The Higher Education Academy (HEA)/JISC Final Report

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Lead Institution	University of Oxford		
Project Director	Sean Faughnan		
Project Manager	Marion Manton		
Contact email	marion.manton@conted.ox.ac.uk		
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Author(s)	Marion Manton (with contributions from Sean Faughnan & Nicola Warren)		
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1   Acknowledgements

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Lastly, and most importantly, we would like to thank the students, tutors, academic and support staff of the University of Oxford Department for Continuing Education's Weekly Classes programme, without whom the project would not have been possible.

2   Project Summary

The Sesame project has produced a rich and sustainable collection of open educational resources (OER), aimed at adult learners and their tutors, but of use to all, across a wide range of subject disciplines. The project has worked with over 150 part-time tutors in the Department for Continuing Education at the University of Oxford to explore how engagement in open practices can help them develop new skills and provide expanded learning opportunities to our students and the wider world. The resources produced are available at: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/ for anyone to view, download, repurpose, and incorporate in to their own learning and teaching.

The Department for Continuing Education has a mission to bring the scholarship of Oxford to a wider audience. Since the nineteenth century this has been achieved through the Weekly Classes programme, which each year enrols more than 4,000 students on over 350 open access courses taught by c.200 part-time tutors. The Sesame project aimed to use technology to expand the reach of this already substantial activity by working with this programme to create and curate OER for teachers and learners everywhere.

This was achieved by creating a platform, and providing information, training and support to the part-time tutors who teach the weekly classes to help them to develop sites for their courses, supported by subject collections to provide a wider resource for all students and tutors. Lastly the project has embedded this work in the delivery of the Weekly Classes programme and has offered all weekly class tutors the opportunity to create a site for courses they are teaching in 2012/13 academic year.

As well as developing the technical, procedural and legal infrastructure required, the project has worked with the Department's part-time tutors to identify or create over 1,500 resources across 25 subjects[1]. The project has been a success for the Weekly Classes programme and the Department more generally, making the case for the role of OER in continuing education at Oxford, and providing a sustainable model that can be used to expand this work in the future.

This report will be of interest to others seeking to embed open practices at programme or institutional level, in particular those working with part-time tutors.

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[1]   While the subject collections cover 25 core subjects taught by the Weekly Classes programme, the project has resources marked with over 150 different JACS subject codes (see: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/subjects).

3 Main Body of Report

3.1 Project Outputs and Outcomes

Output Type	Brief Description and URLs (where applicable)
Open content	The Sesame project has generated a collection of over 1,500 resources, available at: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/. Of these, about 800 are openly licensed content, with over 270 resources created by tutors teaching on our weekly classes and over 500 links to existing OER chosen by our tutors. In addition, the discovery point contains further links to over 750 resources that, whilst not openly licensed, have been identified as being of use to our students and to other tutors and learners. To aid use in different contexts resources can be viewed and searched for by course, subject and keywords.

Tools, processes and supporting documentation	• Briefing Note on Open Education Resources and Creative Commons Licensing (Draft) (see Appendix 5)
	• Open Educational Resource Contribution Terms: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/sites/open.conted.ox.ac.uk/files/Open_Educational_Resource_Contribution_terms.pdf
	• Evaluation questionnaires
	  o Sesame Project Baseline Tutor Survey: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/sesame-project-baseline-tutor-survey
	  o Sesame Project Pilot Tutor Survey: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/sesame-project-pilot-tutor-survey
	  • Sesame Project Pilot Student Survey; http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/sesame-project-pilot-student-survey
	  o Sesame Project Final Tutor Survey: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/sesame-project-final-tutor-survey
	• OER release process workflow (see Appendix 1)

Workshop and training materials	• Training presentation for tutors creating subject collections: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/training-presentation-tutors-creating-subject-collections • Training presentation for tutors using and releasing OER: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/training-presentation-tutors-using-and-releasing-oer • Quick start guide to the Sesame platform (aimed at weekly-class tutors): http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/quick-start-guide-sesame-platform • Hand-out with advice on finding OER: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/finding-online-resources-help-and-guidance-tutors • Hand-out with top tips for producing podcasts: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/podcasting-top-tips • Hand-out on IPR, copyright, licensing and OER: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/ipr-copyright-licensing-oer-and-attribution • Training videos for tutors including: o What are OER and open licensing: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/videos/what-are-oer-and-open-licensing

	- Why release your content as OER?: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/videos/why-release-your-content-oer - Podcasting top tips: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/videos/podcasting-top-tips - How to find and use OER: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/videos/how-find-and-use-oer - How to add content to http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/videos/how-add-content-httpopencontedoxacuk - A short video describing the project, including interviews with tutors about the impact the project has had on their teaching practice: http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/2012/07/02/Sesame-talking-to-practitioners/
Reports and papers	- Sesame Project Plan: http://tall.ox.ac.uk/research/current/sesamefiles/SesameProjectPlan.pdf - Sesame Project Interim Report: http://tall.ox.ac.uk/research/current/sesamefiles/SesameInterim.pdf - Sesame Project Final Report (this document): http://tall.ox.ac.uk/research/current/sesamefiles/SesameFinalReport.pdf - Briefing paper about part-time tutors and open practices written collaboratively with the FAVOR project[2] and the OER Synthesis and Evaluation project[3] (in progress)
Social media	During the project, the project team communicated updates and observations by blogging and tweeting. All blog posts are available at: http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/category/oerSesame/ and all tweets used both the project hashtag #oersesame and the strand hashtag #ukoer.

The anticipated outcomes of the Sesame project were that:

1. Part-time tutors of the Weekly Classes programme use and create new OER to support teaching their classes.
2. The open content produced by the project is used by weekly class students and is discovered and reused by other teachers and lifelong learners.
3. The quality of the teaching and learning on the Weekly Classes programme is improved through the use of OER by part-time tutors and students.
4. The Weekly Classes programme embeds open practice in its work.
5. Hourly-paid part-time tutors engage in new ways with university teaching culture.

All of these outcomes have been achieved by the project as outlined in the following sections.

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

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Sesame project was to:

> Create and provide open educational resources (OER) for teachers and learners through the work of the Weekly Classes programme.

With specific aims to:

1. Embed open ways of working in the development and delivery of weekly classes.
2. Increase awareness and knowledge of OER among weekly class tutors, staff and students.
3. Enable weekly class students to find and use appropriate, validated OER in their work.

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[2]   The UKOER3 FAVOR project: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/ukoer3/favor.aspx
[3]   The OER Synthesis and Evaluation project: http://oersynthesis.jiscinvolve.org/

4. Improve part-time tutors' skills and confidence in identifying, using and creating OER.
5. Widen access to Oxford's teaching to new audiences globally.

The objectives were to:
- Create and release new open content.
- Develop tools and processes that facilitate open practices.
- Provide training to support part-time tutors to identify, use and create OER.
- Develop infrastructure to enhance discovery of OER generated by the Weekly Classes programme.
- Share lessons learned from the project with JISC and the wider community.

These aims and objectives remained valid throughout the project.

Overview of the project

The project was carried out broadly as outlined in our Project Plan (Manton, 2011). Following project initiation activities, work was undertaken in four phases: rapid initial piloting to develop a prototype platform and test it by releasing resources for 11 courses; a further round of pilots to consolidate lessons learnt; the development of subject collections; and finally the embedding of the project work in the day-to-day work of the Weekly Classes programme and the Department more broadly.

1. Rapid piloting
The first phase of the project saw the rapid development of a prototype platform, which was piloted with early adopters in Hilary term (January to March) 2012. The project team provided full individual support to part-time tutors participating in the initial pilot, including adding their content to the platform. This allowed us to understand what we were asking of tutors, test training materials, make essential adjustments to the platform, and generate proof of concept course sites. This work also provided us with advocates for the project from our core audience, part-time weekly class tutors, and experience that we used to design training workshops in later stages of the project.

2. Consolidated piloting
In the second phase of piloting we established a release process[4] and developed the functionality that enabled tutors to upload their own resources to the platform, with a quick check for any copyright or IPR issues from the project team before the material was released publicly. Supported by a training programme (improved with feedback from the initial pilots), this second round of piloting, which was carried out in Trinity term (April to June) 2012, also allowed us to test all our release documentation and processes. In parallel, we used the findings from both pilots to create an updated specification for our platform.

3. Subject collections
The next phase saw the training and support of tutors from 25 core subject areas[5] taught by the Weekly Classes programme to develop subject collections of resources, focussing both on OER (openly licensed content) and other materials of use to our students.

4. Embedding
The final phase of the project was to offer all tutors the opportunity to create a site for their course and to promote the resources available via the open.conted.ox.ac.uk site to all tutors and students of the Weekly Classes programme at the beginning of the 2012/13 academic year. This work included integrating project activities in to the mainstream delivery processes of the Weekly Classes programme, offering face-to-face training to all interested tutors, and developing on-demand training resources for those who were not able to attend a face-to-face session.

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4 See Appendix 1 Course set up, registration and release process.
5 The Sesame project created collections of resources in the following 25 subjects: Archaeology, Architectural History, Biological Sciences, Chinese, Computing, Creative Writing, Earth Sciences, Economics, French, German, Greek, History, History of Art, Italian, Japanese, Literature, Local History, Maths, Music, Philosophy, Physics, Psychology and Counselling, Religious Studies, Spanish, and Study Skills.

Throughout the four phases of the project, tutor support and engagement, evaluation, technical development, development of supporting processes, and dissemination activities underpinned the work.

