



Practising Open Education – Developing the Potential of Open Educational Resources in Art, Design and Media

FINAL REPORT

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1 Acknowledgements

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2 Project Summary

The *Practising Open Education* Project, is part of the 'cascade' strand of the Phase 2 JISC / Academy Open Educational Resources programme. As such it aimed to 'cascade' learning from the *Art Design Media - Open Educational Resources (ADM-OER)* Project undertaken by the ADM-HEA Subject Centre during 2009-10.

The project brought the experiences and outcomes to a range of art, design and media contexts, enabling six institutional project partners to reflect upon their OER ambitions and aspirations in order to develop strategies which would help them put these into practice. With the understanding that 'creative' subjects including art, design and media present challenges, as well as opportunities, to the creation and use of OERs, the aim has been to support six departments in expanding their engagement with OERs, and ultimately develop enhanced understandings of open educational practice that will have value to the wider subject network and higher education communities.

The project engaged directly with departmental management, teaching and support staff and, where possible, students through a series of focus groups, to investigate understandings of open educational practice within the participating institutions. This enabled the project to assess and address motivations for, and barriers to, their creation and use of OERs. The focus groups and subsequent reports also provided the opportunity for the project management to share their experiences, and outcomes from the pilot project, provide information about the range of support available through UK OER programme and highlight the potential benefits of OERs with regard to: institutional and staff profiles; enhancing the student experience and raising pedagogic standards.

The focus group reports aimed to assist project partners in developing a departmental Action Plan which addressed barriers and capitalised on existing motivations for OER production and use. It was



intended that the ‘actions’ would constitute appropriate strategies to embed effective OER practices and policies beyond the project’s funded period. Through this process the project also sought to identify materials that could be made available as openly accessible educational resources.

The project team recorded all these processes in order to report on departmental and disciplinary understandings of OERs and evaluate the project with regard to the effectiveness of the ‘cascade’ strategies and their impact on the partners in terms of the development of sustainable OER policies and practices.

3 Project Report

3.1 Project Outputs and Outcomes

Output / Outcome Type	Brief Description and URLs (where applicable)
Project webpage hosted by ADM-HEA	The website provides: project background information; key programme support and project updates; partner institution information and links; a series of downloadable templates, reports; documents; presentations; and regular newsletters. Available at: http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx
Project Blog	The Wordpress blog has the project partners, steering group members and the project team as identified authors and contributors. The blog provides regular project updates, details of key milestones, programme support and information on related OER initiatives, funding opportunities, events, publications and software. Available at: http://admopened.wordpress.com/
Project Newsletter	The monthly project newsletter was aimed at project partners. It aimed to keep project partners informed of the project’s process and progress and provide supplementary information in a digest format. The newsletters were subsequently made available to the subject community as downloadable PDFs: http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx
Project JISC List	The project mailing list was set up to support group communication between the project partners, project management and steering group: ADM-OER@jiscmail.ac.uk
Final Project Plan	The final project plan is posted on the project website: http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx
Focus Group Reports	Reports compiled by the ADM-HEA project team were designed to assist in the creation of departmental Action Plans. The reports are available to be shared amongst the partners and the wider community through the project website: http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx The reports’ key findings are synthesised in the final project report (see 3.3).
Action Plans	The Action Plans were completed by the project partners in response to the Focus Group reports with support from the



	project team. The final Action Plans are included as appendices with this report and have been made available to share with the subject community through the project website.
Action Plan Feedback	The project team at ADM-HEA gave systematic and structured feedback to each of the partners at the drafting stage to support development of their Action Plans. The Action Plan Feedback template is available on the project webpage and in the appendices.
Project Documents and Reporting Templates	The Focus Group Guidelines, Focus Group questioning route, Project Partners' Reporting Template are available on the project website: http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx and in the appendices.
Project Partners' Evaluation Report	The document collates the responses of the six project partners in relation to a series of reflective questions aimed at assessing and evaluating: the effectiveness of the project processes; key successes, challenges and lessons from the project; and strategies to disseminate, evaluate, sustain project outcomes beyond the period of the project. The document is available through the website and as an appendix to this final report. The partners' responses have also been used to inform this Final Report.
Additional Support Documents	A range of supporting documents including: IP & Copyright Guidance; OER Creation Flowchart; OER Release Form; OER Depositor Agreement; Seeking permission from publishers letter; Website Take-Down Policy and a series of reports from the ADM-OER pilot project are available through the Pilot Project Website http://tinyurl.com/6fp9q5e
OER Materials	Materials and all project outputs identified by the participating departments are included in the departmental Action Plans (see appendix 7.3). The identification of OERs and uploading to institutional repositories and Jorum Open will continue beyond the project period.
Conference Presentation	Stephen Mallinder and Debbie Flint presented early findings from the project at the University of Brighton Pedagogic Research Conference. The slides are available at: http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx
Journal Articles	<i>What are the implications of OEP for teaching, learning and assessment in art, design and media Higher Education?</i> Debbie Flint & Stephen Mallinder (Drafted).
Articles in <i>Networks</i> magazine and <i>Networks</i> online	3,000 hard copies of <i>Networks</i> were distributed to individuals supporting learning in art, design and media higher education. The project was covered in Issues 11 & 12 and an article about the project will be featured in the forthcoming online issue 15 (to be distributed in October 2011).
Interim Report	Completed and submitted.
Final Report	Completed and submitted – to be made available on project website http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx



Project Summary Report	In addition to the Final Project Report a summary report will be completed by the project management focussing on the key lessons, implications and recommendations. This aims to provide an accessible document for use by the subject and wider HE communities. The report will be made available through the project website and disseminated through to the subject network in <i>Networks</i> .
Department-specific understandings of art, design and media OERs; motivations for, and barriers to, their creation and use.	These have been developed through focus group discussions with key stakeholders in partner institution departments. These are articulated in the Focus group reports and underpin the project partners' 'Action Plans'.
Discipline-specific understandings of art, design and media OERs; motivations for, and barriers to, their creation and use.	These have been developed through focus group discussions with key stakeholders in partner institution departments. These are articulated in this project report (see 3.3.3)
Targeted support that addresses the specific needs, motivations and barriers at the participating departments	This is made manifest in the Focus Group Reports for each participating department which identify key areas for development and recommendations for Action Plans. The institutional 'Action Plans' make manifest the ways in which OEP will be supported within the departmental context. Evaluation of this support is compiled in the Project Evaluation Report (see Appendix 7.4)
Effective OER practices and policies within the participating departments.	Project Partner Actions Plans identify departmental approaches to support OER creation and use. Partners sought to align OER use and creation with institutional policy and examples are articulated in the plans.

