What are Technology Demonstrators?

At the University of Southern Queensland it is imperative that we continue to explore and discover innovative ways to facilitate leading edge teaching pedagogy through technology. By committing to using and supporting the Demonstrator methodology, we are also committing to the assumption that our most creative and practical ideas about teaching and learning come from teachers and learners.

Technology Demonstrators use Agile principles – they are designed as short, sharp, 90-day projects, where we dive-deep to explore technologies that assist in learning and teaching and improve an educator’s professional practice and ultimately significantly enhance learning and teaching at USQ. These are evidence-based projects with measurable outcomes and support the Universities wider curriculum.

The goals of the project

To facilitate the delivery of a supported organisational model that re-shapes the way we experiment with technology enhanced learning and teaching innovation at USQ, and how we introduce promising technologies to the university community. The Technology Demonstrators project aligns strongly with the educational pillar of the USQ strategic plan and it is our intention that we continuously seek to explore and drive innovative, measurable evidence-based approaches to the facilitation and delivery of learning and teaching so that all our students receive quality learning experiences and graduate as pioneering connected professionals.

List of the technologies

- 3D Printing
- Aurasma
- BrainA
- ClaroRead
- Facebook
- Google Plus
- iSee
- Joomag
- Kubi
- Mobile Zoom Rig
- Paper Casts
- Peerwise
- Robotics
- Socrative
- Teaching Spaces
- vFairs
- Virtual Dissection
- VoiceThread
- Zoom


- Delivered 26 Technology Demonstrator Projects
- Evaluated over 60 technologies
- Developed an innovation process and demonstrated the value of an agile approach
- Built capacity and confidence of staff to use new technologies
- Media interest from over 60 national and international journals, TV channels and radio nationally and internationally
- Presented at conferences internationally and nationally
- A popular staff development topic (StaffEd, Learning and Teaching Celebration events)
What our academics and professionals say?

"Our most creative and practical ideas about learning and teaching come from our learners and teachers."

Professor Ken Udas
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Services) and Chief Information Officer

"Our technology demonstrator “Google Plus Communities” was a bit of a gamble and didn’t fully pan out, but the whole idea behind technology demonstrators is to engage, explore, and experiment. There are no failures and we gained valuable learning from the experience."

Dr Marcus Harmes
Associate Director (Academic Development)
Open Access College Administration

Highlights of the innovative technologies we explored

**Google+**: is a “learning is social” approach that was used in a paramedicine course to create a modern, connected and collaborative ‘classroom’.

**Kubi**: the telepresence “robot”, helped enhance remote learners’ educational experience through a high-level of connectivity and engagement.

**3D printing**: was used to improve engagement with online students by providing tangible models and artefacts.

**Socratic**: encouraged the use of technology in the classroom as students answered quiz questions on their devices during lectures.

**ClaroRead**: allowed students to listen to complex texts. This is useful to many students where English is their second language.

**vFAIRS**: was used to provide USQ students an opportunity to engage with prospective employers in a virtual environment. Held entirely online, students did not need to travel to on-campus event, and could engage with employers from across the globe.

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Why the Agile approach?

Activating the Agile Approach to Technology Demonstrators at USQ has been embraced by our teaching staff – we are moving toward a ‘growth mindset’ rather than a ‘fixed mindset’ in technology use and learning how innovative technologies can facilitate learning and teaching. Using this approach means that there is no failure – we simply accept what we learn.

The Agile Approach works for technology demonstrators as it enables a quick response to the ever changing landscape of technologies in higher education, and the focus of over-thinking projects is removed. These projects are highly collaborative and iterative which is a central feature of agile development.

At USQ, we believe that it is imperative to explore innovative ways to facilitate leading edge teaching pedagogy through technology and look at how we can introduce promising technologies in a real-world regional university context.

Three Criteria

There are three criteria to become involved in a Technology Demonstrator: you must be able to express the purpose in terms of what you are trying to demonstrate

- no longer than 90 days, or a traditional academic semester
- low risk, low cost, low barrier