### Project Information

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<td>Project Title</td>
<td>TraD: Training for data management at UEL</td>
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<td>Lead Institution</td>
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<td>Partner Institutions</td>
<td>Digital Curation Centre; CILIP Library and Information Group (LIRG)</td>
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<td>Project Web URL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme Name</td>
<td>Managing Research Data 2012-13</td>
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<td>Programme Manager</td>
<td>Dr Simon Hodson</td>
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### Document Information

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<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Stephen Grace</th>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>27 June 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td>On approval the report will be available at The TraD project website. <a href="http://www.uel.ac.uk/TraD">http://www.uel.ac.uk/TraD</a></td>
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### Document History

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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support of the JISC for funding the TraD (Training for Data Management) project under the Managing Research Data (JISCMRD) programme. Our particular thanks to Dr. Simon Hodson, the Programme the Programme Manager, for his dedicated support and mentoring through the process.

Acknowledgements are also due to our project partners, Digital Curation Centre, School of Psychology, School of Architecture, Engineering & Computing, UEL Graduate School, Library & Information Research Group –CILIP and our subject librarians, who supported this project from its inception.

The project was led by Library and Learning Services at UEL with colleagues in three academic schools: the School of Psychology, the Graduate School and the School of Architecture Computing and Engineering. We thank our academic colleagues for their enthusiastic participation, especially Dr Sharon Cahill and Dr Caroline Dunmore. The Digital Curation Centre was an active partner in the project, and we are grateful for the creative and professional input of Sarah Jones and Monica Duke from DCC. A workshop for librarians involving TraD and RDMRose (another JISCMRD project) was organised by CILIP's Library and Information Research Group (LIRG), and we thank Ronan O'Beirne from LIRG for managing the workshop.

We thank the members of The Trad Advisory Group –Prof Cornelia Boldyreff, Dr Alan White, Prof Derek Moore (all UEL), Kevin Ashley (DCC) and Ronan O'Beirne (LIRG) – for invaluable guidance and support. We would like to acknowledge the hard work of the project management team (Stephen Grace, John Murtagh, Sarah Jones) for their dedication and commitment to deliver the project successfully.

2. Project Summary

TraD (Training for Data Management) was designed to embed training in UEL’s developing support for data management. It aimed to showcase disciplinary training for postgraduates by running courses in psychology and geoinformatics (the latter from newly-created material). TraD also enhanced skills in a library-run institutional data management setting through devising and delivering training for librarians, reinforced with workshop training for researchers. Most importantly the project helped us to create a research data management culture through raising awareness of research data management and training. The project has helped us to develop a road map for UEL’s research data management service.

Project Objectives were:

- To gather and analyse data management training requirements of a variety of academic and support roles
- To adopt and adapt existing training material (specifically DMTpsych\(^1\) and MANTRA\(^2\)) for the School of Psychology
- To create new online training material in computer science (CS), a discipline not covered by previous JISC projects
- To develop skills in data management through creating an online training module for librarians and research support staff based around DCC resources.
- To embed training material within existing curricula and in the Graduate School’s Researcher Development Programme (RDP).

\(^{1}\) http://www.dmtpsych.york.ac.uk/
\(^{2}\) http://datalib.edina.ac.uk/mantra/index.html
3. Main Body of Report

3.1 Project Outputs and Outcomes

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<th>Output / Outcome Type (e.g. report, publication, software, knowledge built)</th>
<th>Brief Description and URLs (where applicable)</th>
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<td>supportDM course</td>
<td>A complete first steps in RDM course for those supporting researchers, with presentations, exercises and online learning modules is available at <a href="http://www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources">www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources</a> and will be deposited in Jorum in July 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blog recording project activity</td>
<td>A blog on data management issues at UEL (<a href="http://datamanagementuel.wordpress.com">http://datamanagementuel.wordpress.com</a>) was used to record activities and achievements in the TraD project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing your Research Data course</td>
<td>Generic workshop delivered as part of Researcher Development Programme. To be made available at <a href="http://www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources">www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources</a> in July 2013.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geoinformatics data management</td>
<td>Short course for managing data relating to geoinformatics to be made available in July 2013 in Jorum and on TraD website.</td>
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<td>Wider RDM culture at UEL</td>
<td>Funding for and establishment of Research Data Services, an RDM support service. Developing details of the service will appear at <a href="http://www.uel.ac.uk/researchdata/">www.uel.ac.uk/researchdata/</a></td>
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3.2 How did you go about achieving your outputs / outcomes?

TraD had four components each designed to embed good practice in research data management: training of PGR students in Psychology using existing material; creating and piloting a course suitable for geoinformatics; developing and running a generic workshop as part of the Researcher Development Programme at UEL; and devising and running a training course for librarians that may have a role in supporting researchers manage their research data.

The psychology strand made use of existing materials created under a previous JISC programme - the MANTRA online course from the University of Edinburgh, and the DMTPsy materials from the University of York. The York materials (and those from a subsequent Sheffield project) were available when we initially reviewed the course content for use in the School of Psychology, but not when we compiled it because of a server failure at the host institution: the material is now made available in Jorum at http://dspace.jorum.ac.uk/xmlui/handle/10949/17596. Some of the York/Sheffield material was used in the initial presentation we created to brief students before using the online learning materials. We chose five of the MANTRA modules (including one which became available just as the TraD work commenced) to represent the breadth of content appropriate to the field of psychological sciences.

The academic lead named in the project bid left UEL just as the project got underway. It proved difficult to engage a replacement at short notice, but Dr Derek Moore undertook high level ownership for the School, and Dr Sharon Cahill with Dr Ian Tucker became the academic liaison with Stephen Grace (Project Manager) and John Murtagh (Project Officer). We initially hoped to run the psychology course ahead of the geo-informatics one and use it as a test bed. Due to the staff delays this was not possible, and the psychology course was moved to the Spring semester.

Grace and Murtagh presented the topic of RDM to two groups of professional doctorate students in the School - clinical psychologists and educational psychologists. We reviewed and heavily adapted the presentation between these sessions, structuring the material better and allowing more time for interaction with participants. The educational psychologists were very engaged with the topic and we were helped by the presence of Dr Cahill in leading discussions. Following this introduction the two cohorts of doctoral students were sent an invite to use the MANTRA modules at weekly intervals. MANTRA module was uploaded into UEL’s new e-learning platform (Moodle). It was a challenge for the team as researchers were unfamiliar with the new e-learning environment. A final meeting was...
held on 7 June 2013 to get feedback from the educational psychology group on the course, on what they learned, and what they thought should happen in the future.

The academic lead in the School of Architecture Computing and Engineering also left UEL at the point the project was starting. Despite several useful meetings with staff in the Centre for Geo-Information Studies it was not possible to replace her. Dr Allan Brimicombe and Dr Yang Li in the Centre did, though, give direction and extensive feedback on the content for a four-module course suitable for those students seeking to find, use, integrate, analyse and publish data with a geospatial component - not just from computer science or the School, but across the university. It did not prove possible to pilot the material with a suitable group of taught masters students, but after the project closure we will devise with the Centre and School alternative strategies for using the course we developed. The PowerPoint course is presented in four modules: Finding Data, Integrating Data, Managing Data, Sharing Data, and these will be made available on the TraD website in July 2013 for re-use by other universities.

The UEL Graduate School runs a comprehensive Researcher Development Programme aligned to the Vitae Researcher Development Framework, as a suite of skills development workshops and online resources designed to meet the needs of research students and staff at UEL. Working with Dr Caroline Dunmore (Researcher Development Manager), we identified content for a short (two hour) workshop designed to share best practice in managing research data. The course was devised and delivered jointly with Sarah Jones of DCC on 1 and 2 May 2013. It covered a presentation and exercises based around a simple data management plan template suitable for research students but also comprehensible to academics.

The fourth aim of TraD was the development of supportDM, a course for support staff likely to be involved in institutional support for researchers. We undertook a literature search of relevant material especially in the field of library and information science. We were also mindful of the existence of the RDMRose project funded under the same Jisc programme; we deliberately did not look at its material when determining ours, but sought to offer a distinctive resource of our own. In establishing our brief we had three critical inputs to inform us:

- the blended learning approach of the Data Intelligence 4 Librarians course from the Netherlands
- a draft of the DCC guide on RDM support services
- awareness of the RDMRose work.

We developed supportDM jointly with colleagues from the Digital Curation Centre. After determining the scope of the course and the topics to cover, we met to detail the content and divide responsibility for researching and writing modules

- Introduction to RDM
- Guidance and support for researchers
- Data management planning
- What data to keep and why?
- Cataloguing and sharing data

The online learning material was created using Xerte and uploaded onto Moodle with supporting material ready for participants to use.

Our approach was to create a blended learning course aimed at those involved or likely to be involved in RDM support services. Libraries have been leading most RDM support initiatives, and academic liaison librarians are a key resource since they are often the primary contact with academics. We therefore targeted our liaison librarians, called subject librarians at UEL, to test use the course. We invited an Assistant Librarian onto the course as a career development opportunity, and for some of the course we also had the participation of two Commonwealth Scholarship Commission fellows (from Ghana and India). On their return to their home countries, these fellows are raising awareness of research data management in their institutions. They want to develop long term partnerships with the TraD team to help them running similar training courses.

Using the blended learning model, we met with the subject librarians every fortnight to introduce each topic through a formal presentation, with some individual and group exercises. The librarians then studied the topic in the Xerte online module, as well as undertaking some ‘homework’ task designed...
to reinforce the learning with practical activity. They shared their experience of using the Xerte module and task with their colleagues at the following meeting, before the next topic was presented. A final meeting heard their experience of the last topic, but also got extremely useful feedback on the course as a whole, which has led to revision of the material ahead of final deposit in Jorum. As a summative exercise, each librarian used an adopted “RU RDM Ready” self-assessment form (from the RDMRose project) to measure their confidence before and after the supportDM course. All felt a marked improvement in their understanding and confidence in the matter of RDM – a key aim of the course.