3.2 How did you go about achieving your outputs / outcomes?

3.2.1 Aims and Objectives

The project aims were to generate department-specific and further develop subject discipline-specific understandings of art, design and media OERs; motivations for, and barriers to, their creation and use. In developing these understandings the project sought to offer advice and support in order to address the specific needs, motivations and barriers within the participating departments. The project aimed to raise the profile of OER creation and use to further open educational practise and identify materials suitable for use and release.

To achieve this the project sought to engage with a wide range of institutional and departmental stakeholders. A departmental 'project lead' was identified at each institution to act as a 'champion' and to facilitate communication between the Subject Centre and the institution.

The project management's role was to coordinate all project activities, communicating internally with partner leads, funders and programme support and externally with the wider subject and HE communities. The project partners received project information and guidance, programme support, and details of OER initiatives, publications, conferences, events and workshop. The partners were



given guidance and advice on project processes including focus group structure and goals, the development of Action Plans and the reporting processes.

The two key project strategies were: departmental Focus Groups and partner Action Plans. The project management developed the focus group aims, objectives and questioning route, provided institutional partners with guidance and information and analysed and reported on the process. The subsequent Focus Group Reports articulated findings and 'ideas to consider'. They also included details of support mechanisms and organisations.

Throughout the project the Project Manager maintained direct communication with partner institutions by individual email, group JISCmail and monthly newsletters.

In order for the partners and wider community to follow and engage with the project the website and blog detailed the progress and made the documents, reports and newsletters available to download.

3.2.2 Project Processes

A. Institutional Visits

Set-up meetings were undertaken by the project management with each of the project leads at the participating institutions. The aim of these meetings was to provide detailed information and address any questions or concerns about the project processes, milestones, expectations, roles and responsibilities. The meetings also provided a valuable opportunity to meet and develop a rapport with partners who, in several instances, were new contacts to the Subject Centre team. In some cases the project leads introduced colleagues, including senior management and provided tours of the institution. These visits provided an effective way of learning informally about the institutional context.

B. Steering Group

A project steering group was established and included the three project partner leads from the ADM-OER Pilot Phase, subject discipline representatives, a Project Manager from the OER pilot project and members of the ADM-HEA Subject Centre team. The Steering Group's role was to offer guidance and support where needed and members were encouraged to engage through the project newsletters and blog.

C. Letters of Agreement

It was proposed in the project plan to regard each of the six participating departments as mini-project holders and as a result individually sign their own letters of agreement. The project management team developed a letter of agreement suited to the OER project that was ratified by the legal departments in the host and partner institutions and signed by heads of department. The letter identified roles, responsibilities and terms of project payment.



D. Project communication and information dissemination

A number of approaches were put in place to maintain dialogue and communication both directly with the project partners and the wider subject community. At the commencement of the project Institutional visits to the partners were arranged to outline project goals, roles, timeline and processes. A project blog, JISmail list, regular newsletters, and direct phone and email contact with the institutional leads were all established to ensure clear dialogue with the partners.

These strategies also ensured that in addition to the partners, steering group members and wider subject community received regular project information and details on the UK OER Programme, available support, news, and events, for example, IP/copyright support, Techdis and Cetus support, additional projects and funding calls, conferences (national and international), publications, technical developments, etc.

The *Project Newsletters* were sent to the partners by the project JISlist with PDFs made available to download for use by the wider subject community: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx>

E. Focus Groups

[Subject community responses to the survey and the offer of focus groups indicated a desire to discuss perceptions ... There was a growing awareness and support for open educational resources and there was evidence to suggest significant cultural change was underway at a departmental and institutional level

[Extract From ADM-OER Pilot Project 2010-11 Final Report]

Findings from the pilot project suggested an enthusiasm amongst art, design and media staff for active critical engagement with, and discussion around, the pedagogic, technological and other cultural implications of open educational practice.

The project management team sought to capitalise on this enthusiasm through focus groups in order to generate both department- and discipline-specific understandings of art, design and media OERs; motivations for, and barriers to, their creation and use in order to identify areas where teaching staff could be supported in the more widespread and effective use of OERs.

The project partners were given an outline of focus group objectives and structure.

The focus group questioning route was developed with reference to Krueger and Casey's *Focus Groups* (2000). Questions were designed to sound conversational, to be clear, short and open-ended. The questioning route was designed to start with an ice-breaking introductory question about most valued learning and teaching resources. This proved effective in ensuring that each participant had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

These documents are available to download from the project website: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx>.



E.1. Focus Group composition

Total participants: 83

Subject areas represented (included): textiles, graphics, media, furniture design, film and television, fine art, digital media, 3D art, photography, modelling and effects, fashion technology, architecture, design management and innovation, sculpture, history of art & design.

Stakeholders represented (included): information services staff, economic developers, course director, cross-faculty course director, teaching and learning coordinator, short-course coordinator, heads of department, director of student experience, professional development staff, IT support staff, school disability coordinator, teaching staff, and students (media).

For full lists of participants in each group see the Focus Group Reports: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx>

E.2 Focus Group Reports

The notes taken at the Focus Groups were transcribed and analysed using a variation of the 'long-table approach' (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Responses to questions were summarized and thematic categories were identified.

The Focus Group Reports were structured around the following thematic categories:

- **Technology:** staff engagement with digital materials and platforms
- **Intellectual Property and Copyright**
- **Pedagogic Cultures and Practices**
- **Institutional Contexts:** Profile, marketing and strategic support

The reports also included 'ideas to consider' based on the responses of the group and specific departmental factors.

- These reports are available online as downloadable PDFs: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx>
- A *Focus Group Thematic Spreadsheet* has also been produced which summarises the Focus Group findings. It is available to download: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx> and is included in the appendix to this report (see Appendix 7.2).

