Embedding OER Practice

Publishing your Open Educational Resources: a guide for University of Lincoln Staff

An Open Educational Resource is any educational resource that is licensed for other people to use without any formal permission or fee. The usual mechanism for doing this is through a Creative Commons license (http://creativecommons.org). There is little point in licensing resources in this way, if they are not then made available to others, and this leaflet suggests ways you can publish your OERs.

An educational resource can be anything from a simple reading list, to a fully-fledged multimedia documentary. The **only** thing that makes it open is the license. In the vast majority of cases resources will be made available in an electronic format, and the question for most users, once they have chosen their license is where to publish it.

The simplest place is usually an open web site. For Lincoln staff the solution to resource publication, especially if it is a simple single file, or set of files, is the Lincoln web publishing service. (http://blogs.lincoln.ac.uk). Material on this service is prioritised by search engines, and thus is likely to appear high in search results.

The alternative is to store material in a repository. The university does have a research repository, but it is more appropriate to store material in a national repository dedicated to teaching material, since the point of making a resource open is to share it as widely as possible. You're also more likely to find material that others have done in similar subject areas. There is a national repository which you can use, known as JORUM (http://www.jorum.ac.uk). Using JORUM also has the slight advantage that choosing your license is built into the upload process, so you can't forget to do it. (Remember, if there's no license, it's not an OER!)

Publishing your material on WordPress

WordPress is a powerful web site authoring tool. If you haven't used WordPress before, you need to set up a site. Fortunately this is very easy to do. Go to http://blogs.lincoln.ac.uk and enter your usual university username and password. If you don't already have a WordPress site, or for that matter, if you do, but want one just for your OERs then click "Create a site". Note that there is no need to create a special site for your OERs. You can publish them to any of your sites and they'll be found just as easily.

Let's assume you don't have a site, and that you've just clicked "Create a site". You'll have to give your site a

web address (e.g. *whatever.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk*) a title, (which can be anything you want) and choose to make the site available to search engines. (You don't have to do this, but if you don't then the search engines won't find your resources!) There's lots of information about how to manage your sites on WordPress itself (http://lncn.eu/az79).

To post your resources log into your site and decide whether you want them in a blog post or on a page. It doesn't really make much difference to the search engines, but it will affect the way your site is displayed. Blog posts appear in reverse chronological order, (latest first) and pages will appear in whatever way you arrange them. Remember though that most of your external visitors will arrive via search engines, and will go directly to the resource, not being interested in all the other material you've posted so decisions about how you structure your site should be driven primarily by whoever you're writing it for. (e.g. if you're providing a resource for your students, you should take their needs into consideration)

Once you've decided on how you want to use your site, log in, and either create a new post/page or edit one that you've previously created.

In most cases you'll want to attach a file.

To do so click the "upload/insert" button, which will ask you to locate the file on your computer and upload it to WordPress. Doing this will, among other things, create a direct URL, (web address) which you can then copy and paste into your blog. If you then use the URL to hyperlink the title of your resource, you can then add a description for your users.

You will also need to add a Creative Commons license. (see below) The easiest way to do this is to visit http://creativecommons.org and choose your license using the online form. Copy the code from the "have your own web site" box and then, on your site click the HTML view of the site editing window.

Paste the code into that window , click the "update" button, and the appropriate license graphic will be displayed next to your OER.

Publishing your material on Jorum

Web sites can be deleted by their owners, and while there is no current plan to delete WordPress sites after people leave the university, there will come a point when they have to be audited. (Also if you leave, you won't be able to edit your site unless you set yourself up as a new user before you go.) You may also want to post your materials elsewhere as a back up, especially if you have multiple authors on your site.

The place to do this is JORUM, (http://www.jorum.ac.uk) the UK's national repository of teaching and learning materials. While there is no requirement to publish an OER in

Jorum, it does provide a back up for your resources and is something of a permanent home which you'll be able to access from wherever you're working in HE.

Jorum is accessible through the Athens service, so you don't need to create an account.


Simply enter http://www.jorum.ac.uk into your browser and click the "Share Resources" link under the red Share button. Then click the UK HE and FE link. Type University of Lincoln into the search box and click "Sign in". This will take you to the Athens log in page which will authenticate you as a legitimate user.

Once you've got past Athens you'll see a page that asks you to browse by subject. Click the 'Higher Education' link and navigate to whatever is closest to your topic.

Choose your subject by clicking on it. Then click the link that says "Deposit a new item to this subject"
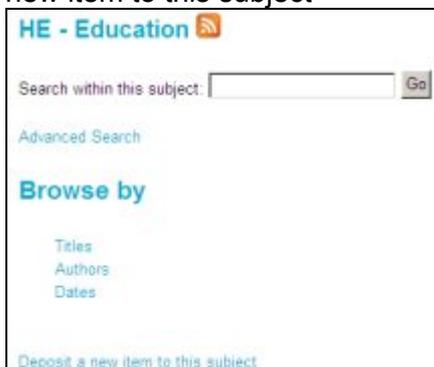
This will take you into the repository. Choose whether you're uploading a

file or a web link. Assuming you're uploading a file, you will be asked to navigate to and upload your file. You can do this with as many files as you like. If you're linking to a web site, then you just paste the URL (web address) in to the box.

Next you'll be asked to describe your file (or resource). First you'll be asked to give a title. This is important since it will be the only description of the resource that can be seen by the user in the search results (along with the author's name). So you must give a unique and descriptive context to the resource. Also if the item belongs to a series of items, it is good practice to keep at least the beginning of the name the same so that a 'sort' on the title field will bring up the whole series.

Next you'll be asked to give a description which should be concise, objective and keyword-intensive, providing the user with a good understanding of what the resource contains. You should enter any relevant and useful words that describes the resource in the keyword box. You must enter keywords into the box one at a time. (That is enter your word and press the add button after each one). Keywords can be single words or very short phrases such as 'open educational resources'.

Finally in this section, there is the 'Author' field. This should be used to record both the creator and the owner (which will usually be the university) of the resource. In law, items created in the course of employment are usually the copyright of the employer. However the University of Lincoln does not, under normal circumstances,

prevent staff or students licensing their material for open use. Each author should be entered individually by surname first, with the title and first name (where known) put afterwards. Enter the primary author first, then any co-authors. The university should be added as an additional author after the primary authors:

e.g.,	<author>	Beckton, Dr. Julian
	<author>	University of Lincoln

Creative Commons Licenses

Licensing your work does not affect your rights. You still retain the copyright in anything you do. You're just giving people permission to use it under certain conditions. You can choose any of the six creative commons licenses but we do recommend that you include the share-alike option, as, if anyone does use your work to develop a resource, you will be able to take advantage of their work in turn.

Attribution CC BY
This license lets others reuse and repurpose your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation.

Attribution-NonCommercial CC BY-NC
This license lets others reuse or repurpose your work non-commercially. They must credit you with the original work but need not use the same license.

Attribution-ShareAlike CC BY-SA
This license lets others reuse and repurpose your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation and you relicense any of your repurposed work under the same terms.

Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike CC BY-NC-SA
This license lets others reuse and repurpose your work non-commercially, as long as they credit you and license the new content under identical terms.

Attribution-NoDerivs CC BY-ND
This license allows for redistribution, commercial and non-commercial, as long as it is unchanged and you are given credit for the original creation.

Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs CC BY-NC-ND
This license only allows others to download your works and share them as long as they credit you, but they can't change or use them commercially