

Open Micro Course Evaluation

Information sheet for participants, Feb 2015 (v2)

Invitation

You are invited to participate in a pilot of the free, open micro course, *Curriculum design in open education*, and take part in its evaluation. The feedback and suggestions offered by pilot participants will be incorporated to enhance future versions of the course, and contribute new insights to the field of open educational practices in higher education. The course will run from mid-February to the end of March, 2015.

The research is being carried out by Dr Carina Bossu (Chief Investigator) and Co-Investigators, Wendy Fountain and Associate Professor Natalie Brown, all from the Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching, University of Tasmania. The micro course development and evaluation are being funded through an Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching seed project grant.

What is the purpose of this study?

The aims of the study are to design, develop and pilot a free, open and online professional development course focused on curriculum design and open educational practices in higher education. After piloting and revision, the course will be made freely available for reuse, remixing and redistribution.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate based on your role in educational development, online teaching, learning support, or similar, and identified through direct collegial networks and public, web-based staff lists at either the University of Tasmania, or project partner institution, the University of Southern Queensland.

Participation in the pilot course is entirely voluntary and you may decide to end your participation at any stage. There will be no consequences from either institution, should you decide to end your participation.

What will I be asked to do?

As a participant in the open micro course, you will be encouraged to complete a series of learning activities which lead directly and indirectly to the completion of two major tasks. Task 1 is a curation and peer feedback task, and Task 2 involves writing a structured reflection on the micro course. Task 2 seeks participants' feedback on their course experience, its applicability to their role, the course design and resources, and specific suggestions for improvement. Responses are made via a web-based survey form, with an upper word limit of 1000 words. We estimate Task 2 will take 45 – 60 minutes. Overall, the course duration is approximately 20 hours.

Task 2 also serves as an evaluation of the course, and participants who undertake the task will be asked whether they consent to their anonymous feedback being used as research data. In addition

to improving the next version of the course, the research outcomes may be published. Any references to participant feedback will be anonymous.

Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

The micro course is a cost-free professional development opportunity to learn with peers and colleagues in a supported online environment, over a five week period. Following the evaluation, participants will receive a summary of the collective, anonymous feedback on the course and the action being taken to improve the course.

Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

There are no foreseeable risks associated with taking part in the micro course and its evaluation.

What if I change my mind during or after the study?

You can withdraw from the course and evaluation at any time, and without explanation.

Should you complete Task 2, give consent, and submit it, however, it will not be possible to identify your anonymous responses in order to delete them.

Should you choose to complete Task 2 without consenting to your anonymous responses being used as research data, your responses will only be considered after completion of the project (31 May, 2015) to inform open course design more generally.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

Participants' anonymous responses to Task 2 will be in password-protected digital form and accessed only by the Chief Investigator and Co-Investigators. These digital data will be kept for five years after first publication and then deleted. Any hard copies of these data will be shredded at this time.

How will the results of the study be published?

The evaluation findings will be reported to the project funding body, the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching. They may also be shared in local, national and international conferences, and journal articles. Any quotations of participant feedback will be anonymous and will not enable identification. The summary of collective, anonymous feedback will be emailed to course participants.

What if I have questions about this study?

Should you have questions about this research, please contact Dr Carina Bossu (03 6226 1906); Wendy Fountain (03 6226 7251); or Associate Professor Natalie Brown (03 6226 1756).

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on 03 6226 6254 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au. The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number **H0014560**.

Kindly keep this information sheet for reference. You will be able to consent to taking part in the research during the process of completing and submitting Task 2 online.