F. Project partners' Action Plans

The Action Plans identified a range of strategies to be employed by the project partners to address barriers and capitalise on motivations for OER production and use and ultimately embed effective OER practices and policies. Strategies identified include:

- 'How to' Guides including 'Enhanced Learning Through Technology' (De Montfort University)
- EdShare Guidance and examples of good practice (Winchester School of Art)
- Workshops - including linking Blackboard 9 with EdShare, Copyright, Intellectual Property guidance and Use of Creative Commons licenses (Winchester School of Art)
- Focus Groups – contextualising OER content (Winchester School of Art)
- Departmental Presentations – benefits of OERs (all partners)



- Conference presentations and OER events (Kingston University, University of Hertfordshire & Winchester School of Art)
- Website development including e-portfolios and interactive guidance (De Montfort University)
- Development of OERs for PGT Research Methods Module: 'Research Methods for Art and Design students' (De Montfort University)
- Development of a series of lectures/demonstrations, using Camtasia, aimed at accessibility and students with Asperger's Syndrome (University of Hertfordshire)
- Use of a new camera and rostrum to capture workshop techniques and demonstrations used in industry for fashion course (University of Hertfordshire)
- Group established to develop institutional repository – site space under construction: <http://creative-arts.stca.herts.ac.uk/> (University of Hertfordshire)
- Showcasing of pedagogic research and fellowship work – project materials available through website (Kingston University)
- Development of case studies and presentations from MA with PGCert student research into existing OERs (Kingston University)
- Usability testing of art, design and media OERs in EdShare: <http://www.edshare.soton.ac.uk/7282/> (Winchester College of Art)
- Development of OER rating system – EdShare (Winchester School of Art)
- User Service Area developed: http://getsatisfaction.com/winchester_school_of_art (Winchester School of Art)
- Project Site and Mailing List under development: <http://meanwhile.soton.ac.uk/oer> (Winchester School of Art)
- Project Area developed on EdShare: <http://www.edshare.soton.ac.uk/7283/> (Winchester School of Art)

F.1 Action Plan feedback

The project team responded systematically to the partners to help develop their Action Plans and evaluate and report on their own project 'actions'. The Action Plan Feedback Template (identifying strategies for roles/responsibilities; timelines; sustainability and evaluation) is available from the website as a downloadable PDF: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx>

G. Project partners' evaluation and reporting process

A reporting template was developed to enable the partners to report on progress made in implementing the Action Plans, sustainability provision and available open educational resources. Drawing upon the OER Programme's Evaluation and Synthesis guidelines (2010) the template also allowed the partners to evaluate the effectiveness of the project processes including:

- Value of the focus group and subsequent report
- Project support
- How the project is to be evaluated
- Reflections on successes and lessons learnt.



Note:

The *Project Reporting Template* (Appendix 7.1), the project partners' *Final Action Plans* (Appendix 7.3) and the partners' *Evaluation Report* (Appendix 7.4), made available as appendices to this report available from the website as a downloadable PDFs: <http://tinyurl.com/6dbfetx>

3.3 What did you learn?

3.3.1 Overview

The project findings, through the responses of the focus group participants, and augmented by comments drawn from the project partners' evaluation reports of the processes, lessons, challenges and successes, have been drawn together into key themes: *departmental and institutional perceptions; disciplinary perceptions; the wider higher educational context and funded projects and Summary of Lessons from project processes from partners' Evaluation Report.*

These thematic sections incorporate more specific findings relating to the need for clarification of definitions and role of OERs; sharing, attribution and what constitutes 'openness'; the range and volume of information that staff and students are navigating in an online ecology particularly with regard to concerns of quality assurance and how students can be supported in a critical engagement with this information; the role of IT support and the extent to which VLEs could be developed in support of open educational practise; the changing nature of time and work in digital contexts and the part institutional profiles play in the growing online environment.

Subject disciplinary considerations include the extensive use of online resources and platforms that involve both the formal and informal use of OERs and other materials; considerations of the suitability of open educational practise to creative subjects; considerations of intellectual property, staff professional practises and profiles and issues arising from the role of visiting lecturers in open educational practise.

The project highlighted some of the issues emerging in higher education with implications for funded projects including issues of staff security, sustaining staff roles through the duration of projects and the need for clear senior management support for the implementation of projects and the sustainable development of open educational practises.

Finally, we report on findings that relate to the effectiveness of the project processes.

3.3.2 Departmental and institutional perceptions

Discussions with staff through the focus groups highlighted the range of themes and areas where current teaching and learning practises and institutional facilities could be built upon to incorporate the creation and use of OERs. Staff indicated how they believed greater understanding of open educational processes, targeted support and consideration of certain parameters – quality assurance, attribution, considerations of critical engagement, and concerns regarding 'openness' – should be incorporated into subsequent OE strategies.



Note: The quotations taken from the *Project Partner's Evaluation Report* have been attributed; all other quotes are taken from the focus group transcripts.

A. Clarification of definition and the role of OERs

Participants in the focus groups expressed the view that a clearer articulation of the role of OERs is needed. Importantly there are competing philosophies relating to OERs and staff involved in the focus groups, including teaching staff, have a range of understandings and motivations.

“There are competing philosophies – one of sharing, it is our instinct [as teachers] to share and one of the market and competing – it seems to be offering a confused notion of knowledge ... or is it communication?”

The changing nature of Higher Education, is impacting on staff and students and OERs are perceived as important in addressing new challenges. Participants highlighted a number of ‘roles’ for open educational practice; facilitating learning and enhancing the student experience, enhancing teaching through the cross-departmental and institutional sharing of ideas and practices, maintaining contact with alumni and promotion and marketing of courses.

One participant articulated a taxonomy of staff responses to open educational practice as follows:

“There seems to be three categories of staff responses to this: those who address in terms of intellectual property and recognition – how the resources will be used; those who fear for a loss of their role and employment – threatened by open access resources which challenge their traditional teaching function as gatekeeper and transmitter of knowledge; and those who believe it is amazing and want to see what can be achieved when no-one is concerned with taking credit.”

B. Sharing materials and processes

Several tutors articulated benefits or enhancements the development of open educational practice may present to existing teaching and learning processes, enabling further staff and student and cross-institutional collaborations and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching materials. Further, for some tutors, OERs present an opportunity to rethink the teaching and learning process:

“It’s collaboration between staff, students and other institutions.”

