
IRISS
Learning Exchange
Collection Development Policy
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1. Learning Exchange Collection Development Policy

1.1 Introduction and background

The Learning Exchange is part of a wider information landscape which includes a number of online bibliographic databases relevant to the social services, for example Social Care Online and reSearchWeb produced by SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence), Careknowledge, Idox, Intute, and Research in Practice. An important development in this landscape was the establishment of Social Services Knowledge Scotland (SSKS)¹, a portal created and hosted by NHS Education Scotland which provides knowledge and learning resources and tools to support the workforce in improving services for users and carers.

This document² is intended to position the Learning Exchange in this landscape in order to minimise duplication of effort as well as confusion on the part of users.

The Learning Exchange is a multimedia digital library, or repository. The resources include information sheets, official publications, interactive learning resources, video clips, case studies and audio files such as radio broadcasts and podcasts. The content is quality assured, and only resources that meet the quality selection criteria are included (see section 3).

The purpose of the Learning Exchange is to foster the sharing and use of quality assured resources relevant to teaching, learning, research and practice in the social services.

Content is collected using a collaborative model based the idea of *collections* maintained by specialist interest groups (see 1.2 below).

What is the Learning Exchange for?

To improve ways in which knowledge, understanding and evidence is used by social services practitioners and managers to deliver better outcomes for users of services and their carers.

What does the Learning Exchange seek to achieve?

To contribute to the development of a world-class, knowledge-based social services sector in Scotland through learning, creativity, and partnership.

How does the Learning Exchange seek to achieve this?

To ensure quality, we work with and rely upon expert and specialist groups to make the value judgments necessary to decide which resources are suitable for inclusion in the Learning Exchange.

¹ In beta testing as at May 2007. SSKS will provide a single point of access to a wide range of resources, including the Learning Exchange, reSearchWeb and Social Care Online (both from the Social Care Institute for Excellence)

² This document is derived from the Intute Collection Development Framework and Policy (http://www.intute.ac.uk/Intute_cdfp.doc) which itself was derived from RDN Collections Development Framework, July 2002 which is now archived at: <http://www.webarchive.org.uk/pan/14883/20060912/www.rdn.ac.uk/publications/policy/index.html>

1.2 Learning Exchange Collections

As the name suggests, the Learning Exchange is based on the notion of collaboration. Third party organisations - *Learning Exchange Contributing Organisations* – which have specific subject expertise are invited to contribute resources to a designated *collection* within the Learning Exchange. The purpose of such collections is to provide a simple means by which organisations with subject expertise may collect, organise and share resources.

1.3 Purpose of this document

This document sets out to make explicit the rationale behind the inclusion of resources and the exclusion of others. The intention is to ensure quality, consistency, interoperability - or compatibility - with other systems and value-for-money. It includes:

- The *scope* of subject coverage
- The intended audience
- The types of resources collected
- The *quality* criteria for selecting and evaluating resources.
- Policies regarding the management and development of the Learning Exchange

It is intended for the use of IRISS staff as well as external organisations who may wish to contribute materials to the Learning Exchange. Equally it may inform users about the nature, extent and accessibility of the collections.

2. Scope

2.1 Subjects covered

The subjects covered by the Learning Exchange are, broadly, those relevant to the social services workforce: Children and Families, Community Care and Criminal Justice. A more detailed indication of the subject coverage of topics is provided in the Social Care Online Subject Taxonomy developed by the Social Care Institute for Excellence³.

2.2 Intended audience and access

The Learning Exchange's primary audience comprises researchers, teachers, students, librarians and members of the social services workforce.

Virtually all of the Learning Exchange content is available free of charge on the Internet. A small number of resources may, for licensing reasons, require password protection. Authentication for access to this part of the Learning Exchange is administered by Eduserv Athens and is available to staff at students at the nine universities⁴ in Scotland teaching social work and the social services workforce⁵.

2.3 Acceptable sources of information

Information generated by academic, government, commercial, trade and industry, non-profit and private sources are all acceptable provided that they meet the criteria set out in section 3.2. Resources of a partisan nature may be considered but any bias should be made apparent in the description of the resource.

