitments;
- have full time jobs;
- have considerable prior learning or relevant experience; for some, it will have been a number of years since they last undertook formal study;
- be highly motivated;
- be more reliant on prompt and helpful feedback regarding their progress to stay motivated;
- feel isolated and/or not necessarily part of the University.

In addition, our 2012 Distance Learning Access to Learning Technology Survey revealed that students:

- will primarily use a home computer for study, although a large minority also use a work computer;
- favour laptops over other computer types, although tablet use for study is increasing;
- will have access to, and make use of, broadband practically universally; and
- will commonly own and use mobile devices for Internet access.

(This survey was re-run in November 2015, and results are available from the Distance Learning Office distance.learning@otago.ac.nz).

Colleagues teaching or administering distance courses in your area may be able to share their insights into the characteristics of their students. Their observations are likely to be closely aligned to the characteristics of your potential student group/s.

UNDERSTAND YOUR AIMS

Several resources help you in setting the aims for the paper you are developing. Graduate Profiles provide sets of attributes that will help in broad terms as you map out more specific learning outcomes and learning activities for your students.

The University has a set of attributes that are to be fostered in every University of Otago course. You will find this set of attributes at: otago.ac.nz/courses/otago078325.html.

You may be offering your paper for a qualification that has a specific graduate profile. An example is the Primary Health Care, Travel Medicine, and General Practice Graduate profiles which can be found on: otago.ac.nz/wellington/departments/primaryhealthcaregeneralpractice/postgraduate/otago103438.html.

The Graduate Attributes, aims, and learning outcome statements provide a framework for course planning. The more specific learning outcomes for your paper will have been written during the formal course approval process, as noted earlier.

Together, the Graduate Attributes and the intended learning aims and outcomes will provide the best guidance of all as you plan and develop your course.

ACHIEVING THE AIMS FOR THE COURSE

Part of the work of course development is to plan activities and design materials to support student learning toward your course aims. In this Handbook you will not find details about that development process. However, as a precursor to the next few sections, note that providing course material and undertaking activities:

- will invariably involve the use of technologies;
- is likely to engage students in using a range of media;
- could be done independently, in pairs, groups, or involve the whole class;
- may be done intensely in real-time or asynchronously at a more reflective pace;
- could be led by a student or the lecturer, and
- may require discussion or document/artefact exchange.

A range of technologies and media types are available to help you achieve the aims for your course and your students.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGIES: WHICH WILL I USE?

There is no 'right' or 'wrong' technology for distance education. Each medium and each technology for delivering it has its own strengths and weaknesses. One of the worst mistakes ... an instructor can make is to become dogmatically committed to delivery by a single medium. The technology selection process should be undertaken for each course and media selection for each objective, since they all have different requirements depending on the objectives, learners and learning environment.

Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2012). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning.* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, p. 96.

A range of media and technologies is available for use in your distance course. The continuum of choices encompasses:

- print-based materials (course administration guide and set of readings) supported by block-course contact teaching;
- print-based courses supported by audio, web (Otago Connect/Zoom), or video-conferencing;
- print-based courses supported by Blackboard (messages, discussion forums, and chat rooms or other online learning environments);
- predominantly online courses supported by some print and/or block-course teaching;
- wholly online teaching via Blackboard or other online learning system;
- a combination of any of the above, augmented by CD-ROMs or DVDs;
- a combination of any of the above, in addition to clinical or other practical, and work-based components.

The range of digital technologies available to support your teaching can seem bewildering. The following website is designed to help you make wise choices from the possibilities: otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/otago029748.html

One of the most comprehensive, yet readable, books on this topic is *Technology, eLearning and Distance Education* (2nd ed.) by A.W. (Tony) Bates, (Routledge, New York, 2005).

An online resource published in 2010 by the United States Distance Learning Association provides a very clear overview of technology alternatives and the kinds of teaching strategy that each technology supports best. The resource is called *An Instructional Media Selection Guide for Distance Learning* and it is available for downloading at: usdla.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AIMSGDL_2nd_Ed_styled_010311.pdf.

PRINT MATERIALS

Print material generally comprises a Course Administration Guide (also known as a Course Book or Course Outline), providing details of how the paper is to be run, and often a set of readings.

To support the learning process, material is usually modularised (e.g., relating to weeks, the web/video/audio conference schedule, or discrete topics). Within many departments or programmes, teaching teams develop a presentation format not only to ensure consistent quality standards but also commonality across papers. Print materials are often provided on your paper's Blackboard or other online learning system site, or by a combination of print and digital media (e.g., Blackboard, CD ROMs).

> If your course includes printed hardcopy material, it should be supplied in University of Otago ring binders with standardised covers designating the course, programme and department. Making arrangements for these is one of the departmental administrator's tasks.

A Course Administration Guide template can be downloaded from the Distance Learning website under Staff Resources at: otago.ac.nz/courses/distance_study/otago002154.html#course_outline.

This template can be customised to suit your purpose and can be distributed in paper form or uploaded into Blackboard.

BLOCK COURSES/RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOPS OR SCHOOLS

Postgraduate courses often structure their teaching around mandatory on-campus blocks or components (initially or subsequently supported by print, email, Blackboard, or other technologies).

These occur at key points in the course, for example:

- to "kick-start" the teaching at the start of a semester;
- to consolidate learning towards the end of a semester; or
- to undertake practical activities not possible in distance mode.

The organisation of residential block courses/workshops, including booking rooms, is the responsibility of your department, so, if you are the departmental or distance learning administrator, it will usually be your responsibility for making arrangements.

WEB CONFERENCING (ZOOM)

Zoom is a collaborative software product and is available for use by distance teachers and supported by the University's ITS eConferencing team. Using Zoom, you and your students can see and talk with each other, share your screens and show presentations to each other, use text chat, and record your sessions. There is also an instant messaging system via the desktop or mobile application.

Please follow the links below to find out more about Zoom and how to get started.

More information about Zoom can be found at: blogs.otago.ac.nz/zoom/

Log in and automatically create your account here: otago.zoom.us/signin

If you wish to discuss in more detail how Zoom could work for you, please contact eConferencing on:

Tel   64 3 479 8997 or
         64 3 479 8440
Email   econferencing@otago.ac.nz

VIDEOCONFERENCING

The University currently provides videoconferencing services at the Dunedin, Christchurch, and Wellington campuses, and in the University of Otago building on Queen Street in Auckland. Videoconferencing is also available from your desktop or laptop with the use of just some basic equipment.

Videoconferencing is similar in many ways to web conferencing however the focus is on video, i.e., being able to see each other well, as opposed to other collaborative tools such as text chat and file-sharing. Students can attend "classes" at dedicated videoconference sites from work or home, if they have access to a reasonably modern desktop or laptop computer, a headset, webcam, and a good quality broadband connection.