“Blogs are becoming increasingly important. In design we want to mark the process rather than the outcome so blogs are becoming an important resource for other students – we mark the blogs effectively. It is collaborative learning, not static outputs.”

“Blogs are the new ‘sketchbook’ – more collaborative and promote group work.”

In general, participants expressed enthusiasm for the sharing of information and ideas between institutions, particularly in relatively new areas of activity (the example of education for sustainable



development was given). Participants suggested that this (sharing) is currently undertaken in an ad hoc fashion.

“There is a level of peer sharing between academics between institutions ... particularly with new subject material ... it is ad hoc and rather informal.”

C. Degrees of Openness and Attribution

Although teaching staff acknowledged a culture of sharing information and resources there was a level of concern regarding the idea of carte blanche sharing as the default in pedagogic practise. Participants in four of the focus groups expressed the view that the term ‘open’ is misleading and there are degrees, and conditions of ‘openness’ that need to be explored in the context of the department. A number of the participants suggested that this ambiguity about ‘open-ness’ needs to be addressed in discussions about OERs.

“It’s a bit idealistic to think that we’re naturally that generous, there’s a danger we feel a bit exploited so you have to be careful what [you’re prepared to] give away.”

Participants are concerned about how their teaching and learning resources would be used but also see the capacity of OERs to have clear licenses, attribution and inbuilt metadata which would benefit the producer through subsequent citations

“The value of OERs is in citations [attribution].”

D. Students, staff and navigating information

The impact of information rich learning environments where OERs are positioned requires consideration regarding student access and use. Two student participants in the focus groups spoke about their use of online resources and experience of the digital ecology. They talked about the difficulties of navigating the wealth of material and of their reliance on friends and tutors in helping them identify appropriate resources:

“Other than friends (on the course) we rely on our teachers. We can use Google but you get a million results so we need guidance from them.”

“Tutors point us in a certain direction ... it can be distracting, you follow the links on the page and it takes you off [at tangents].”

However, participants also expressed the view that, in some respects, students are leading staff, departments and institutions, to the wealth of online resources:

“We are driven by the students, they lead and we follow ... to Google and YouTube for example – digital resources are superseding staff’s lecture structure.”

Such comments from focus group participants suggest the need for support for students and staff in navigating information and resources online.



There is evidence of students developing their own processes that could impact on the development of teaching and learning resources. Staff noted a recent change with students using hand-held technology to record lectures and other aspects of their learning experience.

E. Quality assurance and critical engagement

Although there is a volume of online learning resources readily available to students and staff, the need to develop appropriate skills to critically engage with resources remains:

“... there’s a need to evaluate resources, students need to do this...this [material] is not in the library or in print, so not authorized in the same way. It could be a flyer, or in a gold leaf volume, but online they are both equal.”

Some responses reflected suspicions about the quality, authenticity and educational validity of certain online repositories and of multimedia resources themselves.

“Students can be concerned about authenticity online.”

Projects in progress expressed concern as to issues of quality, specifically in relation to institutional and departmental profiles:

“Many existing Art & Design OERs are not seen to be appropriate... we should not rush to create poor quality OER randomly, but should first plan a methodical approach which will take longer, but has the opportunity to enhance the reputation of our Faculty.” (Kingston University)

F. Existing institutional OER facilities including VLEs

Institutional VLEs are currently the main online mechanism through which staff upload teaching materials and otherwise engage with students. Participants articulated their sense of the shortcomings of VLEs and issues with making the materials currently housed by VLEs available for global access. Generally, participants suggested that technical issues related to developing materials for open access can be overcome through further dialogue between staff stakeholders (academic, Information services, etc) and the provision of technical support.

However, participants in all focus groups suggested that there is a level of anxiety regarding the digitisation of teaching materials, specifically a lack of staff confidence in using emerging technologies to develop ‘open educational resources’ and that technological support would be needed through VLEs in developing open educational practices:

“Do I want that person to see...”

Where OER facilities are already embedded (for example, EdShare at Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton) staff believe it can be easier to engage with OERs and EdShare is viewed as an important facility by some staff within the institution.

Other partners felt the standardised approaches inherent in the use of, for example, iTunes U could actually discourage more informal resource production and use by teaching staff.



“The university has an iTunes U account and this has set a standard, this can discourage staff engagement with open resources.”

G. Technology and Institutional Support

Participants made a wide range of suggestions for actions that would facilitate the development of open educational practice in their departmental contexts. These included the provision of technical support, changes to institutional IT infrastructure and time to engage:

“Technology support is needed.”

“We need to look at the bandwidth, the servers ... there are technical issues we need to address.”

“There are too many firewalls.”

Participants were generally confident that the skills and expertise of existing staff could be utilised to address these challenges. In a specific example participants suggested drawing on expertise in communications design and, more generally, in ensuring that course leaders, especially studio-based staff, play a key role.

“Course leaders, especially studio-based should be used as a conduit [to communicate information regarding the creation and use of OERs].”

The consensus view from focus group participants indicates that the institution needs to play a fundamental role in articulating OER benefits, supporting staff through IT, and resource development and helping embed open educational practice through policy.

Participants suggested that achievement of the ambition to open up access to the virtual learning environment, for example, would require a good deal of institutional, particularly technical, support:

“Staff need training in skills required for resource creation and digitisation, Flash, etc.”

“[We need to] identify skills and expertise inside and outside the department.”

While participants comments suggest it is important to maintain a balance between institutional ‘regulation’ and staff ‘autonomy’, in the context of a more wholesale push towards open education:

“We need external and internal systems in place.”

Participants expressed a need for open educational practices to be situated within, and clear relationships drawn to other institutional policies. This would necessitate the development of appropriate support, recognition and reward, and quality control mechanisms.

“[We] need a more systematic approach, the relationship between staff and the institution needs to be clarified.”



“Institutional policies and systems not yet prepared to cope with easy production of OER.”
(Kingston University)

H. Institutional profiles

Participants suggested that the development of open educational practice has significant value in terms of marketing and raising staff and institutional profiles. It is felt that using OERs to support the institution’s profile would make it more competitive:

“We’re a small campus that can position itself on a world stage.”

“It gives a greater awareness of the staff and the institution ... can make us bigger than we may actually be in the analogue world.”

