



Notes

1) Informal professional development OERs

Informal activities that result in OERs for others to explore as well as some examples of existing free units (Look in unit 4 for more)

2) xMOOCs

xMOOCs are an extension of the MIT open courseware initiative, are an attempt to explore the business opportunities of HE

3) CMOOC

cMOOCs fit the ideas of the Internet and networked learning as a commons, where all contribute and share

4) Extension work

Researching and reviewing OER practice as a professional development exercise (linked with unit 4)

5) Flickr Commons

The key goals of The Commons on Flickr are to firstly show you hidden treasures in the world's public photography archives, and secondly to show how your input and knowledge can help make these collections even richer. You're invited to help describe the photographs you discover in The Commons on Flickr, either by adding tags or leaving comments.*

6) Extension work: creating OERS as a professional learning task (see Unit 4)

Using e-tools for researching practice, collaboration and management (module review, reflecting and transforming practice)

7) Application

This node explores instances where the use of OERS may be appropriate and the practice of using OERS

8) Free research reports

This selection of research reports about professional development for educators in digital technologies in education also provides lists of references for investigation. However, OERs are very new so they are not referred to in this terminology: 'case studies' 'resources' and 'action research' are terms that might provide useful material.

9) Unit 7: Professional Development and Researching Practice

Using e-tools for researching practice, collaboration and management (module review, reflecting and transforming practice)

This resources provide opportunities to study e-tools, especially OERs, for researching professional development and researching practice in the context of creativity and digital literacy. In summary, knowing about OERs would seem to be a new area of digital literacy. However, accreditation, quality assurance and financial issues may militate against creativity in this field.

The resources have been curated on a MindMap that covers professional development opportunities for learning about Open Educational Resources (OERs) as well as some specific information about researching practice.

A key issue that emerges is the tension between traditional and informal forms of professional development. There are three perspectives on this issue. Firstly, in traditional accredited programmes of professional development the content is planned long before and may already be out of date in this fast moving area because of the time lag whilst accreditation is agreed by an awarding body. These courses will have a cost.

The second perspective is emerging informal professional development facilitated by the increasing availability of 'free' OERs. These can underpin private study or can be the content of community learning in groups that is often online. These different communities, often with free membership, present their collective learning online in different forms of OER. Often the author has been paid to produce these OERs however. If they are published they can then be used by other bodies which may endanger the jobs of existing tutors. There is also no obvious route for quality assurance.

The third perspective bridges the gap between these two: traditional and informal. This can be seen when educators oversee the development of action research studies that can be published singly or collected together to provide a management of change message. This method offers the most obvious way of researching practice with a view to reflection and change. This method also facilitates group reflection. Where tutors are involved there is a cost, however.

In detail the user can investigate these resources to see how the new availability of OERs affects the role of the educator as a teacher and a learner in a formal accredited course. Secondly the study can lead to a reflection on whether the availability of OERs makes the development

of remote informal learning alone or in a community more likely as a professional practice. Thirdly the user may wish to use the experience of investigating this resource to reflect on whether the availability of OERs impacts on research into professional practice. Overall the user will want to reflect on how all these issues impact on digital literacy and creativity for profession educators.