Videoconferencing:
- offers immediacy and a way of building social presence within the class;
- provides a way to undertake live demonstrations; and
- can enhance collaborative activities across sites.

As with web conferencing, the potential disadvantage with videoconferencing is that it can suffer from lecturers sometimes teaching with the same methods in the "virtual" classroom, as they do in their face-to-face classroom. Courses should be designed to exploit the advantages of videoconferencing in combination with the use of other technologies.

For more information about videoconferencing, please contact eConferencing on:

Tel   64 3 479 8997 or
        64 3 479 8440
Email   econferencing@otago.ac.nz
Web   blogs.otago.ac.nz/zoom/

AUDIOCONFERENCING

This mode of teaching and student support has a well-established history at Otago. In the first decade of the University's distance programme, student attendance at regular audioconferences was mandatory and, with core material being presented at these sessions, students could not otherwise pass.

Many staff find that audioconferencing is effective for:
• keeping students motivated and connected, and building a class community;
• giving general feedback on assessments and
• clarifying key or difficult concepts.

The eConferencing team can provide you with the details you need to get started with audioconferencing. For more information, please contact eConferencing on:

Tel   64 3 479 8440 or
        64 3 479 8997
Email econferencing@otago.ac.nz

Further information can be found at otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/otago023738.html

ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Online learning environments such as Blackboard, Moodle, and OceanBrowser provide access to course materials, discussion forums, workshops, tests, surveys, simple blogs and wikis, and online assessment via the internet. Other features include the ability to upload assignments, and link directly from course material to other web-based information.

Blackboard
Blackboard is the University's most commonly used online learning environment and the only one supported by the University's Information Technology Services (ITS) at the University.

If you are considering using Blackboard for the first time, remember that:

• ITS provides a number of Blackboard training courses. The two-hour "Getting Started" course should be considered minimum training and can be booked via otago.ac.nz/its/services/training/;
• There is an extensive help site available at help.otago.ac.nz/blackboard.
• Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk (see contact details below). Your query will either be answered by Service Desk staff, or escalated to the ITS eLearning team.
• Papers using Blackboard must be registered in advance with ITS. The form is available on the ITS website: otago.ac.nz/its/forms/. Once registered for its initial semester, your paper's registration can simply be rolled over for subsequent offerings.
• There is no charge for using Blackboard.

If you need help with Blackboard, please contact the ITS Service Desk:

Web   help.otago.ac.nz/blackboard
Email   its.servicedesk@otago.ac.nz
Freephone (NZ)   0800 479 888 (New Zealand only)
Phone   64 3 479 8888

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL

There is a range of options for hosting audio and video files for students to access. There is not enough room in Blackboard to store a great deal of audio-visual material, so it's important to consider where you will store this type of resource.

Otago Capture

Otago Capture (based on Echo360 Technology) is the University lecture recording service. It can be used to record teaching activities in lecture theatres and seminar rooms, and staff can also use Personal Capture software to record presentations on their own computer.

Otago Capture may also be used to store recordings made elsewhere, such as resources created or used in previous years, and recordings of audio or video conferences. Access to these resources can be restricted to students enrolled in a specific Blackboard paper, or a specific MedMoodle or HSMoodle course. A link can be inserted into Blackboard or Moodle which allows seamless access to Otago Capture recordings, without the need to log in again. Otago Capture cannot be integrated with Oceanbrowser.

- ITS provides one Otago Capture training course for people who will be recording and editing presentations. The course can be booked at otago.ac.nz/its/services/training/.
- There is an extensive help site available at help.otago.ac.nz/capture.
- Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk. Your query will either be answered by Service Desk staff, or escalated to the ITS eLearning team.
- Papers using Otago Capture must be registered in advance with ITS, using the Otago Capture Administration Application: corpapp.otago.ac.nz/capture.
- There is no charge for using Otago Capture, although charges apply if the Media Production Team (otago.ac.nz/its/about/whoarewe/otago028089.html) films something for you.

Unitube

Unitube is a locally-developed media hosting and sharing service. As well as the ability to store and share audio and video files, you can also create your own presentations by uploading and synchronising PowerPoint, audio, and video. You can also use the image annotation feature for exploring and marking up images.

You can restrict Unitube material to named individuals, or make it public. The ability to restrict material to a specific paper code is planned to be available in early 2016. Links to Unitube resources can be added to Blackboard, Moodle, and Oceanbrowser pages.

- There is contextual help available on the Unitube website at unitube.otago.ac.nz.
- Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk. Your query will either be answered by Service Desk staff, or escalated to the ITS eLearning team.
- You do not need to apply to use Unitube or fill out any forms. Just log into the Unitube website and start uploading.
- There is no charge for using Unitube, although charges apply if the Media Production Team (otago.ac.nz/its/about/whoarewe/otago028089.html) films something for you.

Otago Podcasts

The podcasting service is the predecessor to the Otago Capture service. It is designed to host audio and video resources and make these available to students. If neither Otago Capture nor Unitube is suitable for your purposes, you may like to consider a Podcast site instead.

You can restrict a Podcasting site to named individuals, or a specific class list, or make it public. Links to Podcasting sites can be added to Blackboard, Moodle, and Oceanbrowser pages.

- ITS provides two training courses for staff who would like to edit audio recordings (using Audacity) or video files (using VLC). The courses can be booked at otago.ac.nz/its/services/training/.
- There is a help site available at help.otago.ac.nz/podcasts.
- Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk. Your query will either be answered by Service Desk staff, or escalated to the ITS eLearning team.

- You must fill in a form to request a Podcasting site. The form is available at otago.ac.nz/its/forms/.
- There is no charge for using Otago Podcasts, although charges apply if the Media Production Team (otago.ac.nz/its/about/whoarewe/otago028089.html) films something for you.

OTHER COLLABORATIVE SERVICES

Blackboard contains tools for making simple blogs and wikis. These are great if you just need a limited feature set and you don't need the blogs and wikis to exist after the end of the semester. However, if you're after something a little more powerful, consider the Otago Blogs and Otago Wikis services.

Otago Blogs

The Blogs service is built on WordPress, which you may be familiar with if you have a personal blog on wordpress.com. A blog typically contains chronological posts on a particular topic, and can contain images and links. Blog members can comment on posts. You can also create static pages, manage your navigation with customised menus, and organise content using tags and categories.

You can restrict a blog to a particular class list, or make it public. A link to a blog can be inserted into Blackboard, Moodle, or Oceanbrowser.

- ITS provides an introductory course on Blogs, which can be booked at otago.ac.nz/its/services/training/.
- There is a help site available at help.otago.ac.nz/blogs/.
- Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk. Your query will either be answered by Service Desk staff, or escalated to the ITS eLearning team.
- You must fill in a form to request a Blog site. The form is available at otago.ac.nz/its/forms/.
- There is no charge for using Otago Blogs.