Participants suggested that “showing what we do” has real potential for attracting students to the institution:

“Use for open days, online prospectus – use the links.”

I. Time and Work

Participants expressed concern about the impact of open educational practice on staff workloads, roles and, ultimately, authority:

“Does it add depth or take away from what we do? ... It certainly adds to the workload.”

On balance, however, there was the belief that OERs could relieve the pressure on staff in terms of workload and teaching procedures which could free up time for more student-centred activities:

“It frees up time to give to students.”

Alongside this expressed need for departmental support in relation to the processes for developing open educational practice, participants suggested that there may be a need for institutional incentives or rewards:

“But what about rights and rewards.”

The rapidly changing HE culture, specifically in art, design and media, where funding, costs and staff security is being severely challenged was of consideration to staff with regard to OERs:

“Threat to jobs ... the concerns over redundancy. [We wonder] whether this is a waste of effort.”

“Is it a replacement for what we do? We do what we do best...”



3.3.2 Art, Design and Media - subject discipline perceptions

Art, design and media subject utilise a number of discipline-specific approaches to teaching and learning that are impacted by the growth of online digital materials and the development of open education practises. The availability of materials, through Flickr, YouTube and Vimeo both as student and staff-created resources as well as objects of study is significant across the subjects. In discussion with staff through the project consideration was given to how staff and students engaged with these materials, the nature of professional practise and staff profiles and the implications for visiting lecturers within the subject areas.

A. Use of online searches and sourcing of materials

Focus group participants indicated that they integrate a range of online resources into their teaching and research; they referred to communication tools such as blogs and blog communities, Twitter and email; named services providing access to online video tutorials (Lynda.com, TED) and other online content (YouTube, Spotify, UbuWeb, MIT website, Creative Choices website); and the search engine, Google. One participant referred to the not-for-profit organization, the Design and Artists Copyright Society – DACS). One participant mentioned the website *Own it* which provides advice on intellectual property issues.

It was clear from the discussions that staff perceive online interaction, particularly through blogs and wikis, as an important mechanism for encouraging student participation. Participants presented considerable evidence of, and attention to the use of online teaching and learning tools.

Valuable resources and sources of teaching and learning materials identified by teaching staff included:

- Ted Talks TED (<http://www.ted.com/>)
- UBU Web (<http://ubu.com/>)
- Studio, Lynda.com (<http://www.lynda.com/>)
- MIT website (<http://ocw.mit.edu/index.htm>)
- Vimeo - video streaming (<http://vimeo.com/>)
- Land of Lost Content - information for design (<http://www.lolc.co.uk/>)
- Box of Broadcasts (BOB: <http://www.boxofbroadcasts.com/>)
- WaSP – Web Standards Project (<http://www.webstandards.org/>)
- WaSP INTERACT – Web Standards Curriculum Framework (<http://interact.webstandards.org/curriculum/>)
- EdShare (<http://www.edshare.soton.ac.uk/>)
- Ashmolean Museum (<http://www.ashmolean.org/>)
- VADS – Visual Arts Data Service (<http://www.vads.ac.uk/>)
- UKfilmNet (<http://www.ukfilmnet.org/exponent/>)

General Use

- YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/>)
- Spotify (<http://www.spotify.com/uk/>)
- Flickr – (<http://www.flickr.com/>)

Networking and Linking: Facebook, Twitter, Google as first search



B. Subject suitability

The focus group participants reflected the diverse range of courses and subject areas incorporated by art, design and media. Teaching staff employed a similarly wide range of pedagogic approaches to their teaching incorporating skills-based learning, textual analysis, and studio-based practises. Nevertheless the underlying characteristics of 'creative' disciplines did result in similar themes during the discussions. The significance of collaborative spaces, particularly the studio in art and design was evident in staff perceptions of open educational practise.

One focus group referred to an alignment between "studio and online motivations"; in an art, design and media context, students have professional motivations to make their work available to audiences external to the university. Referencing Professor Henry Jenkins (MIT), one participant suggested that online technologies can further the collaborative nature of studio cultures. (ref: <http://web.mit.edu/cms/People/henry3/>)

"Motivations in studio and online for Art & Design students are the same."

For another, the type of learning suggested by 'open educational resources' was deemed antithetical to the experiences of studio-based learning.

"Learning is an emotional experience, the classroom [studio] fosters a type of experiential learning."

The 'studio' environment and practices are presented, by some participants, as ideal conditions for collaborative working and interaction in art and design education. Open Educational practice is perceived as challenging this way of working and, implicitly, as related to individualistic approaches to learning.

"Studio offers the experience, and feedback ... the opportunity for collaboration and interaction."

"There was a strong feeling that any OERs should enhance Studio Pedagogy by focussing on the development of creative attributes ... Our curriculum is based on engagement with shifting cultural paradigms and interpretations, and any resources will need to be flexible enough to sustain engagement over a period of time to warrant investment in their creation." (Kingston University)

"[We are] able to investigate suitability of OERs to studio-based courses – OERs should enhance Studio Pedagogy by focussing on the development of creative attributes." (Kingston University)

"The pedagogical structure of our Art & Design courses promotes students as producers rather than consumers of content." (Kingston University)

One participant spoke about the creativity that can be employed in developing new teaching and learning resources:



“It has to be fun ... should stress enjoyment of this type of project”

Certain subjects and processes within art, design and media lend themselves to OER creation and use – Animation for example. Participants spoke of a number of resources that have been developed for distinct purposes, for example videos made to demonstrate techniques in Digital Animation and housed on YouTube:

“In digital animation there is a lack of technical support so we have videos to show technique – this is growing resource more being made.”

One participant expressed the view that unlike other subject disciplines, which may be required to employ more prescriptive teaching and learning materials, OERs are perhaps not suited to art, design and media disciplines:

“It seems other disciplines [sciences, medicine, etc] are somehow more established and have a greater commonality that suit OERs.”

The subject area, for example film media, has implications for the available content online, and the access to a wide range of resources that were not strictly developed as OERs:

“We’re teaching film so it is understandable that there has been a growth of online presence of materials”.

Participants’ responses indicate that in the subject discipline, particularly on film and media courses YouTube, and Vimeo are the most readily used open platforms for teaching materials.

“They’re housed on YouTube as there is no real HE repository.”