Commercial or subscription/fee-based sites are not normally suitable for inclusion. If such sites are included the description of the resource will state clearly that the content therein is not freely available.

³ <http://www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk/>

⁴ Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian, West of Scotland, Robert Gordon, Stirling, Strathclyde and the Open University.

⁵ The NHS Scotland eLibrary will issue Athens passwords to individuals and organisations that provide services and support to the work of NHS Scotland, including local authority staff, Scottish Executive, voluntary health sector, health care staff working in the armed forces, prison service, nursing homes, hospices, schools, etc, emergency services staff, members of the Scottish Royal Colleges, patient / public representatives on NHS groups.

2.4 Resource types and categories

The Learning Exchange may include the following types of digital resources:

- Research projects and reports, particularly those supported by national funding bodies.
- Teaching and learning projects and reports.
- Bibliographies and bibliographic databases.
- UK academic department web pages for appropriate subject disciplines.
- Teaching and learning material, including online tutorials and course notes.
- Resource directories where substantial original content or form is made available.
- Audio, video and other multimedia resources.
- Websites of relevant organisations and associations, including
 - Voluntary organisations.
 - Government.
 - Professional bodies, institutions and associations.
 - Commercial companies but see sections 2.3 and 2.5.
- Reference material, including encyclopaedias and dictionaries.

2.5 Exclusions

The Learning Exchange will not include:

- Resources which contravene laws within UK jurisdictions including, but not limited to, the laws relating to defamation or obscenity.
- Resources which do not meet the selection criteria outlined in section 3.2.
- Lists of links with little or no annotation (resource gateway sites).
- To qualify for inclusion, a gateway site should be extensive, regularly maintained, and each link should be accompanied by at least a few sentences of annotation that add value to the end user.
- Resources designed solely for the marketing, advertising and sale of commercial products.

2.6 Geographical origin

There are no geographical restrictions on the origin of resources.

2.7 Language coverage

The preferred language is English but resources in Gaelic or Welsh will be eligible for inclusion.

2.8 User support

In order to assist users who may experience technical difficulties or may not be able to find what they are looking for, various help and support facilities are provided. These include animated online demonstrations, 'report a problem', general email enquiries and a telephone helpline. Email requests will be responded to within one working day. The telephone helpline is available between 9.30am and 5pm on normal working days. Help and support services will adapt and change according to user demand and needs.

3. Quality Selection Criteria

3.1 Resource discovery

Learning Exchange Contributing Organisations may select digital resources from a variety of sources, including:

- Contributing Organisation's own publications and materials.
- Online discovery tools such as trusted Internet gateways and blogs.

- Advanced search facilities of search engines.
- Contributing Organisation's own Internet bookmarks and favourites.
- Word of mouth.
- References.
- Reading lists.
- Email lists and discussion groups.
- Alerting services.
- Links from trusted sites.

Resources may also be selected by IRISS staff, clients and partner organisations.

Recommendations on new resources for adding to the Learning Exchange are welcome via an online form.

3.2 Selection and evaluation criteria

The Learning Exchange is selective and only online resources that meet the quality selection criteria are included. While the selection and evaluation of resources is largely dependent upon the subject knowledge of the specialist contributors and cataloguers, the following selection criteria should be applied.

3.2.1 Core criteria

- Useful for research, teaching and/or learning in UK higher and further education; or
- Useful for informing policy and practice in the social services⁶.

3.2.2 Intellectual Content

The intellectual content of a resource takes priority over the form in which it is delivered or displayed. Contributors are asked to take account of:

- Any declared purpose and audience.
- Authority and reputation.
- Accuracy of the information or knowledge presented.
- Evidence of sources used and cited.
- Originality in content or presentation.
- Comprehensive coverage and depth of information.
- Evidence of external citation.

3.2.3 Objectivity

If there is a possibility that a resource may contain an element of bias then this should be made explicit.

3.2.4 Structure and form

The physical appearance and navigability of the resource will be evaluated, taking account of:

- Clarity of presentation and navigation.
- Ease of use.
- Accessibility - resources should conform to current accessibility regulations e.g. see the Web Accessibility Initiative at <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>
- Design and layout.
- Provision of user support and documentation.
- Terms and conditions of use.

