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It gives me great pleasure to present the research activities of staff at the Open Polytechnic for 2012.

Research is work. The investigation, analysis, creativity, synthesis and other forms of solid thinking research requires considerable effort. This report includes evidence of the hard thinking and work performed by Open Polytechnic staff and disseminated across 2012.

Ultimately the results of research must be disseminated. That means, in the words of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, they must be ‘open to scrutiny and formal evaluation by others in the field of inquiry’.

Dissemination serves a number of purposes. That the research has been disseminated serves as evidence of its coherence. The means of dissemination gives important clues about the quality and substance of the work, and the audience or readership it has reached. Dissemination also seals a research project’s contribution to broader academic discourse, in that the work can be accessed by others and is open for citation and further critique.

So what does it take to be an effective researcher? The profiles we feature in this report give insight into the criteria: a willingness to collaborate in exploration with others; a clear focus; the anticipation of discovery; sheer curiosity; finding a problem that has long needed a solution; a sense of personal connection with the area of research; the desire to make a positive difference; and the aspiration to learn.

I’m certain that for all researchers the motivation to research comes primarily from the love of knowledge and the desire to see it make a difference in the lives of others. This is one reason why research is so akin to teaching and excellence in the academy – both are concerned with learning, thinking, and sharing ideas in an informed and logical way.

I am pleased that we have more than just effective researchers at the Open Polytechnic – we also have research leaders. The collaborative activities that took place in 2012 stand out on every page of this report, as do the clear connections with industry and open and distance learning.

It is with great pride that we at the Open Polytechnic report on our 2012 efforts.
The School of Business continues to make a significant contribution to the Open Polytechnic’s research activities and achievements.

Of particular note are the achievements of Associate Professor Jonathan Barrett, who in 2012, published nine refereed journal articles and co-authored a further five refereed journal articles. In addition, two papers co-authored by Jonathan and presented in 2011 received recognition at the 67th Annual Australasian Law Teachers Association (ALTA) Conference in 2012 and achieved ‘Highly Commended’ status in the ALTA 2011 Overall Best Conference Paper Awards.

Dr Vasanthi Peter, management lecturer, was the second author in the paper awarded best peer-reviewed paper at the 57th World Conference of the International Council for Small Business (ICSB) conference, another recognition for the School of Business in 2012.

School of Business staff continue to write textbooks and book chapters that are widely used in accounting subjects in New Zealand tertiary institutions. Taxation principal lecturer, John Veal, was again the main author for the Staples Tax Guide – both the 2012 edition and the mid-year supplement. Nazir Awan, senior lecturer in accounting, and Richard Baxter, accounting lecturer, contributed to the 3rd edition of Financial Accounting, a New Zealand Perspective. Gigi Fenster, law lecturer, published her first novel in 2012. This delightful story, The Intentions Book, was also the subject of a number of external talks.

During 2012 staff from the School of Business also established an informal book-review group, which saw several staff publishing book reviews.
‘It is important that we all try to contribute to the research environment.’

Jonathan Barrett
Associate Professor in the School of Business

Dr. Jonathan Barrett, Associate Professor in the School of Business, is a prolific researcher who has written more than 50 journal articles, book chapters and papers since joining the Open Polytechnic in 2006.

In 2012 Jonathan published peer-reviewed journal articles with the Open Polytechnic’s Dr. Luke Strongman (internet law), Leigh Thompson (employment law) and John Veal (taxation). He also co-wrote a chapter in a major international volume on corporate social responsibility.

Jonathan was also the editor of the 2011 e-book Open Learning for an Open World: Reflections on Open and Distance Learning and Teaching at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, which continued to receive positive feedback in 2012.

‘The e-book made appropriate use of technology and gave both experienced and novice researchers the opportunity to publish their work,’ says Jonathan.

‘I was given credit as the editor, but it was a truly cooperative effort that showcased the wealth of open and distance learning knowledge at the Open Polytechnic.’

While the personal satisfaction gained from research is a principal motivator, Jonathan says he finds research to be most rewarding as a cooperative activity.