Otago Wikis

A wiki is a collaborative content-building environment which includes some useful tracking and revision features. Our wiki service is built on MediaWiki, which is the same software that runs Wikipedia. While you can make your Wiki private, there is no capability to add an entire class list all at once. You would need to add each student individually. The other option is to make your Wiki public.

You can insert a link to a wiki in Blackboard, Moodle or Oceanbrowser.

- There is a help site available at help.otago.ac.nz/wikis.
- Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk. Your query will either be answered by Service Desk staff, or escalated to the ITS eLearning team.
- You must fill in a form to request a Wiki site. The form is available at www.otago.ac.nz/its/forms/.
- There is no charge for using Otago Wikis.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY

If you're running short courses where your distance students gather together for a classroom session, you may need some technology support. One option is to book a campus computer lab. The other option is to consider the iPad Class Sets.

iPad Class Sets

We have six iPad class sets – four in Dunedin, and two in Wellington. Each set contains 15 iPads or iPad Minis. If you're not in either of those locations you can ask for the sets to be couriered to you – they come in tough Pelican cases so they're easily transportable. Most people use the built-in software (mostly the web browser and the camera), but it is possible to ask that software is installed on the set for you. All of the iPads have Wi-Fi capability, and some have 3G, but you will need to organize your own sim-cards if you're not in an area that has Wi-Fi coverage.

- ITS provides an introductory course on iPads, which can be booked at http://www.otago.ac.nz/its/services/training/.
- Support is offered via the ITS Service Desk. Your query will escalated to the ITS eLearning team.
- You must fill in a form to request a class set of iPads. The form is available at www.otago.ac.nz/its/forms/.
- There is no charge for borrowing the iPads, but, if applicable, charges to courier the sets to and from your location may apply.

eLEARNING CONSULTANTS

ITS have eLearning consultants available to assist you. If you'd like to arrange a demonstration of one of our services, or you'd like to have a chat about which technology may suit your requirements, please get in touch. We can also visit your department and do a "show and tell" of any of our services which particularly interest you. To arrange one of these sessions, please contact:

Annemaree Senior
eLearning Manager
Email   annemaree.senior@otago.ac.nz
Tel   64 3 479 7580

There is no charge for using eLearning consultancy services.

COPYRIGHT & OPEN ACCESS

As a distance educator, you are more likely to provide copies of materials for your students, since your students are less likely to be able to use library facilities on-site. This material is likely to include a mix of resources you develop yourself, things developed by others and copies of, or links to, book chapters and journal articles.

eReserve is the University's tool for providing students with access to course readings. It works inside Blackboard and Moodle. eReserve is being phased in across 2016, and from 2017, all papers will be required to use it. Fortunately, eReserve takes all care of all the copyright questions and is supported by the Library. Find out more: blogs.otago.ac.nz/ereserve.

The University's copyright site, otago.ac.nz/administration/copyright, has a wealth of information on all-things copyright and open access, such as copyright basics, copyright and lectures, open educational resources, open access publishing, your rights in your own material, and more.

Richard White, the Manager, Copyright & Open Access, can provide individual advice on any of these things.

Email   copyright@otago.ac.nz
Tel   64 3 479 9976

TECHNOLOGIES: WHERE DO I GET HELP?

This section of the Handbook provides some resources and the names of some very useful people who will help you as you start developing your course material and/or setting up or refining course administrative procedures.

For an outline of the technologies available, visit: otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/otago029748.html.

PEOPLE TO CONTACT

HEDC (Higher Education Development Centre)
If you want to talk with someone about where to start, contact Dr Ben Daniel. Ben is the main point of contact for enquiries relating to assistance with developing online resources, including pedagogical advice about the use of web based conferencing technology in your teaching:

Dr Ben Daniel
Coordinator, Educational Technology
Tel   64 (0)3 479 5362
Email   ben.daniel@otago.ac.nz

ITS (Information Technology Services)
Assistance is available for a range of web-based services, including the University's learning management system (Blackboard), as well as:

- Otago Podcasts – otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/podcasting.html
- Otago Blogs – otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/blogs.html, and
- Otago Wikis – otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/otago017977.html

Contact the eLearning Manager:
Annemaree Senior
Tel   64 (0)3 479 7580
Mob   64 (0)21 279 7580
Email   annemaree.senior@otago.ac.nz

For assistance with conferencing from many different platforms, including laptops, desktops, mobile devices, and telephones, as well as access to dedicated videoconference facilities in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, or Dunedin; including assistance with the University's web conferencing through Otago Connect and Zoom, contact:

Jeff Ormandy
eConferencing Manager
Tel   64 3 479 5167
Email   jeff.ormandy@otago.ac.nz

WEB BASED RESOURCES

For distance teaching related resources, including audioconferencing information, go to the Staff Resources section at distance.otago.ac.nz.

For assistance with developing online resources or audio visual materials, as well as links to other online sources of information, go to: hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/em.html.

For help with using Blackboard and links to Blackboard-related resources, go to: otago.ac.nz/blackboard. Information for new Blackboard users is available at: otago.ac.nz/blackboard/general-information/new-staff-checklist/.

If you would like to make audio or video resources available to your students on the Web, streaming or podcasts are two options. Streaming video may not always be appropriate for distance students due to size limitations when downloading. A great deal of information, advice, and guidance on how to get started is available on the ITS website at: otago.ac.nz/its/services/teaching/otago028810.html. Alternatively, audio visual material can be made available via podcast. You can use the ITS podcasting service at otago.ac.nz/podcasting or the University's Unitube service at unitube.otago.ac.nz.

SHORT COURSES

IT Training offers a number of excellent short courses on the use of Blackboard.

These courses are offered at no cost to departments.

Minimum training for new Blackboard users is:
- Blackboard Demo (one hour)
- Blackboard – Getting Started (two hours)

Other courses include:
- Blackboard – At a Distance
- Blackboard – Anti Plagiarism
- Blackboard – Student Content Contribution
- Blackboard - Preparing Tests Surveys and Assignments
- Blackboard – Grade Centre
- Blackboard – Annotating Student Submissions
- Blackboard – Online Marking
- PDF – Creation and Editing

IT Training also provides customised training for groups of staff. Each year at least two visits are made to both Christchurch and Wellington campuses.

Online tutorial videos are available covering the entire course contents of Using *Word* to Write a Thesis/Long Document, and Endnote courses:

- Word Thesis/Long Documents – blogs.otago.ac.nz/thesisinfo/thesis-formatting/. (The Mac version is not yet available.)
- Endnote Mac user videos – blogs.otago.ac.nz/endnotemac/. (The PC version is not yet available.)

For *Excel, PowerPoint* and *Photoshop* assistance, access is available to the online resources available through GoSkills.com. Please contact IT Training to arrange assistance.

