Opportunity through online learning: Improving student access, participation and success in higher education

Dr Cathy Stone, 2016 Equity Fellow

Date: Thursday 25 May  
Time: 12.30-2.30 workshop  
Venue: Learning Link 513.1.005, Murdoch University

This workshop provides an overview of a national research project funded by the Australian Government DET under the 2016 NCSEHE Equity Fellows Program, in which 151 members of staff involved in online education were interviewed, across 15 Australian higher education institutions and the Open University UK. The implications for institutional practice from both the key findings and the National Guidelines will be discussed and explored during this workshop. Workshop participants will be invited: to contribute their own experiences and practices within online education; to discuss the extent to which these findings resonate with their experiences; and to consider how the guidelines could be applied within their institution.

Dr Cathy Stone, is a Conjoint Senior Lecturer with the School of Humanities and Social Science at the University of Newcastle. She is also a 2016 Equity Fellow and a 2017 Visiting Research Fellow with the NCSEHE. Cathy has had many years' experience in developing and managing strategies to improve student success and retention in higher education, with her research and publications focusing on the experiences of mature-age, first-in-family and online students.

Cathy's work with Open Universities Australia between 2011-2014 developed her particular interest in researching the online student experience and ways in which to improve outcomes for these diverse cohorts.

Online learning has become a well-recognised part of the broader landscape of higher education. It is also proving to have a critical place in widening access and equity within this landscape. Increasing numbers of students from backgrounds historically under-represented at university are taking the opportunity to begin undergraduate study online, including through open-entry and alternative-entry pathways (Stone, O’Shea, May, Delahunty & Partington, 2016).

The full report and National Guidelines can be accessed at: https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/publications/opportunity-online-learning-improving-student-access-participation-success-higher-education/

RSVP to Denyse MacNish D.Macnish@murdoch.edu.au

Please arrive early for a light lunch and networking at 12.00 noon, prior the workshop.