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### Abstract

The Open Source Learning Laboratory (OSLL) is building an innovative delivery model in Open Source Software education, training, research and development. The OSLL will be 100% online and students will be mentored while working on real Open Source Software applications under the guidance of online e-tutors. The model is designed to align with the general tenets of the Open Source Software Community.

### Introduction

Mentoring is designed to optimise the impact on productive capability through advanced practice in ICT and applied research. While new to the educational community in New Zealand, there are some parallels to Google's "Summer of Code" where organisations provide mentors to junior programmers.

This poster paper presents the current state of the pilot stage of the OSLL, the courses that are being developed, and options that we are taking for its deployment based on our available resources.

### The Model

The mentoring model is aligned to developing advanced practice, innovation and entrepreneurship based in Constructivism. The OSLL development strategy is inspired in the Open Source principles, as stated in the Open Source Initiative (2007): "Open Source is a development method for software that harnesses the power of distributed peer review and transparency of process".

### Context for the OSLL

The OSLL is an Open Polytechnic of New Zealand lead project, which has contracted Flexible Learning Network Ltd. from Wellington to design and develop it. The OSLL will start as a relatively small-scale project in order to investigate and address issues in a piloting environment. However, the model is highly scalable and because it is entirely delivered through web-based infrastructure, there are no constraints for global growth.

### Linking to Education Providers

The intent is that trainees and students will be able to incorporate courses and modules from the OSLL into their qualifications with other education providers for credentialing. The project will contribute to a network of provision through stair-casing the courses and modules across multiple institutions both within New Zealand and internationally.

### OSLL initial courses

1. Developing Courses in Moodle
2. Moodle Administration
3. Technical Documentation
4. Open Source Development Model
5. Open Source in Business
6. Programming PHP
7. Open Source Development Technologies
8. Open Source at the Desktop

### The challenges ahead

We are working on the following areas:

- Structured education versus community style learning
- Teaching – Learning Model
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Bottlenecks in human resources

### Current conclusions

The OSLL project started in November 2008. We believe that OSLL fills a need for the industry and in the education system. The OSS community has existed for decades, however, it is still in its infancy as a tool for mainstream education.

NZ has large tradition of openness to embrace new paradigms so we expect that OSLL will grow along the established education system while also providing training for organisations.

### References

Google Summer of Code (2009):

<http://code.google.com/soc/>

Open Source Initiative.

<http://www.opensource.org/>