

OUA PLATFORM RULES

University
Provider

MAY 2020

Table of Contents

Section 1	Background on Open Universities Australia	1
Section 2	Objectives of the OUA Platform	2
Section 3	Governing Principles	3
Section 4	Rules regulating who may participate in the OUA Platform	4
Section 5	Rules regulating what's offered on the OUA Platform	5
Section 6	Authority to set and change OUA Platform Rules	6
Section 7	Glossary	6

Document Name	OUA Platform Rules University Provider
Version	02
Date Approved	-
Prepared by	Anthony Elliott, Chief Operating Officer
Next Review Date	30 June 2021

Section 1: Background on Open Universities Australia

Owned by seven Australian public universities (Curtin University, Griffith University, Macquarie University, Monash University, RMIT University, Swinburne University and University of South Australia) in equal shares, Open Universities Australia (OUA) has been in existence since being part of the Keating Government’s “Creative Nation” election platform in the 1993 Federal Election.

At its inception, the Open Learning Agency (as we were then known) offered university units via late night spectrum on the ABC and SBS. Since then, we have undergone a number of transformations in terms of how we deliver access to high quality education to students who are not able to physically attend campus-based modes of education and /or who actually prefer to study online.

There is a core underpinning belief that explains why OUA exists; namely, that access to really great education has the power to transform the lives of people, their families and their communities, and so should be available to all.

And that belief helps define the job that OUA exists to do: bring students, universities and other participants together through a tertiary education online platform that delivers value to all.

Section 2: Objectives of the OUA Platform

The OUA Platform brings together students, universities, textbook suppliers, tuition/tutorial suppliers and other participants in a digital marketplace.

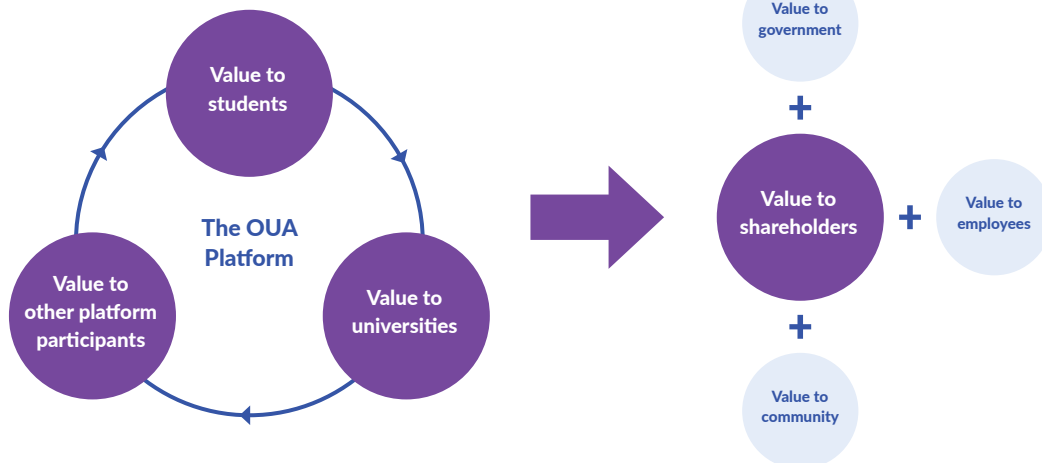
The OUA Platform creates value by:

- becoming a destination for any student looking for online university unit/program options (in other words, OUA will go from being on a student's shortlist, to being a student's shortlist and guide to finalising that shortlist down to an enrolment into a course of study);
- creating more choice for students in terms of the range of disciplines offered and the number of programs within each discipline area;
- guiding students (via a proprietary algorithm) to find the units and programs that best suit their needs based on criteria that they set themselves;
- using data to deliver highly personalised student interactions at every part of the journey from exploration of options right through to the fulfilment of their study goal;
- generating student enrolment (and revenue) growth for our University Providers;
- providing University Providers with insights from the data to enable them to better understand what drives students' decisions about the program/university/delivery mode they choose, and to then develop new programs in areas of emerging demand and to quickly iterate existing programs to better meet the needs of students; and
- having a platform governance framework and a set of rules that drive value for the ecosystem as a whole, rather than for only a subset of participants.

