SCORE Library Survey Report

Executive Summary

The Support Centre for Open Resources in Education (SCORE) is charged with supporting Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Educational Practise (OEP). Librarians are often engaged in the activities around sourcing materials for inclusion in teaching and learning materials, as well as in supporting the activities around archiving and storing of data. As such, SCORE identified them as a target group to engage in OER.

The survey aimed to get a national perspective on institutional engagement in Open Educational Resources through their librarians. It also sought to identify library staff engagement with OER, their understanding of licensing and OEP, and their experience in using and finding OER.

Respondents from some twenty three institutions took part in the survey, enabling some general conclusions to be drawn from the data.

1   Around a third of librarians are confident in using and promoting Creative Commons licences, but the majority are not. This indicates a need for additional support in this area.

2   Librarians are occasionally asked to locate OER but this is by no means a frequent occurrence, indicating that OER are not being used widely by those who create teaching and learning materials at present.

3   The most frequently used repository is Flickr, closely followed by Jorum and then OpenLearn. 'Openly accessible' images are the most sought after resource. The popularity of Jorum and OpenLearn would seem to indicate a need for repositories in which there is significant confidence in the quality of the materials. It was also an indication of a preference for, or trust in, 'local' material over 'international' material when it comes to use for actual learning materials. This was borne out by the fact that the MIT OpenCourseWare repository tied in forth position with Xpert in terms of use, in spite of their being fewer people aware of Xpert.

4   The majority of HEI libraries do not include open textbooks amongst their resources. This indicates that either traditional textbooks continue to be considered of higher intellectual value, or that there is not a sufficient volume of high quality open textbooks available to make sourcing them viable.

5   Most institutions had an open research repository. This is most likely due to this being one way in which institutions can evidence 'impact' for the Research Excellence Framework, and for their similar role in the previous Research Assessment Exercise. This demonstrates how the linking of reward to open publishing (in the case of the RAE, financial reward for institutions who demonstrated sufficient impact through research publications) can encourage openness.

6   Library staff considered that the primary reasons for people not engaging in OER were a lack of understanding of Creative Commons licensing specifically and copyright licensing more generally, together with a lack of digital literacy skills amongst those designing and

developing teaching and learning resources. This is indicative of a need for more information and training to be made available in these areas.

7   Librarians predominantly find out about new tools and technologies through events, their professional association and mailing lists. This makes these the most beneficial routes to target in order to effectively disseminate information to this group of staff.

8   A clear majority of library staff indicated a need for more targeted information on OER and licensing. This requirement comprised of two parts – a need for more information and a need for different delivery methods of the information made available.

These conclusions indicate that the next steps should include a focus on improving knowledge around licensing for teaching and learning resource materials, as well as on improving digital literacy skills within institutions. This is something that can be tackled within institutions but is also something that can be included in the professional development activities run by professional associations.

SCORE Library Survey Report

Introduction

The work of the Support Centre for Open Resources in Education (SCORE) is to support the engagement of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Open Educational Resources (OER) and Open Educational Practise (OEP). Librarians are often engaged in the activities around sourcing materials for inclusion in teaching and learning materials, as well as in supporting the activities around archiving and storing of data. As such, SCORE identified them as a target group to engage in OER.

The survey aimed to get a national perspective on institutional engagement in open educational resources through their librarians. It also sought to identify library staff engagement with OER, their understanding of licensing and OEP, and their experience in using and finding OER.

Methodology

Discussions with colleagues in the Open University's library determined that an online survey would be the most practical manner in which to obtain a reasonable quantity of data on current engagement in OER, in HEI libraries. The Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) were contacted and asked if they would be willing to circulate the survey to their members, to which they agreed. To encourage participation, a prize of a Kindle was offered to respondents.

A draft of the survey was sent to the OU's Ethics Committee for approval. It was also piloted with Open University Library staff, who were asked to give feedback on the questions and the survey design. Some minor amendments were made based on the feedback received, and then SCONUL was approached and asked to circulate the survey to its members so that a reasonable national perspective could be obtained. It was circulated on 18 October 2011 and the survey remained open until 6 December 2011.

The results of the survey were exported to an excel spreadsheet. This allowed the quantitative data to be easily analysed and also enabled the creation of simple charts to illustrate the findings. Qualitative data gained in the survey was used to identify reasons for the figures and identify issues for consideration.