The project officers established a project website at www.uel.ac.uk/trad to post outputs, and used a blog to report and document activity. The blog (http://datamanagementuel.wordpress.com) is being used for wider RDM matters, sharing knowledge, experience and engaging wider audiences.

Presentations on the project were given at:

- "Opening the door to data with new RDM skills for librarians" at the RDM event "Re-skilling for RDM", UWE, Bristol, 29 January 2013
- JISC/CMRD programme meeting, Birmingham, 25-26 March 2013
- "Sharing the load - librarians and research data support services" at M25 annual conference, London, 23 April 2013
- "Research Data and the Role of University Libraries" at LIKE (London Information and Knowledge Exchange), 25 April 2013
- "Research Data Management challenges & opportunities for libraries" workshop organised by LIRG (the Library and Information Research Group), which shared insights and outputs from RDMRose and TraD for librarians facing RDM support, CILIP, London, 30 May 2013

A further event with the working title "Support for support: training those supporting RDM" is being planned for mid-July 2013. This will share the experiences of JISC funded projects in delivering training to library, IT and research office staff with data management support roles. As well as showcasing materials created by JISCMRD projects, it will offer the experience of the TraD, ADMIRe and RoaDMaP in training the three different groups.

### 3.3. What did you learn?

Engaging with academic staff was challenging, but also very rewarding. Especially in the period leading up to REF submissions, turnover in academic staff is high. In our case, we lost both of the academic leads identified in the two Schools. Given their other time commitments, it proved difficult to recruit replacements. This is a difficult risk to mitigate.

Similarly, when working with academics (and students) it is important to understand the timescales imposed by programme timetables. The psychology course originally planned for the autumn semester had to move to the spring because the first was already determined by the time we sought contact time with the students. Indeed, it was the tenacity of Dr Cahill which created time in the spring programme for professional doctorate students (who are typically only on campus one day a week). For similar reasons, it was not possible to schedule contact time with students to use the geoinformatics material.

We also learnt that shorter e-learning modules were preferred to longer ones. People find it difficult to engage with online learning modes that are too long, or which cover multiple topics; both the subject librarians and educational psychology students felt half-hour sessions were more realistic than hour-long ones.

More positively, we were pleased (and even surprised) that all the cohorts found their training worthwhile. The psychology students were enthusiastic about the benefits of undertaking the course, and could clearly relate good data management practice to their working lives as well as the academic environment. The subject librarians all assessed their confidence as greatly increased as a result of the course, and also understood the library’s role in supporting this new area of activity. The staff and students who attended the generic workshop all felt the activity worthwhile; they were enthusiastic about using the data management plan template and several took up our offer of submitting their templates for our advice. We will use this evidence to consider a UEL data management plan.
template (or separate ones for staff and research students) to assist those not subject to RCUK requirements.

The attendance at the generic workshops in May 2013 demonstrated a clear demand and interest in good data management. With only a week’s notice, several staff and students signed up for the workshop. All who booked attended, and so did several more: six plus three more on day one, and fifteen plus six more on the second day. This was a first for the Researcher Development Programme.

The subject librarians were not entirely clear the purpose of the supportDM course – was it to raise their awareness, a CPD activity, or were they being prepared for a new role in RDM support? At the time the course was initiated, UEL had not determined its RDM support offer so we tried to be suitably all-encompassing in our aims. Those reusing the material should be explicit about the purpose of the course. All the librarians, though, did find the course worthwhile in raising their knowledge and confidence in data management.

### 3.4. Immediate Impact

Students on the psychology course reported that they changed behaviour as a result of the course; one went home and backed up her data that evening, one started using a data stick and one stopped using them, for instance. They felt the course had practical value and gave them a good grounding in RDM issues. They recommended that all PRG students undertake the course as part of research methods modules, and the course is repeated in each year of their studies. Discussions scheduled for July/August with course leaders will see how the course can be adopted in PGR programmes in the School. More widely, this course has demonstrated that library-based staff are trusted and competent to deliver RDM training as a part of course curricula. A meeting has already been held with the Cass School of Education and Communities, with another scheduled with the School of Health, Sports and Bioscience, to explore working with schools in this way. Dr Richard Plant, project officer for the DMTPsych and DMSPPsych projects, also influenced School of Psychology researchers in the adoption of training when he attended the staff workshop arranged as a result of student training.

Psychology students found the MANTRA courses too long as they were familiar with shorter e-learning modules. We established that shorter modules would be preferable and should be used to reinforce face to face meetings. A similar finding from supportDM participants suggests that online learning modules work well when they are short and punchy, and are reinforcing learning and experience sharing in face to face meetings.

The generic workshop is to be adopted as a component of the Graduate School’s Researcher Development Programme from autumn 2013. We have also agreed three further RDM-related workshops for programme in 2013-14:
- Writing a Data Management Plan for external funders
- How to make data suitable for sharing
- What to do with data at the end of a research project.

We think this is a significant achievement for the library. TraD has demonstrated the ways libraries can work with institutional stakeholders with an interest in good practice in RDM. The project has helped the library in strengthening relationships with our research community.

Following feedback at the University of West of England event in January 2013, we committed to offer the supportDM modules for others to inspect, use and re-use. We understand that the University of Nottingham has adopted the first two modules and placed them in their VLE for use in training their own support staff: this was mentioned in their "Research Data Management Training" report. We are planning a hands-on workshop for July 2013 to share our experience and that of similar initiatives in training support staff.

More widely, the TraD project had an instrumental part in building the case for an institutional RDM support service based in the library. Project Director Gurdish Sandhu identified and sought funding for a permanent Research Data Management Officer post to work with the Research Services Librarian in helping researchers through training, advice and direct assistance (for instance in drafting data management plans). The post from August 2013 together with a budget for investing in RDM technical infrastructure, will provide UEL capacity in this area. It is also a direct response to the institutional RDM policy, one of the first to be adopted in the UK. Both the Associate Director and Director of
Library and Learning Services have found wide interest in TraD and UEL’s support for RDM from other library directors in the UK.

3.5. Future Impact
We will deposit supportDM material in Jorum, and receive download statistics on their use. Since we will use it as the basis of our own support staff training after the TraD project completion, we are likely to revise and augment supportDM with additional content.

We will work with the DCC and other stakeholders to publicise the work of TraD. Within UEL, we will report on the project to the university’s Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee, and follow up with each academic school what support they might want to supplement the workshops offered in the Graduate School Programme. These conversations are already underway with two Schools, and training under the Researcher Development Programme will be expanded.

We will work with SCONUL to offer RDM awareness workshop for library senior staff. We would be happy to run similar training workshops in India, Nigeria and Ghana subject to funding availability. We have already received requests from these Commonwealth countries.

4. Conclusions
TraD has proved successful in developing research data management culture and in embedding RDM skills at UEL.

The psychology strand has shown that there is a (latent) demand for training by doctoral students, and that a suitable course can be delivered by library-based staff in concert with academic leads. The students in our pilot group were clear about the benefits of good data management, and said that such a course should become a compulsory part of doctoral programmes: embedded in research methods teaching, repeated each year, providing opportunities for discussion as well as didactic knowledge transfer, related to their working environments (professional doctorate courses) and suitably assessed.

The generic workshop was very well received, by research staff and students alike. For students in particular there is a demand for practical guidance on managing research data where there is not the same level of institutional support as for staff. Guidance on using cloud-based services for backup and a straightforward DMP template were found helpful. The workshop is already scheduled for repeating in the next academic year, along with three further more specific topics.

The supportDM course aimed at those supporting researchers was well received by UEL academic liaison librarians. The evidence from a final survey showed a marked increase in confidence on the part of every librarian. The course will be used for training and awareness of further library staff, and as appropriate for others in support roles.

More widely, TraD has been instrumental in articulating a culture of supporting research data management at UEL, following on from the adoption of an institutional RDM policy in March 2012. It demonstrated the library’s role in supporting research staff and students. It also helped Library and Learning Services refine its positive attitude into a more defined service proposition. In this it was greatly helped by the DCC institutional engagement which ran alongside TraD – indeed, since Sarah Jones and Monica Duke were also the institutional engagement officers there was a seamless blending of the two activities at UEL.

5. Recommendations
Recommend to those planning the delivery of RDM training for students (mindful of the academic calendar) to give suitable notice to schedule contact time in timetables.

Recommend to academic leads to consider incorporating appropriate assessment exercises into RDM training programmes.

Recommend JISC to establish shared RDM infrastructure at the national level to ensure the long term accessibility of research data.
6. Implications for the future

All training modules and material would be available under Open access Creative Commons licences for further enhancements. This will help us to improve the quality of training modules.

This project has provided us the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop research data management training modules for other disciplines at UEL. We will be very happy to share our experiences with the HEI community and receive feedback.

We have commitment from the UEL senior management, received funding to establish research data management service. This is a significant legacy of the project and the result of a robust sustainability plan.

7. References


8. Appendices

8.1. Overview of supportDM course

This explains the aims of supportDM, gives detail of the component online modules and supporting materials, and offers advice on using the course.

8.2. Interview schedule

This interview schedule was used by UEL subject librarians to interview researchers and understand the data aspects of their research activities.

8.3. Simple Data Management Plan template

This template was used in the ‘Managing your research data’ researcher workshop as the basis of an exercise

8.4. Psychology RDM training and supportDM blog posts

This report compiles the blog posts for each of these two strands of activity, and acts as a record of what was undertaken and what was learned in each case.
“What is this whole research data thing anyway?”
“Why should it concern me, what has the library got to do with this?”
“How can I advise on writing a Data Management Plan”

The five modules of supportDM will tell you all you need to know to support researchers to manage and share their data. Each session will be introduced by an expert speaker, reinforced by an online module to work through at your own pace. You will also have a small activity to give you practical experience of the types of support we can provide to researchers.

