

**Technologies Transforming Academics:  
Academic identity and online teaching**

Submitted by

Kim McShane  
BA (DipEd), BEd (TESOL), MA

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Faculty of Education  
The University of Technology, Sydney  
PO Box 123, Broadway  
Sydney NSW 2007

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*CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP*

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Kim McShane

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## Abstract

As the discourses of the “technological imperative” and student-centred learning have gained momentum in university teaching and learning, one way for the lecturer to signal excellence has been to adopt the flexible, student-centred practices of online teaching. This thesis investigates academics’ insights and experiences about their changing teacher identities in the context of being, or becoming, a facilitator of online student learning. This was an empirical research project, a collective case study that explored the teaching experiences of twelve university lecturers in two Australian universities who taught online, or were making the move online. Primary research data were drawn from semi-structured conversations with the lecturers, online teaching artefacts and email communications. The interpretative analysis was organised according to three overlapping lecturer identities: the teaching metaphors of performance, care and creative direction. From the perspective of each metaphor position, the move to becoming a facilitator of blended learning was uneasy. The performer/carer/director lecturer struggled to entertain, care and intervene in familiar ways in asynchronous, computer-mediated communication. Online, the performing/caring/directing lecturer was ignored by students, and became instead a helpless and highly reflexive bystander to students’ learning. The findings suggest that the teaching values and practices of the performing/caring/directing lecturer, in particular lecturer-student responsiveness and reciprocity, do not adapt to online pedagogies. Indeed, blended learning establishes the conditions for a new moral order in university education, with the move to online facilitation best understood as a move to management-centred regulation of teaching and student learning. And so, overlooked in higher education policy and research, and ignored by her students online, the performing/caring/directing lecturer is under erasure, at the same time as the work of the facilitator is being archived.