Making learning and teaching resources freely available is deemed problematic in particular subject areas where the skills and knowledge are considered more important than the ‘validation’ of these through qualifications:

“In animation the qualification is not a requirement [employers value the skills over the qualification].”

“By sharing we may risk people not coming here to the university.”

C. Staff autonomous professional profiling

One staff member illustrated how he, like others in art and design, has developed professional practice online using a personal website to showcase work and services including evidence of teaching practice.

“I have my own website with my own design work available ... I’ve had the site for around 12 years – in that time it’s shifted from profiling my design work to presenting my teaching and research [outputs]”



However, at the other end of this spectrum there was the suggestion that some visiting lecturers, reluctant to offer work freely, are sensitive to the potential commercial exploitation of online resources.

D. Intellectual Property and Copyright

Issues of intellectual property, copyright and licensing did not preoccupy focus group participants. Participants do not seem to perceive these issues as unduly inhibitive but rather as an integral component of using and creating teaching materials.

Participants are currently negotiating IP and copyright in an informal and ad hoc way. Nevertheless the groups are aware of underlying issues, and indicate that they would appreciate further guidance. It was suggested that this could be addressed at an institutional level.

Copyright and IP were discussed by one focus group in respect of archive materials which have potential commercial value – in particular design:

“[where] manufacturers were willing to pay for older, more traditional designs and go into production.”

E. Visiting / guest lecturers

Participants referred to the issue of professional practitioner guest and visiting lecturers whose expertise are commonly drawn upon on art, design and media courses. These practitioners, it was suggested, would be much more protective of their materials and not enthusiastic about the department making the materials they produced freely available online.

“There are issues for visiting lecturers [in offering resources used as OERs]”.

3.3.4 Higher Educational context and funded projects

The project highlighted a number of issues that are of relevance not only to the development of open educational practice, but also in relation to the funding and management of short-term projects in institutions.

The current climate of higher education has implications for managing short-term projects. Three of the project partners experienced staffing problems that impacted on the overall project processes. Although the institutional visits and focus groups were completed, with reports submitted to all the departments:

- One institution experienced significant staffing changes at senior management level and was unable to return the Letter of Agreement, or extended periods respond to communication and offers of support. They were unable to develop an Action Plan but did contribute to the evaluation and feedback process. The project management have continued to support the partner department and responses from the project lead indicate the value of their involvement in the project to the long-term development of open educational practises.



- A second institution underwent significant departmental changes and the project leader left the institution before the final Action Plan was submitted. The department has since appointed a new project leader to complete the tasks. Despite this inhibiting the project's progress an Action Plan was completed and a clear commitment to the development of open education.
- A third institution, although continuing with the project, has been affected by major departmental restructuring and staff redundancies which has slowed the reporting process.

It is imperative that funded projects receive senior management support, committed for the duration of the project and identified in the Letter of Agreement.

Effective collaborative projects take time to start up. In the case of this project, committed project partners had to be identified, their involvement ratified by the Head of Department and agreement letters signed in the short bidding phase. The project management team believe that the bidding phase should be longer, or the development of committed project partnerships should be considered part of the implementation phase of the project.

As the project itself developed it became important that all the project processes were communicated with clarity, and where appropriate prescriptive. The project, although encouraging departmental autonomy, also saw the need to offer a clear framework by drawing upon reporting templates, documents, and processes to support effective project evaluation.

3.3.5 Project processes

Focus groups helped identify staff who were keen to become more informed and involved in open educational practice. They also helped target key areas in which to support staff and develop appropriate strategies for the long term. They provided an opportunity to consider audiences and how OERs could be used, how they looked and what this said about the institution. Focus groups, facilitated by project management, offered a 'neutral' space for discussion.

"[Focus group] allowed people to feel confident that they weren't being 'left behind' in their use of technology. Their response has encouraged us to step back and provide a range of support for more basic and introductory ELT." (De Montfort University)

"[Focus group] participants were keen to demonstrate the expertise and talents of our staff and students in the production of resources." (Kingston University)

"The focus group has provided the backbone to drive the Action Plan." (Winchester School of Art)

External project management assisted in bringing objectivity to discussions about open educational practice:

"[Project Management were] useful and vital in 'targeting' our discussion, as well as recording it. Their input structured the discussion, leading us through key issues and ideas and most importantly capturing the essence of our explorations and discussions." (University of Hertfordshire)



“It has been very helpful to have focus groups externally facilitated and a report to be then prepared, for us to follow. It provided a supportive atmosphere and intrigue/curiosity which drew together disparate staff.” (Leeds Trinity University College)

“The focus group documents from each institute provide a unique insight into Art & Design issues which is a very under observed areas for Open Education.” (Winchester School of Art)

The project processes helped promote their own internal cascading:

“The success of this focus group response has led to our decision to hold our internal dissemination event to allow feedback and feedforward.” (Kingston University)

“A greater range of academics within the Faculty are now working more effectively with each other; this has been possible through the workshops that we have led so far.” (De Montfort University)

The project support - newsletters, JISCmail, website, blog and emails – was used by partners to keep track of the projects progress and to access other services and information (JORUM, IP and copyright, general OER updates). In one case it led to successful application for a SCORE fellowship. This support encouraged partners to develop their own project information strategies – blogs, mailing lists and project site. It was felt by one partner to help summarise the information for ‘busy staff’ sometimes overloaded with information. The information gave an indication of what was ‘possible in the short-term’. However the project partners did believe the ‘project blog’, although useful in disseminating OER information and project updates, failed to promote dialogue across the project and the wider community. The absence of this discursive element indicates that a more suitable ‘blog’ platform or further strategies for engagement should be employed

Overall the projects’ activities helped raise the profile of the project and open educational practice within the participating institutions.

The reporting and evaluation process was important in itself, allowing the partners to reflect on and consider the key lessons, implications, successes and challenges which could be shared through the report. It also enabled project staff to reflect and comment upon the changing nature and higher education, pedagogic practices, sustainability and the future needs of staff and students. Consideration was given by project partners to cross faculty and institution wide collaboration required by the development of open education practice.

