

CETL-MSOR Conference 2015

Leslie Fletcher and Sue Milne: OpenMSR: an open and sustainable A-Z of maths support resources

Inspired by the A-Z of maths resources on the Sheffield MASH website and building on work at LJMU felt to be at risk due to staff changes, OpenMSR, an open and sustainable A-Z of maths support resources (<https://mathssupport.coursesites.com/>), has been developed using the Course Sites VLE provided and maintained by the Blackboard Corporation. Links are provided to a wide range of existing resources with numerous formative assessment items alongside them.

Student access to OpenMSR is unrestricted and does not require, for example, registration at an HEI. The Course Sites VLE is close to a clone of the Blackboard VLE widely used in HEIs so staff will, in all probability, be familiar with the technology so can easily add further resources. Course Sites claims to provide a facility to copy OpenMSR into an institutional Blackboard but this is untested at the present time.

In many ways OpenMSR represents a final outcome of the FETLAR project from 2009-10 (www.hear.ac.uk/assets/documents/oer/FETLAR_final_report_1.2.doc) in collecting together a rich variety of learning resources. Much more significantly, OpenMSR makes widely available for the first time, numerous mathematically-rich assessment items conforming to the QT12.1 open standard. It is well understood that this provides the best available assurance of sustainability and certainly minimises the risk of obsolescence which has hitherto afflicted maths e-assessment systems. An eclectic approach has been adopted throughout so OpenMSR includes links to mathematically-rich assessment items from other sources such as Numbas and DEWIS. Careful attention has been paid to the licensing conditions of resources linked to so that OpenMSR is an Open Educational Resource in the formal sense."