‘Teaming up with other researchers with particular skills and knowledge enables joint papers to be written that would otherwise be difficult to produce.

Even solo research is a social activity. Many people are involved in the production of a journal article – from colleagues with whom you might discuss initial ideas, to editors and reviewers who help refine the final output. It is important, therefore, that we all try to contribute to the research environment.’

In this regard, Jonathan often peer reviews journal articles. He is also chair of the Open Polytechnic’s Research Publications Committee, which aims to promote a culture of research at the Polytechnic, and a member of both the Research and the Ethics Committees.

Jonathan holds a Bachelor of Laws (LLB), a Higher Diploma in Tax Law, an Advanced Diploma in International Taxation, and is a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

Jonathan’s doctoral studies concerned the fundamental principles of respect for human dignity and distributive justice in taxation. Application of these ideas in different practical contexts continues to be his primary research concern. In 2013, his principal research focus will be on how artistic expression as a human right interacts with copyright and other laws.
The School of Social Sciences has a diverse portfolio of academic research that supports a range of degree programmes in the fields of communication, humanities, psychology, social sciences and social work.

In the communication discipline, Dr Polly Kobeleva continued to undertake research and publish articles throughout the year in the area of second language learners’ comprehension of speech. Her research on second language listening was published in RELC Journal, an international journal that publishes original research on language education. She also presented a paper at the Tertiary Writing Network Colloquium in Hamilton, and co-authored a book and a conference paper on open and distance learning (ODL).

Dr Samantha Lentle-Keenan, Communication Programme Leader, presented a paper on poetry as autobiography at the 2012 8th Biennial Conference of the International Auto/Biography Association in Canberra, Australia.

Associate Professor Gary Mersham continued his research in the areas of flexible and distance learning, social media, public relations and communication management. He presented a paper on e-learning at the 2012 New Zealand Communication Association Conference in Hamilton and carried out research for the publication of the tenth edition of The Handbook of Public Relations.

Dr Luke Strongman, Senior Lecturer in Communication and Humanities, presented at a number of national and international
conferences in 2012. His research interests span a range of areas, including organisational communication, ethics and the law, post-colonialism, and international development. Dr Strongman published a book in 2012 entitled *Latitudes: Essays in New Zealand Social Science*, and co-authored a journal article with Associate Professor Jonathan Barrett, School of Business, entitled ‘The Internet, the Law, and Privacy in New Zealand: Dignity with Liberty?’ The article was published in the *International Journal of Communication*.

Dr Aaron Jarden, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, continued his ongoing research in the field of well-being. In 2012 Dr Jarden published a book entitled *Positive Psychologists on Positive Psychology*, and continued as a lead researcher on the International Wellbeing Study. Dr Jarden also presented at the 2012 New Zealand Psychological Society Conference and organised the highly successful inaugural International Conference on Well-being and Public Policy, both in Wellington.

Dr Belinda Boyd-Wilson, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, continued research on the enlightenment scale. Her paper entitled ‘The Enlightenment Scale: A Measure of Being at Peace and Open-hearted’, has been accepted for publication in the academic journal *Mindfulness*.

Dr Heather Peters, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, continued her research into decision making and gambling, and presented at the Association for Behaviour Analysis International Annual Conference in 2012 in Seattle. Dr Peters maintained her involvement with the animal and human learning laboratories at Victoria University of Wellington, and continues her collaboration with West Virginia University.

Vanessa Bowden, Social Sciences Major Leader, continued her doctoral studies during 2012. She is currently working on two key journal publications – ‘The Limits to Ecological Modernisation’, which explores tensions between environmental problems and the desire for economic growth, and ‘Land-use Conflict and Climate Change in the Hunter, New South Wales’.

Gradon Diprose, Lecturer in Social Sciences, completed research as part of his doctorate, and presented at a number of national and international conferences in 2012. He is currently working on publishing an article entitled ‘Policing Art: The Political Potential of Creative Practice’, which explores how creativity and social art practices can be understood as political activism.

Following extensive consultation with other social work education providers and the social work industry, Karin Brown, Social Work Programme Leader, identified a gap in the research on practice placements and initiated a research project with Massey University and Learning Designs to assess the demand for and supply of social work practice placements.