Engaging and supporting tutors

In many ways engaging and supporting our part-time tutors was the largest single activity undertaken by the project as overall success or failure was dependent on working successfully with this key stakeholder group. As much as possible we worked within the available framework provided by the Weekly Classes programme, which already had a well-developed structure in place for providing staff development for its part-time tutors, something that greatly facilitated our project. Communication with the part-time weekly class tutors was also helped by a pre-existing VLE site for tutors, acting as an established route both to contact all tutors and to share information.

A key factor in the success of the project was establishing good interpersonal relationships with the tutors who volunteered to take part in the early pilots. By providing a positive experience, much individual support and plenty of opportunities for tutors to provide their feedback, we were able to learn and build on earlier work for the later phases of the project. The insights our pilot tutors provided into the motivations, opportunities and barriers for participation (see section 3.3) enabled us to target our message to a wider group of part-time tutors as the project progressed.

Evaluation

Our first evaluation activity was a baseline survey of our main stakeholder group, the part-time tutors of the Department's Weekly Classes programme. This survey asked a series of questions covering topics such as teaching experience and current practice, general awareness of OER and open practices, and areas in which tutors were interested in developing their skills and knowledge. It also provided an opportunity for tutors to express their interest in participating in the project. The baseline survey[6] was carried out online in December 2011 and all part-time tutors teaching weekly classes in 2011/12 academic year were invited to complete it.

Each pilot was supported by separate evaluation surveys, one aimed at tutors and one aimed at students, to allow us to gather feedback and feed any lessons learnt in to the next phase of the project. In May 2012 we also ran a focus group with a broad cross section of our stakeholders both internal and external to the institution. This explored issues around the platform, the OER we were producing and information we were providing about the resources, and the attendees' use and requirements of OER. As with the evaluation surveys, the focus group provided valuable formative evaluation data such as feedback on the 'look and feel' and functionality of our platform and suggestions for how to encourage more tutors to participate in the project. We were able to feed those data in to the next phase of our project activities.

With the short timeframe for the project we were aware that it would be challenging to collect summative data on what we had achieved in time to provide a full report to JISC in this Final Report[7]. However, we were able to implement evaluation metrics that allowed us to collect at least emergent data from all staff, tutors and students directly impacted by the activities completed in the period of the project, for example through our final tutor survey and focus group, both of which were carried out in early October 2012. We have also worked closely with the Weekly Classes Office to ensure continued evaluation of the project outputs is embedded in current course evaluation forms, so that on-going evaluation and review will continue beyond the end of the project.

Technical development

The technical development in the first phase of the project saw extremely rapid development of a usable prototype platform, something which was very valuable for the project overall, but was very challenging for our developer. From this experience we re-examined our platform specification and build process to ensure it worked for both the project and the developer going forward. As a result, the final technical development of the platform was specified in June 2012 and we planned that the development work would take place over the summer, so that a completed tool would be available at

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[6] The Sesame Project Baseline Tutor Survey questions are available at:
http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/sesame-project-baseline-tutor-survey
[7] As a summative evaluation of activities undertaken in Michaelmas term (October to December) 2012 will only be possible once the term is complete in December 2012.

the start of the 2012/13 academic year in October 2012. In the end this was delayed due to demands on our developer's time, which we had planned for but had underestimated[8]. To manage this situation we prioritised the remaining development time available before the start of term to ensure that the main functionality for students, tutors and the general public was in place. In the end we exceeded our revised expectations and were able to deliver a virtually complete platform, with only a few aspects of functionality remaining to be developed. This remaining work is being managed by a development plan to ensure we achieve our full platform specification, which includes more advanced functionality than was originally envisaged, such as integration with wider University OER systems e.g. podcasts.ox.ac.uk and Jorum. The work will be completed by early 2013 and will not impact on the use of the platform this academic year.

Development of supporting processes
At every stage, the project embedded supporting processes into existing activities, or streamlined procedures to require the minimal possible additional work on top current practices, to ensure a sustainable service in the future. This was possible due to the Weekly Classes programme having very well-established structures and procedures already in place to support its part-time tutors.

In particular, building on existing CPD and contractual terms simplified many decisions, although at times these had to be carefully considered to ensure the right approach was taken. An example of this was the course set up, registration and release process described in Appendix 1. This was designed to integrate both with existing procedures for commissioning courses and with technical systems such as our course management and student record system (InfoSys). Using existing data meant courses could easily be set up through use of information already in the system, without significant additional effort. Lastly, our release process was designed to allow tutors to upload materials and mark them as openly licensed, whilst also allowing Departmental staff to implement a quick additional check before publication to ensure compliance with copyright rules.

Dissemination
Dissemination activities took place throughout the project to keep stakeholders informed about the latest developments. A detailed list of dissemination activities undertaken is provided in Appendix 2. Internally we capitalised on existing and well established dissemination routes, such as regular newsletters and events, which proved an efficient and productive approach. Externally the project team engaged with many OER activities in the UK and presented the project at wider discipline conferences, such as ALT-C. The project team contributed updates on the project to the TALL blog (http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/) and made regular Twitter posts using the hashtag #oersesame.

Wider dissemination of the project to the end user audience is now underway. All students studying weekly classes in 2012/13 have been made aware of the project's outputs through circulation of a promotional bookmark (acting as a link between traditional and new learning resources) and by an email, which also invited them to provide feedback. This is to be followed by promotion of the project and OER at the Department's Open Day, created for the general public and all University staff. This major event is taking place on 14 November 2012. A further opportunity will be provided for part-time tutors to engage with the project at the next weekly class tutors' staff development day, which will be held in December 2012. In addition, another event will be held in the New Year to promote the Sesame project to all Departmental academic and support staff and to explore future developments to build on the project's work.

3.3 *What did you learn?*

To make it easier to see any cross-cutting themes we have grouped our lessons learnt under the following headings:

- Engaging and supporting part-time tutors
- Opportunities with open practice

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[8] The competing demand on our developer's time was upgrading the Department's VLE infrastructure from Moodle 1.9 to Moodle 2.3 and migrating the content of all courses to the new infrastructure, which had to be completed before the start of the 2012/13 academic year.

- Barriers to open practice
- Students
- OER outputs
- Project management
- Evaluation
- Building on earlier work

Engaging and supporting part-time tutors

Throughout the project we have made a concerted effort to understand the experience of being a Departmental part-time tutor of adult students. The part-time tutors who engaged with the Sesame project represented a broad range of practitioners. They ranged in age from 24 to over 65 (41% were aged 55 and over); had varying amounts of teaching experience (26% has less than five years teaching experience and 23% had more than 20 years' experience); and taught more than 25 different subjects ranging from geology to philosophy. Appendix 3 provides a more detailed summary of this information, which was collected in our baseline and final tutor surveys. Certainly there was no 'typical' demographic that engaged with the project. Where conclusions about our tutors could be drawn we used these to inform our training, using examples that resonated with current practice and that respected tutors' expertise. We also used feedback provided by tutors who participated in our initial pilots to make the case to encourage more tutors to engage.

"It increases your skills; it inspires you to present your material in a new and exciting way; it means that you and your work reach a wider audience; it is something that you can put on your CV and refer people to." (Tutor participating in pilot)

It was also been important to acknowledge the challenges as well as the benefits of open practices with an audience that will always contain sceptics as well as advocates. Thus we collected pragmatic advice from earlier pilots to feed in to later training.

"*Think carefully about what it would be reasonably easy for you to prepare."* (Tutor participating in pilot)

Along with the platform and guidance provided by the project we also directed tutors to other valuable tools, such as Open Attribute[9], which simplify needlessly challenging areas (in this case correctly attributing Creative Commons licensed content).

Some of the impetus for the project had come from existing demands for an online presence from our part-time tutors. Reaffirming this, our baseline survey showed that at the start of the project, while some part-time tutors were concerned about sharing their work and releasing materials the majority of tutors were generally open to the idea of OER and the project generally, and cited altruistic reasons as their main driver for potential contribution. This remained consistent throughout the project with the importance attached to a selection of benefits of producing OER and agreement with a selection of statements about OER remaining broadly similar or more positive from our baseline to final survey. Appendix 4 lists the two questions asked and the details of the responses received in our two surveys. The most significant change was an increased importance attached to subject level coverage, probably due to the number of respondents who were involved in creating the subject collections. However overall this reaffirmed our impression that our cohort of part-time tutors was more open to open educational practices than might have been expected. This may be because of the close alignment of the Departmental mission (which has a strong focus on access) and the values underpinning open practices.

"I like the fact that it is open; I see us as the doors of the ivory tower... (this is) … fundamental to what we do." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

Working with enthusiasts as early adopters, and fully supporting them to understand the real issues, has been a very productive strategy for the project. This provided us with insight into what is really

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[9]   The Open Attribute tool can be downloaded from: http://openattribute.com/

involved in releasing OER, valuable exemplars to show to participants of future project activities, and advocates for the project. Our early adopters made the case for participation and provided reassurance against common concerns to others:

"Don't assume that you are giving away your precious personal material ... it's a bonus, not a substitute!" (Tutor participating in pilots)

"As a long time part-time tutor it is great to be offered an innovative platform which is good for teaching and learning and also gives me a chance to get my work out to global audiences in a supported and quality way." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

To promote the project more widely, a number of the tutors who participated in our initial pilot agreed to share their opinions about the project in a short video (which can be viewed at: http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/2012/07/02/Sesame-talking-to-practitioners/).