The fortnightly meetings will last 90mins, and we anticipate the online module and task together will take around two hours to be fitted in as convenient before the next session. We will review each module before moving on to the next, so that you can share your experience of what you have learned with the rest of your peer group.

Objectives
- Increase awareness/knowledge of RDM
- Learn what resources to use, and where to get help at UEL
- Build your confidence in dealing with support enquiries
- Become certified to support your CPD

Module 1: An introduction to RDM
This module will give you a basic understanding of the activities and roles involved in the research data lifecycle.

Module 2: Providing guidance and support
This module will cover typical questions and signposting resources. We will look at models employed by other universities to develop support at UEL.

Module 3: Data management plans
This module will give an overview to funder expectations and UEL’s own policy requirements. Exercises will cover how best to support researchers to develop their plans.

Module 4: What data to keep, and why
This module will consider how to work with researchers to identify data of long-term value so it can be shared and curated as appropriate.

Module 5: Cataloguing and preserving data
This module will explain how registers and repositories can aid the discoverability and reuse of research data. We will consider what metadata is appropriate to capture or create and how best to do this.
SupportDM is a course for those starting research data management support courses. It presumes no prior knowledge of data management or digital curation, and has been developed as part of the Jisc-funded TraD project by the University of East London with the Digital Curation Centre. SupportDM is designed for standalone self-directed learning using Xerte online modules, and also in a blended learning environment with group meetings and individual tasks to complement the online elements.

**Introductory meeting**
Explanation of the course aims and methods [10mins]
Setting the scene/ice-breaker activity [30mins]
- Suggestion – present the results of a RDM survey of staff/students at your institution
Exercise [10mins] Match the data to the publication
Presentation [20mins] “Introduction to research data management”
Questions and discussion [20mins]
Activity [20mins] Comment on the LIBER Ten Recommendations – “Could we, should we?”
Next steps [10mins]
- Explain how to use Xerte Module 1 and set up a researcher interview before next session

**Module 1 “About Research Data Management”**
- Introducing research data
- About research data
- Benefits and drivers
- Roles and players

The module is designed to take no more than 60 minutes, and is in four parts.

**Task 1 “Researcher interview”**
Ask the participants to set up a short (30-60mins) interview with a researcher based on four questions:
- Could you please pick a recent research project to use as an example, and based on that explain a little about the nature of your research and the data that you create?
- How did you manage the data during your project?
- What happened to the data at the end of your project?
- What are your challenges and worries in terms of research data management?

There is an interview framework available with prompts for each question.

**Next meeting**
At the next meeting, ask the participants to share their experience in interviewing researchers about their research data. The next topic will be presented ahead of Module 2 Guidance and Support.

**Things to consider**
**Frequency:** At UEL we are running the course fortnightly, but you may choose to do it more or less frequently. This may affect the time available for Task 1 – you could undertake a full DAF interview.
**Participants:** Is the group already a cohesive group or one composed of people from different settings?
**Teachers:** Do you have experts, or could you run it as a collective with each participant leading a session in turn?
SupportDM is a course for those starting research data management support courses. It presumes no prior knowledge of data management or digital curation, and has been developed as part of the Jisc-funded TraD project by the University of East London with the Digital Curation Centre. SupportDM is designed for standalone self-directed learning using Xerte online modules, and also in a blended learning environment with group meetings and individual tasks to complement the online elements.

Meeting
Feedback on the online Xerte/Moodle Module 1 course [15 minutes]
Feedback on researcher interview [30-40 minutes]
  - How did it go for you?
  - What did you learn? – Writing responses from the 4 questions on paper stuck on the walls
Presentation [20mins] “A comprehensive RDM service: the Monash University example”
Preparation for activities [15mins]
  - Review an external RDM website
  - Answering a typical RDM question

Module 2 “Guidance and support for researchers”
The module is designed to take no more than 60 minutes and is built around an RDM policy.

Task 1 “Reviewing an external RDM support website”
Ask the participants to review a sample site and report back via a PPT of three slides:
  - What the site covers
  - The tone, language, look
  - What we could use/copy at our institution
The PPT template is in the Moodle Module.

Task 2 “How would you answer RDM enquiries?”
Ask the participants to use their information-seeking and presentation skills to answer a typical question about managing research data. Set aside 30 minutes to work in pairs/triples to research and answer one question, and email it to organiser using these headings:
  - What I knew about the topic beforehand?
  - What I know now?
  - How did I obtain this knowledge?
  - What else would you like to know about the topic?
  - How did I find this task? How would I improve it?

Next meeting
At the next meeting, ask the participants to report back on the two task and their use of the Xerte module. The next topic will be presented ahead of Module 3 Data Management Plans.

Things to consider
XXXXXXXXXXXX
SupportDM is a course for those starting research data management support courses. It presumes no prior knowledge of data management or digital curation, and has been developed as part of the Jisc-funded TraD project by the University of East London with the Digital Curation Centre. SupportDM is designed for standalone self-directed learning using Xerte online modules, and also in a blended learning environment with group meetings and individual tasks to complement the online elements.

Meeting
Feedback on the online Xerte/Moodle Module 2 course [10 mins]

Feedback on reviewing an RDM website [15 mins]
- What the site covers
- The tone, language, look
- What we could use/copy at our institution

Feedback on answering RDM enquiries [15 mins]
- How did you find this task?
- How would you improve it?

Presentation: Data Management Planning [15 mins]

Exercise: Comparing DMPs [25 mins]
- An exercise looking at example technical plans from successful AHRC applications

Preparation for activities [10 mins]
- How to support researchers with DMPs

Module 3 “Data Management Planning”
The module is designed to take no more than 60 minutes. It explains why researchers should create DMPs, what to include and how to develop plans.

Task 1 “How to support researchers with DMPs”
Ask participants to read the short case studies about supporting researchers with data management planning. They should consider the merits of each approach and decide which they would provide.

Next meeting
At the next meeting, ask the participants to share their experience of the DMP module and views on the types of support to provide to researchers. The next topic will be presented ahead of Module 4 What data to keep, and why.
SupportDM is a course for those starting research data management support courses. It presumes no prior knowledge of data management or digital curation, and has been developed as part of the Jisc-funded TraD project by the University of East London with the Digital Curation Centre. SupportDM is designed for standalone self-directed learning using Xerte online modules, and also in a blended learning environment with group meetings and individual tasks to complement the online elements.

Meeting
Feedback on the online Xerte/Moodle Module 3 course [10 mins]

Feedback on the case study approaches to DMP support [25 mins]
- What were the good and bad points of each approach?
- How did you find this task?
- How would you improve it?

Presentation: What data to keep, and why [15 mins]

Exercise: Designing a selection policy from scratch [30 mins]
- This exercise will see the group consider reasons for keeping some data but not others. It uses headings from the NERC checklist to brainstorm ideas about what should be the selection policy for a particular institution.
- The course leaders should write up the policy for the group to review at the next meeting.

Preparation for task Appraise a sample data collection [10 mins]
- Explain what the task is and how participants can access the data for consideration

Module 4 “What data to keep, and why”
The module is designed to take no more than 60 minutes. It explains what factors to consider when appraising data for long-term curation.

Task “Appraise a sample data collection”
This task revisits the data interview conducted earlier in the course. Taking a completed project’s data collection from your researcher, try to identify which datasets are suitable for adding to an institutional data repository (presume there is one). Are some datasets more important than others, is there enough evidence to work out what is what and is the documentation adequate to inform potential reusers of the data? Consider any questions you might need to ask the creator.

Next meeting
At the next meeting, ask the participants to share their experience of the appraisal module and views on the appraisal task. Circulate ahead of time a summary of the group exercise, and discuss it becoming policy. The next topic will be presented ahead of Module 5 Cataloguing and sharing data.

Things to consider
Policy: What is your institutional context for a data repository – do you have existing documents/policies to inform its collection/selection policy? Who should be involved in writing and approving it?
Availability of datasets: If you don’t have access to data from the researcher interview, can a sample data collection be made available for the homework task?
SupportDM is a course for those starting research data management support courses. It presumes no prior knowledge of data management or digital curation, and has been developed as part of the Jisc-funded TraD project by the University of East London with the Digital Curation Centre. SupportDM is designed for standalone self-directed learning using Xerte online modules, and also in a blended learning environment with group meetings and individual tasks to complement the online elements.

Meeting
Feedback on the online Xerte/Moodle Module 4 course [10 mins]

Feedback on the appraisal task from Module 4 [25 mins]
- Were you able to work out what was what?
- Which data were worth selecting for retention, and why?
- What questions would you need to ask the creator?

Presentation: Cataloguing and sharing data [20 mins]

Exercise: Barriers to sharing data [20 mins]
- This exercise will see the group consider reasons for keeping some data but not others. It uses headings from the NERC checklist to brainstorm ideas about what should be the selection policy for a particular institution.
- The course leaders should write up the policy for the group to review at the next meeting.

Preparation for task Metadata for data citation [10 mins]
- Explain what the task is and how participants submit their metadata records.

Module 5 “Cataloguing and sharing data”
The module is designed to take no more than 60 minutes. It explains ways to share data, to license them for reuse, and the metadata needed for finding and understanding datasets in repositories. It also covers developments in data registries and data repositories.

Task “Metadata for data citation”
Participants use examples from real repositories to identify and record the essential metadata needed for citing those datasets, offering a chance to reflect on the process of creating and presenting citation metadata.

Next meeting
The next meeting will be the course conclusion. Participants will feed back on Module 5 (including its task), but also on the course as a whole. What did they learn, how did they find the different learning methods, what would they like to see covered in future, and what are the library’s next steps?

Things to consider
Metadata creation: Who would undertake metadata creation for data using what systems in your institution?
Review: Do you want to formalise a review of the course (perhaps in a report to managers), blog about the experience as an individual, or feed back to colleagues?
Follow up: Are there tangible actions you can take as a result of the course? Who would need to approve these actions, or be briefed to consider them?
Research Data Management (RDM) interview framework

To understand the research process and identify how librarians can provide RDM support, we’d like you to interview a researcher for 30mins-1hour.

