

SCORE Fellowship Final Report By Melissa Highton, University of Oxford

Authorship and use of OER as academic practice for research

Melissa's project ran from 20th September 2010 until the 18th September 2011, the aim of the project was to examine policy and practice for OER creation in the context of research led institutions: <http://www8.open.ac.uk/score/fellows/melissa-highton>

Activities

September

Mapping aspects of OER practice against the existing curriculum of University of Leeds PGCAP- Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice, which includes a module on research practice and one on using learning technology.

Mapping aspects of OER practice against the existing University of Oxford 'framework for academic practice' which has a heavy face-to-face -teaching in small-groups emphasis and very little content about online tools or 'creation of learning materials'.

The outcome of this exercise was a series of very useful meetings with Leeds University staff development staff and senior managers. Early planning for a RunCoCo event to promote OER in Leeds. At Oxford it became clear that the correct place to support 'Open content literacy' for staff was to embed it in the information literacy, IT, and learning technology courses offered by Oxford University Computing Services and Bodleian Library User Services Team.

Dissemination: Meeting with SCORE staff at start of project.

October

Productive meetings in Leeds with: Course leader of PG CAP, Principal Staff Developer – research training and skills; Senior staff developer responsible for VLE training, Pro-Dean of Learning and Teaching, Director of Learning and Teaching, Faculty Team Librarians, Project Officer, JISC Building Capacity Project, Head of User Services, ISS, IT manager, ISS, Service Group Leader, ISS, to discuss the staff development programme, blended learning strategy, VLE strategy, and IT infrastructure/workflows for mobile/podcasting/OER. Oxford JISC projects: Steeple, Erewhon (Mobile Oxford), and OER projects - RunCoCo and OpenSpires.

Staff development/building capacity workshop at Oxford University with Oxford Brookes and Harper Adams College to trial staff development activities on promoting Creative Commons and revisiting business models.

Reviewing Leeds' new Blended Learning Strategy Consultation and writing a paper introducing OER. Reviewing Oxford's IT training provision to identify where OER issues can be embedded.

Planning for Open Ed Conference in Barcelona.

Dissemination: Introduction to OER for University of Leeds' Blended Learning Futures Group.

[What are Open Educational Resources?](#)

November

Meeting with academic colleagues to discuss sustainability/ sustainable education. (The Four Es model; environment, economy, equity, emotion)

RunCoCo (open community collections) event in Leeds to promote the [crowdsourcing of OER community collections](#). The approach revisits business models, has the potential to generate huge volumes of OE content as well as cost-effective digitised research resources.

I gave a virtual presentation to a conference in Malaysia via Skype. Speaking about the [benefits to Oxford of choosing an Open Source VLE](#) and highlighting open content and open software tools as areas in which Oxford invests to stay ahead.

Dissemination: Conference presentation: Open Ed Barcelona [OpenSpires: Opening up Oxford like never before](#) Blog post [‘rooftops’](#)

December

Inspired by the Cape Town Open Education Declaration: Unlocking the promise of open educational resources.

It also draws upon open technologies that facilitate collaborative, flexible learning and the open sharing of teaching practices that empower educators to benefit from the best ideas of their colleagues. It may also grow to include new approaches to assessment, accreditation and collaborative learning.

Understanding and embracing innovations like these is critical to the long term vision of this movement.

I hosted a [UK Sakai event at Oxford to promote open educational resource tool: Sakai Open Academic Environment](#) developed in practice by two research-intensive universities: Oxford and Cambridge. Sakai is an OER with an established sustainable model for using and contributing code.

To promote re-use on campus the Oxford Sakai team developed a [‘podcast picker’](#) tool for Sakai enabling academic colleagues to embed podcasts from Oxford collections in their teaching areas of the VLE. This tool is offered back to the Sakai community.

OER ebook of ‘A Christmas Carol’ sent to colleagues across the University to promote the re-formatting principles of OER.

Dissemination: Blog post [‘Christ Kindle?’](#)

January

Writing OER advice to include in the Oxford University’s guide to [Using IT for Impact](#) and a OpenSpires case study in the University report ‘Oxford Impacts’

Progress in Leeds: ‘We are almost there with permission to use iTunesU and no longer have any formal objections to OERs. Some progress!’

Dissemination: Interim Formative Evaluation Report; Case study of impact [‘Tuning into Oxford’](#);

Blog posts [‘announcing our engagement’](#); [‘Opening doors’](#); [‘circle your wagons’](#); [‘What’s the Score?’](#);

Staff development Presentation to senior managers [‘What is your OER doing for you?’](#)

February

Visiting Leeds for the second time to deliver a staff development workshop for learning technologists and interested academic staff. "Share and share alike: using Creative Commons for teaching materials."