A full list of all courses on offer is available at otago.ac.nz/its/training/.

HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (HEDC)

If you want to pilot a distance teaching initiative using technology, it could be worth applying for a grant from the Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT – otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/otago000942.html#Grants). See the information under HEDC in the section called *How can we help?* – at hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/about-us/advice/.

HEDC periodically offers workshops or seminars which are especially relevant to distance teachers and those using technology in their teaching. *Workshops are offered as part of the HEDC Professional Development Programme and are free of charge*. You can review current workshop titles and descriptions online at hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/teaching/programmes/teaching-workshops/.

PRINT RESOURCES – KEY TEXT REFERENCES

Some practical texts are listed in the *References* section of this Handbook. Texts that are available in the University Library are indicated by call numbers: for example: LB 2366 BV72.

ASSESSMENT: IS DISTANCE DIFFERENT?

Conducting assessment when your students are at a distance poses a number of challenges. Not least of these is providing the variety of forms of assessment that is necessary to adequately assess the knowledge, skills, and attributes being developed by your students. The principles of good assessment remain the same, but in particular for distance students you should:

- ensure that assessment is closely related to learning outcomes stated in the Course Administration Guide
- state assessment requirements clearly to eliminate uncertainty and questions
- consider whether assessment is linked to the student's workplace
- pay extra attention to providing PROMPT feedback.

A standout text for those interested in more detailed knowledge of assessment at a distance is *Assessing Open* and *Distance Learners* by Chris Morgan and Meg O'Reilly (Kogan Page, London, 1999). A more recent chapter by these two, 'Ten key qualities of assessment online', can be found in *Online assessment and measurement: Foundations and challenges* edited by Mary Hricko and Scott L. Howell, Information Science Publishing, Hershey, PA, 2006 (LB 1028.3 OK53).

The University has a policy on Assessment – otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago070388.html, and a set of guidelines – otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago078920.html. It is important that assessment in your papers and programmes adheres to the University policy and guidelines. In addition, your Division and/or department may have developed some particular practices that are built on the University policy. You need to find out about those practices from your HOD.

People at the University of Otago who may be able to help with information about assessment include:

Examinations
The Examinations Office can be contacted at:

Tel   03 479 9054
Email   examinations@otago.ac.nz
Web   otago.ac.nz/study/exams/

The person responsible for the administration of examinations for distance students is Suzanne Mackay at:

Tel   03 479 8431
Email   suzanne.mackay@otago.ac.nz

Higher Education Development Centre:
Professor Tony Harland
Email   tony.harland@otago.ac.nz

Swee-Kin Loke
Kin has knowledge of assessment of distance students and the principles and best practices to be employed in developing assessment tasks.

Email   swee-kin.loke@otago.ac.nz.

ITS
Annemaree Senior, eLearning Manager from ITS Teaching & Learning Facilities, has extensive knowledge of the capabilities of Blackboard and can provide advice for staff on the use of Blackboard for assessment, including the mounting of quizzes and other self-testing possibilities.

Email   annemaree.senior@otago.ac.nz

WHO SUPPORTS THE DISTANCE COURSES?

DISTANCE LEARNING ADVISORY BOARD (DLAB)

The Distance Learning Advisory Board provides strategic advice to the University on its distance learning activities. Board membership is composed of representatives from each Division and various service units such as ITS, the Library, and Admissions & Enrolment. Talking with your Divisional representative on the board will let you see your course in a wider context. Board membership, terms of reference, and meeting dates are on the University website at: otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/DistanceLearningAdvisoryBoard.html.

DIRECTOR, DISTANCE LEARNING

The Director, Distance Learning is Dr Sarah Stein. Her role is to provide:

- strategic direction for Distance Education within the University;
- leadership and management of Distance Education; and
- facilitation and communication regarding Distance Education issues.

Dr Stein is also the Acting President of DEANZ, the New Zealand professional association committed to fostering growth, development, research, and good practice in distance education, open learning and flexible delivery systems for education and making *ako* accessible for all. She visits Christchurch and Wellington regularly and would be pleased to meet with distance teaching staff in these locations or elsewhere.

Her contact details are:

Tel   64 (0)3 479 5809
Mob   64 (0)21 279 5809
Email   sarah.stein@otago.ac.nz

The Distance Learning Office can be contacted to provide support for all people engaged in distance activities. Your first contact here should be with Fiona Stuart at:

Tel   64 (0)3 479 4138
Email   distance.learning@otago.ac.nz

DISTANCE LEARNING ADMINISTRATORS FORUM

This Forum provides a means for support staff to air issues relating to distance learning. It meets four times a year and on other occasions if the need arises. Meetings are usually held from **10.30 – 11.30am on Thursday mornings** via Zoom so that staff may participate wherever they are. *Any distance teacher is also welcome to attend meetings of the Administrators Forum.* Doing so may be especially useful for those who have multiple teaching, administration and programme coordinator roles.

If you would like notification of meeting dates or just to receive the agenda, please advise Fiona Stuart in the Distance Learning Office at: distance.learning@otago.ac.nz.

DISTANCE LEARNING ACADEMICS FORUM

This Forum provides a means for teaching staff to air issues relating to distance learning. It meets four times a year and on other occasions if the need arises. Meetings are usually held from **11am – 12pm on Wednesday mornings** via Zoom so that staff may participate wherever they are. *Any distance administrator is also welcome to attend meetings of the Academics Forum.*

If you would like notification of meeting dates or just to receive the agenda, please advise Fiona Stuart in the Distance Learning Office at: distance.learning@otago.ac.nz.

ACADEMICS

Across all Divisions and campuses, you will find colleagues with distance learning experience (much of it considerable!). Many would probably be happy to share some tips on successful practice and answer any queries that you may have – for instance, about workload, materials development, or how their distance learners are faring.

A quick way to find out which papers or programmes are being taught by distance in your Division is to go to the information for prospective students, under Programmes and Papers at: otago.ac.nz/distancelearning. This lists all the subject areas and qualifications offered in distance mode.

If you would like to make contact with a colleague in a particular programme but don't know who is currently teaching which papers, there are two easy ways to find this out: either by consulting the programme's coordinator or by emailing the Distance Learning Office who maintains a course-by-course database of distance learning academic staff (distance.learning@otago.ac.nz).

COURSE/PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATORS

Course/Programme administrators are responsible for the week-to-week support and management of distance students. These administrative officers are key people, as the success of a distance learning paper depends heavily on efficient administration and student support both departmentally and centrally.

The following is a brief outline of the tasks involved in providing administration for distance courses. Each department will have specific ways of operating but these tasks are tasks that are relevant to all distance courses.