3.4 Immediate Impact

3.4.1 Host Institution and the Subject Community

The project enabled a range of outcomes that proved significant for the host institution – ADM-HEA Subject Centre, University of Brighton and the wider art, design and media community. These have included:



A. Host Institution – ADM-HEA Subject Centre, University of Brighton

- The project team have developed greater understandings of OERs and digital learning within art, design and media. This understanding has been utilised in other contexts including the development of a successful teaching development grant proposal.
- The OER project has enabled the development of productive relationships with partner institutions. This has impacted on other aspects of the Subject Centre’s work, for example, the development of events and publications.
- The project assists development of productive relationships with distinct parts of the host institution, for example, senior management, The Research Office and the Finance department
- The project management have developed an ‘institutional change’ project submission for the host institution.
- The project management have given a conference presentation at the host institution’s Teaching and Learning Day 2010.

B. Subject Community

- The project’s progress was disseminated by the Project Management across the ADM-HEA Subject Network. It is difficult to access the impact of this although readers of *Networks* magazine report impacts ranging from changing their way of thinking to direct impacts on the student learning experience.
- The project was able to align other ADM-HEA Subject Centre projects to OER creation and use making recommendations for the project holders to develop OERs as potential project outcomes.
- The Project Management have given feedback to project proposals incorporating OER information and advice.
- The Project Management have received requests from other HE institutions to give future OER presentations
- The project manager is on the advisory board for the ALTO OER Project (University of the Arts London: <http://www.arts.ac.uk/alto/>)

3.4.2 Partner Institutions

The project partners reported that they had built in a range of evaluation processes to assess the impact of their action plans– including questionnaires, audits, staff development activities, student feedback, web analytics - which would enable them to assess the impact of the project and support effective processes for the continual release of resources and engagement with open educational practice (see appendix 7.4).

“[We are] gathering feedback from staff and students on mini-projects.” (Kingston University)

“[We have] planned a range including internal presentation and workshops.” (Kingston University)



“[We will distribute a] feedback questionnaire to all participants by August / September 2011, gather information for evaluation report to FAQEC by Sept/Oct 2011.” (University of Hertfordshire)

“[We are implementing] usability processes, and mechanisms for staff and students to feedback and comment.” (Winchester School of Art)

Drawing directly from the project partners’ reports a range of activities and outcomes provide evidence of the immediate impact of the project on the department and across the institution

Partner institutions report that the project and focus group process offered opportunities for the partner departments to engage colleagues with, develop understandings and raise the profile of open educational practise within the participating departments.

“[The focus groups] were extremely useful in targeting our discussion, leading us and most importantly capturing the essence of our explorations and discussions.” (University of Hertfordshire)

“[The focus group] Indicated support of staff and willingness to showcase staff and student work through OERs.” (Kingston University)

“This project has provided a real kick start to helping promoting and improving the sharing of teaching and learning materials within the School of Art.” (Winchester School of Art)

“Beginning to engage more staff with the concept of OERs ... Realisation of some genuine OERs will be possible in the short term.” (Kingston University)

“Raising awareness of EdShare and OERs.” (Winchester School of Art)

Project partners have reported that the project has supported the development of appropriate strategies for OER development and use:

“[We have] set up own area on StudyNet (VLE), a blog for discussion, updates and newsletters/ JISCmail list useful for communication and “updates”. [It enables] examples and resources that are available to all staff.” (University of Hertfordshire)

“[The project is] capturing project processes and outputs.”
<http://meanwhile.soton.ac.uk/oer> (Winchester School of Art)

In some cases the project has extended partners’ capacity to develop open educational practise:

“Received the award of SCORE short term fellowship” (Kingston University)

The partners’ report also indicate broader dissemination of the project activities; partners are sharing experiences and findings through conferences, presentations and workshops.



3.5 Future Impact

3.5.1 Host Institution and the Subject Community

At the conclusion of the project, and in addition to the Final Report, a 'Summary Report' is being drawn up to be made available through online *Networks* magazine. The Summary Report will collate key themes, lessons and recommendations from the project in a more accessible format in order to help support and advise the subject community.

The project management are currently drafting an article for submission to a peer-reviewed journal: *What are the implications of OEP for teaching, learning and assessment in art, design and media Higher Education?* – will inform the subject community of the project findings and key themes emerging.

In addition, the project management are sharing experiences and outcomes with the art, design and media community by offering support to proposals for the UK-OER Phase 3 Programme.

3.5.2 Partner Institutions

The partners acknowledge that considerable work needs to be done to encourage wider department and community engagement in open educational practise. Although this will require institutional and infrastructural support, the project offers great potential:

“Much still needs to be done both on policy understandings, workload models, technologies, and staff development. There is a pressing need for an agreed strategy and ongoing debate around the issue of OERs. As with many other issues, the needs of Art & Design subject area may differ from those other Faculties within the University, and we need to have a clear idea of how we would like to own and manage these locally.” (Kingston University)

“[Future impact] to embed into school reporting structure, enabling SMG (Senior Management Group) to recognise and resource work in this area accordingly.” (University of Hertfordshire)

“The project has great potential to provide an appropriate context to strengthen our new website with inclusive, engaging materials and links to higher educational resources in the creative sector.” (Bucks New University)

Partners reported cross-discipline and cross-institutional links developed during the course of the project. These will help support wider adoption of open educational practises and the long-term release and use of OERs within the partner institutions the subject community:

“[The] Project has helped make links and connections within the and across the institution ... Bringing disparate staff together to discuss OERs from across University, who otherwise would not have know about, or communicated.” (University of Hertfordshire)



The project did raise key issues concerning how long-term development of open educational practise may be effected knowledge of which will perhaps pave the way to sustainable open educational practises.

“Institutional policies and systems not yet prepared to cope with easy production of OER.”
(Kingston University)

“ [Discussions indicated the importance of] staff development, and a consideration of workload to allow ongoing development of resources as an embedded role.” (Kingston University)

The project partners have identified areas to support open educational practise and disseminate findings beyond the period of the project funding which will inform the subject and wider HE communities:

- Conference paper in Academic year 2011-12. (Kingston University)
- External guest speaker from Oxford University Open Spires project. (Kingston University)
- Usability information will support long-term creation and use. (Winchester School of Art)
- Project leader invited onto various groups for Digital Literacy and Southampton Learning environment - thus may have some capacity to guide the University in making OERs etc more usable. (Winchester School of Art)
- Internal Blended Learning Conference, paper or presentation, June 2012, Internal Learning and teaching Conference May 2012. (University of Hertfordshire)

4 Conclusions

The project offered the opportunity to explore the implications of open educational practise in six institutional contexts and art, design and media disciplines, and to assess the effectiveness of the cascade model.