We offered a small payment for participation in our first pilot and for creating the subject collections and there is no doubt that this was an incentive, at least initially, for many tutors to engage. Certainly the lower levels of uptake and follow through on the second pilot indicate that payment is a motivating factor; however, counter to this is to the fact that 81% of the tutors who were paid to participate in the first pilot have continued their engagement with the project, when no additional payments have been made. Going forward, while continued commitment to the project has been pleasing, with 39 course sites requested for 2012/13 academic year, this is still a relatively small percentage (just over 10%) of the total number of courses offered across the entire face-to-face Weekly Classes programme. However this represents a significant undertaking from a committed cohort of tutors and allows us to embed this work in our current programme while exploring longer term models of engagement, which will be necessary if we encounter greater uptake in the future.

Part-time tutors, by their very nature, have extremely varied work commitments. At its most basic, this made it very difficult to get them in one place at the same time. For project activities that required a briefing or training session, we found that we had to run far more parallel sessions than anticipated in order to ensure all participants received the necessary training or information[10]. While there is little doubt that tutors appreciate face-to-face training opportunities it is clear that this needs to be supported by resources they can access as needed. In our final focus group we asked the participants when during the year was the best time for them to undertake professional development activities to develop their knowledge and skills. There was consensus that during term-time was not a good time, but a wide range of responses to when was the best time. Some part-time tutors had a strong preference for the summer, while for others this was the worst time as this is when they teach intensive summer schools. The key lesson learnt was that when providing development opportunities for part-time tutors there is a requirement for flexibility and opportunities need to be provided throughout the calendar year. In addition, where face-to-face training is required, this may need to be scheduled outside the normal working day, for example during evenings or on Saturdays, to ensure maximum uptake.

The nature of part-time tutors' work also affected the project in other ways. For example, within the Department, if a weekly class course does not attract a minimum number of students it does not run. The cancellation of courses was something that had implications several times during the project. For example, our Trinity term (April to June) 2012 pilot activities were quite severely affecting by this issue when 5 out of 13 courses (where tutors had been trained and wanted to participate in our pilot) were cancelled.

It is not surprising that for part-time tutors, the case for participation in open practices must be especially compelling to ensure engagement. Clearly there is a core of tutors who are already working this way, or are happy to, given only a small level of support to do so; however, this is not the majority. The Sesame project very much benefited from the earlier work of the UKOER programme in identifying potential benefits of open practice and using these to support our case, but we also developed a system that allowed engagement at a variety of levels which minimises the initial commitment, but made it easy to scale up. Thus, while tutors have been encouraged to release their

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[10]   Training 25 tutors to develop the subject collections required nine separate training sessions.

own materials, they can also use the platform just to collate OER and other online resources for students. While evidence of this is still emerging we know from feedback this has encouraged some tutors who would not have otherwise set up a course site. We also found that at least two of the tutors who developed subject collections (explicitly intended to only be links to existing resources) have in practice also released their own materials as OER in the collection, and about a third of the tutors who created a subject collection have requested course sites for courses they are teaching in 2012/13 academic year.

An outcome anticipated by the project was that hourly-paid part-time tutors would engage in new ways with university teaching culture. This is obviously hard to quantify but there is some evidence of a changing perception of their engagement:

"There is a great sense of community. Links start to form between disparate courses." (Tutor participating in pilot)

In our evaluation, it was interesting to see multiple tutors reporting that they felt participating in open practices improved their teaching:

"It has certainly benefited my own teaching." (Tutor participating in pilot)

Certainly through the training provided tutors have been exposed to new opportunities and approaches, commenting that the project had allowed:

"More possibilities realised in delivery of courses; reading and other useful material provided for students between classes; additional and broader possibilities for student learning." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

We encountered great enthusiasm and interest from our part-time tutors in professional development opportunities and one of the most significant attitudinal changes identified between our baseline and final tutor survey was an increase from 51.8% to 75.0% of respondents who felt producing OER was "good for their professional development".

During the project we had a number of meetings, facilitated by the OER Synthesis and Evaluation team, with our 'evaluation buddy', the FAVOR project, who worked with part-time language tutors from a number of different institutions. A theme that came up in these discussions was the institutional systems and processes in place to support working with part-time tutors, in particular for contract administration and payments. As the Sesame project worked exclusively with the Weekly Classes programme, a well-established programme working with a large number of part-time tutors, we were able to benefit from having a comprehensive administrative infrastructure for working with part-time tutors already in place within the institution. As such, tasks such as raising contracts and making payments to part-time tutors were straightforward and the Sesame project did not experience any of the difficulties reported by some of the participants of the FAVOR project, who did not have such well-established existing administrative arrangements. For us, this highlighted the importance of having supporting administrative processes in place to facilitate working with part-time tutors.

Lastly, a notable part of the project experience was the extent to which part-time tutors represent a large pool of relatively untapped enthusiasm and commitment for exploring and engaging in new ways of working through participation in projects. This interest was expressed by tutors in the early stages of their teaching career and also by those with many years of teaching experience:

"It makes a huge difference to be involved." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

"It was great - really quite inspiring as an experience. I feel quite missionary about it now!" (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

There are obviously challenges involved in working with part-time tutors but they are a group with much to offer who value the chance to engage beyond the teaching they normally undertake.

Opportunities with open practice

While open practice is an emergent concept, we do feel the project produced evidence of the areas of open practice achieved, and those that appeared to be of most value to our part-time tutors. Taking the list of open practices generated by Helen Beetham (Beetham, 2011):

1. Opening up content to students not on campus/formally enrolled
2. Reusing content in teaching contexts
3. Using or encouraging others to use open content
4. Making knowledge publically accessible
5. Sharing and collaborating on content with other practitioners
6. Teaching/learning in open networks

It was unsurprising to find evidence of the first four practices as they essentially underpinned our project, but fewer examples of the latter two practices. This seems inevitable within the structure of the Weekly Classes programme in which individual tutors are paid to offer courses which only run if there is sufficient student demand. However, there are signs that projects such as Sesame have a role to play in changing this situation for part-time tutors, with tutors commenting:

"You realise when you work on your computer you are not alone – you can see what others are doing – you can share and be enriched by what you find." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

"You feel more part of a community." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

"This helps with the shift to sharing resources and collaborative approaches to learning and knowledge sharing." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

The results of our final tutor survey also support this with an increased number (64% compared to 56.3% in our baseline survey) of respondents identifying the benefit of "I may make new connections or collaborations through sharing" as important or very important to them.

What has also been clear from the resources generated by the project is a significant enthusiasm towards using pre-existing content. This may be explained by three factors:

1) the project supported tutors to use any useful online resources (whether openly licensed or not) thus complementing rather than working against existing practices;

"Some of the best online resources in geology are not OER, but I have included them in my subject collection anyway." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

2) a focus within the training provided towards using OER repositories and other similar sites as a way of identifying better quality content, thus encouraging the identification of OER in searching practice;

"I had no idea that there were so many free and complete courses available." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

3) and lastly, the context of open access courses, where tutors are teaching students of significantly variable ability and background, making the availability of materials that scaffold or extend students' learning particularly valuable.

"Could be used to help mixed ability teaching – providing catch up material for the less able and advanced material for high flyers." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

Whilst in both our baseline and final tutor surveys few tutors stressed the self or institutional promotion aspects as primary reasons to engage in open practices, we did encounter two interesting perspectives on this in our other evaluation activities. In our final focus group tutors felt that evidencing teaching was perhaps less significant in the research-focussed context of Oxford than for other institutions, although as part-time tutors working across multiple institutions this did not necessarily mean it was not a factor for them. The other example was a tutor who commented that he

has found a Master's programme at another UK HE institution (that he had not previously been aware of) that, on the strength of the OER that they produced, he would bring to the attention of his students.

More broadly we have benefited from the real change in attitudes to and use of technology in academia in recent years – now being matched by increasing interest and engagement with the openness agenda. At the start, we positioned this project as a way for tutors to engage both in open practice and in online practice more generally. While it is clear that some tutors initially engaged through a keen interest in 'open':

"It is extremely important to share resources and to make resources freely available. So much material is on the internet, and students a) have trouble distinguishing between useful and not useful / authoritative and not; and b) don't always understand copyright issues." (Tutor participating in pilot)

In the case of our early adopters, and through anecdotal evidence from 'laggards', it is the opportunity to engage in 'online' which was, at least initially, the main driver for engagement:

"A student asked do we have a site, and I thought whoops I had better do it!" (Tutor participating in training provided in October 2012)

This corroborated our baseline tutor survey results, outlined in our Interim Report (Manton, 2012), that indicated many part-time tutors would be focussed primarily on access to a VLE. However it was clear that engagement with the project saw opinions evolve:

"It has made me more open-minded about OER and less hesitant. I now believe there is a lot to be gained through OER both by students and tutors." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

This change was also evident in our final tutor survey where the number of tutors agreeing with the statement "I fully support the idea of open content and open educational resources" was 76.9% compared to 56.8% in the baseline survey.

Barriers to open practices

While open practices have become increasingly straightforward in recent years, creating and using OER is still complicated and there are many real barriers to engagement. Thus, in the implementation of the Sesame project the extent to which we could benefit from lessons learnt from earlier projects was less than hoped. While we used resources from OpenSpires[11] and other UKOER phase 1 and 2 projects as much as possible[12], these materials had to be heavily customised, and in many cases we eventually developed materials virtually from scratch for our context.

