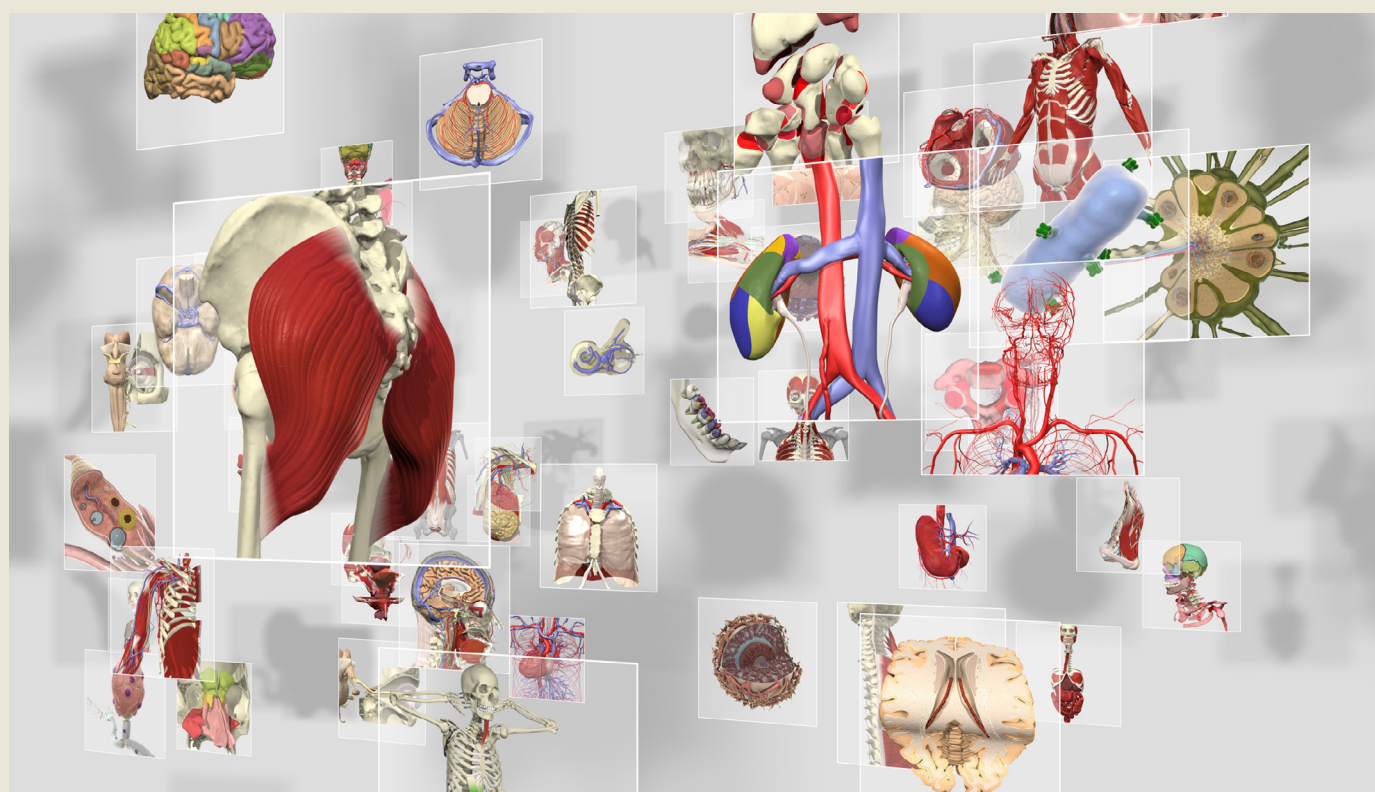


How The Open University pushes the boundaries of accessibility using Anatomy.tv



Strong relationships with the Primal team help maximize student potential

Beverley Delaney is an eContent Advisor and Library Co-Accessibility Operational Lead at the Open University. The Open University is a large distance learning provider and was one of the first institutional subscribers to Anatomy.tv in the UK. The OU therefore has a well-established relationship and a lot of experience with the Primal team.



Cara Darroch & Beverley Delaney

“The library’s Content & Licensing team are the main contact for our suppliers, and we really believe in building those relationships,” says Delaney. “Being part of the team that purchases content for use in modules and the wider library, we understand that students trust the university to offer the best resources for their studies.”

Serving Special Needs

In 2011 the Open University encountered increased demand for access to offline study material for their students. The Open University’s student population has a large number of students with disabilities who have specific access needs and other requirements. The OU also provides degree courses to students in secure environments such as prisons. After initially working closely with the Primal team to produce and deliver offline accessible content on CD-ROMs and ensure ongoing availability of content, the university was able to meet the needs of its diverse student population.

Being one of the first subscribers to Primal in the UK, the Open University was ahead of the curve when it came to sourcing high-quality, 3D anatomical graphics. First used as part of the Sports Science curriculum, Primal’s content proved popular with academics and received plenty of positive feedback, resulting in its introduction into Nursing and Biology degree programs.

Always searching for new products that integrate technology into learning, Delaney says the team chose Primal for its excellent features including 3D visuals, embeddable links and wealth of available material.

Partnership to Product Enhancement

Delaney highlights Primal’s willingness to work with the Open University on product enhancements that suit them both. “If you have an idea of what we [The Open University] need, then that’s probably going to improve the market for everyone,” she says. This has been particularly true since the pandemic. The Open University’s mission is “to be open to people, places, methods and ideas” – which means that they have always been proud to provide access and equity for everyone. Now, more than ever, institutions are following their lead and looking at resources like Primal to allow students the flexibility to study anywhere.

In her time working with Primal, Delaney praises their responsiveness, problem solving and forward-thinking attitude. The Open University library regularly undertakes accessibility testing of products it purchases and provides feedback to suppliers to help technical teams develop more accessible platforms and content for all users. When explaining the accessibility needs of OU students and staff, Delaney was pleased with Primal’s interest and commitment to improvement. Primal’s clear, proactive roadmap for development to meet the access needs of their diverse student population has exemplified the long-term relationship and the care that goes into building and maintaining it.

With an enrolment of approximately 72,000 full-time equivalent students (of which 20% have a declared disability), flexibility of access is paramount to The Open University. For this reason, Anatomy.tv’s resources are an invaluable asset – both online and offline.

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