Responses and Participating Institutions

There were thirty two responses from a total of twenty three institutions and *chart 1* provides a graphic representation of the profile of responding institutions. The institution with the highest number of respondents was Nottingham University with six, followed by The Open University with three. Sheffield Hallam University and Royal Holloway University each had two respondents, with all other institutions having a single respondent.
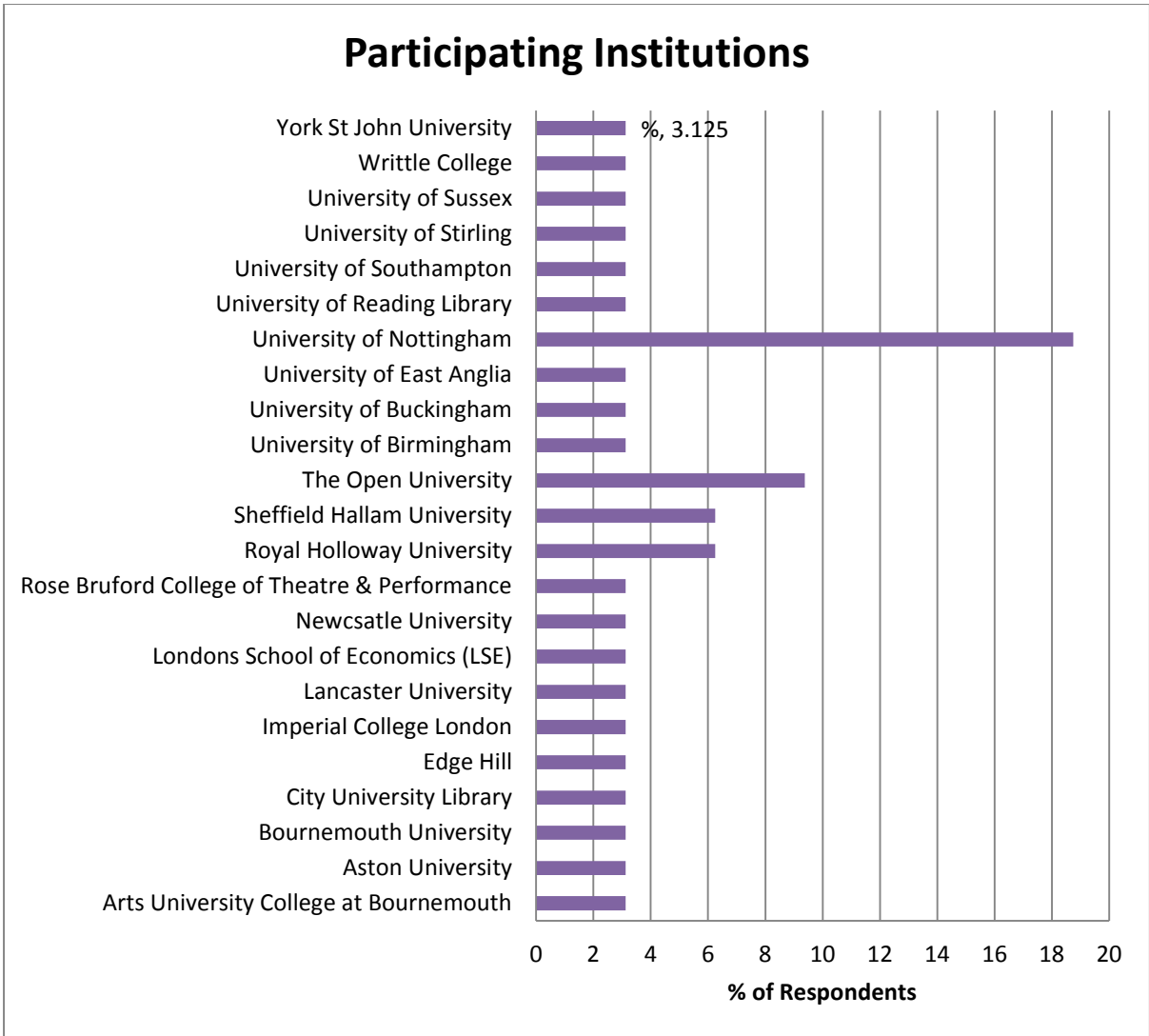
Participating Institutions

Institution	% of Respondents
York St John University	%, 3.125
Writtle College	3.125
University of Sussex	3.125
University of Stirling	3.125
University of Southampton	3.125
University of Reading Library	3.125
University of Nottingham	18.75
University of East Anglia	3.125
University of Buckingham	3.125
University of Birmingham	3.125
The Open University	9.375
Sheffield Hallam University	6.25
Royal Holloway University	6.25
Rose Bruford College of Theatre & Performance	3.125
Newcsatle University	3.125
Londons School of Economics (LSE)	3.125
Lancaster University	3.125
Imperial College London	3.125
Edge Hill	3.125
City University Library	3.125
Bournemouth University	3.125
Aston University	3.125
Arts University College at Bournemouth	3.125

% of Respondents

Chart 1 indicating the institutions represented in the survey and the number of respondents from each participating institution

Of the thirty two respondents, twenty eight were familiar with the term 'Open Educational Resource' (OER), two were not familiar with the term and one was vaguely familiar with the term.

Librarian Classification

Respondents were provided with a list of classifications and asked to indicate what type of librarian they would class themselves as. Multiple entries were enabled resulting in a total of 73 answers, indicated in *chart 2* below. The eleven categories were faculty liaison/subject specialism, research support, information literacy training, enquiry service, systems, cataloguing/metadata, acquisitions, facilities, collections management/development, marketing and other, as indicated in chart 2 below. 59% of the respondents classified themselves into a single category. Of the remaining 41%, 24% indicated that they covered between two and four of the categories, with the remaining 17% indicating that they cover between five and ten of the categories listed.
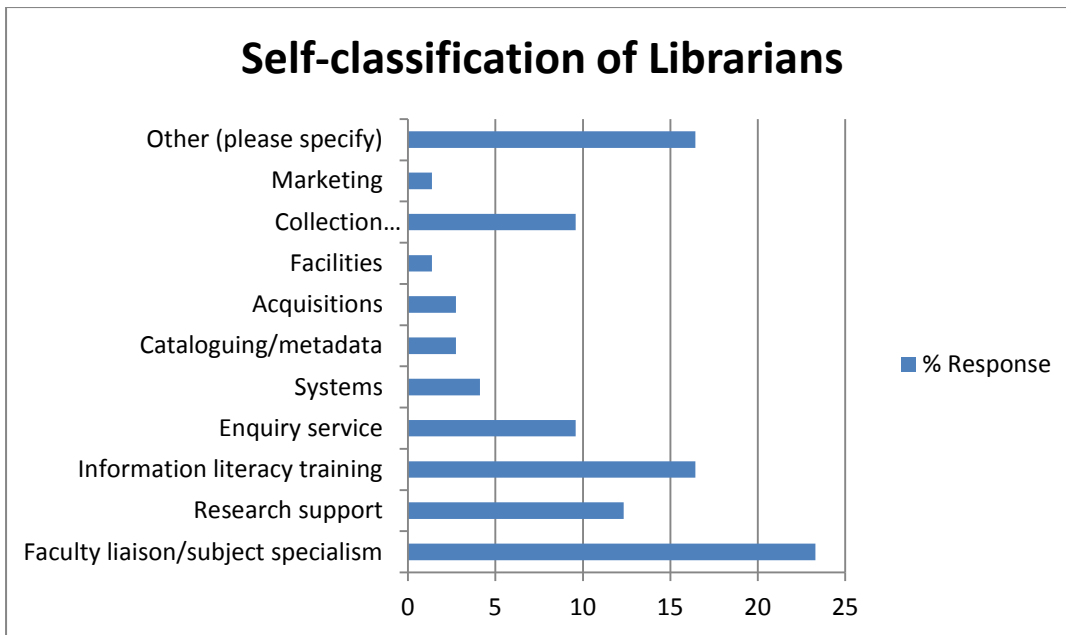
Self-classification of Librarians

Chart 2 indicating the way in which the Librarians who participated in the survey categorised themselves

Those selecting the 'other' category primarily indicated that they had some type of managerial responsibility. As indicated in *chart 2*, most respondents classify themselves as *faculty liaison / subject specialist* librarians (23%).