More specifically, as mentioned in our Interim Report (Manton, 2012), the issues around copyright and IPR and what can be released are still confusing. In addition, the gap between what is legitimate practice in the classroom and much other academic practice, for example using third party quotes with references, and what is permitted in openly licensed material[13] can restrict activities that would be normal in any other academic context:

"I released far less than I had hoped. Almost all of my handouts contain material still in copyright. I hope to address this (to some degree) in the future." (Tutor participating in pilot)

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11   OpenSpires (http://openspires.oucs.ox.ac.uk/) was a JISC-funded project in phase 1 of the UKOER programme that put in place the institutional infrastructure at the University of Oxford for releasing open content, in particular podcasts and videos.

12   The Open Education Resource infoKit (JISC infoNet, 2009) was especially useful.

13   See JISC Legal FAQ "Is the inclusion of third party quotes with references allowable in a CC-licensed OER?" (JISC Legal, 2010).

This can also prevent participation:

"I am still very interested in the project. However, nearly all of the hand outs I have prepared this term contain quotes from contemporary texts." (Tutor correspondence with Sesame project team)

More generally some tutors are unclear about what legitimate practice is and what is "cheating":

"It has changed the way I think about getting teaching resources together; I no longer see using others' materials as cheating or plagiarism." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

On a related note, and corroborating data from our OER Impact Study report (White and Manton, 2011), identifying what is an OER remains complicated, with many OER repositories or search engines regularly returning results for content which are either hard to be sure are OER, or which are definitely not openly licensed. We also had issues with identifying OER produced in languages other than English and would welcome guidance on international equivalents to creative commons. More generally, our tutors discovered much existing bad practice:

"I e-mailed one American professor to ask for his permission to reproduce a diagram from his student resource website, and he replied that it was not his own and he could not remember where it came from!" (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

From the experience of the OpenSpires project we were aware that original podcasts and videos produced by tutors are good sources to create OER from as, from a copyright perspective, they are less likely to contain contentious pre-existing materials. However, during the Sesame project we found that there are significant barriers (such as the need for recording equipment, knowledge of how to use it, skills to edit recorded material, and resources to produce transcripts) for part-time tutors to overcome in order to produce these resources themselves. While we were able to reduce these barriers to some extent during the Sesame project, for example by investing in recording devices and developed supporting materials to help tutors to use them, this has remained the area where our tutors indicated the greatest desire for additional training and support in our final tutor survey (68% of respondents to our final survey rated their knowledge and skills for producing podcasts as 'limited' or 'none' and almost all the requests for further training were in this area).

While we had many enthusiastic participants there were still tutors at the end of the project who expressed concerns about the increased visibility of their practice through releasing OER.

"I do worry about getting negative feedback from other academics." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

"I feel self-conscious." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

Clearly this is a valid response which will still resonate with many practitioners, although there is some evidence that this fear declines, with using OER acting as a stepping stone to producing OER.

"I am less wary of them (OER). I am also thinking of how best to make more of my teaching materials available." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

While the project aimed to provide an environment in which the ideal of seamless sharing might be possible this was far from reality. Depending on their level of engagement, tutors reported spending between ten minutes and four hours a week in addition to their normal preparation time (to support two hours of face-to-face teaching).

"It's a lot of extra work to make it worthwhile!" (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

"I had to stop and draw the line somewhere, or I would have spent a limitless amount of time on this!" (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

While we are confident that this time commitment is likely to reduce with experience, it is not possible to ignore that this kind of activity is a significant extra commitment for busy part-time tutors, many of whom are paid a fee based solely on contact teaching hours.

Students

We canvassed the opinions of students studying courses that participated in our pilots, however, this was only a small proportion of the programme's students and we will only have evidence of the impact of the project on the wider student body at the end of the current term (in December 2012).

Our pilot student surveys indicated that students were overwhelmingly in favour of the idea of the project overall, with many positive comments:

"Sounds good"
"Excellent idea"
"Fantastic"
"Open sourcing education should be at the top of the University's agenda, given its position as a world leading centre of meritocratic learning. GOOD IDEA" (Students commenting in pilot student surveys)

However a few students were sceptical of the value and 26% responded that online resources to support their course will not add value to their learning experience. However, there are signs, even among those who don't use technology, that attitudes are changing:

"I have not yet come fully to terms with the internet …So I am not representative… but I am aware how much I am missing. I plan to do better." (Student commenting in pilot student survey)

More generally we had evidence that students were benefitting from this additional resource:

"For me the best part of these online resources are the links to further information, reading and listening all relevant to the subject." (Student commenting in pilot student survey)

"Access to the worksheets, especially of other courses, helps whet the appetite to explore further what's available." (Student commenting in pilot student survey)

Certainly students were generally interested with 26% clicking through to the Sesame online resources within the first two days of us sending out an email to announce the site.

On a related note, some of our part-time tutors commented on the way engaging with OER has allowed them to consider new ways of supporting and engaging with students:

"It could be very useful in language teaching to put resources online so students can better judge the level of a class; to provide continuity between classes; and to make collaborative teaching and student transition easier." (Tutor participating in final focus group)

"It made me look for online resources specifically suitable for recommending to students, rather than just using resources in the preparation of lectures. In recent years, I had always included some relevant websites along with reading lists given out in class, but this project has made me focus more on specific learning objectives that can be followed through web links." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

More generally, our final focus group provided many suggestions on ways to help students to understand and use OER, focussing in particular on ensuring that the routes they already take to seek help with resources and study skills, such as libraries and handbooks, were ready to support this.

OER outputs

In terms of the types of outputs generated by our tutors, these remained fairly consistent throughout the project. We had fewer presentations than handouts, probably due to the greater legacy copyright issues in many presentations. We also had more image collections than initially anticipated, reflecting how many tutors do teach with their own images and are happy to share these. Links were the largest single type of content (although this is somewhat skewed by the subject collections that contain only links). Video was less popular than audio content as only a few tutors felt they had the skills necessary to produce videos to a standard they would be happy to share. This last factor was also an issue in the type of audio content produced, as while a few tutors experimented with recording teaching sessions, very few were happy to release these, preferring shorter more-focused podcasts they had created especially for release. While this has probably resulted in higher-quality podcasts overall it did mean fewer were produced than we might have anticipated at the start of the project.

At an early stage we decided to use JACS subject codes[14], which we hoped would make data about our OER more transferable; however this has been a frustrating experience on a practical level for end users, with subjects we needed not on the list[15]. As a result we are not sure we would use this list again.

Project management

There was always a challenge with the time available to undertake the Sesame project as the timeframe of the funding was not well aligned to a project that needed to work with an existing academic cycle. With the 2012/13 academic year only starting on 1 October 2012, it was clear that this would be a project where everything came to fruition at the conclusion of the project, but this has been true to an even greater extent than anticipated. We will not be able to collect all of our final evaluation data until the end of this term; however, we have collected as much data as we could at the start of term, including undertaking a final tutor survey and organising a final focus group in order to be able to include our initial findings in this report by the October 2012 deadline.

We used the JISC Project Plan and associated workpackage templates and these were very effective as tools for planning, undertaking and recording the project. The project resources allocated, the roles and responsibilities assigned and the project management infrastructure put in place all proved congruous for delivering the project successfully.

As mentioned in our Interim Report (Manton 2012), carrying out an early pilot was valuable as it forced us to consider the processes for including project outputs in the platform, in particular the OER and links generated as well as the course sites. This enabled us to develop a solution that worked well both in practical and technical terms.

Evaluation

As shown by the evidence included throughout this report, our evaluation work allowed us to successfully collect information during the project to establish needs, to monitor progress and to ensure the quality of our outputs. In addition, our summative evaluation has provided us with evidence to demonstrate that the project has achieved its aims and objectives and has assisted us to make informed decisions about future activities, for example identifying further training requirements.

We began our evaluation activities with an initial survey of our part-time tutors, which was originally undertaken to provide a baseline to compare our later evaluation work against; however, in addition, this survey was an excellent tool to confirm or reject our initial assumptions; to learn more about the motivations and concerns of our key stakeholder group; to find out about tutors' current practices; to help determine training needs; and to identify individuals to approach to participate in the initial project pilot. We used much of the information gleaned from this survey to successfully target our communications and to design our initial pilots. The surveys used to evaluate our initial pilot were

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[14]   Further information about the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) is available from: http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=158&Itemid=233
[15]   Modern Greek and History, as a top level subject, were not available

also a successful method for gathering feedback from both tutors and students. In particular, we found the feedback provided extremely helpful for improving our platform, refining our training and for identifying ways to encourage more tutors to participate in future project activities.

Initially we had planned to hold a focus group at the beginning of the project, with a range of end user, to explore the appropriateness of planned OER resources and the proposed release interface. However, we decided to postpone this activity until our platform was in place and our initial pilots had been completed. This turned out to be a good decision as it allowed us to consult with a broad range of end users (including directors of study, weekly class tutors, weekly class students and a representative from another university's continuing education department) who all had the opportunity to engage with the project in some way. We organised the focus group to discuss three key topics – 1. OER resources; 2. Motivations for using OER; and 3. Our platform – and having a mixed group proved successful for exploring these areas and gathering feedback from a range of perspectives, which we were able to feed in to our final platform specification and next round of pilots and training.

We had our first meeting with the OER Evaluation and Synthesis team and our 'evaluation buddy', the FAVOR project, on 9 May 2012. This was a useful meeting, both for improving our understanding of the JISC evaluation framework and for exploring emerging themes from the two projects. Following the meeting we decided that we needed to revise the focus of our summative evaluation activities to ensure the data we collected was a better fit with the overall JISC evaluation framework. In particular we decided to focus our remaining activities on working with part-time tutors and designed our final tutor survey and focus group with this in mind. Our final tutor survey was designed to closely align with our baseline survey and this proved a successful strategy for gathering evidence of change and impact and our final focus group was also a useful way of collecting more detailed qualitative feedback.