Below is a transcript with pointers on what to ask and how to develop discussion.

Introduction

To set the scene, explain a little about your role as a librarian and the research data management course you are doing. Mention that the objective of the Training for Data Management (TraD) project is to raise awareness of research data management and make sure appropriate support and services are in place. The context is the UEL Research Data Policy.

Interview

To structure the interview, we’d like you to talk through the process of completing a research project. Ask the researcher to explain what they did from initially applying for a grant, creating the data, analysing it, publishing and sharing the data. It will be helpful to understand the nature of the dataset (type, volume, format etc), whether they wrote a data management plan and if the data were shared or preserved in the long-term.

1. Could you please pick a recent research project to use as an example, and based on that explain a little about the nature of your research and the data that you create?

   If needed, the following could be used as prompts:

   a. What research questions were you trying to answer on the project?

   b. What type of data did you create? e.g. interview transcript, audiovisual data, statistical databases...

   c. How did you collect the data?

2. How did you manage the data during your project?

   If needed, the following could be used as prompts:

   a. Where did you store the data? e.g. on departmental I: drives, on USB sticks...

   b. Who was responsible for backing up the data?

   c. How did you share the data with others in your group? e.g. email, dropbox, portable storage devices...

   d. Did you write a data management plan to help decide what to do?
3. What happened to the data at the end of your project?

   If needed, the following could be used as prompts:

   a. Did your publisher ask you to share the underlying data or submit it as supplementary information?
   b. Did you deposit (or consider depositing) your data in a data centre?
   c. How did you decide what to keep?
   d. Where are your data now stored and backed up?
   e. Has anyone asked for access to your data?

4. What are your challenges and worries in terms of research data management?

   a. Have you ever lost data or been unable to understand it?
   b. Is your storage space sufficient?
   c. Are there additional support services you would like to see?

Wrap up & close

Thank the researcher for taking part and ask if there is anything else they would like to add that wasn’t covered? If desired, pick up on particular aspects of interest such as services they would like to see developed to wrap up the conversation.

Leave a copy of the UEL Research Data Management Policy as you depart.

This framework was devised by Stephen Grace and John Murtagh (UEL) and Sarah Jones and Monica Duke (DCC) as part of the Jisc-funded TraD project at the University of East London. It is based on the DAF implementation guide, UWE’s pilot study “Managing Research Data: a pilot study in Health and Life Sciences” and David Shotton’s “Twenty questions for Research Data Management”. Details are in our blog entry here.

www.uel.ac.uk/trad/datamanagementuel.wordpress.com
1. Could you please pick a recent research project to use as an example, and based on that explain a little about the nature of your research and the data that you create?

2. How did you manage the data during your project?

3. What happened to the data at the end of your project?

4. What are your challenges and worries in terms of research data management?

Name of researcher:
Data Management Plan Template for PGR Students
Use this template to compile a simple data management plan for your research data. Imagine you need to write a short summary to inform a new supervisor, who does not already know your thesis or the data you are creating/using.

1 Introduction and Context
Write a paragraph on the aim and purpose of your research.

2 Data types, formats, standards and capture methods
Describe the data aspects of your research, how you will capture/generate them, the file formats you are using and why. Mention how metadata will be created to describe the data, and your reasons for choosing particular data standards and approaches.

3 Ethics and Intellectual property
Detail any ethical and privacy issues, including the consent of participants. Explain the copyright/IPR and whether there are any data licensing issues – either for data you are reusing, or your data which you will make available to others.
4 Access, Data Sharing and Re-use

Note who would be interested in your data, and describe how you will make them available (with any restrictions). Detail any reasons not to share, as well as embargo periods or if you want time to exploit your data for publishing.

5 Short-term Storage and Data Management

Give a rough idea of data volume. Say where and on what media you will store data, and how they will be backed-up. Mention security measures to protect data which are sensitive or valuable.

6 Deposit and Long-term Preservation

Consider what data are worth selecting for long-term access and preservation. Say where you intend to deposit the data, such as in UEL’s research archive ROAR or the UK Data Archive.

You can email researchdata@uel.ac.uk for advice on managing your research data.

Adapted from DCC Checklist for a Data Management Plan v3.1 © 2012 DCC CC-BY

Useful guidance in the DCC guide How to Develop a Data Management and Sharing Plan and in the Managing and Sharing Data: best practice for researchers guide from UK Data Archive
During the TraD project, Stephen Grace and John Murtagh used a blog to record activity and the lessons learned.

This document collates the posts on the psychology course (used by professional doctorate students in the School of Psychology) and the supportDM course (used by subject librarians at UEL).

You can see these and other posts on the blog at

datamanagementuel.wordpress.com
Psychology RDM training

http://datamanagementuel.wordpress.com/category/psychology/

1. Review of existing RDM training materials
Posted on 23/10/2012

Two workpackages (2 and 3) in TraD will produce an adapted data management course for professional doctorate/PhD students in Psychology, and new data management materials for Computer Science postgraduate students.

Our first task was made a lot easier by two factors. One, the expectation from JISC that funded projects make their outputs available for re-use and adaptation and secondly, there were already existing projects with excellent training materials for RDM in psychology (MANTRA and DMTpsych).

We reviewed both these training packages and have outlined our top three most valuable elements for reuse in the training of psychology research students in RDM at UEL.

Top 3 for Psychology

1. Mantra

An excellent online course that makes full use of multimedia materials such as video, images, flowcharts as well as learning technology methodologies in the form of quizzes within modules, drag and drop (words into phrases), questions from scenarios, drag and drop of words to fit tables (for example, a data management plan). The modules also have an excellent “further reading” element at the end of each module.

2. MANTRA – Data Handling

A useful teaching module on Data Handling using the statistical analysis software SPSS 18 (aka PASW 18) which is commonly used in Psychology and Social Sciences.

3. DMTpsych

A six-part lecture series on Data Management Planning in Psychology with copious slides full of excellent material and images. This certainly provides us with an option to pick and mix from each lecture to fit our own training materials. Accompanying the PowerPoint presentations are slide-by-slide feedback from students on the course which means we have an excellent opportunity for tweaking and working on ideas for training at UEL.
We will also be looking into using the comprehensive guidance booklet (136 pages!) entitled: Guidance Notes for Completing a “Checklist for a Data Management Plan v3.0” For Researchers in the Psychological Sciences”.

Our second task as part of workpackage 3 was to review all other existing RDM training materials for ideas related to creating a training course for Computer Science students. In total we reviewed 19 JISC-funded projects that contained elements of RDM training and to which we could use for our own training modules. Read on for our Top 5 finds.

Top 5 Finds

1. **Datum in Action** – The fact that Northumbria’s School of Computing, Engineering and Information Sciences (SCEIS) was included could provide relevant examples for our CS data management. The thorough and Records Manager-authored “Folders and Files – Guidance” is a very good document. [http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/static/5007/ceispdf/filenameguide.pdf](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/static/5007/ceispdf/filenameguide.pdf)

2. **PrePARe** - “What is Data?” gives an excellent and succinct presentation with good images which are worth re-using. The ‘Store It Safely’ slide we also thought to be a good punchy slide with lots of relevant images and Explain It, Share It, Start Early. Probably the least driest presentation on RDM. A script alongside the presentations: [http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/dataman/PrePARe/Lightning_modules_intro.pdf](http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/dataman/PrePARe/Lightning_modules_intro.pdf)

3. **Digital Curation Centre’s Curation Checklist**

The Curation Checklist is very succinct – a table of

- Checklist for conceptualisation
- Checklist for create and/or receive
- Checklist for appraise and select
- Checklist for ingest and store
- Checklist for preservation action
- Checklist for access and reuse

[http://www.dcc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Curation%20Checklists.pdf](http://www.dcc.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Curation%20Checklists.pdf)

4. **Research360**

Doctoral Training Centres as catalysts for research data management

The workshops and presentations detailing the training of doctoral students at Bath have been very useful in finding out what aspects of the training has worked well and what has worked less well.

5. **Incremental**

Cambridge and Glasgow in their joint project gave lots of good links covering external links as well as newly-produced factsheets, some examples (hyperlinked):

- Preparing for your inevitable computer disaster’ (GeekGirl’s Plain English Computing)
- Recovering Deleted Files [in Windows] (GeekGirl’s Plain English Computing)
- How do I keep track of my files with all of these devices?
- Organising Files: developing an electronic filing system (factsheet)
- Information on file formats (factsheet)
- Selecting Data: what to keep, what to bin, why bother? (Fact Sheet)

Incremental also offers Factsheets and Tables on the following topics:

- Organising Files: developing an electronic filing system [PDF / PowerPoint](#)
- Document Properties: adding information to your Microsoft Office documents [PDF / PowerPoint](#)
- Selecting Data: what to keep, what to bin, why bother? [PDF / PowerPoint](#)
• How do I keep track of my files with all of these devices? PDF / Word Doc
• Common Image Formats: what to use when PDF / PowerPoint
• UK Funding Councils: data retention and access policies PDF/PowerPoint

As you can imagine, the review process of all existing training materials has been time consuming. We thought it would be useful to others embarking upon a similar process to share what resources we found and our thoughts on each of them.

If you have used any of these resources, or want to recommend others, please feel free to add your comments to this post.

2. Lords of the Data: psychology and research data
Posted on 04/12/2012

One of the work outputs on the TraD project is to deliver a course in research data management for Psychology postgraduate students at University of East London. We've therefore been keenly following an academic scandal directly affecting the world of social psychology involving the Dutch psychologists Diederik Stapel (falsifying data) and Dirk Smeesters (massaging data). Similar scandals and retractions in the field have also involved Lawrence Sanna (2012) Marc Hauser (fabricating data 2010) and Karen Ruggiero (2001).

Dutch investigators have released their final report into the case of Stapel from Tilburg University, entitled: Flawed science: The fraudulent research practices of social psychologist Diederik Stapel.