Enrolments
- Respond to course enquiries from potential students, referring them to a course advisor where appropriate.
- Enrolment: Monitor students' progress in completing enrolment procedures and following up those who are not course approved (see otago.ac.nz/staff/course_approval.html)

Course Organisation
- **Course material:**
  - Coordinate course content editing.
  - Update the administrative guide, including additional resources.
  - Manage the publication and distribution of course material.
  - Order textbooks and request e-reserve articles from the Library.
- **Audio and Video conferences:**
  - Organise the audio/video or web (e.g., Zoom or Otago Connect) conference teaching programme.
  - Make bookings for the audio/video or web (e.g., Zoom or Otago Connect) conference network.
- **Online learning systems including Blackboard, Oceanbrowser, & Moodle:**
  - Rollover papers from previous Semester and update information.
  - Facilitate access for students & lecturers.
- **Residential schools:**
  - Book venues & catering, lecturers' flights, & accommodation.
  - Provide information to students & lecturers.
- **Assignments:**
  - Manage assignment receipt and record assessment marks.
  - Record the receipt of assignments, distribution to markers and return to students.
  - Record internal assessment marks and notify students of their results.
- **New Staff Orientation**

Student Administration
- Respond to enquiries relating to the **administration** of their paper(s) by enrolled students.
- Respond to requests for **student support** during the course.
- Assist with **course evaluations** carried out through HEDC.
- Assist with **exam** activities: timetables, exam papers, and post exam queries.

Marketing the Distance Programme
- Marketing of distance papers is generally the responsibility of programme coordinators, however many administrators become involved in the promotion of their papers to prospective students.
- Marketing will generally be concentrated around August to September to generate enrolments for Semester One in the following year, and again in April/May for Semester Two enrolments.

ACADEMIC SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION

Under the directorship of John Price, Academic Services is responsible for admission, enrolment, conduct of examinations, return of final results, maintenance of student records, and the graduation of distance students. All of these systems accord with those used for on-campus students.

Admissions
Based in Academic Services, Admissions has responsibility for processes and procedures concerning the admission of students to the University and admission of students to programmes. Details of who to contact can be found here: otago.ac.nz/administration/admissions.html.

Examinations
All arrangements for the formal examination of distance-taught courses are the responsibility of the Examinations Officer. If you have any queries, please contact Suzanne Mackay:

Tel   64 (0)3 479 8431
Email   suzanne.mackay@.otago.ac.nz

LIBRARY SERVICES

A brochure outlining library services for academic staff can be viewed at:
library.otago.ac.nz/pdf/2008_info_academic_staff.pdf.

This pdf lists library resources, research assistance for staff, and teaching and learning services, including: collaboration on course design with Librarians to:

- embed information and research skills;
- customise interactive, face-to-face and online tutorials, classes, workshops, or lectures for students.

Distance Library Service (DLS)
The Distance library Service exists to support you as a distance teacher, as well as your students. Any student enrolled in a University of Otago Distance programme or paper is eligible to use the Distance Library Service (DLS).

Teachers can ask for readings to be placed in eReserve for multiple access by students, and can also ask for copies of high use books to be placed in their Distance Services Collection *at no charge to their Department*.

Students can request research support, advice, and help accessing library resources by contacting the DLS. Through the DLS they can also ask to have books, journal articles, and chapters sent to them at no charge. A guide to the Distance Library Service is incorporated in the *Distance Learning Information and Support Booklet* sent by programme administrators to each distance student.

Contact the Distance Library Service:

Email   distance.library@otago.ac.nz
Tel   0800 347 826 (0800 DISTANT)
Fax   0800 421 621
Web   library.otago.ac.nz/distance

Subject Librarians

Subject Librarians liaise with Departments and other campus units to support the effective use of information for research, learning, and teaching. They will help answer specific enquiries in their subject area specialty. They have an educational role and will assist with customising Library Resources material for uploading into your Blackboard courses, and can present Library/Research Skills workshops at residential schools. To find the name of your Subject Librarian, check the webpage at: otago.libguides.com/liaison under the Distance tab, or contact the Distance Library Service.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (ITS)

Services provided and/or supported by ITS are available to staff whether you are based on the Dunedin campus, the Christchurch, Wellington, or Auckland campuses, or elsewhere. ITS supports software such as Blackboard, Webmail, Zoom, and Otago Connect. The main contact point for general computer trouble-shooting and information on or assistance with these services is the ITS ServiceDesk:

Tel	64 (0)3 479 8888
Free phone	0800 479 888 (NZ only)
Email	its.servicedesk@otago.ac.nz
Hours (NZ time)	Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 7pm during Semesters and Summer School
	Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 5.00pm outside Semesters
	Saturday and Sunday, 10.00am – 5.00pm (calls redirected to Student IT)
Web	otago.ac.nz/its/services/help/

ITS Training

IT Training conduct training courses throughout the year for a variety of computer programmes including Blackboard and Otago Connect/Zoom web conferencing software. Most courses are free for staff. New staff whose papers are taught using Blackboard as their online learning system should at least attend the one hour demonstration and two hour introductory courses.

Refer to their website at: otago.ac.nz/its/training for a full list of courses available, or contact:

Anne Johnston
IT Training Manager
Email   anne.johnston@otago.ac.nz
Tel   64 (0)3 479 8466

Although scheduled courses are run from the Dunedin campus, IT Training will travel to the northern campuses to conduct personalised training for groups on request.

eVISION – THE UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS)

eVision is the University's Student Management System (SMS). This system, used by both staff and students, is where the following activities happen:

- Admission and course enrolment;
- Programme and paper selection;
- Timetabling;
- Fee payments;
- Tracking assessment; and
- Results and graduation

Depending on your role and your responsibilities, you will be given certain levels of access to eVision. Here are some recommended access levels/training based on peoples roles blogs.otago.ac.nz/evision/evision-course-recommendations/.

Information about the use of eVision can be found on a Blackboard site especially set up for this purpose.

New staff members

If you are a new staff member, or have a changed responsibility and need to gain access to eVision, you should get the access request to Blackboard and eVision started as soon as possible, as it can take a few days or more in busy periods. This will provide you with access to Blackboard where most of the resources you will need to consult are.

Obtaining or changing access to eVision is via otago.ac.nz/its/forms/otago061235.html. The easiest way to add or change access is to add the name of a staff member who has the same access you need, (e.g., the person who held your role before you) in the 'Notes' field.

Once eVision staff have an idea of the access needed, SMS Support will provide access via Blackboard to the online courses and/or organise face-to-face help to take you through information about Course Approval (not available online). If SMS Support thinks the request is unreasonable or that it doesn't seem to fit the staff member's role, they will query the request with you or with your HoD.

Existing staff members

For existing staff who are starting to deal with distance students, there is very little difference on the staff screens – just looking for campus and mode on papers. The biggest difference is the student experience – additional screens for selecting exam centres, confirming distance papers etc.

