

e-Framework Update November 2009

The e-Framework for Education and Research is an [international initiative](#) that provides information to institutions on investing in and using information technology infrastructure. It advocates service-oriented approaches to facilitate technical interoperability of core infrastructure as well as effective use of available funding.

This newsletter will inform and update you about the e-Framework developments and related activities. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please log-in to the e-Framework [subscriber list](#) and unsubscribe.

The views expressed in papers and individual contributions are the views of the contributor and may not reflect the views of the e-Framework Partnership.

News from the Initiative

Technical Review Update

The e-Framework Partnership for Education and Research is seeking feedback from the community around the service-oriented approach to software analysis and design it has developed. A rationale for the approach, technical model, comparison with approaches to Enterprise Architecture and most recent submissions to the e-Framework Service Knowledgebase can be found at:

<http://www.e-framework.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1008>

We've provided some initial questions to consider, but welcome comment or longer contributions on any aspect of the technical approach. A comment and feedback form is provided at the above URL.

Business Case for Standards

Making a business case for interoperability and standards is a challenging task for those involved in the strategic planning of IT systems in education. A new paper 'Assessing the Business Case for Standards', published by JISC and JISC CETIS, provides advice and supporting materials to help people to incorporate standards in their ICT-related business cases.

The publication explores why universities and colleges should care about

standards. It explores the idea that, rather than restricting freedom, standards can be liberating in that they free up time to concentrate on areas of ICT where there is real scope to add value.

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/documents/bpbusinesscaseforstandards.aspx>

Australia: Entries now being accepted for 2010 Learning Impact Awards

Entries for the Australian Regional Finals of the IMS Global Learning Consortium Learning Impact Awards (LIA) are now being accepted. Australian entrants have had success for two years in a row on the international stage. Automatic entry into this global arena is guaranteed for winners of the regional finals. Once again the LIAs will be showcased and judged according to specific criteria during the Technology in Education Open Forum at IDEA10 (sponsored by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and University of Southern Queensland), to be held in Melbourne, 10 - 12 March. The IMS GLC Learning Impact Awards and Recognition Program recognizes outstanding applications of technology that address the most significant challenges facing the education community. The awards are unique for their recognition of the use of technology in context. Winners from prior years are ineligible. However, previous participants who did not finish in the top three are welcome to enter with a new submission or the same submission providing this has matured since last judged. Submission information is located at the Australian Regional Finals page.

For further information please send an email to: ideaconference@usq.edu.au. Don't forget, as one of the top three Australian finalists, this is an opportunity to receive support to attend the international IMS GLC Learning Impact Awards in Long Beach, California, USA in 2010.

<http://www.linkaffiliates.net.au/idea10/events/lia10.html>

The e-Framework at eResearch Australasia 2009

An e-research paper is to be presented by Stephen Bennett at eResearch Australasia. Entitled 'Modelling generic e-Scholarship infrastructure with the e-Framework' - <http://www.eresearch.edu.au/bennett2009> - this presentation demonstrates a method of analysing infrastructure requirements in eResearch in terms of generic functionality.

Unleashing Enterprise Architecture

JISC TechWatch has now released their second report on the Enterprise Architecture (EA) Pilot programme – 'Unleashing Enterprise Architecture: Institutional Architectures and the Value of Joined Up Thinking'. The first report, 'Doing Enterprise Architecture - Enabling the agile institution' provided an introduction to EA frameworks and tools, together with case studies. This new report provides a synthesis of the findings of the pilot projects, reflects on the challenges of undertaking EA, and includes detailed review of EA tools. It does assume some prior knowledge and the authors recommend reading 'Doing Enterprise Architecture' report first. Many of the conclusions are embodied in the objectives and work plan of the 'EA Practice Group' which is being managed as part of JISC's Flexible Service Delivery (FSD) programme.

