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# The JISC/Academy case study template

This template is designed to encourage you reflect on how you have used open educational resources in response to particular challenges and then to share the outcomes with other practitioners. *Case studies require some depth of analysis in order for others to engage with the experiences described; it is advised that case studies submitted are approximately 750 words in length.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study title</th>
<th>OER for Blended Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution name</td>
<td>Southampton Solent University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background</strong> [Give brief details of institution, type of learners and learning environment in which the activity/ies took place]</td>
<td>The PG Cert in Blended Learning course is a new course offered by Southampton Solent University; it is aimed mainly at academic staff involved in teaching on blended learning courses. Blended Learning is therefore both the subject of the course and the mode of delivery. The module ‘Developing the Online Learning Experience’, which is the first of the two modules of the course, is comprised of four classroom-based sessions spread throughout its duration, coupled with online moderated activities that take place in between the sessions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intended outcome(s)</strong> [Describe the objective(s) behind the practice outlined here]</td>
<td>To raise awareness among academic staff about the wealth of existing resources that are out there to be utilised and to highlight ways in which these could be combined with their own learning materials in order to provide a rich learning experience for their students.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The challenge</strong> [Identify the issues that required attention or which prompted you to re-assess your previous practice]</td>
<td>The challenge was to design from scratch a module that teaches blended learning techniques in a blended learning way; various resources - both internally and externally created - had to be used to demonstrate good practice in the area of blended learning. Those resources provided a rich environment for group discussion and individual reflection that took place in the classroom and online. Challenging participants’ established views on how students learn and encouraging them to review their teaching practices was also a key element of the learning experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Established practice</strong> [Identify features of the practice previously in use - this may include any aspects which were subsequently amended]</td>
<td>Traditionally many lecturers feel under pressure to create their own learning materials to complement their teaching; this can be time consuming and sometimes expensive. Increasing awareness about OER enables lecturers to enrich their materials further and focus more on the ways in which students engage with the materials and in facilitating learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### The OER effect
[Describe the effects of the addition of OER, as experienced by learners, practitioners and/or the institution as a whole]

OER were used in various ways; OER were integrated with other subject-related learning resources such as journal articles, book chapters and presentations from the face-to-face sessions. To encourage participants’ own use of OER, they were featured in a face-to-face session where participants were asked to work in groups to evaluate the use of some of the most common OER websites such as OpenLearn, Jorum, MIT Courseware and more. Furthermore, learning activities - both group and individual - were based around Open Educational Resources as participants were asked to search, identify and evaluate an online, publicly available, structured activity that could be relevant to their subject area. To assist participants in their evaluation the following indicative questions were provided:

1. Is it individual/group activity
2. Is the activity moderated/non-moderated
3. If the activity is assessed, is it diagnostic/formative/summative assessment
4. Potential/limitations of the activity to be used in blended/online learning
5. Is the activity conducive to learning
6. Does it support a wide variety of learning styles
7. Any other comments

Participants’ systematic and guided exposure to OER resulted in a shift in their perception on ways students’ learning can be supported, as evidenced by their reflections.

### Key points for effective practice
[Briefly identify the most important points in the case study for other practitioners – these may include risks as well as benefits]

Effective practice with OER includes first of all a good search of what is out there. Following that, suitable resources can be selected to become part of a particular module or course. More importantly, attention should be placed on integrating these resources into the students’ learning experience by setting up tasks that will encourage students to evaluate these resources. Benefits of using OER include the opportunity to re-use a wide variety of rich media learning resources saving time and money at the same time. The risks around the use of OER are minimised and include paying attention in order to comply with the copyright, which might be slightly varied among different resources. All participants were familiarised with the terms of the Creative Commons license.

### Conclusions and recommendations
[A summary of how and why the practice outlined here has been effective]

The introduction of OER as part of a PG Cert in Blended Learning module called ‘Developing the online learning experience’ was one of the main four themes covered in the module. By embedding OER in most themes of the module as learning resources, their importance and relevance was further promoted and underlined. The potential of Open Educational Resources to enhance blended learning has been recognised by both module leaders, who are working with SEDA (Staff and Educational Development Association) to link the module to the ‘Supporting Learning with Technology’ SEDA award.
### Additional information
[Use this optional section to add related materials or content e.g. a lesson plan or a set of data, or to supply your email address or other contact details]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contacts:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timos Almpanis</td>
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<tr>
<td>and Barbara Lee</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Barbara.lee@solent.ac.uk">Barbara.lee@solent.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Link to the OER materials used:**

[http://mycourse.solent.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6103](http://mycourse.solent.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=6103)

**Link to a publically-accessible description of the course in which OER has been used:**

[www.solent.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/blendedlearning_pgcert/course_details.aspx](http://www.solent.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/blendedlearning_pgcert/course_details.aspx)

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