Institutional position on Open Educational Resources (OER)

Respondents were asked to indicate how they viewed their institution's position in terms of encouraging engagement in the use and creation of OER. 65% of respondents indicated that their institution allowed the use of OER in the creation of teaching and learning materials but did not actively encourage it. Reasons given by respondents as to why there was a lack of active encouragement for the use of OER at their institution ranged from there being 'little interest in OER' to there being 'a lack of sufficient understanding, process and resource' to pursue a more active engagement in OER. 32% of respondents indicated that their institutions encourage the use of OER in teaching and learning material. 3% of respondents did not think that their institution had a view on OER.

Confidence in using and promoting Creative Commons Licences

Confidence Guage for Using and Promoting Creative Commons Licencing

3%

39%

58%

■ Very confident

■ Not very confident

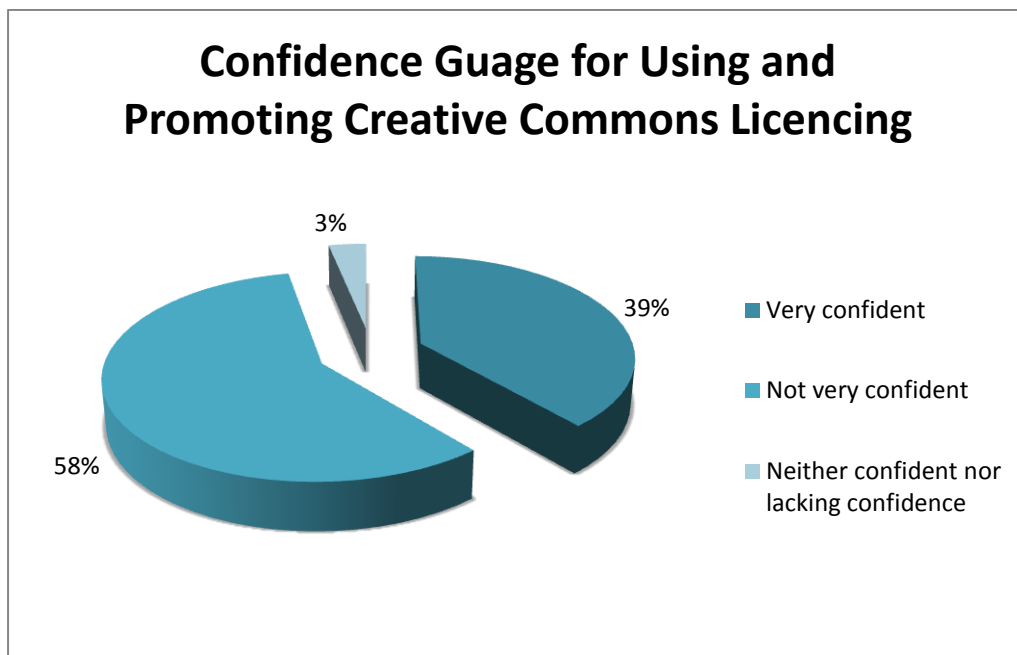■ Neither confident nor lacking confidence

Chart 3 indicating the proportion of respondents who felt confident in using and promoting Creative Commons licenses compared against those lacking the confidence to do so

Of the thirty one respondents replying to the question on whether they felt confident in using and promoting Creative Commons (CC) licenses, twelve respondents (39%) said that they were very confident, as indicated in *chart 3*. Of those twelve, five indicated that they had used Creative Commons licensed images with four of those specifically mentioning Flickr as the repository used. Two 'confident' responders had been involved in JISC projects, two had published articles with one of these being specifically on licensing and the other on resources but including information on licensing. One respondent had developed a framework on 'open content literacy', and the other two respondents had previously been involved in creating or re-using openly licensed material.

Eighteen respondents (58%) indicated that they lacked confidence in using and promoting CC licensed material. Suggestions for rectifying this included training, case studies, guidance, hands-on experience and involvement in a JISC project. Two respondents indicated a need to put aside time to review the resources and information available.

One respondent indicated ambivalence regarding whether s/he was confident or not in this regard.

Frequency of Requests to Locate Open Educational Resources

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they were asked to locate open educational resources on a scale of 'frequently', 'occasionally', 'infrequently' and 'never'. Of the thirty two respondents, sixteen had never been asked to locate them, seven were infrequently asked to locate them and nine were occasionally asked to locate them. No respondents indicated that they were frequently asked to locate this type of resource.

Awareness and Use of Repositories

Repository Familiarity

Percentage Indicated

Categories: JORUM, OpenLearn, MIT OpenCourseWare, WikiEducator, MERLOT, Xpert, Flickr, Other
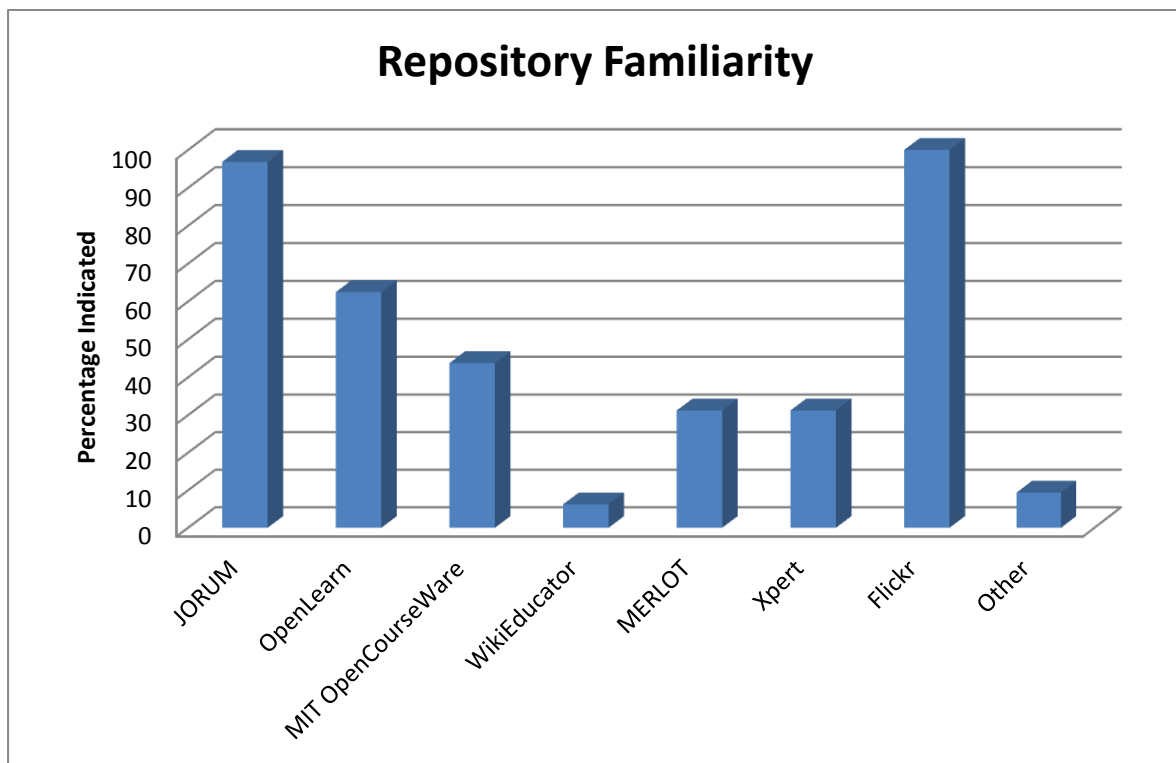
Chart 4 indicating respondents familiarity with seven repositories