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/services/techwatch/reports/earlyadopters.aspx>

Flexible Service Delivery Update

Growing Interest in Flexible Service Delivery in UK Higher and Further Education

From early September 2009, JISC has welcomed HE and FE institutions to be considered for participation in the Flexible Service Delivery (FSD) programme. Institutions can either be funded as 'explorer' members or be funded to deliver a 'pathfinder', 'demonstrator' or 'pilot' project. A great deal of interest has been generated: A total 22 institutions have already become funded members, either individually or via consortia. A further 11 institutions are considering or are in the process of applying. The list of member institutions, together with a description of about how they will be contributing to the FSD programme, can be found on the programme website (URL below). Interested institutions have until 30 November 2009 to apply by completing a four-page 'expressions of interest' form.

Programme Events

A launch event, held on 2 October 2009, focused on the barriers and enablers to adoption of a flexible approach to service delivery. Much of the discussion centered on the significance of cultural, rather than technical, barriers, highlighting a need to develop a rounded case for adoption.

One of issues raised at this first event was the need to improve dialogue between suppliers and educational institutions. A follow up event on 10 December 2009, entitled 'Meeting the Suppliers', will provide institutional members a unique opportunity to discuss with supplier companies the potential for a FSD online forum to assist this dialogue, to consider how this forum might operate and be structured. There will be particular focus how such a forum could aggregate, use and present data obtained from

educational institutions, consortia and suppliers.

Further Information

For more information about the FSD programme, including how to participate, please contact Alex Hawker (a.hawker@jisc.ac.uk) or visit the programme webpage.

<http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/flexible-service-delivery>

Discussion - Open Educational Resources as a Strategic Issue: the New Zealand context

Background

At the e-Framework Partners Strategy Board meeting in August 2009, New Zealand offered to share some experiences on strategic issues related to open education resources (OER).

The three strategic issues identified were:

- The quality of open educational resources (what does quality mean, what processes might be useful to monitor and ensure quality and what quality related risks are there for education systems?).
- The metadata associated with open educational resources (how can it be used to make resources more discoverable, formally and/or informally).
- Who publishes what open resources and where (and in particular where should teacher created resources be published?)

Officially sanctioned on-line resources in NZ

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Education has developed a bilingual portal and web community which provides quality-assured educational material for New Zealand teachers, school managers, and the wider education community.

It is called Te Kete Ipurangi or in English, The On-line Learning Centre
<http://www.tki.org.nz/>

Learning Management Systems and Digital Content

The growing use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) is taking place in parallel with the development of the TKI on-line learning centre and the reuse and portability of teacher created content is an emerging issue.

With more (composite) digital resources being created in New Zealand

schools via LMS we want to avoid this tool set becoming a silo for content. We want content to be more reusable and portable, not locked inside the creation/run-time tool. The alternative is more 'lock-in' or expensive exit costs for schools changing systems and increased barriers to sharing digital content.

The Strategic Issues

Here in New Zealand, the need to make teacher created digital resources discoverable and re-useable has led to some dilemmas. If we want to use our official on-line channel for teacher created content, and we claim that this channel publishes quality assured material, then we need to put quality assurance processes around the content and that could be a barrier to growing a culture of sharing.

Alternatively, we could use a separate channel for authoring, publishing, licensing, storage, discovery and editing/republishing teacher created content. Wikieducator is one option that we are exploring. However, without suitable quality assurance this could lead to the reuse of material that is not endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

We are in the early stages of this journey – we will share our experiences via the e-Framework newsletter and we are interested in similar experiences taking place in partner countries.

Some relevant literature

Findings reported in the following three publications provide some useful insights into the development of open educational resources, and may help further inform on some of the associated issues.

1. Susan D'Antoni, "Open Educational Resources: The Way Forward. Deliberations of an International Community of Interest" UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, February 2008
<http://www.osbr.ca/ojs/index.php/osbr/article/view/911/880>

This report sets out the priority issues identified by a community of interest of more than 600 members from over half of the 193 member states of UNESCO for advancing and supporting the growing OER movement internationally. The discussions and deliberations took place over a two year period, 2005-2007.