In this session you will have a chance to learn and discuss how and why some academic colleagues are choosing to release teaching materials under creative commons licenses, inside and outside VLES. How can we best support staff to make informed choices in the use and dissemination of their materials? The session will include an overview of international Open Courseware initiatives and OER (open educational resources) projects in HE, and make direct links with plans for blended learning, information literacy and research led teaching. Melissa will draw on specific examples from Oxford, Leeds and more broadly from other JISC funded OER projects. "

A paper went to Leeds University Research Board about iTunesU, which cited 'The Oxford experience' and Leeds won JISC funding for 'Faculty Podcasts' project. We discussed a possible SCORE Fellowship for a colleague at Leeds to continue to embed and champion the OER policy and practice work. They plan to embed a session in their PGcert LTHE specifically about using OER.

Dissemination: [Share and Share alike: Using Creative Commons materials in teaching](#)

Blog posts [What's mine is yours](#), [copyright and elearning](#), [Unlocking the Gates](#), [open politics](#) [what's wrong with open?](#),

March

Preparing presentations for two SCORE events '[Institutional Strategies for OER](#)' and '[OER: Does it make a difference](#)'.

Launching yet another Oxford University collection of [crowdsourced OER – Woruldhord](#).

Staff development event at Oxford 'Engaging staff in OER: persuasion, support and reward.' Discussing a number of initiatives which help set the groundwork for opening up, for example the student experience strategy which includes embedding graduate attributes and mapping them on to undergraduate courses, the need to surface and share resources, and the move to an open source VLE.'

Organising my team to meet with SCORE Fellow Terese Bird to assist in her research.

The [OpenSpires team](#) release 'open content literacy' topic staff development animated presentations to be included in Oxford University training sessions.

I invited a guest speaker, [Tim Unwin](#) to discuss issues of sustainable development with my team and my students.

Dissemination: Presentation for SCORE '[Opening up Oxford](#)'; 'open content literacy' topics- animated presentations; [Copyright](#); [Marketing and Communications for OER](#) ; [Why make it open?](#); [Creative Commons Overview](#); Blog posts '[Rhetoric or reality](#)'; [Looking for OER- Your journey's end](#)'; [Looking for OER- dig deep](#); [Does OER shape pedagogy? 'Aim for success not perfection'](#) '[For sustainability build on solid ground](#)'; '[Don't call it OER, call it creative commons](#)'; '[Don't underestimate the power of PowerPoint](#)'

April

In April Leeds University ran their PGcert LTHE session on OER and I prepared a presentation from Oxford to feeding into Apple UEF (Universities Executive Forum) meeting in Cupertino, CA. The UEF has long served as an advisory group of CIOs for Apple in higher education. The meeting had two tracks: open educational resources (OER) track building upon the scholarly publishing discussion, and a health sciences track focused on mobility (iOS devices) and related issues.

Organizing my team to meet with OLnet Project research student Kasia Kozinska to assist in her research.

May

I hosted the annual [Oxford 'Beyond 2011' conference](#). Debate and discussion about academic crowdsourcing and community content in the UK and beyond.

I attended a discussion looking back at the impact of the 'Edgeless University' report which urged Universities to tackle the "*technical, legal and price barriers*" which often deny access to higher education. These are aspects we have tackled recently as part of our growing range of OER initiatives at Oxford.

I presented my ideas about sustainable OER and the model of Four Es: environment, economy, equity, emotion at two events, one with visitors from apple and one in the context of Fair-trade week. At the same event three academic colleagues to captured their thoughts on how the production and dissemination of their research via podcasts aligned with their academic practice in writing and publication. Their experiences serve as case studies from Oxford.

Our project 'Listening for Impact' reported and I presented at [Digital Impacts: How to Measure and Understand the Usage and Impact of Digital Content](#)

Dissemination: Interim Formative Evaluation Report; Presentations [‘How does your garden grow?’](#), and ‘Sustainable practice at Oxford’. [[mp3](#)]; Blog posts [‘going global’](#), [Universities with walls and hedges](#), [Sustainable resources’](#) [‘four Es of sustainability’](#), [‘what’s the use of books without pictures or conversations?’](#) [‘peaks spikes and pads’](#)

June

As host of the university [OxTALENT awards](#) for innovative use of technology to support learning and teaching I awarded prizes in the academic and student podcasting categories to OER content.