This groundbreaking research aims to enhance the quality of social work practice placements in New Zealand.

Academic staff in the School of Social Sciences are also actively involved in a number of research projects relating to ODL. Dr Natilene Bowker, Psychology Programme Leader, continues to research people’s experiences in online environments. Dr Bowker’s research culminated in the publication of a chapter on emerging forms of online identity in a book entitled *Social Psychology: New Developments*. Dr Bowker is currently working on several projects, including students’ grief management of assignment expectations in an online course, and an Open Educational Resources project with co-researcher Dr Stephen Marshall of Victoria University of Wellington. Dr Polly Kobeleva and Dr Luke Strongman, published a book in 2012 entitled *Research, Teaching and Learning: Pedagogy and Practice in the Open and Distance Learning Paradigm*, and presented a paper entitled ‘Towards a Unified Concept of Distance Learning’ at the Creative University Conference in Hamilton. Dr Strongman also presented a paper on effective communication for teaching practices using learning management systems in distance education at the 2012 Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand Conference in Auckland.

Belinda Lawrence, Lecturer in Psychology, commenced doctoral studies in 2012. Her research will investigate individual and institutional factors influencing teaching practice in ODL in New Zealand. Belinda Lawrence also co-authored an article with Dr Samantha Lentle-Keenan entitled ‘Teaching Beliefs and Practice, Institutional Context and the Uptake of Web-based Technology’, which has been accepted for publication in the academic journal *Distance Education*.

Dr Nancy Weaver, Principal Lecturer in Psychology, and Estelle Barnard, Open Polytechnic Librarian, continued their research into sources students use in completing assignments in an introductory psychology course in an ODL context. Their findings provide valuable insight into teaching, and library planning and acquisition. Dr Weaver is also currently researching the cognition of instruction, and how students think about and make use of the professional literature when completing tertiary courses. Her research aims to establish whether or not there are common cognitive biases and prejudices that affect resource choice.
A fledgling researcher, Karin Brown is looking forward to cutting her research teeth in a meaningful way. As both a social worker and academic faculty member she is committed to ensuring any research she completes helps to make a difference in people’s lives.

Karin has presented on teaching and social work in a bicultural environment at a number of conferences, including the World Indigenous Peoples Conference and the Education and Women’s Studies Association Conference.

Although having previously completed some literature-based research, Karin’s current research project – a collaborative piece of work she will complete alongside Dr Kath Hay from Massey University and Neil Ballantyne, formerly of The Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services in Scotland – will be her first official foray into the research world.

‘The joint research project is about mapping the supply and demand of social work student placements, including comparing perceptions and expectations of the different stakeholders. We also hope to examine the application of a particular supervision model,’ says Karin.

Work has begun on the first stage of the project, and the research team is eager to get through the quantitative stage so that work can begin on the qualitative interviewing.

‘I’m very excited about meeting with stakeholders so that we can hear their perspectives on the issues and also their proposed solutions. This country has a shortage of social workers, so it’s very important that we build the capacity of the sector to absorb and support the students coming through,’ she says.

Originally from South Africa and raised in Switzerland, Karin trained as a social worker in the United States and worked in community-based substance abuse prevention before relocating to New Zealand. Since arriving here, she has predominantly worked in academia, including five years at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa and two years at the Social Services Industry Training Organisation.

Even though she hasn’t worked directly as a social worker for a number of years, Karin has kept up voluntary work in the social service sector by serving on an NGO voluntary governance board, participating in community development activities and contributing to the production of a free feminist magazine.

‘It’s never boring when you’re working to make our world a better place,’ she says.
Belinda Lawrence, Psychology Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, has her first education-related paper, 'Teaching Beliefs and Practice, Institutional Context, and the Uptake of Web-based Technology', currently in press with the journal *Distance Education*, and is currently working towards her PhD.

Belinda graduated with a master's degree in Psychology in 2002, but despite winning an award for her first journal article published in the *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* in 2002, she found it difficult to gather early momentum as a psychology researcher. However, while completing a Certificate in Tertiary Teaching through Otago University in 2007, she was introduced to the field of higher education research, and found a renewed energy and interest in doing research.