⁶ Social services workforce includes 'people working in all areas of social services provision in public, private voluntary sectors.

3.2.5 System and maintenance

The accessibility and longevity of sites will be evaluated, taking account of:

- Currency and stability/durability of the content
- Potential longevity of resource
- System reliability, administration and maintenance
- Use of technology and recognised standards

3.2.6 User suggestions

Suggestions made via the online suggestions form and/or the email helpdesk will be subject to the same selection and evaluation criteria outlined above.

3.3 Summary of resource selection and evaluation criteria

Information on evaluation criteria, including implementation guidelines (e.g. implementation on how and by whom these criteria are applied) will be made publicly available.

Table 1. Column titles represent major headings and column cells represent sub-headings.

Context	Content	Use features	System features
Provenance	Scope/coverage	Accessibility	Site integrity (availability, broken links etc.)
Authority	Accuracy	Navigability	System reliability
Uniqueness	Currency	Terms and conditions of use	Appropriate standards and technologies
Relationship to other resources	Substantiveness	Copyright or other restrictions on use.	
Audience	Comprehensiveness	Design, layout, and aesthetics	
	Composition and organisation	User support and documentation	

4. Cataloguing

4.1 Conventions and standards

As from January 2008, the Learning Exchange cataloguing guidelines are based on Dublin Core⁷. Resources added before January 2008 were catalogued according to the UK LOM⁸.

Complex objects are stored as IMS Packages⁹

Resources will be classified using the SCIE Taxonomy¹⁰

Cataloguing guidelines are produced and updated from time to time.

5. Collection Management and Maintenance

Collection management encompasses the selection and descriptive cataloguing of online information resources; the balancing of new records with the removal of redundant resources;

⁷ The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI) is an organization dedicated to promoting the widespread adoption of interoperable metadata standards and developing specialized metadata vocabularies for describing resources that enable more intelligent information discovery systems. <http://dublincore.org/about>

⁸ The UK LOM Core is an application profile of the IEEE 1484.12.1 - 2002 Standard for Learning Object Metadata, optimised for use within the context of UK education. http://www.cetis.ac.uk/profiles/uklomcore/uklomcore_v0p2_may04.doc

⁹ IMS Content Packaging is a specification for sending learning resources (or learning objects) from one program to another, facilitating easier delivery, reuse and sharing of materials. <http://www.imsglobal.org/>

¹⁰ Available from Social Care Institute for Excellence www.scie.org.uk

the access to and display of the metadata; and the availability and exploitation of the collections.

Learning Exchange Contributors are expected to manage their collections as they are best placed to ensure the collections retain relevance to changing user needs.

Collection maintenance includes weeding out broken links and checking resources for continued relevance and accuracy.

Final responsibility for deciding on whether resources are suitable for inclusion will rest with the repository manager.

5.1 Duplication

The same resource may appear in more than one Learning Exchange collection but there should be only one 'master' copy of the resource within the Learning Exchange. If the same resource is added by more than one Contributor, the repository manager shall at his/her sole discretion remove whichever copy he/she chooses, always ensuring that the resources remains visible within the relevant collections.

5.2 Granularity

A resource may be catalogued as a single entity (e.g. an entire training manual) or each constituent part (chapter or section) may be catalogued as a separate resource. This is referred to as 'granularity'. A website, for example, may constitute a single resource. Complex websites, on the other hand, might better be regarded as comprised of several distinct resources, each of which might be catalogued individually.

Each resource should be given the shortest and simplest URL as is appropriate for that resource. Additionally individual pages should be checked for a parent website that may be more appropriate to catalogue.

A note on granularity

- If the different parts of a website have little in common beyond being accessible from one home page then an individual record for each resource might be created.
- If, however, the different parts of a site relate to different aspects of one topic it may be preferable to describe these common features in one record, with just a sentence per section explaining its unique features.
- If describing all the component parts of a site, or other resource - for example a training manual - in one record would require a very long description (more than say,400 words), separate records should be created for each component part.
- If all keywords for each component part of a site cannot be accommodated in the parent description and/or the keywords field, it might be preferable to consider separate records.