As outlined elsewhere in this report, due to the timing of the project funding and its alignment with the academic year, collection of our summative evaluation data was significantly affected. For example, we could only announce and leave our final tutor survey open for one week in order to have some data for final reporting. Given the circumstances, we were pleased with the survey response rate, but it was less than half the response rate of our baseline survey, which was open for three weeks and promoted more widely. Similarly, due to the need to hold our final focus group right at the start of term, we struggled to find people to attend and had to ask five tutors for each one who was able to attend. Many of the tutors we approached expressed disappointed that they weren't able to attend, and wished to have the opportunity to contribute. We felt that our summative evaluation could have been richer and offered additional value if there had been more time available to collect and analyse summative data at the end of the project.

Building on earlier work

While, as already mentioned, we were not able to use wholesale as much material as we had hoped from previous OER projects, we did very much benefit from the proximity of the Great Writers Inspire[16] and OpenSpires project team, based in the University of Oxford's IT Services group and their experience in this area. In particular our release process was refined in light of feedback from the OpenSpires team about their experience of working with the University's iTunes U and OER release documentation. This documentation has very formal legal wording and had led to some potential contributors being put off from releasing the material they had produced when they were asked to sign the paperwork at the final stage of the release process. As a result of this feedback, and also advice from the JISC Legal Service, we put in place a release process that starts with a briefing note (see Appendix 5), written in plain English, that explains the implications of openly releasing content, which potential contributors were asked to sign to say they had read and understood and that they would like an account set up on the OER platform. The platform then requires the contributor to agree to the terms of the standard University release documentation. This approach has worked very well for the Sesame project, allowing any participants not happy with openly licensing their material to make an informed choice at the outset and avoid participants dropping out at the point of releasing their material.

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[16]   Further information about the Great Writes Inspire project is available from: http://writersinspire.org/

Engaging with practitioners through existing systems and structures has worked extremely well for the project in many ways, offering considerable gains in terms of efficiency and sustainability, for example, by saving money by providing training as part of existing events and incorporating project evaluation activities alongside regular course evaluation. However, there have been times when working with existing systems and processes has meant less control and the need to compromise with the optimal timing of some project activities, something which needed to be carefully managed to ensure the best outcome for both the project and the on-going sustainability.

3.4 Immediate Impact

Impact area: Teaching & learning excellence

We anticipated that the project would enable us to enhance teaching and learning standards on the Weekly Classes programme through providing access to new resources and learning opportunities, and there is no doubt this has been achieved by the project. All weekly class tutors teaching courses in 2012/13 academic year have been given the opportunity to create a site on the Sesame discovery point, about 150 tutors have engaged with the project, 31 course sites have been created across the last three terms and, so far, 39[17] courses have requested a site for the 2012/13 academic year. More broadly, the 25 subject collections, which include well over 1,000 resources, mean that whether or not an individual tutor has chosen to participate in the project, all students will benefit from easy access to high quality, online resources, selected by the Department's tutors.

In addition to improved access to online resources for our weekly class students, our tutors have reported that their participation in the project has had a positive impact on their teaching:

"It helped make you think about your teaching in a dynamic and engaged way." (Tutor participating in pilot)

"I felt the standard of my hand-outs improved due to them being publicly accessed!", "I was also aware that *anyone* can read my stuff, so took probably more care writing/producing it." (Tutor participating in pilot)

"I think carefully now about the kind of sources I use, use more source-based teaching generally, better attribute it, and am more conscious about the variety of approaches to teaching generally." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

"A general re-orientation of the way in which I approach teaching, to make far greater - and hopefully more creative - use of the internet in teaching." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

Impact area: Increased effectiveness

We anticipated that, once completed, the project would enable us to be more effective by offering considerably more to our students and the wider world with minimal extra resource required from the Weekly Classes Office. This certainly has been a major achievement of the project. Previous attempts to design sustainable online provision for the Weekly Classes programme had failed from being too costly to implement, whereas with the pump priming from the Sesame project we have developed tools and processes that will allow the Department to support this provision at a cost we are confident the programme can sustain. Moreover, the project has raised the profile of OER such that the subject is discussed frequently at the Department's academic committees, and this enhanced profile has led to requests for more effort in this area.

We have been able to give our students more than before, with one tutor described his contribution as:

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[17] Note this number is likely to increase over the year.

"A set of what I think are useful and interesting resources that support the course, but in a way that would not be possible in the classroom (e.g. giving access to large amounts of reading matter, and allowing the students to revisit visual material presented as slides/PowerPoints should they wish)."
(Tutor participating in pilot)

Other tutors cited benefits of participation including:

"How to locate (quickly and efficiently) high quality resources." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

"More efficient use of available material; making available a greater range of teaching resources, tools and methods; more effective application of resources." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

An important element of the Weekly Classes programme is that the courses are accredited and require students to engage in independent study. Therefore, the fact that the Sesame platform will provide opportunities for this online, at both the individual course level and at a programme level through the subject collections, will be a major benefit to our students.

Finally the site has been designed to increase efficiency going forward, resources can easily be used in multiple courses, and courses themselves can be reused and updated year-on-year, as required. At an individual resource level the project has implemented a simple online mechanism to allow users to report out of date or inaccurate resources allowing us to track the currency of our provision for minimal resource.

Impact area: Helping with future technology needs
At the start of the project, weekly class courses taught face-to-face did not provide any online support for students, apart from an optional electronic reading list service provided by the Department's library. In addition, as students were only able to access the University's online library resources from within Departmental buildings and not remotely, student access to online resources was a recognised issue. To complement our library provision, this project has enabled us to make available easily accessible online resources and to improve the skill set of many of our tutors, staff and students to better prepare them for future engagement with technology in their teaching and learning.

"I learned that I enjoy doing video lectures and that it is a good medium through which to convey my passion for the subject." (Tutor commenting in final tutor survey)

Having focussed our training on the areas tutors had identified as the most important in our baseline survey, at the end of the project we asked tutors to rate their knowledge and skills (selecting the most appropriate choice from: none, limited, sufficient or extensive) in a number of key areas. For both 'Finding good quality learning resources on the internet' and 'Knowing which online material I have the right to use in my teaching', 92% of tutors rated their knowledge as sufficient or better, and for 'Understanding how I can use online resources' 84% rated their knowledge as sufficient or better. While the numbers were lower for skills such as producing podcasts and videos this was a result of less initial interest in these areas, something that may be changing now the project is complete, as these were identified as the areas in which most tutors would like additional training.

At a programme level, the project has also had an impact on the evolution of the weekly classes more generally enabling the programme to use technology effectively to support the delivery of its courses. From book boxes[18] to online courses, the programme has had to adapt to meet the demands of current and future students as well as meeting the challenges necessitated by the changing funding regimes in higher education[19]. The Sesame project has enabled us to provide a resource for our existing students, and at the same time support our mission of opening Oxford scholarship to a greater degree than ever before, thus acting as an enhancement for continuing education more generally.

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[18]   http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/2012/04/04/book-boxes-to-oer-opening-up-oxford/
[19]   Note the significance of the ELQ policy on the Cascade project,
       http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/2012/06/19/extending-opportunities-for-lifelong-learning-cascade/

Impact area: Have a positive impact on wider society

The Sesame project hoped that by collecting and releasing OER through the activity of the Weekly Classes programme, we would provide new learning materials to wider society, and on many levels it is clear that this has been achieved. However, our ability to gauge the potential use and thus the impact of the resource on wider society has been limited. The project has only been in a position to actively promote its outputs from the start of October 2012 and the interface with wider portals such as podcasts.ox.ac.uk or Jorum is not yet complete. We know that the Sesame platform has attracted over 4,700 unique visitors and we will continue to track this once the project is complete and the outputs have been more widely disseminated.

In our baseline and final tutor surveys we asked the part-time tutors of our Weekly Classes programme the question "As well as teaching weekly classes for the Department for Continuing Education, do you hold any other HE-level teaching appointments?". As may be expected, the response was similar in both surveys. Taking an average from both surveys, 41% of the tutors only taught on the Weekly Classes programme; 31% also worked as part-time tutors on other programmes in the Department; 37% also worked as part-time tutors at other HE institutions; and 22% held substantive teaching posts (such as lectureships) either at the University of Oxford or other HE institutions. Since almost 60% of the programme's tutors also teach elsewhere any new knowledge and skills they have gained through their involvement in the Sesame project will also be of benefit to their teaching on other programmes, including courses taught at other institutions.

Impact area: Greater engagement with open practice

The Sesame project aimed to equip part-time tutors with new knowledge and skills to create and use OER, and through this to increase their engagement with open practices. This has certainly been the case with a significant number of the part-time tutors[20] attending training and/or information events, and evidence that this has resulted in changing practice for many.

On an individual level, of the tutors who took part in our pilots and responded to our survey all but one[21] indicated they wanted to continue to release OER, and would continue to use the OER of others in their teaching. In addition, 73% reported that they found new online resources they would not have otherwise known about – something that increased to 86% when we asked the same question in the final tutor survey, which also included those tutors who had developed subject collections.

In several cases tutors have enquired about expanding use of the Sesame infrastructure for other programmes they teach within the Department, and this is something we intend to explore in the future. Training materials developed as part of the project are now available through existing information portals for tutors as well as being available through the Sesame site itself as OER, and the project team is planning to continue its role in supporting the existing cycle of development opportunities for part-time tutors in the future.