Its findings reveal that Stapel fabricated data in 55 articles and book chapters. So far, 31 of those published papers have been retracted — three others have expressions of concern — although more might follow. In addition, 10 dissertations by students Stapel supervised were found to contain fraudulent data and this is what should be brought to the attention of our psychology Postgrad students here at UEL.

The final report makes for sober reading (Stapel personally taught his department’s scientific ethics course, for example) and a damning assessment of the discipline itself referring to “a failure to meet normal standards of methodology, [bringing] into the spotlight a research culture in which... sloppy science, alongside out-and-out fraud, was able to remain undetected for so long.” P. 5
The report has highlighted a number of issues with regards to research data handling, standards and attitudes and which we are likely to cover in our course. More points from the report:

- “The Stapel group had no protocols for, for example, the collection of data (including standards for questionnaires) or research reports. The PhD students in Mr Stapel’s group were not familiarized with fixed and clear standards. (Stapel) underscored the lack of (fixed and clear) standards; but that too was far from a local issue, according to Mr Stapel.” P. 42

We cannot be certain if as Stapel says this is not a local issue but one that crosses social psychology as a whole but how research data is collected and standards applied to that data (as well as taught) should be something that is paramount in the teaching of postgraduates. The report again:

- “The doctoral examination board must form a clear impression of the way in which research data has been collected.” P. 57

The importance of research data verification and replication of findings from research data will be something we shall likely emphasize to students studying for doctorates in our course.

- “Research data that underlie psychology publications must remain archived and be made available on request to other scientific practitioners. This not only applies to the dataset ultimately used for the analysis, but also the raw laboratory data and all the relevant research material, including completed questionnaires, audio and video recordings, etc. It is recommended that a system be applied whereby on completion of the experiment, the protocols and data used are stored in such a way that they can no longer be modified. It must be clear who is responsible for the storage of and access to the data. The publications must indicate where the raw data is located and how it has been made permanently accessible. It must always remain possible for the conclusions to be traced back to the original data. Journals should only accept articles if the data concerned has been made accessible in this way.” P. 58

There is not much we can add to this set of recommendations; whether they can or will be implemented is as yet unclear particularly as as far back as 2002 similar recommendations were made following the Ruggiero case. But there seems to be a desire to change and the way data is managed in this field is something that unbeknownst to us is something we are now a part of.

As Uri Simonsohn, the researcher who flagged up questionable data in studies by social psychologist Dirk Smeesters, has said: “We in psychology are actually trying to fix things... It would be ironic if that led to the perception that we are less credible than other sciences are. My hope is that five years from now, other sciences will look to psychology as an example of proper reporting of scientific research.”

We hope that the psychology course in research data management we will be running at UEL will be a part of this hoped-for progress and will be seen as an example of good practice for future psychologists.

3. Teaching RDM to Psychology students

Posted on 07/02/2013

We’ve recently kick-started our RDM training for post-graduate students in the School of Psychology. In addition to the introduction presentations on RDM we are offering five online modules using the MANTRA course material via the newly launched Moodle virtual learning environment at UEL.

Our course will cover the following MANTRA modules:

1. Research Data Explained
2. Organising Data
3. Documentation and Metadata
4. Storage and Security
5. Data protection, rights & access
Our first Introductory class included 27 professional doctoral students in clinical psychology and our second 12 professional doctoral students and 1 PhD student in educational psychology.

We were pleased by the number who attended; their time on campus is limited sometimes to just one day a week; research data management as a subject doesn’t always come across as terribly exciting either.

The PowerPoint presentation lasted from an hour to two hours and re-purposed useful slides previously featured in other JISC-funded RDM projects in psychology 1) Data Management Planning and Storage for Psychology (DMSpsych) and 2) DMTpsych: Postgraduate training for research data management in the psychological sciences.

We also featured the research malpractice scandals from two social psychologists Diederik Stapel (falsifying data) and Dirk Smeesters (massaging data) which always livens up RDM proceedings. We quoted the report investigating Stapel which accuses the discipline of becoming a representative of “sloppy science” because of the way it currently deals with data.

We also fitted in 4 or 5 question points which broke up the session of our students being talked at and helped start discussions from.

- What is your research?
- What is research data for you?
- Verification of science
- Prevention/detection of fraud
- Are you aware of these fraud cases?
- How does it affect you, and psychology?
- Do things need to change?
- Has this happened to you?
- What lessons have you learnt? (E.g. have you changed where you’ve saved your data? Yes/No?)
- What concerns do you have about sharing data? (Especially dealing with children)

You can look at the presentation we did here

The questions that came out of these discussions were as follows:

- “death of the data” – what happens to the research data when it is no longer of use. Can it be used for teaching or should it be destroyed?
- What does the Data Protection Act (1998) say about keeping data after a project ends?
- What does the UK Data Archive say about what rights I have over my data that I deposit?

We supplemented our presentation with a print-out of questions about RDM entitled: “Some things to consider in your research” which was started by MIT and adapted by us, which asked students questions such as

- How long should it be retained? e.g. 3-5 years, 10-20 years, permanently?
- What directory and file naming convention will be used? Year, versions, folder conventions.
- Do you have a storage and backup strategy?

We also included print-outs from the fact sheet produced by JISC on “Freedom of Information and Research Data” which we hoped would answer any questions our students had if they were to be the recipient of an FOI. Reassuringly, we told them that were 23 exemptions to their research data having to be made public and the DPA trumped the FOI Act.

We’ll be blogging more about the Psychology training in future posts as well as in Geoinformatics.

4. Psychology RDM Workshop
Posted on 15/03/2013
On Wednesday 13th March Stephen and I organised a workshop for academics in the School of Psychology.

Our aims were the following:

1. To inform participants of funder expectations for RDM
2. To share good practice in data management planning
3. To gather RDM requirements from psychology researchers
4. To offer tailored support via data clinic sessions

Also helping us on the day was Dr Richard Plant, who formerly worked on two JISC MRD Projects (DMTpsych Project at the University of York, and Data Management Planning and Storage for Psychology (DMSPsych) at the University of Sheffield.

Dr Sharon Cahill, Senior Lecturer and Research Leader for Professional Doctorate in Applied Educational and Child Psychology in the School opened the workshop by explaining our involvement with the School via the training programme for PhD and Professional Doctorate students in RDM.

I then gave a short overview presentation about the TraD project, UEL’s Research Data Policy and our training for psychology professional doctorate students. Since it was passed by Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee in March last year we have to advertise the policy and we thought this was a good opportunity especially as it has a number of conditions that cover what Deans and Principle Investigators (PIs) are expected to do with respects to data management in the University. It also details the roles and responsibilities of the Library and Research Office.

Dr Richard Plant then presented on Data Management Plans, or developing good practice in managing data during the project which also went into detail about the DMPOnline tool from the DCC. Dr Plant has written a useful 36 page guidance document on how to fill out a DMP specific to psychology. He also outlined why DMPs for funding bids were now required.

We followed this up with an exercise on Data Management Planning where we placed academics into groups of three. We then asked them based on their latest/last research projects and draft a sample answer to one of the following three questions:

**Topic 1 Storage, security and backup**

*What planned quality assurance and back-up procedures do you have for your research data? Is there any data that needs to be secure, and how will you ensure this? How will you move data if you do not work in one location?*

**Topic 2 Sharing data during the project**

*What are the expected difficulties in data sharing, along with and causes and possible measures to overcome these difficulties? Who will you need to share data with during the project phase (e.g. colleagues at UEL/elsewhere)? How will you manage version control?*

**Topic 3 What happens to the data at project end**

*What are your plans for management and archiving of collected data? Are you required to deposit the data e.g. with the UK Data Archive? Is there data underlying a publication which may need to be made available? Can/should you share data more widely, and will this require extra effort?*

This may have been an overly ambitious exercise because for many of the academics this was the first time they had come across RDM and DMPs. It was also made more difficult by the concerns surrounding the requirements under the Data Protection Act – of which they were all mindful of as psychology researchers. If we were to run the workshop again I think the demands of the DPA and the funders to openness to that research would be more fully developed. We have covered these subjects in depth in our teaching to students.
Stephen next provided an overview of the findings from the recent UEL RDM online survey. Answers to questions which were asked such as what would stop a researcher from sharing data. There were also results from questions about what support in RDM was required in the University. The question of what the School and University needs to do to make RDM easier/better/simpler was then opened up to the floor for discussion:

- Simple Guidance for research students – e.g. encrypted datasticks, backing up data
- More data storage
- Possibility of having a UEL version of Dropbox?
- Advice about data encryption
- Advice about taking data outside the EEA
- A Practical advice/checking over of DMPs in case of missing obvious problems/funding for storage
- What format would the data be in e.g. XML, compressed?
- 1. Corporate Policy – Data, QA, Security, Support/Webpage – on three levels
- 2. Link to specific school information
- 3. General admin for individuals.

Over lunch these issues were discussed further and a few champions in the School came into the foreground so we’ll be following this up.

We also included lots of hand-outs such as

- “Data Management in perspective: the career profile of clinical psychologies” by the Research Information Network.
- A flyer from the newly launched Journal of Open Psychology Data from Ubiquity Press, kindly provided by Brian Hole.
- The nifty DCC-Checklist for a Data Management Plan leaflet
- The DCC’s How to Develop a Data Management and Sharing Plan by Sarah Jones
- The comprehensive Managing and Sharing Data from the UK Data Archive

What would we do differently?

Lots of things!

We would probably try to first establish the experience of researchers in the room from the start of the workshop. We were aware that early-career researchers may not have previously made bids to research funding bodies let alone started to think about DMPs to their data. We were also aware that some researchers may not need be applying to external research bodies.
We would also probably offer a Question and Answer session around RDM because there was concern around the conflicting demands of the Data Protection Act and funders. We hope that the webpages we develop will clear this up definitively.

We would like to thank Dr Sharon Cahill and Dr Richard Plant for assisting in this workshop and we intend to carry out similar events in the future to other schools.