The OUA Platform:

- is intended to operate in the tertiary education space only;
- makes available all University offerings;
- is intended for use by students in Australia in the short term, with the longer term goal of targeting prospective students around the world; and
- has a longer term aspiration of being a global marketplace with participants from across the globe.

OUA's Board and shareholders are committed to and aligned behind the vision of creating the dominant platform business for enabling access to all to tertiary education.



Section 3: Governing Principles

The core belief that underpins the OUA Platform

Access to really great education has the power to transform the lives of people, their families and their communities, and so should be available to all.

Governing Principles

Principle 1:

The Algorithm that underpins the OUA Platform is (and will continue to be) independently and rigorously applied, and free from gaming of outcomes.

Principle 2:

University Providers who participate in the OUA Platform are committed to continuous development of the pedagogical underpinnings of online education and to delivering great learning experiences and great Student interactions.

Principle 3:

All participants in the OUA Platform are committed to Students achieving their educational goals.

Principle 4:

The OUA Platform operates as a true market does, with University Providers free to determine what they take to market, when they offer it and the price at which they offer it. As the platform operator, OUA will give guidance to University Providers and other non-Student market participants about what it believes will be successful in the marketplace, but they will be free to act on or disregard that guidance as they see fit.

Principle 5:

The OUA Platform is strengthened by having a collective ethos and codes of conduct for all members of the community regarding the standards of behaviour to which they must adhere.

Principle 6:

Transparency of platform participant feedback will aid platform performance and reliability. The "voice of the crowd" is valuable and insightful and is a key element of the OUA Platform, helping inform participants' decision making. Feedback will be appropriately moderated to protect the reputation of the OUA Platform.

Principle 7:

All aggregated data produced by the OUA Platform is valuable and provides the opportunity for great insights; it will be actively managed, protected, analysed with appropriate rigour for validity and reliability, and shared in a manner that both meets

compliance obligations and drives value for the platform. OUA will avoid duplication of requests for data from participants.

Principle 8:

OUA is a platform that offers a range of services across the value chain of student acquisition and enrolment. Universities may only use one service for any given program of study but may use a range of different services for different offerings.

Principle 9:

Students benefit from having more choice. As a result, an essential feature of the OUA Platform is cross recognition and cross accreditation of units and recognition of prior learning by all University Providers in the OUA Platform to enable Students to customise their course of study. OUA will help facilitate collaboration and accreditation between University Providers, creating value for the OUA Platform.

Principle 10:

OUA will encourage participation in the OUA Platform via a range of incentives and rewards.

Principle 11:

The use of the OUA Platform will always be free for students (but this does not extend to program/unit enrolments with a University Provider or other participant transactions).

Principle 12:

The OUA Platform rules will be consistent with the legal and regulatory environment for Tertiary Education in Australia and University Providers are responsible for their own compliance obligations.

Principle 13:

OUA will operate the platform in a way that treats each class of participant fairly and equitably (although not necessarily equally). In particular, different classes of participant (for example, Students and Providers, Shareholding Providers) have different interests and cannot be treated equally.

Principle 14:

As the platform operator, OUA's role is to maximise the value generated by the entire platform ecosystem, rather than any particular participant or group of participants.

Principle 15:

Notwithstanding Principles 13 and 14, market participants recognise that OUA's shareholders are participants in the OUA platform and will derive shareholder value over and above the value derived by other platform participants. By participating in the OUA Platform, the other market participants acknowledge and agree that shareholders will derive value that represents their risk capital invested in OUA (i.e., as an alternative to dividends).

Section 4:

Rules regulating who may participate in the OUA Platform

To take part in the OUA Platform, participants must meet the following criteria.

