

Institutional Repositories: Staff and Skills Set

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Introduction

This document is based on a paper written by Mary Robinson of the core [SHERPA](#) team in 2008 and 2009, assisted by contributions from the SHERPA partners and [UKCoRR](#) (United Kingdom Council of Research Repositories) members.

This is the third revision of the SHERPA Staff and Skills Set document, produced by Jackie Wickham in consultation with UKCoRR and can be found at <http://www.rsp.ac.uk/help/publications/#briefing-papers>

The JISC Recruitment Toolkit, released in March 2009, is recommended as a useful source of information on how to manage the recruitment process and specifically focuses on recruitment for repository or related posts
<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/themes/informationenvironment/recruitment.aspx>

Staff

Staff requirements for a repository vary greatly between institutions depending on the remit of the repository and existing and available resources.

In some repositories the skills, knowledge and abilities required may be expected of an individual repository post with the assistance of general IT personnel. However, many institutions spread the work over two main posts:

1. Repository Manager- who manages the 'human' side of the repository including content policies, advocacy, user training and a liaison with a wide range of institutional departments and external contacts.
2. Repository Administrator- who manages the implementation, customisation and management of repository software, manages metadata fields and quality, creates usage reports and tracks the preservation issues. A particularly important part of this role is the checking of copyright compliance.

Other institutions spread the work over several posts or over several departments; typically including library cataloguers, subject librarians, other library, teaching and administrative staff as well as IT services.

Skills

As mentioned above, institutions vary greatly in how the work of the repository is distributed. Hence this document is **not** intended as the skill set required of a particular repository post but rather the skills, knowledge and abilities required for the development and management of a successful institutional repository.

Many commercial services now offer hosted repository solutions. The roles or skills supplied by the commercial service and those needed within the institution will be agreed through negotiation between the two parties. This document can be used to identify those skills available within the institution and those which the commercial service must supply.

Management

Ability to:

- Manage the repository budget and respond to user needs in line with resources
- Develop a strategy and costing for the future development of the repository
- Source funding opportunities, both internal and external, for repository projects where appropriate
- Manage projects which are related to repository development
- Collaborate with research staff in the university to prepare research proposals (e.g. advising on data management and standards)
- Manage the repository service by identifying goals and future strategies for improvement in the repository service
- Develop workflows to manage the capture, description and preservation etc. of repository outputs
- Manage the day-to-day running of the repository including any mediated-deposit service (if required or possible) or self-archiving by authors
- Coordinate and manage activities of repository personnel and coordinate repository development with associated departments
- Set up test collections and user satisfaction surveys to evaluate the service and report on findings where appropriate
- Monitor deposit; download and other usage indicators to identify the impact and success of the repository and areas for improvement in the service. Produce usage reports where appropriate.
- Manage user expectations to ensure that expected service delivery is achievable
- Handle comments, complaints and relationships if service delivery does not meet user demand. Manage other difficulties as they arise.

Software

Familiarity with:

- Standard web-based software systems including (but not limited to) Unix, Linux, SQL Server, MySQL, SGML, XML, PHP, JAVA, PERL, Apache
- At least one major repository software including (but not limited to) EPrints, DSpace, Fedora, OPUS
- Functionality of commercial CRIS (Current Research Information Systems) e.g. Pure, Converis, Symplectic
- Web-based software and services including web 2.0 services such as del.icio.us and statistics tools such as Google Analytics or AWStats

Ability to:

- Customise, deploy and manage repository and associated software
- Arrange and carry out testing of the system and evaluate results
- Design and develop repository interface and tools to meet user needs
- Identify and develop value-added services such as community and collection pages in the repository, feeds to other university web pages such as personal profiles

Metadata and interoperability standards

Familiarity with:

- Relevant metadata standards including (but not limited to) Dublin Core, MARC, METS, MODS,
- General interoperability protocols such as OAI-PMH, OAI-ORE
- Standards for the interoperability of research information, particularly CERIF

Ability to:

- Identify or develop appropriate metadata and other standards
- Liaise and test implementation with cataloguing team where appropriate
- Ensure compliance and monitor metadata quality on an ongoing basis

Storage & Preservation

Familiarity with:

- Current best practice procedures and external advice and resources

Ability to:

- Work with IT Services on the use of their network storage and on backup requirements
- Scope the long term storage requirements of repositories and work with IT services to meet backup requirements

- Work with institutional personnel including (but not limited to) University Records Manager, Archivist and IT services, as well as external organisations in order to
 - Identify best practice and establish requirements for preservation
 - Develop a policy for how different materials should be preserved (or not)

Content

Familiarity with:

- Relevant IPR issues
 - Needed when accepting material for the repository
 - Needed to develop guidelines to ensure consistent good practice
 - Must be able to provide advice on relevant IPR issues
 - Sources of bibliographic information which can be machine harvested such as Web of Science, InCites, Scopus etc

Ability to:

- Develop a content policy for the repository to include (but not limited to)
 - The types of materials that can be deposited
 - How different materials should be managed within the repository
 - How embargoed materials are to be managed
 - How withdrawals of deposited items are to be managed
- Increase the amount and quality of items deposited in the repository by
 - Identifying suitable publications for deposit by checking personal and departmental web pages and following the development of new areas of research in the institution
 - Encouraging authors of suitable publications to deposit their work
 - Explaining to authors how to self-archive OR where mediated deposit is provided
 - Asking authors for files and converting them to appropriate formats for deposit (e.g. Word to PDF); depositing in the repository on their behalf
 - Harvesting /downloading bibliographic data from external systems into a repository or CRIS
- Ensure the quality of the content in the repository by
 - Adding high quality metadata to records and/or checking the accuracy of the metadata submitted by others such as academics and departmental administrative staff
 - Dealing with duplicate entries in the system
 - Ensuring authors' names are recorded consistently
 - Checking copyright compliance when full text is uploaded

Advocacy, Training & Support

Familiarity with:

- Academic publishing including developments in open access and hybrid journals. An understanding of the journal options provided by the main publishers in different subjects is essential in establishing credibility with academics and in advising them of their options.
- Funders requirements regarding open access.

Ability to:

- Develop an advocacy programme to address the full spectrum of stakeholders to create a broad culture of engagement within the institution
- Develop advocacy and publicity materials for use within the institution

e.g. webpages, guides, FAQs and presentations

- Be proactive in publicizing repository developments via institutional newsletters, seminars and email alerts etc
- Assess the training needs of specific stakeholder groups within the institution
- Develop suitable training programmes and materials for those groups
- Organise and run training sessions. Topics may include (but are not limited to)
 - Introduction to Open Access
 - How to deposit items into the repository/CRIS
 - How to search for OA materials
- Answer queries and provide advice as appropriate

Communication (Internal)

Ability to:

- Liaise with a wide variety of departments and interest groups (e.g. students) to
 - Identify high-level and longer-term institutional strategies, opportunities and needs of the institution which may be met by the repository
 - Identify and address any areas of concern or overlap between the repository and stakeholder requirements or other interests within the institution
 - Build awareness and confidence in the repository service
 - Develop practical policies and procedures to ensure the repository becomes embedded in the research processes of the institution
- Liaise with a wide variety of departments and interest groups in particular
 - Senior institutional managers must be aware of the benefits of the repository to the institution and must have confidence in the ability of the repository personnel to deliver a key service tailored to the needs of the institution
 - Work with the Research Support/Grants Offices to develop and improve research reporting systems such as those required for the Research Excellence Framework and for funder reporting.
 - Ensure IT services have buy in to the repository through demonstrating its benefits; work with IT services to maintain repository hardware and software and to facilitate integration and alignment with other university systems
 - Work with the library to identify key information and services needed by researchers from the repository and to ensure that repository staff are aware of any feedback from users
 - Initiate contact with individual academics and research groups in the institution to identify their needs from the repository and develop their involvement in the repository
 - Where a repository is to hold e-theses, liaise with the Graduate School to encourage/ensure deposit of e-theses and to identify and address any potential copyright issues

- Use social media as a tool for promoting the repository and engaging academics, wider library staff and other internal stakeholders

Communication (External)

Ability to:

- Promote the repository outside the institution as a showcase of the institution's work. At a minimum, the repository should be registered with OpenDOAR, OAI and other relevant service providers such as the OAIster and BASE search engines
- Liaise with external stakeholders in open access and repository development, including (but not limited to) funding agencies; publishers; repository groups or federations; service providers; learned societies; international peers and related organisations
- Use social media as a means of promoting new developments, projects and initiatives to the repository community

Current Awareness & Professional Development

Familiarity with:

- Current trends in the repository community, particularly with respect to events within the UK, through attendance at relevant conferences and meetings and reading relevant email lists and professional literature
- Developments within the general research community and the UK higher education system to identify potential implications for the repository. Example include research evaluation processes such as the REF which are likely to significantly impact the repository and the open data agenda which may involve repositories in curating and exposing such data..
- Technical and repository developments through attendance at relevant workshops and training courses
- The changing landscape of scholarly communications including developments in open access publishing – the Gold route to Open Access.

Ability to:

- Participate (where appropriate) in new developments, best practice, and relevant projects within the repository community
- Support the repository community through sharing experiences and contributing to community discussions as appropriate

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