**Paper Title:** Using Portable Moodle and eReaders to Enhance Learning at a Distance for Incarcerated Offenders

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**Abstract:** Incarcerated offenders face a number of additional challenges to those faced by most other students studying at a distance. Lack of internet access is especially problematic for those studying in a sector that is increasingly characterised by online course offerings.

This paper will outline a proposed project at South Queensland Correctional Centre as a first step in addressing this challenge. The focus will be on those incarcerated offenders studying within the Tertiary Preparation Program at the University of Southern Queensland. Though the course is offered online, blocks of printed material and CD ROMs are distributed to the incarcerated students. Even so, their experiences are not comparable to those accessing the course online through USQ’s instance of Moodle. Consequently, students who are incarcerated offenders are not achieving all of the graduate attributes set out in the course profile.

In order to redress these issues, it is proposed that a portable version of the course Moodle site be loaded directly onto a local server within the correctional centre. Students will access this rather than the version located on the university servers located in Toowoomba. This will be supplemented by eReaders – without internet connectivity - which will hold relevant library resources, removing the need for
Education and Learning Support Officers to download resources and extending learning beyond the lab time.

It is expected this will result in numerous benefits, among them: students will be participating in learning experiences more closely related to those experienced by students outside of the prison system; they will be learning relevant IT skills; USQ will be fulfilling its obligation in relation to equity of access; and will be addressing the Federal Government’s agenda of increasing participation by socially and economically disadvantaged groups in higher education.

**Presentation Setting:** Classroom style though audience members are welcome to ask questions or make comments at any time.

**Audio-visual requirements:** Computer with data projector