3.5 Future Impact

As already discussed above, this project was always seen as part of an on-going commitment to the development and use of OER in the context of wider open practices in the Department. Due to the timing of the project we are still collecting evidence of the project's initial impact; however this does not preclude us from either anticipating future impact or articulating the plans that are underway.

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[20]   114 tutors attended a general presentation about the project at an event in December 2011, 23 tutors participated in more advanced training offered to pilot participants, 26 tutors attended a workshop on OER as part of a staff development event, 26 new tutor received information about the project as part of their induction training, 25 tutors were given advanced training to support them to develop subject collections, and at least 10 more tutors have signed up so far to attend full training this term. (Note there is a small amount of overlap of individuals between these groups.)

[21]   Note that this tutor did not rule this out, but indicated that they were not sure at the present time.

From the outset, the Sesame site (http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/) was designed as a portal that could support OER from a wider range of Departmental activity than just the Weekly Classes programme, and extending this work remains a key aim of the Department. This broader commitment was evidenced during a recent Departmental review. The Departmental reviews occur approximately every six years and in its response to the 2012 review, the Department cited the production and use of OER as a key activity in the Department, bringing the project's work to wider attention within the University at Pro-Vice-Chancellor level.

Work is also being undertaken to embed OER activities in the Department's Five-Year Strategic plan and its Access and Widening Participation strategy and, as part of this work, we will develop a Departmental OER strategy statement. In particular, this will build on work that was undertaken in parallel with the Sesame project, and has seen significant financial investment in classroom infrastructure and technology that enables recording and streaming of lectures and seminars. The purpose of the investment is to facilitate our ability to offer a significant amount of OER material in the future. As a result, our lecture theatre and principal teaching rooms will shortly be equipped to enable the simplified recording and sharing of material.

The Sesame project has proved to be a catalyst and has supported the creation of momentum that will lead to refinement of the Department's historical mission. Not only will the Department offer courses face-to-face and online, but it will repurpose and offer an increasing amount of OER material online for the benefit of learners globally. The Department will also, in conjunction with the activities in the University's IT Services group and elsewhere in the University, continue to raise the profile of OER and open practices across the institution and build the case for ongoing support.

It is in this context that we are certain that the production and use of OER in the Weekly Classes programme will be maintained, and we will continue to measure the impact on those groups directly involved in delivering the programme. The role of OER in improving and extending the weekly classes continues to make the case for the value that this open access programme delivers in terms of opening Oxford to the wider world – and we intend to extend the offering. Lastly, as one of the leading continuing education departments in the UK, we work closely with other continuing education and lifelong learning departments, as well as organisations such as the Universities Alliance for Lifelong Learning (UALL)[22], and would be interested in further opportunities to share our lessons and further explore and enhance the role for OER in this particular sector of higher education.

4   Conclusions

In the past, many sharing and technology change projects were hampered by the attitude of participants, and while negative views of open practices are still the case for many, this is rapidly changing with tutors and senior managers becoming more receptive to open practices and using technology. This shift in attitudes is a major opportunity for projects in this area. However, working with OER and open practices is not a straight forward process with issues remaining in communication, training, legal, procedural, practical and infrastructural areas. Even for an experienced team such as TALL, working in an institution with a long track record of releasing OER, there were few shortcuts. All of this activity is substantial and meant that the project was not able to leapfrog or simplify many of the stages every OER project has to engage in. As well as exploring the particular issues of part-time tutors and a sustainable OER development model, much of our work has confirmed and expanded upon findings from the earlier UKOER projects as synthesised by the OER Synthesis and Evaluation project, confirming the validity of those conclusions.

As the Department for Continuing Education, our mission is to open the scholarship of the University of Oxford to the wider world and certainly this cultural affinity between our mission and open practices more generally has been a great benefit to the project, especially in terms of ensuring 'buy in' at higher levels within the Department as the project progressed. The project has enabled the development of a significant collection of over 1,500 resources, which currently support a major constituency of our student body, with the intention to build and grow this work in the future. By

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[22]   Further information about UALL is available from: http://www.uall.ac.uk/

changing practice within the Weekly Classes programme to support the use of OER and online resources, and as a way for us to do much more for students in a sustainable manner, the project is contributing to the evolving definition of continuing education in Oxford more broadly.

With changes in higher education, it seems certain that there will be more part-time academics delivering education in new ways. This continues the trend of recent years where the mainstream activities of the Department have moved from being atypical in higher education to matching the reality of practice for many institutions[23]. Thus it seems certain increasing numbers of individuals and institutions will engage with online and 'open educational practices' whether through encouraging use or production of OER or by delivering MOOCs[24]. There is a discourse that sees open activities as being core to the future of higher education, but while it is not yet clear the extent to which OER will play, it does seem inevitable that an increasing number of academics and institutions will engage with this inspiring area of development.

The reality remains that open practices are still far from straightforward, with the majority of academics currently lacking the incentive, skills, knowledge or time to effectively participate, whether they are inclined to or not. At Oxford, support from the University's IT Services provides opportunities for academics and others to learn about OER and to access training to support individual development. We seek to develop pragmatic means to offer the same opportunities to wider constituencies, including part-time tutors. To that end, we will develop more sustainable models for engagement, and support the development of OER, insofar as we are able, for higher education, making the work of projects such as Sesame, in the context of broader programmes such as UKOER, as important as they have ever been.

5   Recommendations

Recommendations for JISC:

Support initiatives to simplify copyright issues for academia
Copyright and IPR are still very complex issues and present a significant barrier to tutors' engagement in open practices. Anything JISC can do to work with publishers, higher education and government to simplify this is welcome.

Invest in work to enhance the discovery and identification of OER
It is still harder than it should be to find OER. Directing resources to simplifying the process of discovering and identifying OER, to make it as simple as using Google, is still needed. Providing information on identifying OER and openly licensed content produced in languages other than English – or at least indications on where to find out this information – would also be useful.

Time funding calls to better fit within the academic year
Consider timing of the funding for projects that are closely aligned to the academic year and involve piloting with academic staff and students.

Better integrate programme level and project level evaluation
In order to maximise benefits at a programme level, it would be helpful for the programme evaluation framework to be available when individual projects produce their initial project plans so that the most appropriate evaluation metrics can be chosen at the project level to support overall evaluation.

Consider restructuring funding to allow for a longer period for summative evaluation
In order to gain the most from short projects, such as Sesame, where new systems and processes are only in place only in the last few weeks of the project, the project timeframe and associated funding should be lengthened to allow for summative evaluation to take place at a later date when there has been time for the impact of new interventions to be fully assessed and evaluated.

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[23]   Where increasing numbers of mature learners wish to engage with higher education in more flexible ways.
[24]   For an introduction to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mooc

Recommendations for the wider community:

Continue to engage in activities to promote awareness of OER
Lack of awareness and complexity of engagement are more significant than attitudinal issues as barriers to engagement with OER. With growing awareness and openness to open educational practices, providing the information and training academics need to effectively engage promises to deliver greater results than in the past.

Engaging with concerns around open practices is important
While evangelists for open practices are important, promoting concepts such as seamless sharing is misleading in the current climate. Thus while it is important to share the benefits of 'openness', being realistic about what this means is more likely to produce longer term engagement by practitioners than hyperbole.

Promote open practices as part of the wider area of new academic literacies
Whilst many academics are interested in open practices once they are aware of their existence, it is clear that this is not an area where demand for training is practitioner led. However, much open practice overlaps with other academic practices that more tutors feel pressure to engage with, such as social media or using technology more generally. While there is not always resource to make open practices the focus of staff development activities, exploring them in the context of other training is often appropriate and always valuable.

Encourage all levels of engagement with open practice
There are many levels of engagement with OER and open practices. Where you have a large cohort of practitioners with variable backgrounds and interest, scaffolding tutors to engage with OER at a level which works for them is the best way to encourage initial uptake, which in the longer term, has the potential to be converted to deeper engagement.

Undertaking project work with part-time tutors requires appropriate administrative structures
When working with part-time tutors on projects it is necessary to ensure that local administrative arrangements are in place for contracting and paying part-time tutors for undertaking work other than part-time teaching.

Working with part-time tutors requires greater flexibility
Due to their varied working commitments, working with part-time tutors inevitably involves greater flexibility from project teams than working with mainstream staff.

Part-time tutors are a relatively underutilised resource for many institutions
Many part-time tutors (both those in the early stages of their career and those with many years of experience) have a great enthusiasm and appetite for new opportunities beyond basic teaching.

General recommendations:

Investment in CPD can produce valuable outputs for both part-time tutors and institutions
Where there is little resource to support part-time tutors, focusing activities on engagement and training has the potential to produce outputs that are both valued by the tutors themselves and likely to deliver wider benefits to the institution.

Systems and processes can allow easier production and release of OER, but not yet seamless sharing for the majority
It is possible to implement systems and processes to allow tutors to produce sustainable OER as part of existing activities. However, developing the necessary skills to do this is still a significant additional commitment from tutors which should not be underestimated.

6 Implications for the future

Implications

The Sesame project has produced a resource, with the potential to be of use to all involved in lifelong learning, which will continue to be supported and extended by the Department for Continuing Education. In particular we have explored the implications of open educational practices for part-time tutors and proved the validity of one model of sustainable OER production and use for our context.