While there were differences in priorities between developing and developed countries, and among regions,

- awareness raising and promotion,
- building communities (eg. regional, linguistic, and topic specific),
- building capacity,

- sustainability, and
- quality assurance

stood out as the most important issues, with copyright and licensing also of significant concern, in particular where resources intended for release in OER contained copyrighted material within. In the use of Creative Commons licenses a need for guidance towards better understanding of the implications of the licenses chosen was identified

2. Norm Friesen, "Open Source Resources in Education: Opportunities and Challenges" BC Centre for Open Learning, July 2009
<http://www.osbr.ca/ojs/index.php/osbr/article/view/911/880>

This report discusses two OER models – the creation of open educational content in online Wiki environments specifically designed for its collaborative development and organisation, such as occurs in Wikiversity and WikiEducator, and the open courseware model where existing course content is made available on the Web, as has occurred at MIT where 'virtually all' of its courses were posted online by 2007.

Friesen raises the issue of sustainability as one that is of major concern for OER projects. He defines this as "the capacity of an initiative to outlive its initial start up phase and the associated short term project funding". He asserted that it was 'disquieting' to read from Susan D'Antoni's report (above) that the 'majority of OER developments' are generally still being 'undertaken on a project basis'.

He suggests that the open courseware model followed by MIT is a relatively clear alternative to project funding, (ie financial support of the educational institutions with which the courses are associated), and that MIT has benefited in a number of ways from its investment in OER:

- 32% of faculty say that putting say that putting material online has improved their teaching
- MIT's site has shown to be a significant factor in student choice of institution and recruitment
- Majorities of students and faculty use the site to support study and teaching
- Marketing of the quality of teaching and learning in areas of strategic institutional interest

Friesen concludes that "enlightened self-interest is one of the most

powerful drivers for the sustainability of OCW (open courseware) and for OER more generally.

3. OECD, "Giving Knowledge for Free: The Emergence of Open Educational Resources" OECD Publishing, May 2007
<http://www.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/display.asp?CID=&LANG=EN&SF1=DI&ST1=5L4S6TNG3F9X>

This report explores a range of issues and implications of the OER movement that it says exist at many policy levels and also identifies sustainability as a significant issue.

It suggests a number of models that can address this, from user-producer and co-production models to replacement, endowment, segmentation, voluntary support model, and membership model.

- The report says there are three arguments for governments to support OER projects:
- They expand access to learning particularly for non-traditional groups of students and thus widen participation in higher education.
- They can be an efficient way to promote lifelong learning.
- They can bridge the gap between non-formal, informal and formal learning.

It also says institutions mention six types of reasons for being involved in OER projects:

- Altruism – sharing knowledge is a good thing to do.
- Educational institutions should leverage taxpayers' money by allowing free sharing and re-use.
- Quality can be improved and the cost of content development reduced by sharing and re-using.
- Public relations – an OER project can attract new students.
- There is a need to look for new cost recovery models as institutions experience growing competition.
- Open sharing will speed up the development of new learning resources and stimulate innovation.

Whilst much of the literature and experience with OER relates to the higher education/tertiary sector, many of the implications, issues, and concerns identified could apply across all sectors, and consequently help inform decision and policy-making for stakeholders nationally and internationally.

Upcoming Events

The 6th annual JISC CETIS conference

10 – 11 November 2009, The Lakeside, Conference Aston, Birmingham

The CETIS conference considers the interventions needed to realize information systems for teaching and learning into the future. The conference includes sessions entitled 'Technology change in Education - Involving Senior Management at last?', and 'The problem with modeling or modeling problems?'

http://wiki.cetis.ac.uk/Conference_2009_Programme

UCISA Corporate Information Systems Groups 2009 conference

18 - 20 November 2009, Fairmont St Andrews

This year's UCISA CISG Conference aims to bring you the latest reactions to the challenges associated with financial crisis, funding cuts and high expenditure. With an exciting line up of presentations, including sessions about vendor management, the risks of cloud computing, the UK Research Excellence Framework, identity management, information management and data quality, green IT, strategy, lean principles and more. There will also be Birds of a Feather sessions to allow the discussion of your top concerns.

Get Involved

To keep up-to-date with e-Framework activities visit the [e-Framework community wiki](#).

To share your own experiences and let us know the topics that you would like us to explore, email Clare Groom: c.groom@jisc.ac.uk

Follow the [e-Framework on Twitter](#).