Respondents were asked to indicate their awareness of a selection of repositories and *chart 4* provides a pictorial representation of the responses received. All respondents were aware of 'Flickr', the images repository containing a mix of openly licensed and non-openly licensed resources. This was closely followed by knowledge of JORUM (thirty one respondents), the JISC OER project repository and OpenLearn (twenty respondents), the Open University's openly licensed repository. Only 6% of respondents were aware of WikiEducator. Xpert (owned by Nottingham University) and Merlot (California State University owned) were each known by 31% of respondents, and 44% of respondents were aware of MIT OpenCourseWare. The 9% of respondents indicating awareness of other repositories listed EdShare, Humbox, SWAPBox, the Creative Commons 'DiscoverEd' and 'various IL resources' as examples.
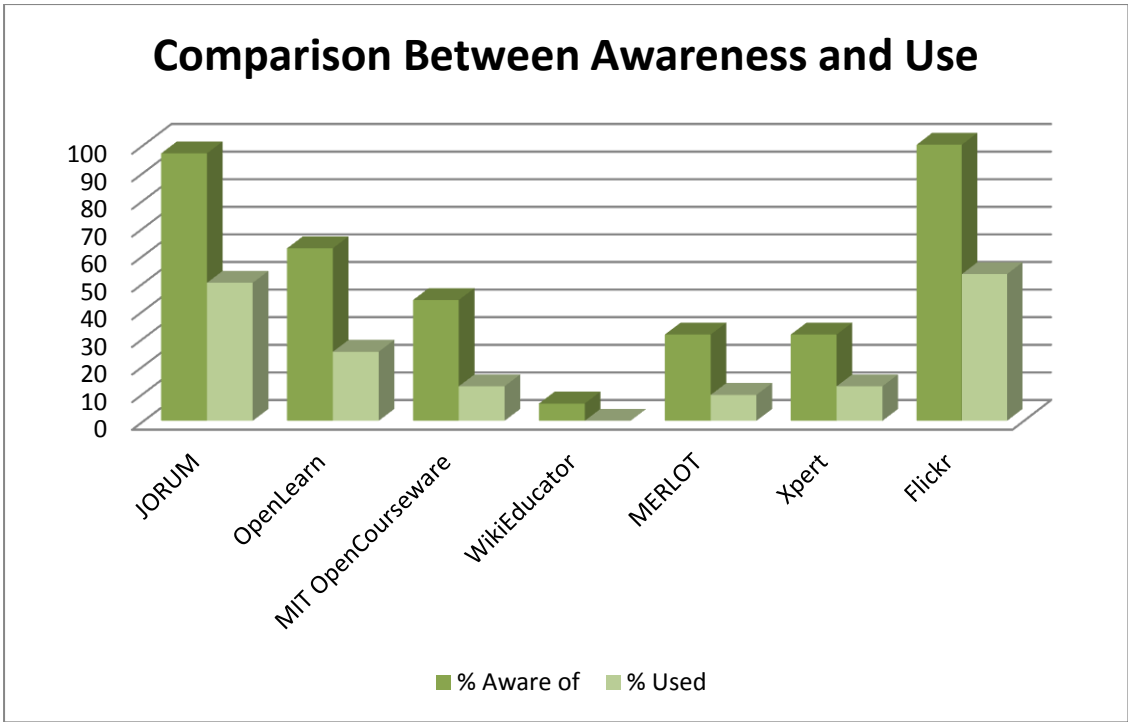
Comparison Between Awareness and Use

Chart 5 indicating the difference between the awareness of repositories versus their use amongst respondents

As can be seen from *chart 5* above, the frequency with which a repository had been used ranged from approximately a third to half of that which respondents had indicated awareness of it in. The frequency pattern for usage followed that of awareness for the top three repositories, with usage of Flickr topping the chart as the most frequently accessed of all the repositories, followed by JORUM and then OpenLearn. Amongst the less frequently used repositories there was a slight change, with MIT OpenCourseWare and Xpert tied, followed closely by MERLOT. In position of least used was WikiEducator with a value of zero.
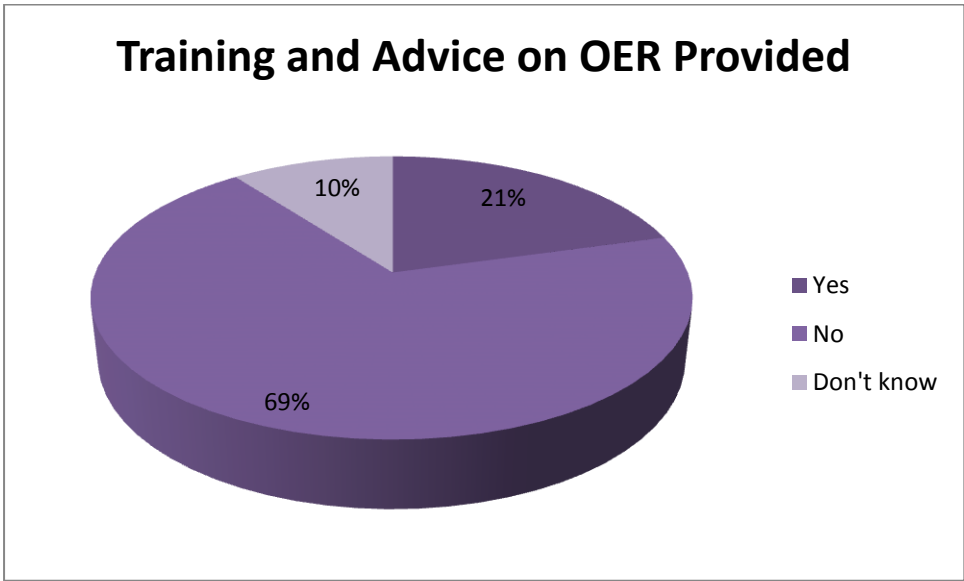
Training and Advice on OER Provided

Chart 6 indicating the percentage of respondents who are involved in providing training or advice on open educational resources to staff in their institution

Majority of respondents indicated that they were not involved in providing training or advice on OER (69%). 21% of respondents did provide training or advice to staff at their institution, as indicated in *chart 6*.