The SMS Support Office is always ready to help you by phone 64 (0)3 479 8333, via email evision@otago.ac.nz and in person. Information about the Student Management System is available at blogs.otago.ac.nz/evision/. It is best to contact SMS Support *earlier* rather than later if you think you have a problem or cannot find the information you are looking for.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications Division has overall responsibility for how and where the University promotes itself. As appropriate promotion of your programme to its market is critical to the success of your endeavours, it is wise to share your market knowledge with, and seek advice from, Marketing and Communications well in advance of launch date.

Web   otago.ac.nz/administration/service_divisions/marketing_communications.html

Teaching my Distance Course

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP WITH MY TEACHING?

In the early days of distance education, after the hard work of course design and development, the start of a semester and the beginning of a course may have been an anticlimax. Course material was designed to provide almost the entire teaching input from the lecturer – it was written as a "guided didactic conversation" to enable the learner to work through the course as though engaging in a discussion with a content expert. Feedback on assignments was the major point of contact between student and lecturer, and the start of the semester meant only that students opened course readings and study guides and started work.

Today, the amount of teaching you do during a distance course can vary considerably, depending on the way in which you have designed the course. You may have a residential or contact course at the beginning of the semester; you may be starting your course with a web, audio or videoconference; you may begin straight away with an online discussion, or a series of online ice-breaker activities. Or, you might have designed your course to let students undertake some reading over the first two weeks before planning any other learning activity of any kind.

Because the design and development of your course is so closely aligned with your teaching, you will have been thinking about teaching during that earlier phase of your work. However, teaching at a distance involves additional skills that you will wish to learn about. This section of the Handbook provides information about resources and people who can help with your distance teaching.

This section covers the following support for your teaching:

- Professional development for distance educators.
- People who support your teaching.
- Online community of practice.
- Researching your practice.
- Evaluating your course.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR DISTANCE EDUCATORS

NEW-TO-DISTANCE WORKSHOP

This two hour workshop is for people who have not taught a distance course previously or have not had to develop one. The New-to-Distance workshop introduces you to how distance learning happens at Otago. It explores five areas of critical importance to effective distance courses and provides a brief and easy introduction to them. The areas are:

1. **Learning goals and content:** Preparing good instructional materials, "why" and "how" are as important as "what".
2. **Interactions:** Facilitating interactions and engaging students, especially online, but with a variety of technologies too.
3. **Assessment and evaluation:** What's special about assessment in distance education? And how do you manage it?
4. **Instructional media, tools, and technologies:** It's so hard to choose! What should I use, and how should I use it?
5. **Learner and course services and support:** … but they are independent learners, surely they don't need support! Well, do they? And if so, how do we best provide it?

The New-to-Distance workshop is run three times each year, once out of each of the Wellington, Dunedin, and Christchurch campuses. It is offered face-to-face only.

DISTAID PROGRAMME

Those of you involved with distance teaching may be interested in the DISTAID programme: an opportunity for you to engage in an extended professional development experience across 12 months.

DISTAID works by supporting your investigation of:

Distance education through your
Investigation of (your understanding of)
Services and support,
Tools and technologies,
Assessment and evaluation,
Interactions, and
Design

Programme components

Topics are organised around five core areas that are critical to distance education. The addition of an introductory workshop completes the set of 6 workshops making up the DISTAID programme:

1. Introduction to DISTAID: Making a change in distance teaching
2. Interactions: Engaging your students and interacting at a distance
3. Learning goals and content: Getting the course design right
4. Assessment: Assessing student work to support learning and teaching at a distance
5. Tools and technologies: Choosing and using tools and technologies in distance education
6. Services and support: Supporting distance students.

Two workshops will be run out of each of the Wellington, Dunedin, and Christchurch campuses (face-to-face as well as via Otago Connect or Zoom) meaning that you can participate in the full workshop series no matter where you are based.

Register for any or all of the workshops here: hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/teaching/programmes/teaching-workshops/.

DISTANCE EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM

The biennial distance education symposium is an opportunity for distance educators to network and share practices and includes workshops and guest speakers. The next symposium will be in November 2016 and it will be run in conjunction with a celebration of 30 years of distance education at the University of Otago.

Notification will be via email to educators on our distance learning database.

WHO SUPPORTS MY TEACHING?

HIGHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (HEDC)

HEDC staff

The Centre has professional staff with expertise in all areas of Higher Education, including distance and online learning. These staff members are available at any time to help you in designing the development of your paper or programme for teaching at a distance. Please address your initial enquiries to Candi Young:

Tel   64 (0)3 471 6385
Email   candi.young@otago.ac.nz or hedc@otago.ac.nz.

For queries about particular distance learning technologies, contact names and addresses are provided in the previous section of the Directory: Developing my Distance Course: *"Technologies – Where do I get help?"*.

Educational Technology Group (HEDC)
This resource for the development of education technology-assisted learning is coordinated by Dr Ben Daniel:

Tel   64 (0)3 479 5362
Email   ben.daniel@otago.ac.nz

Higher Education Studies
Four papers are taught by HEDC in the programmes for Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Higher Education The papers are available in both contact and distance mode and provide for specialisation in distance learning topics.

For further information, the person to contact is Professor Kerry Shephard:

Tel   64 (0)3 479 8439
Email   kerry.shephard@otago.ac.nz

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (ITS)

Online community of practice
The itforum.coe.uga.edu/ is an international forum devoted to exploring ideas related to instructional technology. It has a large membership, a useful website, and it conducts lively discussions on particular topics around the theme of e-learning and instructional technology use. You can view current and archived discussions, sign up for the discussion list, and view lists of recent instructional technology publications on the website.

The University of Otago also has an eLearning discussion group. If you are interested in joining the list, please visit: lists.otago.ac.nz/listinfo/elearning-discuss.

The address for the list is: elearning-discuss@lists.otago.ac.nz.

LIBRARY

Contact details for the Distance Library Service are in the section *Who Supports The Distance Courses?* earlier in this Handbook.

Faculty of Medicine eLearning
Set up to assist Faculty of Medicine staff with new technologies

Dr Phil Blyth
Senior Lecturer
Tel   64 (0)3 479 4290
Mob   64 (0)21 299 2237
Email   phil.blyth@otago.ac.nz
Web   facmed.otago.ac.nz/elearning/elearning/hello-world

Medical Education Group (MEG)
If you are based in one of the three Schools of Medicine and Health Sciences, this resource may be useful to consult. Although MEG was set up predominantly for staff involved in teaching in the MBChB programme, the Group's expertise in and understanding of educational issues could be helpful to a wider audience. Staff in Dunedin, Christchurch, and Wellington have particular responsibility for coordinating the network, the focus of which is professional development for Medical School staff. For a full list of contacts on each campus, contact:

David Tordoff, Medical Education Advisor, at:
Email   david.tordoff@ otago.ac.nz.
Web   dnmeds.otago.ac.nz/departments/deans/medical-education-group/.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFERENCES

In all regions of the world there are active professional associations of distance educators. Most of these have comprehensive web sites with links to distance learning conference papers and proceedings, distance learning literature, and electronic forums. For speakers of English, the world body is ICDE (the International Council for Open and Distance Learning): icde.org.

