A Maturing Process of Engagement

Raising data capabilities in UK higher education

Graham Pryor - Digital Curation Centre, United Kingdom

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Raising RDM capability: agenda

1. Context and purpose
2. The process of engagement
3. RDM and transformational change
4. Outcomes, outlook and sustainability
Helping to build capacity, capability and skills in data management and curation across the UK’s higher education research community

- DCC Business Plan 2010-13
2011 – a year of mandates and modernisation

• RCUK - Common Principles on Research Data Policy
• ESRC - requirement for data management plans
• EPSRC - Policy Framework on Research Data
• HEFCE - Universities Modernisation Fund and DCC
The first programme - a balanced cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Representative group</th>
<th>Senior management champion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aberystwyth (joined by Bangor)</td>
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<td>Welsh Confederation</td>
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<td>Million+</td>
<td>[Senior management team strategic initiative]</td>
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<td>Russell Group</td>
<td>Vice Principal Knowledge Management</td>
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<td>Vice-Principal for Research &amp; Enterprise</td>
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<td>University Alliance</td>
<td>PVC Research</td>
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<td>Vice-Principal for Research and International Affairs</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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<td>Stirling</td>
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<td>Deputy Principal</td>
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<td>Surrey</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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</table>
A cycle of business process redesign

- Input from three perspectives
  1. Research practice
  2. Management
  3. Research support
- Unfamiliar collaborations and groups
- Need for authority, clarity and drive
- Focus on desirability, achievability and sustainability
The institutional engagement (IE) teams

50% have senior academic champions

Team leaders
- Library – 11
- Research office – 8
- ITS – 2

Major support
- Library – 7
- Research office – 2
- ITS – 6
- Records management – 2
- Repository management – 1

DCC
- Expert knowledge
- Facilitation
- Technical advice

Ownership

Guidance
DCC institutional engagements

Tools for engagement

Survey and interview methodology for investigating data holdings and how they are managed

Capability model for establishing consensus on capabilities and gaps in current provision, rating organisation, technology and resources

Customised institutional templates for data management planning
The engagement process

Sixty days...

Assess needs
- Workflow assessment
- DAF & CARDIO assessments
- Advocacy with senior management

DCC support team
- Institutional data catalogues
- Pilot RDM tools
- Guidance and training
- RDM policy development
- Customised Data Management Plans

Develop support and services

Make the case

...and support policy implementation
Developing institutional infrastructure

Steering Group and roadmap
Awareness raising
Analysis of practice
Audits
Data clinics
Pilot groups
Training
Business plans or roadmaps
Customised DMP

Four phases
- Initiate change
- Diagnose data practices
- Reengineer roles
- Introduce sustainable services
IEs as case studies of HEIs

Interim observations

- Universities typically are in the early stages of scoping RDM needs and obtaining benchmarks
- Few have the components for RDM services or infrastructure effectively in place
- The greatest impetus is from meeting funder expectations rather than a desire for sustainable infrastructure
- There is confusion over the sequence for producing strategies, plans and policies
- The gulf between early adopters and late entrants is widening
Major foci of IE activity

- Policy implementation
- Policy development
- Training in skills and techniques for support staff
- Roadmap design (EPSRC)
- Use of DCC tools (DAF, CARDIO, DMP Online)
Imperatives of guidance and training

Training features in over 25% of the 21 IEs

- Data management can seem arcane and overwhelmingly technical
- Provide short, simple guidance that reflects and promotes local support
- Use tried and tested resources (e.g. DC101)
- Focus on sustainability:
  - Disciplinary courses for postgraduate students
  - Reskilling of professional support staff
Quick wins: data planning and storage

- Six of the seven research councils require DMPs
- Create tailored / rebranded versions of DMP Online with links to
  - local web pages and support contacts
  - institutional templates
  - training materials
- Storage - focus on
  - providing sufficient capacity for research data
  - tools to enable sharing with collaborators
  - advice on the selection of options (e.g. onsite repository, national services, cloud services)
  - matchmaking with relevant projects
Summary

• Nineteen plans of action being delivered
• Broad range of momentum
  – some HEIs prioritised the allocation of resources and time to RDM, others did not
  – new universities have been the most agile and less subject to hierarchical decision processes
  – the impact of cultural drag is occasionally severe
• Main driver is compliance (funders and legislation) and risk avoidance
• The enthusiasm for training is the key
• Increasing cross-collaboration is promising
Next steps

• Realign future programme to reflect the widening spectrum of need, offering
  – specific curation techniques to enable infrastructure development
  – sociotechnical support, from advocacy to skills reengineering to organisational repositioning
• DCC team engaged as expert hands-on consultants delivering specific tasks
• HEIs will be required to demonstrate commitment to maintain the engagement
Afterword

Further information from the DCC

• Institutional engagements
  http://www.dcc.ac.uk/community/institutional-engagements

• Research data policy
  http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/policy-and-legal

• DCC tools
  http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/tools-and-applications

• Contact us at info@dcc.ac.uk