

MEDIA RELEASE



Social media helps online students stay connected

Student engagement on free online learning platform Open2Study has increased 38 per cent on the previous intake, according to research report released by Open Universities Australia.

“What the data is telling us is that students are embracing the online learning environment and creating virtual communities with likeminded people,” said Open2Study’s Executive General Manager Mr Jose Herrera Perea.

“Students have up to four weeks to register their interest. During that time, through myriad social media and social learning tools, they can establish relationships with students who have similar interests. So once the course has started, they have already created a network to share their learnings and experiences”.

Mr Herrera Perea said that the tools were not just sitting there passively waiting to be used. Lecturers use provocation techniques that stimulate debate and discussion amongst the students.

“We have found that online learning that focuses on collaboration and cooperation enhances student’s ability to explore ideas and knowledge more effectively,” said Mr Herrera Perea.

“Social media provides students and lecturers with a marketplace in which to exchange and debate ideas.

“Social media tools also help overcome some of the isolation issues for online students. To make things easier, we have embedded in the platform social media tools such as instant messaging that show students who from their course is currently online. We have also introduced course specific hash tags.

According to the research report, the platform has attracted over 60 per cent of enrolments from 165 countries.

“Social media has enabled the student community to expand beyond its traditional boundaries. The diverse student population ideally translates to a richer learning experience,” said Mr Herrera Perea.

Open2Study was recently recognised for its Excellence by the eLearning Industry Association of Victoria in the categories of Education and Community.

Judge’s comments: Slick and stylish. Great concept and execution. The site encourages people to apply and removes barriers that may make people hesitant to try online learning. Well conceptualised and thought through, boasting a 95 per cent satisfaction rating and

well-above average completion rates. Importantly, it is a flexible platform for the delivery of online learning which will have many applications beyond those originally planned for.

Research Snapshot

<https://www.open2study.com/research/download/576>

Full Research Report

<https://www.open2study.com/research/download/575>

Ends

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](#), 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? Visit www.open2study.com or access the Media Centre at www.open2study.com/media-centre

Media inquiries

Valentina Lazarevska
Media and Public Relations Manager
Email: Open2StudyMedia@open.edu.au
Tel: +61 (3) 8628 5097