5. Psychology Research Data Management: The Results
Posted on 10/06/2013

On 7 June the TraD team carried out a feedback session on the training we’ve carried out for the professional doctorate students in educational psychology. The training consisted of introductory presentations and offering the MANTRA course material via the newly launched Moodle virtual learning environment at UEL. We wanted to find out their views on how well it went but also on the future design of the course: we’re building for the long term.

Presentation

First, we asked our students what they recalled about the nearly 2 hour long session/seminar on 1st February 2013.

The cases of Dirk Stapels and Dirk Smeesters, academics in the field of social psychology who had fabricated their data to produce research articles were well remembered and they were “reassured” that they were found out. One said they would be keener to look at research which offered access to the data:
open data is good and openness engenders trust

What was pleasing to us was how the presentation had been remembered (“it stayed in the mind for quite a while” and interestingly “I knew what the data problem was with the story on the World Bank wrong data and global austerity measures”. Most pleasing of all were the follow-up actions from the students as a result. One students went straight home and backed up her data; another started using a data stick (someone else stopped using a data stick entirely); another started using Dropbox as a means of storing and sharing their data; a further person stated that they now understood the fragility of backups so they began to email their data to themselves.

Online course

Following the introductory seminar the prof doc students were offered a reinforcing follow-up online course from MANTRA which we asked them to carry out in their own time. The modules we placed into Moodle were the following:

1. Research Data Explained
2. Organising Data
3. Documentation and Metadata
4. Storage and Security
5. Data protection, rights & access

We then asked them if they remembered the MANTRA course it; What worked; What didn’t work; and did they like using on-line courses for learning?

In short, the course was not widely accessed – only one from 12 students actually got up to the second module and the reason given was largely a question of timing (the students are part time on campus once a week with day jobs). The student who did the first two modules thought they were “too long”. A consensus opinion was that nothing could beat “face-to-face” meetings although they were familiar with on-line learning in local authorities. Some students thought it was good to have a combination of learning – to use MANTRA as a reference source in order to come back to things in more depth when it was more relevant to their programme of study (more on this below).

RDM Course for Psychology

We next asked the students the following questions:

How should the course be run in the future? Just presentations/workshops or shorter on-line modules? Spread out or a more concentrated focus and what else?

The answers we received were that the course should be smaller and “bite sized” – from half-hour to one hour sessions and to include discussions, similar to the ones we delivered in February’s event – so a possible seminar session. The on-line course should be made available directly after the face-to-face meetings for the course. It should also be a part of the curriculum and should also be compulsory for all the doctorate courses. There should be a session in each semester and one idea was that the RDM topic should be synchronised with a topic on their course – for example quantitative data and managing anonymisation of that data. One idea voiced was that these types of sessions should be repeated ever year of the degree programme in order to reinforce the message and particularly nearer the time when students would be collating and analysing their research data.

There were also feedback on assessments and the relevance of RDM to their professional roles outside of the University. For example they felt it was important to have an assessment on RDM which took their knowledge into their working environment and was a part of Continued Professional Development (CPD). The role of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), which is a regulator in standards for training, professional skills, behaviour and health was mentioned as playing an important role.

We also asked the students what topics and exercises/tasks should be included in any future course. They suggested scenarios-based learning – for example, how would you respond to a private psychologist retained by a parent who demands the raw data on their child? Or Booklets for assessment records and how the Freedom of Information Act or the Data Protection Act and indeed Ethics were involved. More generally it was seen as good to include a topic that covered the latest laws and trends relevant to their discipline. Our students also felt that there should be “take-home messages” on current issues/laws – and to have handouts to reinforce this.
Our students also wanted an in-depth discussion on topics such as sharing data with each other. Also suggested were practical demonstrations/instructions on Data Management Plans, TrueCrypt software and cloud storage services.

Taking away

This was a very worthwhile 90 minutes to get real feedback from students to whom we had brought research data management. We were delighted to have such positive feedback on the actual presentation itself but also that students had followed-up on the concepts and investigated things such as backing up their data. The feedback was essential to make any future course on RDM in Education Psychology a success and to be relevant to students – which they found it was: a number of students described the topic on first appearance as “dry” but were surprised to find that it wasn’t after all, but was in fact very useful to them. We hope to take this positive message and progress it further when we embed it into the curricula of the Psychology doctoral training programmes at UEL.
1. supportDM training

http://datamanagementuel.wordpress.com/category/supportdm/

1. An overview of the supportDM course
Posted on 15/02/2013

“What is this whole research data thing anyway?”
“Why should it concern me, what has the library got to do with this?”
“How can I advise on writing a Data Management Plan”

These are the types of questions librarians ask when contemplating involvement in an RDM support service. John and I met with Sarah Jones and Monica Duke of DCC this week to firm up the course outline and content for the “supportDM” training course aimed at liaison librarians. Here’s what we are telling our colleagues signing up for the course starting in early March.

The five modules of supportDM will tell you all you need to know to support researchers to manage and share their data. Each session will be introduced by an expert speaker, reinforced by an online module to work through at your own pace. You will also have a small activity to give you practical experience of the types of support we can provide to researchers.

The fortnightly meetings will last 90mins, and we anticipate the online module and task together will take around two hours to be fitted in as convenient before the next session. We will review each module before moving on to the next, so that you can share your experience of what you have learned with the rest of your peer group.

Objectives
• Increase awareness/knowledge of RDM
• Learn what resources to use, and where to get help at UEL
• Build your confidence in dealing with support enquiries
• Become certified to support your CPD

Module 1: An introduction to RDM
This module will give you a basic understanding of the activities and roles involved in the research data lifecycle.
Module 2: Providing guidance and support
This module will cover typical questions and signposting resources. We will look at models employed by other universities to develop support at UEL.

Module 3: Data management plans
This module will give an overview to funder expectations and UEL's own policy requirements. Exercises will cover how best to support researchers to develop their plans.

Module 4: What data to keep, and why
This module will consider how to work with researchers to identify data of long-term value so it can be shared and curated as appropriate.

Module 5: Cataloguing and preserving data
This module will explain how registers and repositories can aid the discoverability and reuse of research data. We will consider what metadata is appropriate to capture or create and how best to do this.

Well, lots

2. What’s it all about? Reviewing supportDM Module 1
Posted on 11/04/2013

The UEL subject librarians are acting as guinea pigs for the supportDM course, run as blended learning with fortnightly meetings interspersed with online study and homework tasks. After the kick-off meeting we blogged about here, we reconvened on 18 March to go over the Xerte module “Introducing Research Data Management”.

I ran the event by myself (John wasn’t available that day) so my notes are a bit sketchy – it’s hard to lead a conversation, give proper attention to the discussion and at the same time take notes. Perhaps I should have asked a participant to take notes, or made use of a flipchart to write notes as I went.

We reviewed their experience of the first Xerte module: overall, they felt it was repeating too much the content of the introductory PowerPoint a fortnight before. We also had a short three–question survey in Moodle to gauge their experience of the module, and one kind soul managed to make a positive out of this repetition:

Well, it was the same as the session on Monday so I’m a bit confused about what the point was. I suppose it underlines the main points.

The homework task was to set up and conduct a researcher interview. Not all could arrange the meeting within the timescales so in future we would want to give more advance notice. Several were apprehensive about the task, but the two that shared their experience found it less scary – indeed, a good way to engage with their chosen researcher. In future, it would be good to write up the interview as a record and to follow up: it may be that the interviewer is able to provide advice or signposting as a result of the rest of the supportDM course.

We were also joined by Mariëtte van Selm from the University of Amsterdam. Mariëtte had just visited the RDMRose project, and is well underway with scoping the library’s response to the RDM challenge at Amsterdam. It was great to get her perspective, and to share what she is doing. This helps to underline that library involvement in RDM is not just a “UEL thing” or “Stephen’s hobby horse” but a matter of interest across academic libraries.

3. M25 annual conference
Posted on 24/04/2013
No, its not for afficionados of London’s orbital motorway but for librarians – I attended the M25 Consortium’s annual conference at the Wellcome Collection yesterday.

The M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries is a collaborative organisation that works to improve library and information services within the M25 region and more widely across the East and Southeast

The conference was wide ranging – with MOOCs, engaging with students, linked open data and open source library management systems all on the agenda. There was also an hour of research data management before lunch. Dr Jonathan Tedds from Leicester gave a good presentation on open data and the depth of data creation in astronomy, then I talked about how libraries can support researchers in managing their data.

The conference theme was The Joy of Sharing, and I entitled my talk "Sharing the load: librarians and research data support services". You can see it on SlideShare. I wanted to reassure the audience that researchers would be happy to have support and guidance in managing and sharing their research data, and that librarians had relevant skills. These skills may need to be augmented with specific expertise in RDM, but such an enhanced skillset will make one eminently employable. DCC publications, the supportDM course and the wealth of material from the other projects in Jisc's MRD project will allow other universities to get started in RDM support. We shall certainly be making productive use of MRD outputs when we plan our RDM support service at UEL this summer.

4. Interesting/vague: Reviewing Module 2 of SupportDM
Posted on 25/04/2013

We met with our subject librarians on Monday 8 April to review Module 2 (on support and guidance for researchers) and to introduce Module 3 (Sarah Jones of DCC presented on data management plans – more on this in a later post). We begin each face to face meeting with a review of the Xerte module and the tasks (“homework”) we set to reinforce the learning. Our approach in supportDM has been to give participants a flavour of the types of activity involved in running a support service for RDM. For this module, there were two tasks:

- review an existing university RDM website
- answer a typical RDM-related question

Our participants reported back on RDM websites from Glasgow, Leeds, Leicester, MIT and Wisconsin-Madison. We asked them to see what the websites covered, to notice the layout, tone and language used, and to say what was worth copying for our future RDM support website at UEL. Comments ranged from “all of it” (on what we should copy) to “very bright and busy but in a bad way”. It is really helpful to get feedback from our colleagues, who approach the websites with new eyes, and John and I will make use of this feedback when we work on our website in June.