Inclusion and Use of Open Textbooks and Open Research Repositories

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their institutional library included open text books. They were also asked to indicate whether the institution hosted an open research repository. The responses received as represented in *charts 7 and 8* below.
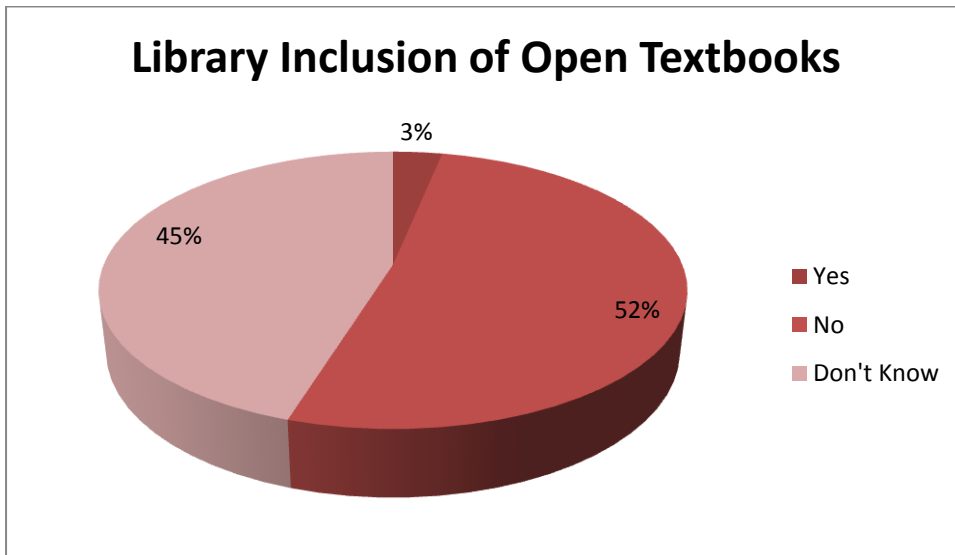

Chart 7 indicating the percentage with which open textbooks are known to be included in libraries from responding institutions

As indicated in *chart 7*, majority of respondents indicated that their institution did not include open textbooks (52%), followed closely with 45% being unsure. Just 3% indicated that their library did include open textbooks.
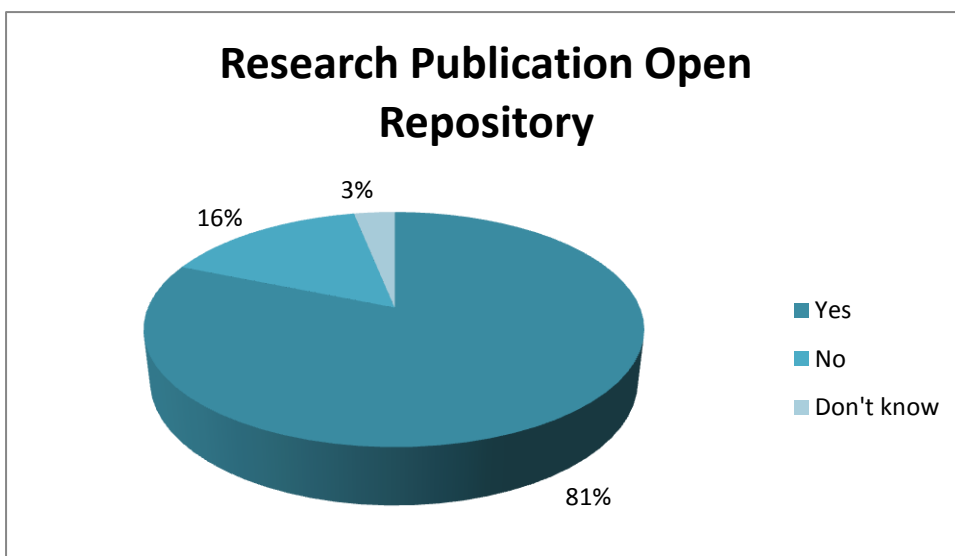

Chart 8 indicating the percentage of institutions with an 'open' research publication repository

As indicated by *Chart 8,* the vast majority of respondents from participating institutions indicated that there was an institutional open research publication repository, at 81%. 16% of respondents from participating institutions indicated that their institution did not a have one, and 3% of respondents were unsure. URLs provided by respondents to their institutional repositories were:

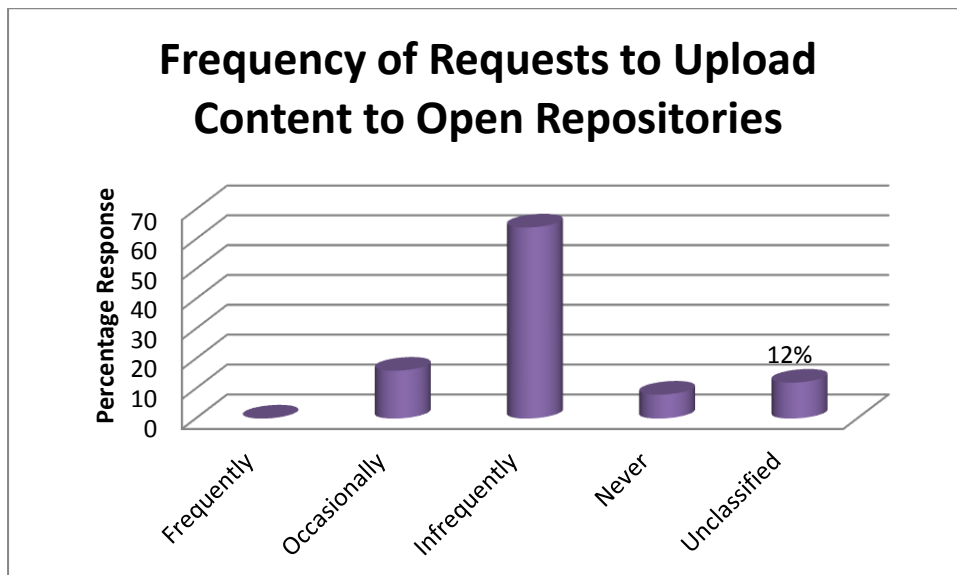| Institution	URL
Royal Holloway University	http://digirep.rhul.ac.uk/
Lancaster University	http://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/
Imperial College London	http://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/
City University London	http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/
University of Stirling	https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/
University of Reading	http://centaur.reading.ac.uk/
University of Birmingham	http://eprints.bham.ac.uk/
Aston University	http://www1.aston.ac.uk/research/aura/
Sheffield Hallam	http://shura.shu.ac.uk/
Nottingham University	http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/
The Open University	http://oro.open.ac.uk

Chart 9 indicating the frequency with which respondents have been asked to upload content to open repositories

Majority of respondents have received infrequent requests (64%) to upload content to open repositories to date. None of the respondents indicated that they were frequently asked to do so. All the 'unclassified' respondents indicated that they had been asked to upload content but did not indicate the frequency with which these requests had been received. 16% of respondents indicated that they received 'occasional' requests and 8% indicated that they had never received a request to do so. *Chart 9* above provides a pictorial representation of the responses to this section.

Understanding Why Staff and Institutions May Choose Not to Engage with OER

Respondents were asked to indicate from a range of options, what they felt prevented staff in their institution from using open educational resources in their own teaching and learning resources.

Respondents were encouraged to indicate as many reasons as they felt applied to their institution. The range given is indicated in *chart 10* below.

Reasons for Not Engaging in OER

■ % of Respondents

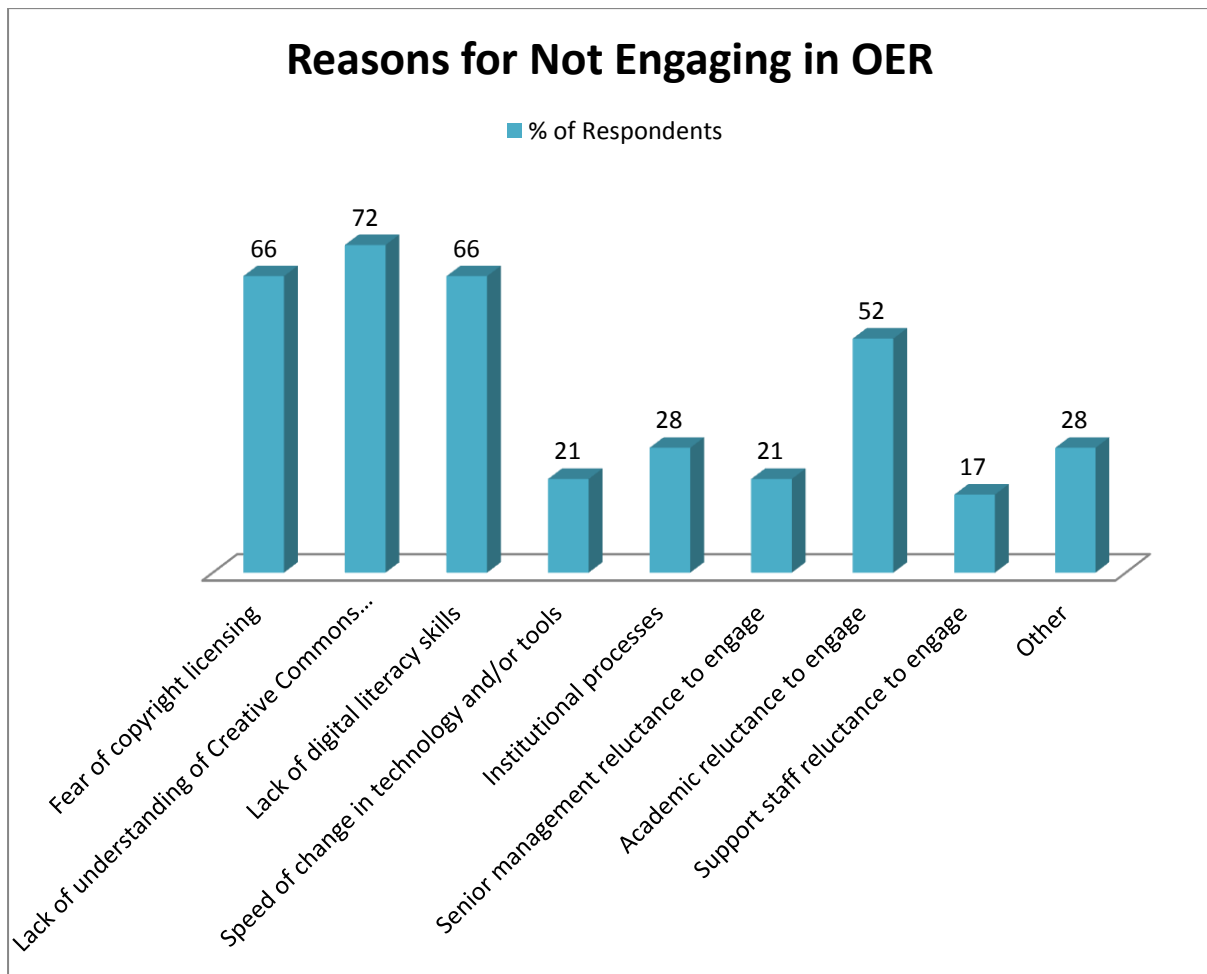| Reason	%
Fear of copyright licensing	66
Lack of understanding of Creative Commons…	72
Lack of digital literacy skills	66
Speed of change in technology and/or tools	21
Institutional processes	28
Senior management reluctance to engage	21
Academic reluctance to engage	52
Support staff reluctance to engage	17
Other	28

Chart 10 indicating the respondents' impression of reasons why staff in their institution may not be using open educational resources in their teaching and learning materials

