

### Development of technologies

*"Almost all really new ideas have a certain aspect of foolishness when they are just produced."*

- Alfred North Whitehead

Due to the unusually restrictive prison environment and ban on internet access, it was difficult to secure technologies that met prison security requirements. The course also needed to be modified extensively to be able to function effectively without the internet. Considerable planning and development will be needed to automate these processes in the future.

We need to be cognisant of the extent to which we take access to the internet for granted.

### Implementation of trial

*"A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm will go further than a great idea that inspires no one."*

- Mary Kay Ash

The technologies that were deployed in the project look very different those we envisaged in the project blueprint. This highlights the importance of being flexible during the product development process.

We also learned that the implementation of new technology requires the comprehensive training of students and educators. Learning and teaching with unfamiliar technologies can be an intimidating experience. The launch of the trial is only the beginning with iterative redesign of the processes required to ensure a sustainable and viable solution for integrating digital technologies into prison education.

### On-going research and discussion

*"New ideas pass through three periods: 1) It can't be done; 2) It probably can be done, but it's not worth doing; 3) I knew it was a good idea all along!"*

- Arthur C. Clarke

Continuous discussions with stakeholders identified needs and potential benefits that would not have been possible to discern otherwise.

The research during the trial also uncovered a number of assumptions about the functionality of the technologies which were not true. Without sound evaluation methods in place we would have proceeded with the development of features that did not address student needs.

### Obtaining stakeholder support

*"I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones."*

- John Cage

One of the greatest challenges in this project was to satisfy numerous committees to obtain clearance for new digital technologies to be used in the prison environment. Security of the devices was a greater concern than functionality.

The lesson learned here is that stakeholder approval was necessary to make this project possible. It was worthwhile diligently working through the correct channels to obtain leadership support and commitment. This was an invaluable trust-building exercise.

### Obtaining Institutional support

*"The new idea either finds a champion or it dies. No ordinary involvement with a new idea provides the energy required to cope with the indifference and resistance that change provokes."*

- Tom Peters

Support from our own institution was difficult to obtain. The layers of support required were complex and the red tape extensive. We also faced unanticipated negative attitudes towards exceptions handling for prison education.

A key lesson is that emotional commitment from project team members and stakeholders is essential to effectively navigate this difficult stage.

### Initial planning

*"An idea, like a ghost, must be spoken to a little before it will explain itself."*

- Charles Dickens

This stage of the project involved a range of meetings with project stakeholders and team members to develop a blueprint for the project. Enthusiasm and common sense were often at odds and convincing people that new ways of doing things is a good idea, is not an easy task.

Being comfortable with chaos was an important lesson during this stage. A project can be well scoped and planned but there are always problems you don't anticipate.

### Conceptualising the project

*"If at first, the idea is not absurd, then there is no hope for it."*

- Albert Einstein

The project began with high hopes and big dreams. We were out to solve the world's problems with little awareness of the technicalities and difficulties we would face.

The key to success during this stage is ensuring that the need and expected outcomes of the project is clearly articulated, documented and understood by all parties.

This poster presents the observations and frustrations encountered attempting to implement an innovation solution for incarcerated education. The project was aimed at providing incarcerated students without internet access with innovative e-learning technologies that would simulate the learning experience of traditional distance and online students.