The second task was based on the 23 Things approach used by Exeter in their Open Exeter project (see their blog); our participants were set a real-world question to research and answer in pairs or threes, using a five-fold approach

1. What I knew about the topic beforehand?
2. What I know now?
3. How did I obtain this knowledge?
4. What else would you like to know about the topic?
5. How did I find this task? How would I improve it?

I didn’t explain the activity as well enough as I should in the previous meeting, because some found it unclear what they were doing and why – “too vague” was one comment! But others followed the instructions and made good attempts at answering their question(s). Their reflections included

I found this task interesting. It enabled me to learn about how to safeguard material and how to digitise non-digital data
We found the Digital Curation Centre website with relative ease and noted that all the relevant information is on there
The exercise gave librarians a chance to use their reference skills, and they carried out literature searches (or Googling as it is now called) and even phoned individuals in UEL to get information. I think this is a worthwhile exercise for others to undertake, because it gives them an opportunity to do something practical and to reflect on it. It could be used in a coaching setting, to give feedback to the student and to follow up their “what else would I like to know” response, or it could be used in a collective setting where group members share their results and help each other improve.

There were a few problems with using Xerte and we have sought to fix what we can. We also took the opportunity to revise and tidy up the Xerte module. The second supportDM module is now available for reuse, and we’ve tidied up the first one. Both can be found at www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources and we’d love to have your feedback.

5. Reviewing Module 3 of supportDM – Data Management Plans
Posted on 25/04/2013

We met with our subject librarians on Monday to review Module 3 (on Data Management Plans) and to introduce Module 4.

A chunk of the blended learning course is the online module produced in Xerte and imported into our Moodle VLE.

Despite Stephen’s best efforts to create a thrilling online module covering DMPs it wasn’t fully appreciated by all of our librarians, however.

“Online learning isn’t really my thing.”

“I speed read through the online modules”

“I get more out of these [face-to-face] sessions than I do from reading online”

“I’d rather do everything in one session, like today”

But…

It seems to reinforce what we’ve done in the meeting.

It’s not just the structure of “blended learning” that is at issue it seems. It’s the actual technology too. It was revealed that one of our librarians has been unable to properly view the Xerte module in Moodle because of screen size issues which are likely related to the Zip file that’s been imported, although not everyone has had this problem. There was a also a feeling that more photos were needed in the online course in order to enliven an admittedly dry subject and there was a desire for it to be more interactive than it was. Again it is likely down to Xerte’s functional limitations.

Which is all leading towards a reconfiguration of the blended learning course to perhaps one that is less online-dependent. You can see our course for yourself in a week or so’s time when we release it for reuse. We like to think it’s good! Keep your eyes peeled for the next release.

The task we gave to use as homework looked at four approaches for supporting researchers writing DMPs. Our Librarians were asked to read the short case studies of the following institutions:

1. Guidance & training at the University of Edinburgh
2. The Digital Curation Centre’s DMPonline & the DMP Tool (USA)
3. Embedding data management into grant application processes at the University of Leicester
4. Consultation at Monash University, Australia

They were then asked them to consider the merits of each approach:
Which approach do you favour?
What may be feasible to implement at UEL?
Are there other types of support you would consider providing?

We wrote down the responses to the questions and aligned them with each case study and there were some useful contributions.

- Edinburgh’s Data Management Planning page featured a check-list and was seen as “essential” and seen as a good model for researchers getting started and something we should emulate at UEL.
- The Digital Curation Centre’s DMP Online tool was described as “awesome!” as well as “structured, and “properly helpful” – East London style. It was also suggested that we should have create a similar template for use at UEL just as Queen Mary, University of London have done. It was also suggested that this include a template for use by our Post Graduate Researchers and for those who are without funding.
- The embedded help flag alerts (tick boxes) for grants being made at the University of Leicester was seen as a “good idea” and “simple” but perhaps “too simple” as it would put more onus on the researcher to actually know that they need advice and may slow down their bid application.
- Monash University’s institutional data planning consultations were described as “good” in providing expert advice. However, there was a comparison of a research university such as Monash and a teaching university such as UEL which raised the question of whether there would be a demand for this type of support or service here at UEL.

This exercise had me thinking that it would have been useful to see the “traffic light” checklist system of asking researchers about data management planning from the Archive and Data Management Training Center at Gesis Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften in Cologne, Germany.

Some of the other feedback covered the schedule of the course such as perhaps making it less than every fortnight in order for memories to be fresh on the online course they had. Monday mornings were also bemoaned. But Steve and I love Monday mornings!? Scheduling has been very much based around the best availability of our librarians but it’s something to consider again for any future iteration.

The meeting then moved onto what would be covered in Module 4: What data to keep, and why by looking at the DCC publication on “How to Appraise and Select Research Data for Curation” by Angus Whyte, Digital Curatlon Centre, and Andrew Wilson, Queensland State Archives. More on Module 4 in a fortnight.

6. The joy of sharing: cataloguing and sharing data

Posted on 09/05/2013

Yesterday we met with our subject librarians to kick off Module 5 of supportDM, on cataloguing and sharing data. We were pleased to be joined by Monica Duke of the Digital Curation Centre, who led the workshop. Several commented favourably on
Monica’s presentation so many thanks, Monica, for joining us in East London. Monica gave an overview presentation ahead of the online learning and homework task, covering these areas:

- drivers for sharing data
- barriers to sharing data
- data repositories
- data discovery
- data citation
- data licensing

Monica also led an exercise, getting the participants to name barriers to sharing data and then to think about ways to overcome such barriers. Although some disciplines have a culture of sharing data, others don’t and some academics are reticent to share for a variety of reasons. It helps if those supporting and advising researchers can give positive reasons for data sharing, and know appropriate strategies to allay fears.

The Xerte online learning package and supporting material for Module 5 will be made available in a couple of weeks’ time at [http://www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources/](http://www.uel.ac.uk/trad/outputs/resources/), along with those for Module 4.

7. RDM challenges and opportunities for libraries

   Posted on 06/06/2013

Last Thursday we took part in this “challenges and opportunities” event at CILIP organised by LIRG, the Library and Information Research Group. Delegates heard from TraD and RDMRose of the training material the two JISC-funded projects have created (in our case supportDM), and engaged in some activities using the projects’ materials including

- self-assessment checklist RURDMReady from RDMRose
- template for researcher interviews from supportDM

There was also lively discussion about roles for librarians in supporting research data management. We were meeting just before the final session of the supportDM course (more on this soon), so couldn’t feed back to the participants what the experience of academic liaison librarians at UEL. It was a worthwhile event, and good to share the experience of the two projects.

8. Reviewing Module 5 of SupportDM – Cataloguing and Sharing Data

   Posted on 11/06/2013
We met with our subject librarians on Monday June 3 to review Module 5 (on Cataloguing and Sharing Data) of the supportDM data training course for support staff at UEL.

**Xerte module**

A chunk of the blended learning course is the online module produced in Xerte and imported into our Moodle VLE. The module was designed to take no more than 60 minutes. It explained ways to share data, to licence them for reuse, and the metadata needed for finding and understanding datasets in repositories. It also covered developments in data registries and data repositories.

The feedback we received from was that it was far too long at over 50 screens (admittedly 6 or 7 of them were subtitle screens) and as a result:

"it was too much to take in"

"I got to screen 40 and gave up"

"I only got to slide 10"

"break it up"

"it felt like a lot of content was repeated"

"cut it down (a lot seemed aimed at researchers)"

It was suggested that instead of over 50 slides a 15 slides maximum instead would be more manageable.

Some librarians also found usability problems with the Xerte presentational style, for example the websites we featured in the module were difficult to navigate around as they didn’t fit the screen and needed to be scrolled to view. Also despite using videos to make it more interesting and varied some videos and sound clips didn’t work. For example they didn’t realise the first video should be watched from 5min onwards mainly as it was not YouTube video and couldn’t be edited to the relevant time point. It was suggested that some modules could be condensed – “we don’t need so much info”. Perhaps have links to more info if people want to explore, rather than taking them though everything.

However the “drag and drop” task within the module was seen as a good exercise for reinforcing what they had already scrolled through.

To aid the process it was further suggested to create sub-headings to each subject (such as Metadata schemas or UK data repositories) which then explained what was covered and the learning outcomes. In addition it was suggest that we provide information on how long each module would take so that librarians could calculate when the best time to do the module was.

We’ve since taken on board all of these suggestions for improvement and taken the step of dividing the module into two; separating **Data Sharing** and **Cataloguing Data** into an additional Module 6 which would make the subjects more manageable. (Uploaded and released on our [website](http://example.com))

**Metadata task**

The task we gave to use as homework looked at examples from real repositories to identify and record the essential metadata needed for citing those datasets, offering a chance to reflect on the process of creating and presenting citation metadata. The learning objective was to think about what makes good metadata, and what a useful citation might look like, rather than to come up with the perfect answer, and to reflect on the process of creating and presenting metadata. Our librarians found that the examples became progressively more difficult (particularly example data from [TreeBASE Web](http://example.com), a repository of phylogenetic information, specifically user-submitted phylogenetic trees) and for some it was unclear how to effectively cite any of the data. It was observed that for the researchers they would have even less time to find out. Some felt it was important to be able to state with certainty who the author is of any data in any data repository.

**Data Sharing (Cata**
The supportDM course at UEL is now complete and it’s time for us to assess how well it’s gone and to ask out librarians for their views (and to present their graduation certificates).