'Something just clicked. By combining my background in psychology with my interest in higher education, I suddenly found myself getting passionate about research again.

'I found that I had a constant stream of questions that I wanted answers for, and I found a community of researchers who were interested in the same things I was interested in,' she says.

This encouraged Belinda to research the uptake of web-based technology by tertiary educators as part of her Diploma in Tertiary Teaching in 2011, which resulted in her paper ‘Teaching Beliefs and Practice, Institutional Context, and the Uptake of Web-based Technology’.

‘My publication focuses on what influences teachers to teach the way they do, and in particular what factors affect how they use web-based technologies (for example, discussion forums, news posts, online videos, website links, blogs, wikis, email, chat, online document storage, and so on) in their teaching. Previous research had indicated that teacher’s beliefs and goals, and their perceptions of particular technologies, influenced the use of technology to teach. My research found that as well as these factors, institutional priorities and division of labour also affected how teachers used technology in their teaching.

Belinda’s current PhD research, which she will be completing part-time over the next 5 years through the Higher Education Development Centre at Otago University, is expanding on this by looking at the individual and environmental factors that influence teachers in their teaching.

‘I’m looking at how things like funding, institutional policies, peer networks, particular types of technologies, individuals beliefs and practice all come together to result in someone teaching a particular way. I think this is interesting from a change management perspective (so we can know what factors to tweak to get the results we want), and also for professional development. I’m using a methodology that looks at the system as a whole, and which helps identify contradictions and conflicts in the way components in the system are interacting which may be impeding achievement of teaching goals.’
2012 has been a busy year for Learning Centre staff as they continue to build their research capability and gain recognition as experts in their field.

The Learning Centre’s research activity has been firmly focused on student engagement and success, with the outcomes of this research used to inform practice.

In late 2011, Centre Manager Catherine Ross and Learning Advisor Ron Grant were fortunate to secure funding to write a report about the Centre’s student-mentoring programme. The report, entitled *Peer Mentoring: An Effective Approach to Enhancing First-year Student Engagement and Success*, was published on the Ako Aotearoa website in July 2012.
Centre staff have also been active this year presenting their research at a variety of conferences. The Learning Centre’s Ximena Riquelme, Hana Craig and Catherine Ross all had papers accepted for international conferences. Ximena and Hana co-presented their paper ‘Enhancing Student Success at a Distance Tertiary Institution – The Creation of a Sense of Belonging and Enhanced Awareness of Support Services via an Online Orientation’ at the 5th International Independent Learning Association Conference in Wellington in August 2012.

Their second paper, ‘The Design of an Online Orientation Workshop for Distance Students’, was presented at the 17th Annual International Conference of the Association of Tertiary Learning Advisors of Aotearoa/New Zealand (ATAANZ) in Hamilton in November 2012. The two papers were well received by conference participants, who were very interested in how the online environment can be used to support student learning and success. Both papers have been accepted for refereed publications in 2013.

Catherine also presented a paper at the ATLAANZ conference. The paper, ‘The Practice of Learning Advising: How Do Learning Advisers Practice?’, discussed the preliminary findings of her doctoral research. In addition, Catherine’s 2011 conference paper ‘Navigating Towards Success: Supporting Students on Academic Probation’ was published in the refereed ATLAANZ conference proceedings in October this year. Catherine also acted as a peer reviewer for the Distance Education Association of New Zealand (DEANZ) conference.

Catherine and colleagues John Bathurst and Aaron Jarden from the School of Social Sciences completed a commissioned report entitled Well-being and Academic Success for Ako Aotearoa. The report was published on the Ako Aotearoa website in December 2012.

Learning Centre staff continued their practice of contributing to internal research activities and presented two papers at the Open Polytechnic Learning Conference in August 2012. Ron and Ximena presented a paper entitled ‘Guiding and Supporting Student Success’, which discussed the impact of support programmes on student success outcomes. Catherine’s paper, ‘Engaging Students in Learning’, reported findings from a recently completed research project on student engagement.
With many successful years in the information and library field in Australia, both commercially and publicly, and a PhD from Australia’s Curtin University, the Open Polytechnic was delighted by Dr Peta Wellstead’s decision to jump shores and join its faculty staff in 2011.