New development work

Through working with part-time tutors the project has explored the implications of open educational practices for this growing cohort of academics and how best to engage them in this. However, we have not yet completed our development and dissemination activities for the project. Some technical development work remains to enable content from open.conted.ox.ac.uk to be pushed out to other platforms (such Jorum and podcasts.ox.ac.uk). In addition, further technical work is planned to develop processes to facilitate the simple integration of material captured with the new lecture-room-based recording equipment outlined in section 3.5. In terms of dissemination, we are focussing on raising awareness of the project and its outputs more widely, both through publicising the project's work to Departmental staff, students and the general public, and through more targeted interaction with student support staff. In particular we plan to work with librarians to ensure that the project's outputs continue to be discovered and used by our students in their learning. We hope this will improve students' awareness of OER and open practices, for example by helping then to understand, use and contribute their own OER. All of these activities are an indication of our commitment to ensure that the impact of the Sesame project is greater than just the significant successes the project has already achieved.

Sustainability and output management

The Sesame project was designed to encourage sustainability from the start and this has meant that moving the work from a project to a service is something the Department is fully committed to as a core part of its mission. In particular the embedding of current activity in the Weekly Classes programme is already taking place, and we are starting the process of exploring how this can be transferred to other areas of Departmental activity, where appropriate. As a result the project outputs will remain available through open.conted.ox.ac.uk.

Project contacts and user community

The long term project contacts are the project director, Sean Faughnan sean.faughnan@conted.ox.ac.uk, and the project manager, Marion Manton marion.manton@conted.ox.ac.uk. Both are already involved in the wider UK OER community, through associated JISC and other mailing lists, and engagement with organisations such as SCORE, and intend to continue this engagement in the future.

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8   Appendix 1: Course set up, registration and release process

The working processes below outlines how courses are set up, users are registered, and how content contributed to the Sesame project portal are released.

Course set up and registration process

1.   Weekly Classes Office sends Briefing Note on Open Educational Resources and Creative Commons Licensing (see Appendix 5) (including an option on the form to request course site(s)) to all tutors with a contract to teach a weekly class, at start of academic year.

2.   Weekly class tutor completes the Declaration section on the Briefing Note and provides details of the course site(s) he/she requires and returns a signed hard copy of the Briefing Note to the Weekly Classes Office.

3.   Weekly Classes Office sends the link (http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/user/register) to the online registration form in the platform to all tutors requesting a course site and asks them to register.

4.   Weekly class tutor fills in online registration form and agrees to the Open Educational Resource Contribution Terms.

5.   Weekly Classes Office approves the registration and a username and password are automatically emailed to the tutor.

6.   Weekly Classes Office confirms whether course has recruited sufficient students to run:

     a.   If 'no' the Weekly Classes Office sends email to tutor to inform them that unfortunately the course won't run and therefore that a site on the platform won't be created.

     b.   If 'yes' the Weekly Classes Office sets up the new course in the platform, using data from the Department's InfoSys database, and emails tutor the URL of their site and the Quick Start Guide to using the platform.

Resource release process

Roles
   - Uploader - Weekly class tutor
   - Editor Uploader - Weekly Classes Office (or Sesame project team member).

1.   Uploader identifies self-generated materials and other pre-existing materials he/she wants to share in advance of the course.

2.   Uploader does any resource editing required to ensure content is suitable prior to release, including :
     a.   topping and tailing podcasts and videos;
     b.   converting file types;
     c.   removing unsuitable elements;
     d.   ensuring correct external attributions are included in each resource;
     e.   adding own attribution information to each resource.

3.   Uploader adds resources to platform, attaching them to the relevant course and ensuring that they are correctly tagged and that all other information is provided, and ticks release button to agree to the Open Educational Resource Contribution Terms for each item.

4. Editor Uploader checks resources and either releases them or raises a query with the tutor.

5. Each week Uploader adds any additional resources generated by the course (e.g. podcasts of lectures, additional notes or resources identified by themselves or students) as outlined in step 3.

6. Each day Editor Uploader releases materials, as outlined in step 4.

7. Resources released from open.conted.ox.ac.uk to wider Oxford resource portals (note currently only audio and video outputs accepted) and Jorum.

9   Appendix 2: List of Dissemination Activities

Dissemination to the wider community

- Presentation 'OER Impact Study' given at Learning from the OER research projects SCORE Event, Open University, 19 January 2012

- Presentation 'Students' use of online materials' given at Supporting Academic Practice in a Digital Age Symposium event, University of Exeter, 17 May 2012.

- Presentation 'Open Sesame: embedding open educational practices in Oxford' given at 19th International Conference of the Association for Learning Technology, University of Manchester, 11 September 2012.

Dissemination to part-time tutors

- Emails sent to all part-time tutors to announce each stage of project and to inform them of opportunities to participate and feedback.
- General presentation about the project given at weekly class tutor event, December 2011.
- Workshop on OER given as part of a weekly class tutor development event, June 2012.
- Overview of project provided as part of new tutor induction training, September 2012.

Dissemination to Department and wider University of Oxford

Information about the project has been (or will be) presented at the following meetings within the Department and wider University:

- Overview of project given at Weekly Classes Programme Course Committee Meeting, 25 October 2011.
- Updates on the project included in the Technology-Assisted Lifelong Learning (TALL) unit's termly report to the Department's Academic board (which includes all academic staff), October 2011, January 2012, May 2012 and October 2012.
- Updates on the project given at OxTALENT Committee meetings (the University of Oxford's special interest group for teaching and learning enhanced by new technology), October 2011, January 2012, May 2012 and October 2012.
- Presentations and demos to be given throughout the day at Departmental Open Day (which will be open to all University staff and the general public), 14 November 2012.
- Project event, aimed at Departmental academic and support staff, to be held in early 2013 to promote existing outputs and explore future plans, January 2013.

Dissemination to students and the general public

- Article written to publicise the concept of open education, and raise awareness of the Sesame project (http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/news/index.php?post=2012-03-05:101112:616), produced for Open Education Week, 5-10 March 2012.

- Promoted in the Department's external newsletter (which is emailed to 60,000 recipients).

- Promotional bookmark issued to all weekly class students at start of Michaelmas term, October 2012.

- Presentations and demos to be given throughout the day at Departmental Open Day (which will be open to the general public), 14 November 2012.

- All blog posts about the project are available at: http://tallblog.conted.ox.ac.uk/index.php/category/oersesame/.

- All tweets about the project were made using the hashtags #oersesame and #ukoer.

10   Appendix 3: Characteristics of our part-time tutors

In our baseline and final tutor surveys we asked the tutors of our Weekly Classes programme a number of questions including their age, how may years teaching experience they had, and what subjects they taught. As might be expected, the results were similar on both surveys and the figures below provide the average from both surveys.
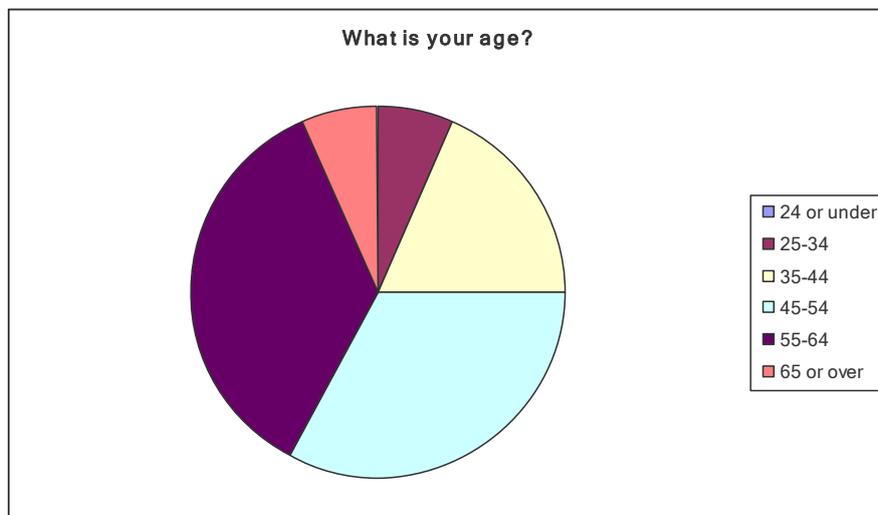

Figure 1: Response to survey question: What is your age?
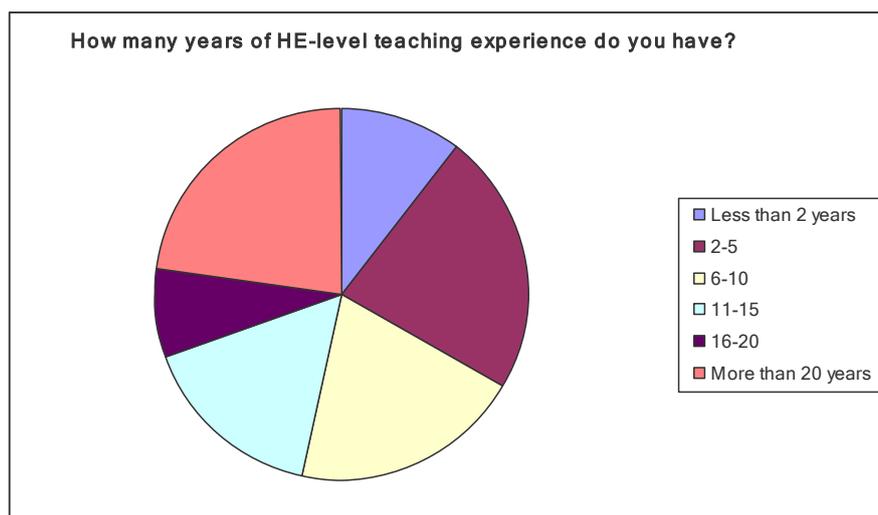
Figure 2: Response to survey question: How many years of HE-level teaching experience do you have?