More useful, perhaps, is The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), which has a mandate from the 53 Commonwealth governments for sharing and leading open and distance education development (col.org). The COL web site is packed with distance learning information, resources and assistance. In partnership with COL, the Federation of Commonwealth Distance Learning Associations (FOCODLA) holds a biennial Forum that is usually attended by 400 – 600 delegates.

Our national organisation is DEANZ. **DEANZ is** committed to fostering growth, development, research and good practice in distance education, open learning and flexible delivery systems for education. DEANZ, like those listed above, mounts biennial conferences and hosts e-discussion groups. It also publishes the refereed *Journal of Open, Flexible and Distance Learning* (deanz.org.nz).

RESEARCH INTO DISTANCE EDUCATION

Your interest in distance education may extend to undertaking research in the area, especially if you are working with your students in some innovative way or have a particular interest in the impact of your practice as a teacher. The Director of Distance Learning is always prepared to discuss potential research projects with interested staff.

CALT GRANTS

The Committee for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT) administers annual grants for projects in educational innovation and for research into university teaching. Several grants have been made for distance learning projects.

For information relating to the CALT University Teaching Development Grants, visit the CALT website at: otago.ac.nz/calt.

EVALUATING YOUR COURSE: WHAT HAPPENS AT OTAGO?

COURSE AND TEACHING EVALUATIONS

Student Course evaluations and Individual Teacher evaluations can be undertaken for your courses using the HEDC Evaluation Service. Please refer to the HEDC website for guidance about this and how to order your evaluations: hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/etc/Evaluation-Questionnaires.html.

Check with your course coordinator regarding the timing of evaluations. **You can order evaluation questionnaires online by logging into** Otago inFORM (inform.otago.ac.nz/userHome) our ordering system for questionnaires. Log in using your University username and password, select a questionnaire type, and start designing your questionnaire. Once you are happy with it, proceed to "checkout" to submit your request. You will be sent a confirmation email with the details of your request.

After each evaluation has been run, you will be sent a report summarising the responses. Individual Teacher evaluation reports are sent confidentially to teachers only, but a Course evaluation report is sent to the person who requested it and the relevant Head of Department. Please contact HEDC Evaluation Service if you have any questions:

Email   hedc.evaluation@otago.ac.nz
Tel   64 (0)3 479 7581

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The University's standard processes for quality assurance apply equally to distance learning courses and programmes. You may find, however, that implementing these processes takes greater forethought and monitoring. Reasons for this include that:

- robust, coordinated, in-course feedback is rather difficult for your Class Representative to provide;
- you can't hand out a questionnaire to the class at your last lecture;
- in year-long courses without a final examination, and courses involving a dissertation or thesis, your students might be finishing at quite different times;
- if your course is team-taught, all team members don't have to be based in the same location (Dunedin, Christchurch, or Wellington);
- the University's standard evaluation instruments – from both HEDC (hedc.otago.ac.nz/hedc/teaching/evaluating-your-teaching/) and the Quality Advancement Unit (otago.ac.nz/quality/) – tend have a stronger focus on on-campus learning opportunities.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM

In 2004, Senate reaffirmed the important role of the Class Representatives (Class 'Reps') and the accountability of Heads of Department for ensuring that representatives are appointed in all papers. For distance papers, finding representation usually requires direct involvement and facilitation from teaching staff.

Information about the Class Rep system can be found at: otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago003107.html and on the OUSA website at: ousa.org.nz/support/class-reps/.

While written for a primarily undergraduate, on-campus audience, the *Class Rep 101 Guide*, found on the OUSA site, provides useful information about the class rep system, and the roles and responsibilities of your Class Rep.

BENCHMARKING

Where applicable, this can be internal – against the outcomes, pass rates, and course surveys of the on-campus offering. Benchmarking against another institution offering a similar distance programme is also worthwhile. If you would like assistance with finding an appropriate distance counterpart, the Director, Distance Learning may be able to help. Some Otago distance programmes, however, have no counterpart elsewhere.

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS AND ACADEMIC AUDIT

Although review and audit panels do not necessarily include expertise in distance education with their membership, your courses will be included in Departmental Reviews and audits by the Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND GRADUATE OPINION SURVEYS

These will, over time, involve your distance students. Administered by the Quality Advancement Unit (otago.ac.nz/quality), the surveys do not require your involvement. Results pertaining to distance students are extracted and reported to the Director, Distance Learning as well as to Divisions, Schools, and Departments after they have been analysed and summarised by the Quality Advancement Unit.

Supporting your Students

STUDENT INFORMATION & SUPPORT HANDBOOK: WHAT IS IT?

Distance Learning - Information and Support is an annually updated handbook that should be sent to every distance student in the first mail out from your Department.

The purpose of the publication is to provide your students with the basic, practical information that is common to all distance learning courses, for example, about their ID cards; accessing eVision; accessing Blackboard; audioconference venues, connection instructions, and accessing Otago Connect and Zoom; making course changes; information about examinations; and study support. It also contains a useful guide for students on using the Library including using the Distance Library Service, searching for information in the library catalogue, using electronic databases, and managing references.

The Distance Learning – Information and Support 2016 Handbook is a useful resource for you to use in support of your students. You can refer your students to it or use it yourself and the sources of contact details and information and advice.

References

There is an extensive body of literature related to theory, research, and practice in distance education. In the University of Otago Library, much of the distance education material is located in and around the Call Number LC5800. A (very) brief list of core reading material would have to include:

Bates, A.W. (Tony). (2005). *Technology, open learning and distance education* (2nd ed.) New York: Routledge (LB 1028.3.BA19 2005)

Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2005). *Distance education: A systems view* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. (1st ed. LC 5805.MT512)

Rowntree, D. (1994). *Preparing materials for open distance and flexible learning*. London: Kogan Page. (LB 1029.O6 RU86)

Salmon, G. (2004). *E-moderating: The key to teaching and learning online*. London: Kogan Page. (LB 2395.7.8474)

Salmon, G. (2003) *E-tivities:The key to active online learning*. London: Kogan Page. (LB1044.87.S474)

Simpson, O. (2002). *Supporting students in open and distance learning* (2nd ed.). London: Kogan Page. (LC 5800 SL127 2002)

MORE IN-DEPTH READING COULD INCLUDE:

Evans, T., Haughey, M., & Murphy, D. (2008). *International handbook of distance education*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group.