'Other' reasons given as forming barriers to staff who could potentially use open educational resources in their teaching and learning materials but don't, included:

- attitudes to IPR
- attitudes to open access
- lack of relevancy of resources found
- isolated working practices
- lack of understanding of the benefits of OER
- concern over student perception of the inclusion of freely accessible resources in their teaching materials
- lack of time

Tools and Technologies

Identifying New Tools and Technologies

5%

11%

10%

24%

24%

26%

- My professional association
- Events
- Mailing lists
- Industry publications
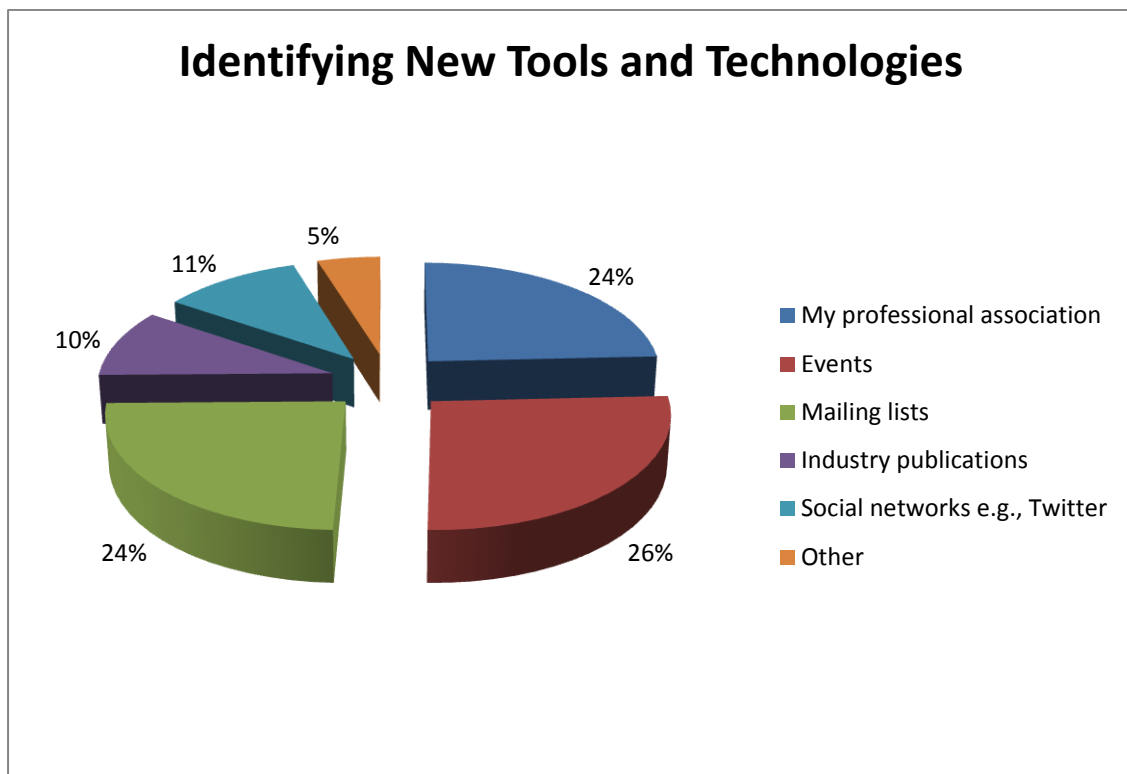- Social networks e.g., Twitter
- Other

Chart 11 highlighting the range of resources used to identify new tools and technologies by respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate how they found out about new tools and technologies. Multiple responses were allowed. As can be seen in *chart 11*, the top three mediums for identifying new tools and technologies were 'events' (26%), 'professional association' (24%) and 'mailing lists' (24%). Each of the thirty one respondents to this question indicated two or more mediums. Examples provided in the 'other' category included personal research, Twitter, involvement in externally funded projects, networking, RSS feeds and blogs.

Professional Development

In response to a question on professional association membership, twenty nine of the thirty two respondents indicated that they were members of a professional association and three had no professional affiliation, as indicated in *chart 12*. Of the twenty nine who were members of a professional association, the majority were affiliated to CILIP. 17% indicated that they were a member of more than one professional association.
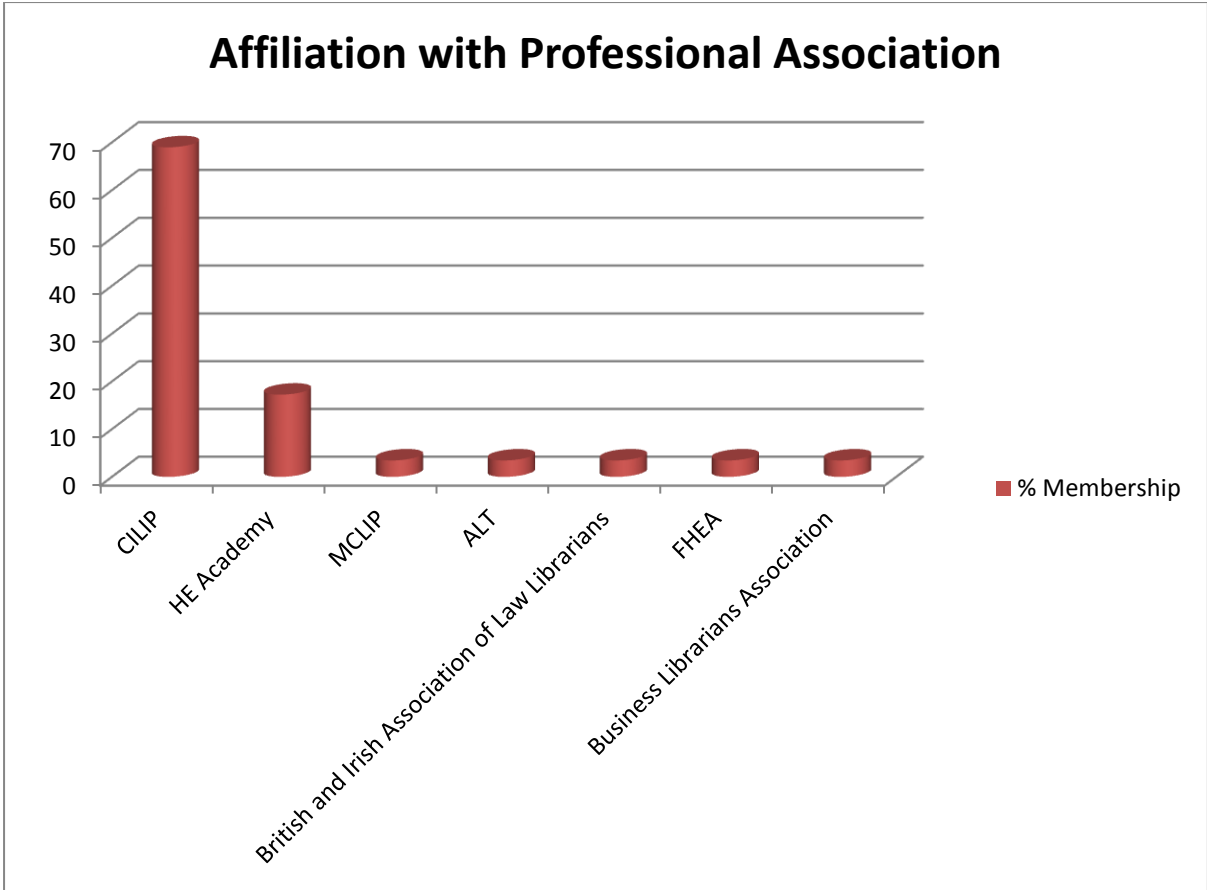
Affiliation with Professional Association