Subject discipline	Percentage of responses
Archaeology	7.6 %
Architectural History	7.6 %
Biological Sciences	1.0 %
Classics	3.6 %
Computing	1.9 %
Creative Writing	5.7 %
Environmental Sciences	1.0 %
Film Studies	1.9 %
French	1.9 %
Geology	2.9 %
German	1.0 %
History	7.6 %
History of Art	3.8 %
Italian	1.9 %
Japanese	1.0 %
Language Studies	3.8 %
Literature	9.5 %
Local and Social History	5.7 %
Music	2.9 %
Philosophy	7.6 %
Psychology and Counselling	3.8 %
Religious Studies	5.7 %
Spanish	1.0 %
Theology	2.9%
Other (not provided on list)	6.7%

Figure 3: Response to question: What subject(s) do you teach? (Tick all that apply)

11   Appendix 4: Attitudes to open practices

We included the two questions below in both our baseline and final tutor surveys to see if there was a change in attitudes towards online content, OER and open practices more generally by our core stakeholder group of part-time tutors at the end of the Sesame project.

Question: Please indicate which of the following statements about online content you agree with. (Tick all that apply.)

Statement	Percent who agree (Baseline tutor survey)	Percent who agree (Final tutor survey)
I fully support the idea of open content and open educational resources	58.6%	76.9%
With so much open content available there is no excuse not to use it	46.6%	46.2%
Online content is not currently of much relevance to me or my students	8.6%	0.0%
My students would benefit from online resources to support their learning	72.4%	88.5%
With finances tight, there will be less willingness to share resources openly	17.2%	19.2%
The University of Oxford should be making teaching materials available to the world	41.4%	69.2%
In making resources freely and openly available unanticipated and exciting things can happen	51.7%	69.2%
It worries me that once 'out there' you have no control over your resources	53.4%	42.3%
There are no real incentives for individuals to get involved	20.7%	11.5%
Teaching practices must change so that sharing and reuse becomes a habit	36.2%	38.5%
Much of sharing is simply about publicity and marketing	8.6%	3.8%
Content that is available for use free of charge is rarely of good quality	13.8%	3.8%
The Department's mission to widen access to Oxford teaching and learning should continue online	62.1%	76.9%
Making content openly available could prove detrimental to the quality of teaching in the long term	19.0%	7.7%
It is useful to provide resources at a subject level as well as a course level	58.6%	88.5%

Table 1: Percentage of Sesame project survey respondents who agreed with statements provided about online and open content

Question: Please indicate how important each of the following benefits of producing OER is to you. (Answer choices: Very Important, Important, Not Sure, Not Important)

Statement	Percent who rate as Important or Very Important (Baseline tutor survey)	Percent who rate as Important or Very Important (Final tutor survey)
1. Student learning will be improved	70.9%	88.0%
2. It is a good thing to do	65.4%	83.3%
3. Develops my research activity or interests	61.1%	77.7%
4. It is good for my professional development	51.8%	75.0%
5. The reputation of my course, department or institution is enhanced	74.1%	73.0%
6. Increases my use of resources	63.6%	70.8%
7. Increases my audience	64.2%	69.2%
8. I may make new connections or collaborations through sharing	56.3%	64.0%
9. It will save me time and enable me to be more effective	50.9%	58.4%
10. Opens my work to comment, review etc.	63.0%	57.7%
11. This is a more efficient way of working and will save money	38.2%	41.7%
12. It associates me with University of Oxford-branded portals, such as iTunes U	40.7%	36.0%
13. My reputation is improved	45.2%	32.0%
14. The possibility of financial reward	24.1%	20.8%

Table 2: Percentage of Sesame project baseline and final tutor survey respondents who rated each of the suggested benefits of producing OER as important or very important to them. The statements have been re-ordered based of the level of importance indicated in the final tutor survey.

12 Appendix 5: Sesame project briefing note

Briefing Note on Open Educational Resources and Creative Commons Licensing (Draft)

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Sesame project. We are delighted you have chosen to take part in this exciting initiative, which will allow you to create Open Educational Resources (OER) from your teaching materials and give you the opportunity to showcase your work to a worldwide audience. Before you set up an account on the project website, which will allow you to upload and release your content as OER, we want to make sure that you understand what is involved in openly licensing and releasing your material. This short briefing note outlines some key terms and concepts and summarises what is involved. As the first step of taking part in the project, we ask that you read through this note and sign the Declaration section at the bottom to request a contributor account on the project website. Once we've received your signed Declaration we will send you details of how to set up a contributor account and then you'll be ready to start uploading and sharing your material.

What are Open Educational Resources (OER)?

Open Educational Resources are teaching and learning materials that are freely available online, licensed in a way which enables them to be used and adapted by anyone worldwide, while ensuring that the original creators will always be acknowledged and credited for their work, and their rights as authors respected. OER come in all shapes and sizes and can include anything from a simple reading list to a full course. Some of the more common types of OER include course notes, slides, images, podcasts and videos. There are thousands of OER already available online, with many of them released by the most prestigious universities worldwide. Most OER are licensed with a Creative Commons licence.

What is a Creative Commons licence?

Creative Commons, usually abbreviated to CC, is a non-profit organisation that provides a series of simple, standardised licences that allow creators to retain copyright in their work, while granting others a range of permissions to use the work, from simply downloading it to adapting or incorporating it into their own material. The aim of these licences is to strike a balance within the traditional "all rights reserved" setting that copyright law creates, by offering a simple and standardised way for creators of original material to grant copyright permissions to others to use their creative works, within the boundaries of copyright law.

What CC licence will be used?

The CC licence chosen by the University of Oxford for its OER is the Creative Commons UK: England & Wales Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share-Alike 2.0 licence. The main terms of this licence are that the use is non-commercial only, so you can be assured nobody is making a profit from your work; the creator must be attributed in all copies and derivative works, so nobody can lawfully claim your work as their own; and any materials based on yours (derivative works) must be licensed for others to use on the same terms.

What material is suitable to be openly licensed?

Much material in digital format created by you in the course of your teaching can be openly licensed. It can be in almost any format, whether text-based, visual, audio, video or multimedia. As well as the types of resources mentioned above, you could include assignments, handouts, games, quizzes, simulations, classroom and laboratory activities and many others. Podcasts and videos can be of talks you have recorded in advance of a class or recordings made of the sessions you have taught. (Note, if anyone apart from you appears in a podcast or video, for example one of your students, you must have their consent before you openly license the resource).

There are some conditions which you need to meet when you create the materials to ensure it is suitable to be openly licensed. The main ones are that the work must either be your own original creation; or, if it includes material created by others, such as images or video clips, these must be appropriately licensed for re-use. In addition, all the content must be lawful and not, for instance, defamatory, likely to incite racial hatred, or pornographic, and must not violate any third party rights (such as copyright).

The main point to remember is that if, for example, you include images you have found on the Internet to illustrate a PowerPoint presentation, you need to ensure that you will not be infringing the copyright of the person who created the original digital photograph or image. The safest way to do this is to omit anything that you are unsure about or look for images that are licensed under a suitable Creative Commons licence. There are easy-to-use tools available to help you find such images and you will be provided with training on how use these tools when you take part in one of the Sesame project workshops.

How do I license my material?

Content will be uploaded initially to the Sesame project portal at: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk. In order to be able to upload your material you will need to register and create a contributor account on the site. As well as giving brief details about yourself, you will be asked to tick a box to confirm that you agree to the University's Open Educational Resource Contribution terms. The three things you will be asked to agree to are: that your contribution is suitable to be openly licensed; that you grant the University a licence to distribute your contributions; and that you would like the University to make your contributions available under a CC licence. Each time you upload a new resource you will be asked to tick a box to reaffirm that you agree to these terms.

Once your material has been uploaded to the portal, it will be reviewed by the Weekly Class Programme Office and then made publicly available from: http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk. Selected resources will also be made available through other University of Oxford and public distribution channels and posted on Jorum, the UK national educational repository.

What rights will I have when I openly license my content?

By agreeing to the University's Open Educational Resource Contribution terms you grant the University rights to distribute your material to others, but do not grant this right exclusively. It is still your material and you can do with it nearly everything you could before. The only restriction is that, having given the University the right to distribute, you can no longer exclusively grant that right to someone else. You retain a full range of rights in your work, including:
- Ownership of the copyright in your work (unless it is already owned by your employer).
- You can grant others the non-exclusive right to distribute your work, even commercially.
- You can still use the material yourself and publish it via a third party publisher.
- You can ask for your work to be removed from the Sesame project portal at any time by following the instructions in the Take Down policy published on the site and we will gladly remove your material. However, you have no rights over any material that has already been downloaded and is in use elsewhere. This is a key term of the CC licence which enables users to have confidence that their right to use CC licensed material will never be revoked.
- You can take legal action if you know of anyone using your work outside the terms of the licence, for instance by failing to credit you or for obtaining commercial gain from it.
- You are protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act,1988 and can take legal action if you know of anyone subjecting your content to derogatory treatment, distortion or mutilation.

Further information

You can find further information from the following websites:

- Creative Commons: http://creativecommons.org/
- Creative Commons licences: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/
- Open Educational Resource Contribution terms: http://tinyurl.com/ContedOER

Declaration

I have read this briefing note and understand how material I contribute to the Sesame project will be licensed and released.

Signature: ....

Full name: ....

Email address: ....