For Australian universities:

1. be a body corporate that is a “higher education provider” for the purposes of the Higher Education Support Act 2003;
2. be a registered higher education provider that is registered in the Australian university provider category and authorised to self-accredit its courses of study under section 45 of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
3. be approved by OUA’s Board of Directors to be a University Provider in the OUA Platform;
4. Agree to the platform Terms and Conditions published by OUA.

For other platform participants:

1. be a registered body corporate, incorporated association, or partnership;
2. have Professional Indemnity and / or Public Liability insurance with coverage of at least AUD\$10million (requirements will be dependent on participation type);
3. be able to clearly demonstrate how their participation provides value to the OUA Platform and all its participants and aligns with educational achievement; and enter into a Participant Agreement with OUA; and
4. enter into a Participant Agreement with OUA.

For non-Australian universities:

1. be registered as a university under the legislation of its country of domicile;
2. adhere to a qualifications framework that is consistent with the Australian Qualifications Framework;
3. be approved by OUA’s Board of Directors to be a University Provider in the OUA Platform;
4. Agree to the platform Terms and Conditions published by OUA; and

Section 5: Rules regulating what's offered on the OUA Platform

The OUA Platform will take to market 'open portfolio' offerings that meet the following criteria:

The OUA Platform will take to market 'open portfolio' offerings that meet the following criteria:

- Accredited programs of study that meet the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework;
- Delivered wholly or predominantly online (with the only non-online aspects being pre-specified requirements, including practicums, intensives etc.);
- Designed for consumption by online learners accessing material by a device such as a desktop computer, tablet or phone; and
- Approved by the relevant University Provider's Academic Board or equivalent.

Other products

- Products and/or services that enhance the value of the OUA Platform and its participants;
- Aligned to educational achievement and are not merely a buying / advertising group service; and
- A non-exhaustive list of examples includes: corporate partners, textbook supply, textbook rental, educational technology hardware and/or software, stationery and other study supplies.

Pricing

- University Providers and other market participants will determine the price at which they offer their degree programs, other programs, single units of study, micro-credentials, products and/or services, subject to compliance with all laws; and
- All market participants to determine their pricing independently of others with no agreement, arrangement or understanding in relation to the price at which they will offer anything through the OUA Platform.

Quality Assurance

- All units / programs added to OUA's open portfolio are subject to the accreditation requirements of the Higher Education Support Act.

Section 6: Authority to set and change OUA Platform Rules

	Board	Shareholders
Who is involved?	Members of the Board (representatives of shareholders, plus others approved by the shareholders).	Vice Chancellors of shareholder universities only.
Role in platform governance (i.e. platform rules)	Determine OUA Platform rules on the recommendation of Management. Make any changes to the platform rules. Oversee the implementation of the platform rules.	Give authority to the Board to determine OUA Platform rules.
Frequency	As required, but will consciously consider platform rules at least annually.	Shareholders' meetings to occur at least twice per year.
Comments	Board members have statutory duty to act in the best interests of the company as a whole in determining platform rules.	

Section 7: Glossary

In OUA's Platform Rules, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definitions
Academic Programs Committee	Operational committee of OUA established under the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)</i> with the responsibility for advising the Chief Executive Officer of OUA on matters concerning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the academic programme offered by OUA the units to be offered, their content and their mode of delivery; assessment and other academic procedures; the accreditation of the units to be offered; and the quality assurance arrangements for OUA for the ongoing assurance of the quality of tuition accessed through OUA
HESA	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)</i>
Open Portfolio	The portfolio / range of units / programs represented in market by OUA and awarded by OUA University Providers via OUA's platform, subject to the approval of OUA's CEO.
OUA Platform	The digital marketplace that brings together students, universities, textbook suppliers, tuition/tutorial suppliers and other participants.
Student	Has the meaning given in HESA
Unit of Study	Has the meaning given in HESA