4.1 Key conclusions relating to Open Educational Practise in art, design and media disciplines:

- Art, design and media subjects are developed with consideration to an audience. The culture of exhibiting, critiquing and sharing is inherent in the subjects. In this way the disciplines lend themselves to open educational practise. However, subject practitioners raise questions about the relationship between open educational practice and existing ADM pedagogies specifically ‘studio-based’ learning.
- The ADM sector embraces a wide range of subjects with varying functions offered through OERs – from animation skills teaching resources to film and television studies critical engagement with resources. There cannot be a ‘one size fits all’ approach to developing open educational practise.
- Art, design and media tutors are keen to be part of a critical debate about open educational practise and to take proactive roles in debating and constructing definitions and purpose.
- There is some development, and extensive use, of online materials for teaching and learning by staff and students although participants do not associate these practises with ‘open



educational resources' and 'open educational practise'. These practises are driven by individual need, rather than institutionalised practise.

- The focus group participants and project contributors were generally enthusiastic about developing open educational practises particularly in relation to cross-institutional and inter-institutional collaboration. Teaching staff also perceived the potential for raising personal, departmental and institutional profiles and developing pedagogic practises.
- Aside from the early adopters there was not widespread understanding of OERs, licenses and available information and support.
- ADM staff believe that students, who in many cases are informally creating and sharing learning materials, should be actively involved in the development of open educational practise, including the creation of resources where learning and sharing are aligned.
- Teaching staff currently use VLEs as the key online platform through which to engage with students and provide learning materials. However, these are not open access and staff believe they need technical support to ensure that resources are suitable to open access..
- Where OER facilities and support are already in place there is a strong sense of the benefits of open educational practise.
- Staff believe there is a need for greater coordination in institutions to support open educational practise.
- In the current HE funding climate there is considerable anxiety about staff employment and uncertainty about staff roles which have implications for OER initiatives and short-term funded projects generally.

4.2 Key conclusions about the 'Cascade' model:

- The processes of the cascade model provided the opportunity for the project management to: share knowledge and experiences gained during the pilot phase; to build on work achieved by the pilot partner institutions; to disseminate the wide range of available programme support and participate in a growing OER community.
- The Cascade process, being built upon on the sharing of information, knowledge and experiences, was suited to the cultural change paradigm. The project methodology of enabling open dialogue through focus groups was effective in encouraging a wide range of institutional and departmental stakeholders to become engaged, promoting understandings of open educational practise, and enabling participants to contribute to their department's future in this area.



5 Recommendations

In response to the six focus group discussions, the focus group reports included a range of 'ideas to consider'. These are offered here as suggestions for departments and institutions embarking on more open educational practises.

5.1 Recommendations for departments and institutions embarking on the development of open educational practises

- Open Educational resources and practises in need to align with the key aims and characteristics of the disciplines.
- Provide opportunities for dialogue between academic and information technology staff to support art, design, & media pedagogies through appropriate online technologies.
- Explore what types of teaching and learning resources are best suited to OER creation and use. The development of a 'taxonomy of resources' within the department would help encourage wider staff participation in open educational practice.
- Schedule workshops which enable the showcasing of existing open educational practices in the department.
- Explore the potential for the development of resources through curriculum and assessment design.
- Identify and draw upon expertise and resources across the institution – in particular those developed through existing OER related initiatives.
- Ensure that students are involved in the development of the open educational practise. Existing student practices can help inform the rationale and process for developing open educational practice in the department
- Explore ways in which existing repositories and VLEs can be developed to support more explicitly open access.
- Considerations of degrees of openness may encourage a wider staff engagement in open educational practise. Institutions could benefit from having greater clarity and guidance on licenses. Explore 'tiered' approaches to releasing resources developing staff confidence in the creation of resources by the controlled release and sharing of materials through the institutional platforms.
- The potential benefits to staff need to be articulated to help departmental involvement in open educational practise.



- Build on existing motivations to develop open education practice – for example, individual lecturers’ enthusiasm to enhance online professional profiles, and explore willingness to engage in dialogue across institutions.
- The development of open educational practice should be considered as part of staff professional practise.
- Support staff research methods with regard to online materials. Encourage staff and students in the critical engagement with online materials.
- Align the development of open educational practice with the departmental / institutional key strategic goals and underpinning values and philosophy.
- Explore opportunities to develop ‘purpose built’ open educational resources to avoid issues inherent in retrospectively re-purposing of materials.
- Embed the OER strategies in the institution’s technology enhanced learning strategy.
- Provide staff with appropriate IP and copyright guidance on issues associated with open educational resources through library and legal services and programme support. Explore Creative Commons licenses suited to staff needs and considerations.
- Visiting and fractional staff – Involve visiting and fractional staff in the development of the OER strategies.
- Participants expressed concerns regarding the institutional motivations for the development of OERs in the existing HE economy. Clarification on the intended impact on current staff roles would support burgeoning open educational practice.
- Eventually, a clear OER policy statement will help sustain burgeoning open educational practice in the department / institution.

5.2 Recommendations for the HEA/JISC

Effective collaborative projects take time to start up. The project management team recommend that the bidding phase should be longer, or the development of committed project partnerships should be considered part of the implementation phase of the project.



6 References

- ADM-OER Pilot Project 2010-11 Final Report (Available Project Website: <http://tinyurl.com/6fp9q5e>)
- Krueger, R. A. and Casey, M.A. (2000), *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research* (3rd ed), Sage, London
- McGill, L. Beetham, H. Falconer, I. & Littlejohn A. Synthesis and Evaluation Report (JISC Synthesis and Evaluation and Project, 2010) Available at: <http://www.caledonianacademy.net/spaces/oer/index.php?n=Main.PilotProgrammeSynthesisAndEvaluationReport>)

7 Appendices

- 7.1 Project Partners' Reporting Template
- 7.2 Focus Group Thematic Spreadsheet
- 7.3 Departmental Action Plans
- 7.4 Project Partner's Evaluation Report

All appendices are available as downloadable documents on the project webpage

