Bringing learning to regional communities: Designing the new game

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Widening access and increasing participation

Drivers for regional engagement in education:

"Australia needs a sustainable system of higher education provision in regional and remote areas. Provision needs to be flexible and innovative. It must anticipate and respond rapidly to local needs. Providers in regional and remote areas need to be encouraged and supported to build upon partnerships with local communities, providers in other sectors of education, businesses and industry."

(Bradley et al. 2008, p.111)
Inhibitors to regional access and participation

Regional communities report ...

1. Low aspirations and school completion rates
2. Limited educational pathways (school-VET-HE)
3. Social/cultural exclusion
4. Limited access to technology, the internet and academic skills development
Technology support for learning: Internet connection at home?
Technology support for learning: Broadband connection at home?
Enablers to regional access and participation

Research suggests ...

1. Institutional commitment and strategies to widen access and increase participation (e.g. Lefoe 2003)
2. Regional educational design
3. Specified educational pathways (cross-sectoral) from school-VET-HE
4. Sharing of infrastructure and resources (educational providers, government bodies and industry) to enhance access to technology and academic support
5. Community leadership and engagement
Elements of regional design framework

- Technology support & design for learning
- Enhanced student access and participation
- Student support & lecturer PD
- Teaching, learning & assessment practice
- Community leadership & engagement

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Design of teaching, learning & assessment strategies

- Design: Curriculum alignment, skills development; web-enabled; disruptive
- Design: Situated, problem-based
- Interactive, communicative, learner-led content
- Quality assured, cost-effective, sustainable

Teaching, learning & assessment
Technology support for learning: Equal access?

Technological equipment & infrastructure

Computers and video-conferencing: TAFE & schools?

Education Centres & libraries?

Internet access & broadband: Maccas? Gloria Jeans?
Community leadership & engagement

Community leadership and engagement

- Community-led course design and implementation
- Student support: academic skills, personal support
- Professional development for staff & community
- Mobile university
  - Mobile health bus

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Community leadership & engagement

- Community-led course design and implementation
- Student support: academic skills, personal support
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- Mobile Allied Health (bus) Mobile university
What strategies do you/ would you use to increase participation in regional communities?

Group discussion/ brainstorm:

1. Share experiences: How do you/ would you support learning for young and mature aged people living in regional areas?

2. Summarise the three most useful technology-based strategies.
Conclusion: A new game (based on old rules)

1. Regional communities face intergenerational disadvantage and reduced access to technology and the internet.
2. Enhancing participation in regional education requires innovative, integrated approaches to educational design, application of technologies and meaningful engagement with community members.

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