

MEDIA RELEASE



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Forget uni budget cuts – try out a free education Could free online education be one of the answers to educating more Australians?

As the Government signals its intention to wipe \$2.8 billion of funding from Australia's higher education sector, thousands of everyday Australians are getting ready to study a university, TAFE or professional education subject for free.

On Monday 22 April, these students will jump online to participate in free classes with providers such as Macquarie University, TAFE NSW and the Central Institute of Technology.

It's all made possible through Open2Study, an innovative new initiative backed by Open Universities Australia (OUA), that's making quality tertiary education available and accessible to anyone.

Julia Franklin of Roseville, NSW has enrolled in *Principles of Project Management* and hopes the subject will help her take on more complex and varied projects in her current role.

"I'm a special event project manager, but have no formal qualifications in Project Management. I'm interested to know a bit more and broaden my knowledge," says Ms Franklin.

Julia also hopes to gain an insight into what might be involved if she chose to go further with some formal courses at university or TAFE.

Never having studied online before, Julia thinks it's fabulous to be able to do so for free. "I can study in my own time, at home and online, without having to attend classes at specific times, or outlay huge fees to pay for my further education. As I run a small business, this flexibility and price is very appealing," says Ms Franklin.

"The number of people looking for a tertiary education is on the rise. In 2011, there were over 1.2 million Australians studying at this level – that's more than 30 per cent more students than 2001," says Mr Paul Wappett, OUA CEO.

"The flexibility of online learning has already helped people, who wouldn't otherwise have studied, to realise their education goals."

"Why offer these glimpses of tertiary education for free? Well, you end up attracting more people, like Julia, to tertiary education than ever before. Lack of confidence, lack of prior education, indecision, lack of time to attend classes or deep pockets no longer need to act as barriers to people's desire to learn something new. They've been replaced by curiosity, conviction, motivation and the true blue Aussie spirit of giving something a go," says Mr Wappett.

"All you need is a desire to learn and an internet connection. And at Open2Study, we won't just give you a set of PowerPoint slides or place some PDFs online – we've got videos, animations, simulations and interactive quizzes to keep you engaged," says Mr Wappett.

With access to high quality, free tertiary education that's designed with the student in mind, Mr Wappett believes that there's no stopping online education from becoming the leading way to educate more Australians than ever before.

Open2Study currently offers 10 subjects in areas including management, writing for the web and nutrition, which are available multiple times a year. With new subjects added every month or so, Open2Study anticipates to have at least 40 to 50 free subjects available by the end of 2013.

Visit www.open2study.com for more information.

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About Open2Study – Never stop learning

Open2Study delivers free high quality online education. It offers everyone the chance to experience online tertiary and professional learning through a range of subjects, designed for everyday people. Backed by [Open Universities Australia](http://OpenUniversitiesAustralia.com), Open2Study is based on the core principle that learning is life-long and should be accessible by all. And did we mention it was free? Access our Media Centre at www.open2study.com/media-centre

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