

RDM Training Initiatives @ Edinburgh – DIY RDM Training Kit for Librarians

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Background

Information Services (IS) at the University of Edinburgh has developed a cross-divisional RDM Roadmap (August 2012 – May 2015) to:

- Help engage academic units and PIs in RDM
- Deliver a suite of services to implement the University's RDM Policy
- Comply with research funder requirements

Research and support staff need training to build confidence in engaging in RDM processes and activity.

The following resources have been developed to upskill stakeholders:

- Tailored RDM Training Courses
- MANTRA
- DIY RDM Training Kit for Librarians

Training: Tailored Courses

Formal and bespoke training workshops, power sessions, seminars and drop in sessions to help researchers and administrators with RDM issues.

MANTRA

An internationally recognised free online RDM training course for researchers delivered and hosted by the Data Library

- 8 units that map onto the data lifecycle
- c. One hour per unit
- Interactive
- Self-paced, available ‘anytime, anyplace’
- Software-specific data handling exercises
- Course materials deposited in JorumOpen and Xpert
- CC-BY license for re-use and customisation
- SCORM-compliant formats for use in VLE’s (Moodle, Blackboard)

But before I introduce the DIY RDM Training Kit for Librarians ...

The Evolving Librarian !

The role of the 'traditional librarian' is evolving with advent of Google and other online utilities as well as the rapid pace of change in relation to information management, delivery, consumption, curation, and of course the data deluge!

RDM is a hot topic which requires a range of information handling skills (organisation, metadata, research support, service delivery, resource discovery)

What does RDM offer librarians?

RDM offers an opportunity:

to establish credibility in a new area of expertise and to learn new 'technical skills'

to get closer to the research community and their research processes and hence forge closer working relationships

to get your hands dirty with unpublished or the raw materials that are the building block of knowledge

RDM DIY Training Kit for Librarians

The DIY Training Kit is designed to contain everything needed to complete a 'confidence building' RDM training course for librarians and other information professionals in small informal groups.

Idea inspired by Data Intelligence 4 Librarians hybrid course from 3TU Delft

Approach

- Librarians bring to the training their with own expertise, and concerns both in terms of the disciplines they represent and as library professionals – useful to share experiences
- Key to obtain buy-in from outset, from participants as well as their managers
- Work in small group (4 plus facilitator), neutral setting, plenty of time for discussion, asking questions
- Emphasis on facilitation rather than teaching
- Reuse MANTRA in a blended learning approach
- Selling RDM as a transferrable skill (voluntary participation)

Course structure

- 5 x two hour F-2-F sessions
- Facilitated by an 'expert' (data librarian)
- Invited speakers give short presentation on specific topic
- Short talks followed by long discussions
- Interactive group exercises from UK Data Archive *Train the Trainers* workbook

Five topics / modules

- Data management planning
- Documenting & organising data
- Data storage & security
- Ethics & copyright
- Data sharing

Topics of interest were originally agreed with participating librarians before start of training.

Loose correspondence to MANTRA units.

‘Homework’ assignments

- Sent round my email - allowing 2 weeks to complete prior to each session
- Self-paced reading assignments from MANTRA for each module plus recommended reading
- Reflective questions to think as a researcher detailing own experiences & commentary of MANTRA content
- Independent study:
 - Interview a researcher
 - Write up a Data Curation Profile
 - Builds confidence and future knowledge base

Anticipated outcomes

- Librarians are in control of their own training (planned collaboratively) and therefore are committed to learning.
- Reading at own pace, reflective writing, and open discussion allow individuals to achieve deeper understanding RDM and how it applies to their disciplinary or support setting.
- Librarians gain confidence in fielding RDM enquiries
- Librarians gain a new and transferrable skill set

The Edinburgh Experience

DIY Training Kit piloted in 2012 with 4 Academic Support Librarians (ASLs)

Repeated in 2013 with another 4 ASLs 2013
(Reflective questions rationalised)

Repeated with remaining 6 ASLs 2014

Observations

Evaluations from the 3 sessions indicated that overall the librarians considered that the training was of use to them (in particular in relation to DMP support)

Those (few) Academic Support Librarians who wrote up data curation profiles commented that they gained:

- a boost in confidence
- an insight into the types of data being created and processes used by the researchers they support

Academic Support Librarians supporting the sciences appeared more 'keen' than those from Arts and Humanities

Like any group dynamic some librarians were more participative than others (this was why we kept the numbers low and sessions as informal as possible)

The bigger the group the more difficult it was to schedule sessions (and to manage discussion)

No such thing as a silly question !!

Remarks

Requests for a glossary of RDM terms

How often should the materials be revisited/refreshed (bearing in mind the pace of change in this field?)

Could this approach be adopted for discipline-specific training?

Commitment is lightweight - done as other work allows, spread over 4 months, however it is difficult to gauge how effective the learning will be without follow up.

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The complete kit including course schedule, reflective questions, group exercises, podcasts and slides of short talks, evaluation forms, and completed curation profiles is available at:

<http://datalib.edina.ac.uk/mantra/libtraining.html>

THANK YOU!