

## Editorial

Dear Readers

Prepare to be MOOCed! The MOOCs are upon us and there is no turning back. MOOC is an acronym for Massively Open Online Course. The acronym, which was coined in 2008, is destined to join a growing list of icons that define the educational and social experience made possible by the ubiquitous high speed internet broadband. *The New York Times* which likes to be a step ahead of its readers, declared 2012 as 'The Year of the MOOC'.

Many universities in Australia and around the world have been involved in the creation and delivery of online courses for many years and so not everything in a MOOC is new. But two of the key words in the acronym are a potential game changer: Massive and Open. Although there is no hard and fast rule on how to quantify what qualifies as Massive, you should be thinking of enrolments in the tens or hundreds of thousands. And Open suggests access to all; at the present time most MOOCs on offer have no fees and provide no accreditation. This could change. One of the major obstacles in providing accreditation is online identity verification. How can you be sure that the person completing the online assessment tasks is the person who is being given accreditation. There are now several major players competing for the delivery of MOOCs: Coursera, edX and UDACITY to name a few, and this is driving innovations in identity verification. For example, Coursera uses a combination of photo verification and typing pattern recognition to confirm identity.

If you want to have a MOOC experience then you can sign up now with one of the course providers listed above. How about a Coursera course in Mathematical Thinking by Professor Keith Devlin from Stanford University?

Editor

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