



## **Anytime-anyplace – developing online maths support at Australian Catholic University**

### **Key Words**

Online, numeracy, success, retention, support, interactive, integrated, accessible

### **Abstract**

As resources for university study move increasingly to an online mode (Oliver, 2002), the Academic Skills Unit (ASU) of Australian Catholic University (ACU) is developing corresponding digital resources, with a focus on “teacher presence”, to meet the need for students’ online skills development, including in numeracy. A study of online student satisfaction and retention (Herbert, 2006) found that excellent quality of online instruction was rated as very important by students but their level of satisfaction with the quality of online instruction was rated as only moderate (pp. 5-6). Clearly, the quality of what was provided did not meet expectations. A key implication for ACU ASU therefore is to prioritise the development of online resources and build in the facility for feedback from students, academic staff and presenters. This feedback is crucial in systematic quality improvement. (Winston, Nash, Parker & Rowntree, 2016). This presentation covers a range of mathematics online support materials currently in development. In November 2015 an interactive quiz with feedback on basic mathematical skills was developed. Adobe Captivate on basic maths skills and a LANTITE preparation video occurred early in 2016. The development of several interactive self-assessments, with feedback, in a number of basic maths topics followed. These can be run on various portable devices to support and strengthen students’ maths skills. Integrated into all these are reminders of the availability of support from Academic Skills advisors. More recent additions have been the extension of the face-to-face workshops to an online mode, and online consultations. These enable students to log in to the workshop or consultation from any location, exemplifying Oliver’s (2002) anytime-anyplace learning concept (pp. 4 – 5). The increased “teacher presence” in the interactive nature of these support mechanisms is in line with Stone’s (2017) national guidelines for improving student outcomes in online learning with students the ultimate beneficiaries (Oliver, 2002, p. 7). These initiatives align with ACU policies of Learning and Teaching, Learning for Life and Graduate Attributes. Kate Nolan – Academic Skills Advisor (Numeracy), ACU Sydney Michael Russo – Academic Skills Advisor (Numeracy), ACU Melbourne

### **References**

Herbert, M. (2006). Staying the course: A study in online student satisfaction and retention. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 9(4), 300-317.

Oliver, R. (2002). The role of ICT in higher education for the 21st century: ICT as a change agent for education. Retrieved April, 14, 2007.

Stone, C. (2017). Opportunity through online learning: Improving student access, participation and success in higher education. Retrieved from [https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CathyStone\\_EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY.pdf](https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/CathyStone_EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY.pdf)

Winstone, N., Nash, R., Parker, M., & Rowntree, M. (2016). Supporting Learners' Agentic Engagement with feedback: A systematic review and a taxonomy of recipience processes. *Educational Psychologist*, doi: 10.1080/00461520.2016.1207538