At the invitation of SCORE Fellow Therese Bird I spoke at an assembled audience at Leicester University about Oxford’s experience of podcasting , OER and iTunesU.

Dissemination: Blog posts [‘just what I always wanted’](#) [‘student podcasting’](#), [‘academic podcasting’](#)

July

Our ‘Listening for Impact’, ‘Ripple’, ‘Triton’ and ‘OER Impact’ projects complied their final reports and the outputs of each of these make valuable staff development materials and learning activities for effective practice in creating and using OER in research-led teaching environments.

I have had early discussions with Oxford University Press about including their content in iTunesU.

Dissemination: Attendance and OpenSpines flyers at HEA conf; Blog post [‘transformation, it’s all about the sharing’](#).

August

The IT training programme at Oxford now features several sessions designed to promote creation of OER with titles like ‘Make: Open’ ‘Educational podcasting’ and ‘Finding and using images in your teaching’. We also run training in all our favorite open source packages and tools.

Dissemination: Poster for SCORE, Final report

Further Plans

I will deliver a symposium at ALT-C in Leeds in September where I expect there will be a lot of OER presentations. I’ll be presenting with Dave White (Oxford) and John Norman (Cambridge) and other

members of the Sakai community. I will work with colleagues at Leeds in the run up to this event to build more interest locally.

I will also speak at Kingston University about a strategy for embedding and developing OERs and plan to visit Leeds again in the Spring to deliver a session in their 'Talking about Teaching' series and to follow up on last years' session.

We will of course, hope to get another OER project in the new round of JISC funding. I will also continue to support Joanna Wild during her new SCORE fellowship.

Outputs

Staff development materials:

Introduction to OER for University of Leeds. [What are Open Educational Resources?](#)

Presentation [Share and Share alike: Using Creative Commons materials in teaching](#)

'Open content literacy' topics- animated presentations [Copyright](#) , [Marketing and Communications for OER](#) ,[Why make it open?](#) ,[Creative Commons Overview](#)

Case study of impact ['Tuning into Oxford'](#)

Presentation to senior managers ['What is your OER doing for you?'](#)

Findings

The main areas of work of the project are listed in the poster shown above: Revisiting business models; meeting expectations; protecting the brand; joined up thinking; sharing experiences with other institutions; models of re-use; sustainable storage, institutional support; discovering collections; promoting creative commons; open content literacy, adding value, reward and recognition, institutional support, exploring outreach and impact, case studies and student engagement.

There also emerged an increased focus on 'sustainability' and with that in mind I investigated the aspects by which something could be considered to be sustainable, drawing upon literature from sustainable development and developing a 'four Es' framework of economic, environmental, equitable and emotional factors against which to evaluate. I chose to focus particularly on the emotional aspects of academic 'buy-in' in relation to academic ethos at University of Oxford and I continued to promote the open source learning tools which I consider to be OER (if not content).

My outputs have been interim reports, staff development materials, conference presentations, and regular blog postings. During the course of my fellowship the Oxford OER collections have continued to

grow. I have supported successful SCORE Fellowship applications from colleagues at Leeds and Oxford. Our staff development activities have continued at Oxford with more sessions on skills for podcasting, understanding copyright and using podcasts for teaching in the VLE. We are also producing case studies to support OER release which will be shared with Leeds. We continue to develop ideas about measuring impact and sustainability.

Reflection

This project gave me time to promote and engage with 'joined up thinking' about OER across the board beyond that which I might have normally managed to do. In a rapidly changing landscape filled with many OER projects the aims of this SCORE project shifted slightly and in some places began to run in parallel with initiatives shaping the sector. It emerged that there were many other projects looking at links with the HEA PSF and so, after an initial mapping I did not pursue that line of research much further. It became clear that impact at institutional level could be better achieved by sharing of experience and lessons learned and embedding OER skills in learning technology support.

My work with Leeds University was joined by opportunities to work more closely with nearby neighbours Oxford Brookes University and Harper Adams College promoting institution-wide uptake of OER and to present at Leicester and Kingston universities as well as SCORE events. There may have been some initial suspicion from other institutions as to what Oxford 'was getting out of' the sharing we were doing in terms of institutional development and this caused me to reflect on Oxford's leadership role in the HE community.

SCORE funds were used to cover 60 days work between 20 September 2010 and 19 September 2011. In addition the expenses incurred by two visits to Leeds reimbursed. I attended the Open University on a regular basis. The networking opportunities offered by the fellowship have been very useful. I have enjoyed meeting with other managers, such as those from Nottingham to discuss institutional approaches and have discussed future projects with several other fellows.