Categories: CILIP, HE Academy, MCLIP, ALT, British and Irish Association of Law Librarians, FHEA, Business Librarians Association

Legend: % Membership

Chart 12 indicating the range of professional associations respondents' were affiliated to

Seventy two percent of respondents indicated a need for more targeted information to be made available to library professionals, with the remaining twenty eight percent feeling that there was no such need as indicated in *chart 13*. The responses from those indicating a need for improved information can be categorised into two requirements: the need for different methods of delivering information and the need for additional information. The former included the targeting of specific skills such as digital literacy, the mapping of resources to 'subject disciplines' and the provision of easy to understand summary information. The latter included the requirement for more information to be made available about JISC/HE Academy projects, tools, principles, technologies, legal issues and licensing.
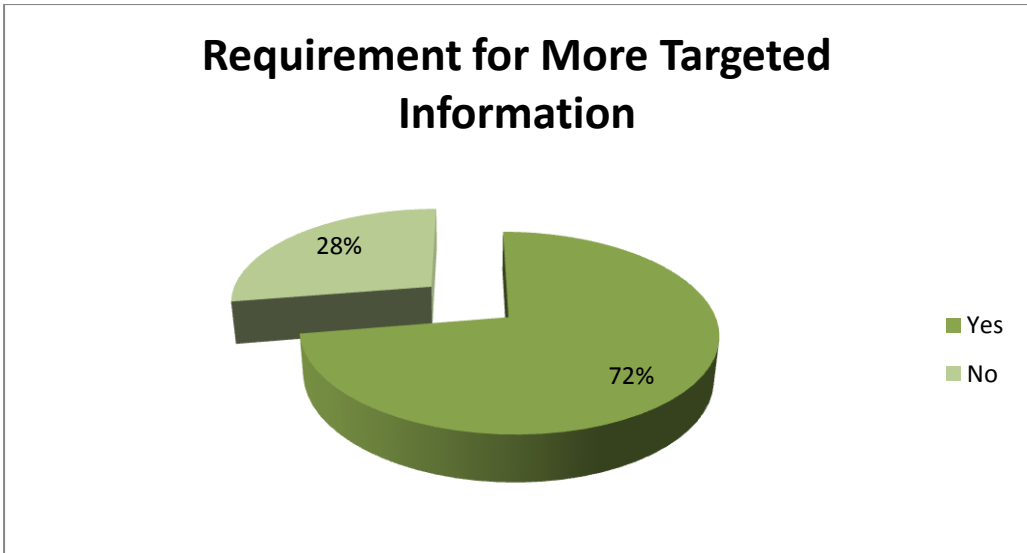
Requirement for More Targeted Information

28%

72%

Yes

No

Chart 13 indicating responses on the need for the provision of more targeted information on open educational resources to library professionals

Conclusions

Respondents from some twenty three institutions took part in the survey, enabling some general conclusions to be drawn from the data.

1   A good proportion of librarians are confident in using and promoting Creative Commons licences, but a significant majority are not. This indicates a need for additional support in this area.

2   Librarians are occasionally asked to locate open educational resources (OER) but this is by no means a frequent occurrence, indicating that OER are not being used widely by those who create teaching and learning materials at present.

3   The most frequently used repository is Flickr, closely followed by JORUM and then OpenLearn. As individual assets then, 'openly accessible' images are clearly sought after. JORUM, the JISC OER project repository, and OpenLearn, the OU's learning material repository being in second and third place respectively, indicate a need for repositories in which there is significant confidence in the quality of the materials. It was also an indication of a preference for, or trust in, 'local' material over 'international' material when it comes to use for actual learning materials. This was borne out by the fact that MIT OpenCourseWare repository tied in forth position with Xpert in terms of use, in spite of their being fewer people aware of Xpert.

4   The majority of HEI libraries do not include open textbooks amongst their resources. This indicates that either traditional textbooks continue to be considered of higher intellectual value, or that there is not a sufficient volume of high quality open textbooks available to make sourcing them viable.

5   Most institutions had an open research repository. This is most likely due to this being one way in which institutions can evidence 'impact' for the Research Excellence Framework, and

for their similar role in the previous Research Assessment Exercise. This demonstrates how the linking of reward to open publishing (in the case of the RAE, financial reward for institutions who demonstrated sufficient impact through research publications) can encourage openness.

6   Library staff considered that the primary reasons for people not engaging in OER were a lack of understanding of Creative Commons licensing specifically and copyright licensing more generally, together with a lack of digital literacy skills amongst those designing and developing teaching and learning resources. This is indicative of a need for more information and training to be made available in these areas.

7   Librarians predominantly find out about new tools and technologies through events, their professional association and mailing lists. This makes these the most beneficial routes to target in order to effectively disseminate information to this group of staff.

8   A clear majority of library staff indicated a need for more targeted information on OER and licensing. This requirement comprised of two parts – a need for more information and a need for different delivery methods of the information made available.

Tracey de Beer
Communications Manager, SCORE
1 February 2012 (data collected between 18 October 2011 & 6 December 2011)