5.3 Optimum size of collections

The Learning Exchange emphasises quality above quantity. The size of collections will be determined by the human resources available for their development and maintenance and the level of granularity.

5.4 Reviewing records

To ensure that each record for each resource remains accurate and up-to-date, records are reviewed regularly along with the resources they describe. Where possible, software tools will be identified and employed to check, for example, web sites that have changed.

5.5 Link checking

A monthly automated check will be made of all URLs contained in the Learning Exchange. The resulting report will be shared with Contributors so that broken links can be fixed and records updated where necessary.

5.6 Deselecting records

Records should be removed from a collection:

- If the resource is no longer available.
- If the currency or reliability of the resource has lost its value.

- If another Internet site or resource offers more comprehensive coverage.
- If it is a duplicate record.

Records will never be completely deleted from the Learning Exchange. They will be moved to collection specially created for the purpose of maintaining an audit trail. This collection will be visible only to Learning Exchange managers and technical staff and Learning Exchange Contributors. The metadata for this collection will not be made available for harvesting. A resource may be re-instated if the reason for its de-selection ceases to be valid, for example if web site becomes live again.

6. Hosting and Linking

6.1 Linking

- The Learning Exchange will make links to third party websites only where it is confident that the site owner will be 'pleased or indifferent' about the link.
- All Terms and Conditions displayed on the Linked Site will be respected.
- The Learning Exchange does not routinely notify Linked Sites that a link has been made unless such notification is explicitly requested by the site owner.
- If a Linked Site displays a linking policy which does not allow links then a link will not be made without first obtaining permission.
- While the Learning Exchange does not make any differentiation between 'shallow' and 'deep' links, it will at all times seek to ensure that that source and ownership of the web site or resource being linked to is clear to the user. In the event that this cannot be made clear the link will not be made and efforts will be made host the resource.
- All external links to third party sites carry terms and conditions information which instruct the user to check and abide by the terms and conditions of the Linked Site.

6.2 File Hosting

Where the link is to a specific and discrete resource, such as a PDF file, the Institute will seek to host the resource inside the Learning Exchange rather than make an external link to it.

Before hosting the resource, permission will be sought from the owner, except where:

1. The resource itself gives explicit permission in the form of a licence, such as Creative Commons, or a statement of what uses are permitted.
2. The document is Crown Copyright, as such documents are usually covered by the Learning Exchange's PSI ("click use") licence.¹¹

The Institute is mindful that the licensing process can place an unwelcome burden on some third parties, particularly in the voluntary sector. Permission will be therefore be sought by email and a reply by email will be deemed sufficient.

All material contributed by users to the Learning Exchange will be checked by Institute staff for the presence of web links. If there are links contained in the contributed material that do not adhere to the Linking Policy then the link will be removed.

7. Notice and Takedown

The Learning Exchange reserves the right to and will act, as expediently as is reasonably possible, to remove illegal or objectionable links from the Learning Exchange, upon receiving notice or becoming aware of their existence.

Every effort has been made to ensure that nothing in the Learning Exchange infringes UK law and to trace rights owners where relevant.

In some cases, despite all attempts, it may impossible to trace any rights holder. Such persons or their representatives, where they exist, are invited to contact us with evidence to support a claim so an agreement can be reached. In these cases, we will remove any allegedly infringing material from the Learning Exchange until we have completed the

¹¹ 'Click use' is a free licence to re-use Crown, Public Sector and Parliamentary copyright information
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/click-use/psi-licence-information/index.htm>

necessary investigations. We apologise for any infringement that might occur where such rights owners do not come forward.

8. Rights Statement

Unless stated to the contrary all rights in the data and pages of the Learning Exchange are reserved by IRISS. No part of the Learning Exchange database or web pages may be reproduced or distributed in any material form or medium other than for the private purposes of users or in accordance with the terms of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (1988) without the permission of IRISS.

9. Status of this document

This document is IRISS policy and has been issued with the approval of the IRISS Strategic Board.

The Collection Development Policy should be considered as continually under review. Changes will be made in response to changing conditions and requirements.