Dissemination

Conference presentations:

Conference presentation: Open Ed Barcelona [OpenSpire: Opening up Oxford like never before](#)

Presentation for SCORE event '[Opening up Oxford](#)'

Presentations '[How does your garden grow?](#)', and '[Sustainable practice at Oxford](#)'.

Blog posts:

[‘rooftops’](#), [Christ Kindle? ‘announcing our engagement’](#), [‘Opening doors’ ‘circle your wagons’ ‘What’s the Score? What’s mine is yours](#), [‘copyright and elearning’](#), [‘Unlocking the Gates](#), [‘open politics’ ‘what’s wrong with open?’](#), [‘Rhetoric or reality’](#), [Looking for OER- Your journey’s end’](#), [Looking for OER- dig deep](#), [Does OER shape pedagogy? ‘Aim for success not perfection’](#) [‘For sustainability build on solid ground’](#), [‘Don’t call it OER, call it Creative Commons’](#) [‘Don’t underestimate the power of PowerPoint’](#) [‘going global’](#), [Universities with walls and hedges](#), [Sustainable resources’](#) [‘four Es of sustainability’](#), [‘what’s the use of books without pictures or conversations?’](#) [‘peaks spikes and pads’](#) [‘just what I always wanted’](#) [‘student podcasting](#), [‘academic podcasting’](#), [‘transformation, it’s all about the sharing’](#) [‘consider authority’](#) [‘my year as a SCORE fellow’](#)

Conclusions

As a professional learning technologist I have always seen OER projects as learning technology initiatives. The skills are the same and the drivers very similar. The key to learning technology success has always been in matching the technology to the task and the activity to the institution. At University of Oxford in linking our learning technology (podcasting) to activity widespread in the institution (inspirational lecturing and dissemination of research) we found a rich stream of content. By linking our OER projects to that same activity we ensured that creating Creative Commons licensed materials is an easily achievable academic practice. By focusing on ‘born digital’ materials we avoided, for the most part, the challenges that third party materials caused in other institutions. By aligning our support to ideals of outreach, public understanding, impact and giving we attracted colleagues whose own academic ethos and identity fit with the values of OER. By training students and staff in the skills they use for OER production we develop capacity for all our learning technology initiatives and each of those initiatives, in turn, produces more OER. There are many institutions in the sector whose content and teaching is research led. I hope lessons learned at Oxford can be of use more widely.

Summary

In institutions where teaching is research-led academic colleagues are regularly engaged in processes of knowledge creation. This new knowledge quickly becomes the content of their teaching. This project took as a starting point the outputs of focus groups conducted at University of Oxford during the OpenSpines project, in which academic colleagues explored their concerns, motivation and learning needs with regard to the creation and re-use of OER. The final report of the OpenSpines project highlighted as an area for further research, the support for ‘open content literacy skills’ amongst academic staff. Linking regular and continuing creation of OER to academic practice can be key to the sustainability of OER initiatives. At University of Oxford in linking our learning technology (podcasting) to activity widespread in

the institution (inspirational lecturing and dissemination of research) we found a rich stream of content. By embedding our OER projects as part of that same activity we ensured that creating Creative Commons licensed materials is now an easily achievable academic practice. By focusing on born digital materials we avoided, for the most part, the challenges that third party materials caused in other institutions. By aligning our support to ideals of outreach, public understanding, impact and giving we attracted colleagues whose own academic ethos and identity fit with the values of OER. By training students and staff in the skills they use for OER production we develop capacity for all our learning technology initiatives and each of those initiatives, in turn, produces more OER. By sharing our experiences with similar institutions we hope that the volume of materials appropriate for reuse in our teaching will increase.

This project explored the relationship between OER and the research-teaching nexus by looking closely at how academic staff at research universities are supported in their 'academic practice' looking at the synergies between OER, publishing and Open Source Software where OER provides another dissemination mechanism for research, impact and public engagement. The main areas of work of the project were: Revisiting business models; meeting expectations; protecting the brand; joined up thinking; sharing experiences with other institutions; models of re-use; sustainable storage, institutional support; discovering collections; promoting creative commons; open content literacy, adding value, reward and recognition, institutional support, exploring outreach and impact, case studies and student engagement.

As part of policy and practice across the institution there emerged an increasing focus on sustainability and impact. Drawing upon literature from sustainable development disciplines the project tested an early 'four Es' framework of economic, environmental, equitable and emotional factors against which to evaluate. There are many institutions in the sector whose content and teaching is research led. It is hoped that lessons learned at Oxford can be of use more widely.