Senior Lecturer in Information and Library Studies, Dr Wellstead is the first Open Polytechnic faculty member to be awarded ‘research focus’ status under the Polytechnic’s revised 2012 research categorisation scheme.

Dr Wellstead’s particular research interest is the area of information literacy.

‘Information literacy is vital for today’s society. If people are not information literate, they are hindered in their capacity to engage in community life, access services and be active citizens. Information is the currency of modern life, and it is essential for people to become lifelong learners with the necessary skills to navigate their way through the plethora of information choices that confront them,’ says Dr Wellstead.

She is predominantly interested in the social aspects of information use and how it supports community engagement and civic participation. These interests fall within the growing research area of social informatics, and have been brought into sharp relief by the increasing use of mobile technologies to share information in the realm of community activism. In recent years, the use of information in this way has seen governments fall and ordinary people launch blogs and webcasts that have changed history.

The critical premise of Dr Wellstead’s work in the area of information literacy is ‘that it is not information that is important, but what we do with that information and how it changes behaviour over time. Information literacy is a tool that allows citizens to have the information they need to make appropriate life choices when they need to.’

Mirroring her doctoral research, where she looked at the information needs of Australian men in the health arena, Dr Wellstead is in the midst of duplicating and extending that study in this country. She is doing this in collaboration with the New Zealand Mental Health Foundation, in order to help the Foundation produce and deliver information in ways that best serve New Zealand men’s health needs.

In tandem with that project, Dr Wellstead is also examining the efficacy of Accessing Information, the Open Polytechnic’s information literacy course, which has been compulsory for Bachelor of Applied Science students since 2005.

‘All educational institutions evaluate their own teaching curricula and practices on an ongoing basis,’ she says, ‘but often that evaluation does not go beyond individual staff reflection, generic end-of-course student satisfaction surveys and anecdotal feedback. I wanted to conduct a more rigorous, scientific evaluation to confirm or deny our understanding that its delivery makes a valuable contribution to the education of those students who complete it.’
‘The issue to be addressed is that of finding an effective way of storing electrical energy.’

IOAN TULEASCA

Senior Lecturer in Electrical Engineering

The leader in electrical engineering in the Open Polytechnic’s Bachelor of Engineering Technology, Dr Ioan Tuleasca has spent the last year researching groundbreaking ways to provide low-cost, environmentally friendly, magnetic energy storage.

‘Presently, there are proven means to create electricity (micro wind turbines, photovoltaic arrays) that enable isolated households to acquire energy self-sufficiency. The issue to be addressed is that of finding an effective way of storing electrical energy,’ he says.

Since 2008 Dr Tuleasca has collaborated in a joint project with Dr Johan Potgieter at Massey University’s Albany campus to build a research-testing stand to provide the refrigerating means for a cost-effective electrical energy storage system.

‘The testing stand is operated by three electrical motors, and the effects of magnetic field interaction produced by three fixed and three mobile parts are studied. Various velocities are applied in association with adequate dimensional patterns to obtain the desired effects. Cryogenic temperatures are expected to be obtained that could be easily applied to superconductive coils-based magnetic energy storage systems, keeping them at low temperatures, creating a highly efficient application,’ says Dr Tuleasca.

Final-year Massey University Bachelor of Engineering students were involved in this development, as well as Aaron Lane, Sales Manager, Magnets New Zealand Ltd, and Dr Dariusz Kacprzak, Senior Lecturer, Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, University of Auckland.

Due to associated mechanical constraints triggered by the need for higher velocities, the stand started being rebuilt in 2012 using more resilient materials (polycarbonate), as well as different technical solutions, including shaft and cylinder-associated roller bearings.

Dr Tuleasca says that they are planning to begin mechanical tests on the new testing stand before the end of 2013. ‘Once the Faraday effect-based sensor system is operational, magnetic field characteristics are to be determined and the results disseminated in specialty journals and conferences.’