With a free lunch on offer (in order to entice our busy librarians away) and with the help of Sarah Jones from the DCC we sat down to ask some serious questions of the course. However, what made our task more difficult was the lapse in time since last meeting and also the large gaps in between meetings for the modules. As a reminder therefore Stephen provided a quick overview of the course modules, the tasks that had been carried out in the meetings as well as the homework that was set.
We then asked the following questions about the supportDM Course:

**What was good?**

- The Introduction to RDM was good, useful and “set the scene”. It formalized the course and the presentations from myself, Stephen, Sarah Jones (DCC) and Monica Duke (DCC) were seen as engaging. And with the DCC present it was positive to show that there was a proper body active in this area.
- Our participants found it was good to break up the presentations with discussion, reflection and exercises to contextualise the learning. The discussion exercises in each module were seen as particularly good and there should be more of them.
- The homework tasks were interesting in that it provided feedback, to hear back from others in the course. However, the homework tasks should be done in the face-to-face meetings.
- Our librarians felt the modules and the interview exercise was useful to relate to real-life situations e.g. of what researchers do outside of teaching.
- From the Data Management Planning module it was seen as revealing an interesting perspective on what researchers are expected to do and once they realised this “it started to click”.
- The tasks within the class added structure to the sessions but that the homework could have been done as an exercise within the session itself.

**What was bad?**

- There should have been a more formal introduction to the course. It needed an opening speech about scope, why, who for, who is involved. Simple information such as asking permission to photograph participants and outlining how those images would be used, were missing.
- Consensus surrounding the course topics appeared to be satisfactory but “the structure could be improved as well as the content”. Each topic meeting “was a bit too long” and “too stretched out” and the gaps between meetings were also seen as problematic: “Two weeks in between meetings is too long”. A librarian thought there were “too many sessions” and it was suggested that the five modules be “cut” and “condensed” into three.
- There should be more setting of the context, for example: “why you are learning this” as there was a question mark over who is responsible for RDM across the university and were librarians expected to answer RDM based enquiries. This was all compounded by ambiguity concerning the future roles of those in the TraD project team.
- The module on What Data to Keep and Why as an overview was not seen as relevant to every librarian on the course. That and the Data Management Planning unit were suggested as one single module rather than two. The DMP session for example took 90 minute session and it was seen by one librarian as running better at 30 minute length instead.
As the librarians were not creating metadata the Cataloguing and Sharing Data module was also suggested be renamed as “depositing data” instead.

What was missing?

- There was a suggestion of another module on the subject of how we helped a researcher and understood their research process in the lifecycle.
- It was thought that the supportDM course should be more UEL-focused with particular attention paid to the Research Data Management Policy with an exercise linked to the topics.
- It was also suggested that the Interviews with Researchers homework task should be conducted at the conclusion of the course in order to benefit from what they had learnt about the subject. The librarians felt that this would have made them more confident in their interviews which by and large their interactions are as teaching support.

Online modules

- Some modules could be condensed as they don’t need so much info. Perhaps have links to more info if people want to explore, rather than taking them through everything.
- Perhaps include an option to leave feedback in the module itself? This could feed into a discussion at the next session.
- It was good to do Xerte after the face-to-face session because it reinforced learning.
- It would have been better for all content to be ready in advance to let people go ahead if they’re on leave or particularly busy one week.

Homework tasks

- The five modules each had an exercise that was carried out away from the class so we asked our Librarians who took part in the course what they thought was “good”, “bad” and “missing”. Here are their responses (again based on those with a good memory).
- The Researcher interview was, for a first “homework” quite a big step – and they also didn’t have much time to schedule and complete it. However, it was seen as the most valuable exercise. We may have this as the only homework task to be scheduled at any point in the course and as suggested by the librarians themselves, upon completion of the course.
- The Reviewing RDM website was also useful but could have been done in the face-to-face session in groups. In fact it was suggested that the homework exercises could have been done in class – which is possibly a better model. People weren’t sure they’d understood the 23 things exercises, they found the DMP one too like the RDM websites so found it repetitive, and the metadata one a little frustrating. Often wondered what the outcome was – would the answers be checked? Why am I doing it? Though still found it useful though on reflection, just struggled to get into it. The “barriers to sharing data” exercise was seen as “interesting” and the participants enjoyed the discussion element in the class; a recurring theme in supportDM.
- Sometimes homework came too late so there wasn’t time to do it. Conversely, if it was done immediately after the session you could forget what you’d done before feeding back.
- The exercises in the class felt repetitive – someone thought the DMPs and website comparison exercises could be merged so we could perhaps include more information on the UEL repository and policy to relate content back to the university.

Other comments

- There’s a time pressure so Xerte and homework can’t be too long to work through. It felt like too much.
- It would be better to run this over summer. Time is clearer then so could do once a week and fit in homework between. This keep things fresh in mind.

Who should do the course?

- The researcher interviews that the librarians carried out were universally seen as helpful; it was seen as less useful for library assistants, however, so perhaps this should be an optional course for them instead.
- It was seen as useful for academic liaison librarians – both learning and teaching as well as research. A briefing for other staff e.g. assistants at counter, Skillzone as well as those directly related to work e.g. repository/digital library.
- An overview for senior managers in the Library was seen as “essential”. A presentation to them about the supportDM course and using examples from exercises like assessing Data Management Plans.
• The course would also be useful guidance for students and their tutors as well as the Research and Development Service, in addition to research leads in each school.

• Other ideas included a condensed version of one hour length and offer it to researchers in the Staff Development Programme.

Conclusions

There is a lot to work through practically and in our mind when we are to run the course again but we are confident that as a first-run we learnt a lot and the course will be far stronger in content and structure when we offer it out to others across the University.

We thank our participants, the subject librarians at UEL who took time out of their busy schedules to attend the supportDM class and do actual homework for it too. We also thank them for the valuable feedback they gave us and we are confident that the course has provided them with confidence and knowledge about Research Data Management.

Loguing data was the final module of the SupportDM course – which have covered an Introduction to RDM; Guidance and support to researchers; Data management planning; What data to keep and why; and Data Sharing (Cataloguing data). We also got our librarians’ feedback for the entirety of the supportDM course in the wrap-up meeting, and this is to be blogged about soon.

10. Are you RDM Ready? From zeroes to heroes

Posted on 19/06/2013

As part of the wrapping-up of the supportDM course (we’d already had a session with our librarians asking them what was good, bad and missing) we now asked them one last question: “Are you RDM ready?” Well, sort of a last question...

Within that question itself were 29 others which asked people to rate their own knowledge (0=None and 5=expert) BEFORE and AFTER their completion of the supportDM course. They would then total up the amount at the bottom. The questionnaire was the “RU RDM ReadY” self-evaluation form created by the RDMRose project and adapted by us.

This was an excellent evaluation for the supportDM course for several reasons: (and thanks to RDMRose for allowing us to use it)

1. It was short enough for our delegates to take time to complete
2. It gave us an understanding of what they had learnt (and not learnt) which identified parts of the course we should improve upon for the future
3. It compelled our delegates to think about what they didn’t know before the course – to conclude that maybe they’d learnt something and therefore instilled confidence in themselves.

The average score our librarians achieved after the course out of a possible total of 145 was 75.35 which is roughly, well, average but not if you count how much they scored themselves before the course – an average of only 21.65. So from knowing very little to knowing rather a lot – zeroes to heroes?

Let’s go into more detail of our librarians’ knowledge after taking part in the supportDM course.

What is research data? Why does it need to be managed?

Out of eight responses seven graded themselves between 3 which we count to mean reasonably knowledgeable to 5 (expert) with two of our librarians grading themselves as experts.

We also asked our librarians to grade themselves on their knowledge of other resources for keeping up to date with RDM matters, for example from the DCC website. Before the course seven out of eight librarians knew nothing at all about resources but now they knew something if not all were “experts”.
We next asked various questions related to **LIS roles in RDM** which was another overwhelmingly dark area of knowledge for our librarians. All respondents thought their knowledge had increased as a result of the course and in particular the different roles LIS could play as well as what the library could copy from other institutions.

When we asked about knowledge of **Policy and Advocacy** for RDM there was some confidence beforehand but generally across them all there was more confidence in answering: “Why has RDM become a key issue now?” and “Does your institution have an RDM policy? What does it say? Who owns and promotes it? How does it differ from policies at other institutions?”. We think this is mainly due to good early introduction surrounding the course’s aims and reasoning behind it also being underpinned by the RDM policy at UEL.

Under Support and training – specifically **Information Literacy** we asked several questions on what they knew about the key messages for best practice for researchers and the availability of teaching material. There was very little knowledge beforehand and only a small change in that knowledge afterwards which is likely to reflect the lack of comparable resources currently in existence for information literacy as a whole.

On the subject of **advice on RDM** we asked the following questions regarding what they knew, such as:

1. Who are the key contacts in my institution for RDM issues – in the library, research office and computing service?
2. What is a data management plan and what is involved in writing one?
3. Are there any national data repositories relevant to subjects you support?
4. How would you cite a data set in APA? What is DataCite?
5. What advice would you give to researchers about practical things like filenaming or backing up data?
6. What are the copyright and licensing issues around RDM?
7. What are the key drivers for and barriers to data sharing by researchers? Is there any evidence that data sharing increases researchers’ impact?

The majority of our librarians knew something about each of the topics above but the majority graded their knowledge highest following the course in data management plans and the key contacts in the library. We assume this is because the demand for DMPs are something relatively new to researchers as well as librarians; we assumed their newly found knowledge of key contacts was because we were those contacts teaching them!

Finally, under the heading of **developing local curation capacity** we asked the following:

1. What could an institutional infrastructure to support RDM consist of?
2. What collection management decisions need to be made in order to establish a data repository in your institution?

Whilst knowledge of infrastructure and a data repository was practically zero before the course this didn’t increase much following the course, largely we suspect because the university still hadn’t looked into this in depth and indeed very few other universities either. We’re confident however that when UEL’s Research Data Services is formally launched in August our librarians will have more knowledge than most on RDM infrastructure to be put into place.

### Conclusions

Despite the length in time between modules as well as the mixed nature of activities we are confident that they are RDM Ready and more importantly they know that they are RDM Ready as a result of the supportDM course. As a result of this survey we hope to identify weaknesses in the course with a view to running it again for other support staff in the future.

The RU RDM Ready form is available to [download](#) from the RDMRose website – why not try it for yourself!