Mayer, R. E. (2005). *The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Moore, M.G. (Ed.) (2007). *Handbook of distance education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

The Commonwealth of Learning Toolkits (1999), Manila: The Commonwealth of Learning and Asian Development Bank:

- *An Overview of Open and Distance Learning*, Kit-01
- *Designing Materials for Open and Distance Learning*, Kit-02
- *Planning and Management of Open and Distance Learning*, Kit-03
- *Use and Integration of Media in Open and Distance Learning*, Kit-04
- *Quality Assurance in Open and Distance Learning*, Kit-05
- *Learner Support in Open and Distance Learning*, Kit-06

Appendices

APPENDIX I – WHAT IS DISTANCE EDUCATION?

According to Keegan (1996, p. 37), the terms "distance teaching" and "distance learning" are each only half of the process of distance education. When used in this directory, the term distance learning refers to both the teaching and learning processes and is interchangeable with the term "distance education".

Distance learning is a general term used to cover a range of teaching and learning events in which the student is separated from the teacher and, usually, other fellow students. As Moore & Kearsley (2005) explained,

> *Distance education is teaching and planned learning in which teaching normally occurs in a different place from learning, requiring communication through technologies as well as special institutional organisation.* (p. 2)

Defined by the University Senate (April 2003), a "distance paper" at Otago is one taught in such a way that, with the exception of a short residential component and/or attendance at audio and videoconference sessions in some cases, regular attendance at one of the University's campus centres is not expected.

Although the general characteristics of distance education have remained the same over time, the way in which distance courses have been taught has changed substantially. Rumble (2001) proposed that distance education has evolved historically through four phases or "generations":

1. the *Correspondence phase*, based on print technology;
2. the *Broadcasting phase*, where radio and television were used extensively;
3. the *Multi-media phase*, based on print as well telecommunications technologies such as audio- and video-conferencing;
4. the *World Wide Web phase*, based on online delivery via the Internet.

Rumble also identified five key changes that have occurred in the last 30 years:

1. technology underpinning all four distinct phases of distance education;
2. a pedagogical shift from a transmission model of education towards a constructivist model exploiting computer-mediated communication;
3. growing acceptance of distance education, and its expansion;
4. a change of perception of distance learning, from low status to acceptance, with increased confidence as its methods are adopted across education as a whole;
5. evolution from an essentially modernist form of education into a post-modernist phenomenon with a focus on the student as consumer, on flexibility and global reach.

(Adapted from Rumble, p. 31)

REFERENCES

Keegan, D. (1996). *Foundations of distance education*. (3rd Ed.) New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Moore, M. G. & Kearsley, G. (2005). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Rumble, G. (2001). Reinventing distance education, 1971 – 2001. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 20(1/2), 31-43.

APPENDIX II – BACKGROUND OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

The University has been active in the distance learning field since 1985, predominantly at postgraduate level. It is clear from the range of distance qualifications and papers offered throughout New Zealand and overseas that Otago is committed to distance education.

This statement in the University's Strategic Direction to 2020 (otago.ac.nz/otago053226.pdf) makes it very clear:

> *While Otago will remain a predominantly campus-based university, we will continue our commitment to distance learning and to other forms of course delivery, especially at the postgraduate level in areas where we have particular expertise.*

Contributing to over 130 qualifications, approximately 430 papers currently have approval to be taught in distance mode.

If you are interested in the history of distance learning's development at Otago, you will find a succinct overview by Elizabeth Purdie in "Distance Learning at the University of Otago". This document is posted on the Distance Learning website at distance.otago.ac.nz under Resources for Staff.

PURPOSES & BENEFITS

The purposes of, and benefits gained by, the University from involvement in distance learning include:

- protecting the EFTS base in targeted discipline areas and strengthening the financial viability of Departments;
- increasing post graduate EFTS with minimal added pressure on campus facilities;
- enhancing the range of the University's teaching skills and pedagogical approaches, with the potential for transferring these to the on-campus environment;
- extending or diversifying the University's potential to engage with other providers in collaborative programme development and teaching;
- engaging overtly with the government's Tertiary Education Strategy in relation to cooperation, IT-based innovation, lifelong learning, extending access; and most importantly,
- enabling students to engage in studies not otherwise available to them.

OVERSIGHT AND POLICY ADVICE

Distance Learning Advisory Board (DLAB)
Established in 2008, the Advisory Board reports to the University Senate. The DLAB's Terms of Reference are:

- To advise the Senate on policy and procedures relating to Distance Learning,
- To assist the Director, Distance Learning to ensure that Distance Learning operates in accordance with policy and to provide guidance for the ongoing development of Distance Learning,
- To promote the University of Otago as a centre for excellence in Distance Learning,
- To promote Distance Learning in Divisions and Departments, in accordance with the Strategic Direction for the University approved by Council,
- To promote Distance Learning as a means to further the University's commitment to internationalisation,
- To recommend guidelines and provide advice to those responsible for the administration and technological support of Distance Learning, particularly on the academic dimensions of these facets of Distance Teaching,
- To consider any other matters relating to Distance Learning and Teaching referred to it.

Under the leadership of Professor Vernon Squire, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), the Advisory Board's current membership can be viewed on the University website at:
otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/DistanceLearningAdvisoryBoard.html.

The Strategy is worth reading for understanding the context and future direction of distance learning at Otago and is available at otago.ac.nz/courses/distance_study/otago084451.pdf. Hard copies of both the outline and the detailed Strategy are available from the Distance Learning Office.

APPENDIX III – FORMAL APPROVAL PROCESS

Formal academic approval is required for any paper to be offered in distance mode. Up until the end of 2014, the Paper Code designating distance papers always ended with an X – thus EDUX rather than EDUC for Education papers, and TOUX rather than TOUR for Tourism papers. The "X" codes were removed when the new Student Management System, eVision, was introduced.

All distance papers are listed in a separate section in the *University Calendar* and the *Guide to Enrolment*.

To convert a campus-taught paper to a distance paper, your Department needs to submit a proposal to your Divisional Board. The appropriate document to complete is a Form 6. To seek approval for an entirely new distance paper, Form 3 needs to be completed. Both forms are available from *Proformas for new proposals and resources for academic approval processes at* otago.ac.nz/administration/academiccommittees/proformas.html.

For 100, 200, 300, and most 400-level papers, after Divisional Board approval the proposal goes to the Board of Undergraduate Studies (BUGS). Some 400-level papers and all papers at 500-level or above must go to the Board of Graduate Studies (BoGS). Both BUGS and BoGS are University level committees.

Forms generally need to go to the March meetings of BUGS or BoGS in order for the papers to be published in the *Calendar*, the *Guide to Enrolment*, and the *Distance Learning Prospectus* for the following year. A considerable amount of early planning is necessary, therefore, to get through the approval process in time for your paper to be promoted via the University's main publications.

Notes

Notes

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