In addition to refrigeration-related effects, it is believed the work will provide specific input into local resonance phenomena associated with rotational magnetic fields.

In 2012, following a different line of research, a collaborative paper describing a more efficient, lighting-related, energy-saving appraisal was approved for publication in the specialty peer-reviewed journal Intelligent Control and Automation ICA Journal (Volume 4(1)).

After concluding the joint Massey University project the focus will shift towards studying the social implications of technology, as well as systems comprising environmentally friendly generation and storage of electricity, in conjunction with academic and industry partners.
3. **CHAPTERS IN BOOKS (RO)**


4. **REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES (RO)**


5. **COMMISSIONED REPORTS FOR EXTERNAL BODIES**


**6. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FULL ACADEMIC PAPERS PUBLISHED IN PROCEEDINGS (RO)**


**7. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS ONLY PUBLISHED IN PROCEEDINGS (RO)**


8. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (NOT PUBLISHED) (CRE)


9. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE POSTER PRESENTATIONS (CRE)


10. NATIONAL CONFERENCE FULL ACADEMIC PAPERS PUBLISHED IN PROCEEDINGS (RO)


11. NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS ONLY PUBLISHED IN PROCEEDINGS (RO)


12. OTHER NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (NOT PUBLISHED) (CRE)


**13. EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANT (RO, CRE)**


**14. RESEARCH GROWTH FUND GRANT (CRE, RO)**


**15. BOOK REVIEW (CRE)**


FACULTY ACADEMIC OUTPUTS

16. EXTERNAL PRESENTATIONS OTHER (RO, CRE)


17. NON-REFEREED MAGAZINE AND JOURNAL ARTICLE (CRE)


18. OPEN POLYTECHNIC SEMINAR


Barnard, E., & Weaver, N. (2012, August). How do students use sources to complete assignments?

Barrett, J. (2012, July). It’s only rock & roll? What the Rolling Stones can teach us about copyright and tax policy.


Howland, P. (2102, February). Democratised wine, metropolitan urbanity and reflexive narratives of social distinction.


Merrett, M. (2012, October). What’s going on in Waiwhetu Stream?

Neal, T. (2012, November). ODL and the developing world – implications for the Open Polytechnic?

Peter, V.M. (2012, August). Online Learning: Does it Work?


Shaw, R. (2012, February). The Nature of Science and Science Education


19. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AWARD (PE)


20. JOURNAL EDITORSHIP (CRE, PE)


Hicks, D.R. (2012). Associate Editor: Inside Tourism.


21. EXTERNAL SCHOLARLY AND ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION (CRE, PE)


Ross, C. (2012). Reviewer, Distance Education Association of New Zealand (DEANZ) Conference, Wellington, New Zealand.


22. INTERNAL RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION (CRE)


Barrett, J. (2012). Member Open Polytechnic Ethics Committee.

Belabun, L. (2012). Member, Open Polytechnic Research Committee.

Brennan, M. Member Open Polytechnic Ethics Committee.

Clarke, P. (2012). Member, Open Polytechnic Research Committee.


Everiss, L. (2012). Member, Open Polytechnic Research Committee.

Gutchlag, K. (2012). Member Open Polytechnic Ethics Committee.

Fields, A. (2012). Committee Member, Research Special Interest Group of Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa.

Fields, A. (2012). Member, Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa Professional Registration Board.


Nichols, M. (2012). Convenor for the Distance Education Association of New Zealand (DEANZ) conference held in Wellington, 11-13 April.

Nichols, M. (2012). Executive member of DEANZ.


23. OFFICIAL ROLE (PE)


24. EXTERNAL POSTGRADUATE DEGREE EXAMINATION (CRE)


OUR VISION
A NEW ZEALAND THAT’S CONTINUALLY LEARNING TO SUCCEED.

OUR PURPOSE
TO INSPIRE SUCCESS THROUGH THE MOST FLEXIBLE, ACCESSIBLE AND MOTIVATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THE WORLD.