

## Open slather? – supporting open educational practices and resources

Sarah-Jane Saravani  
Library Manager  
Waikato Institute of Technology  
Hamilton  
New Zealand

The creation of open educational practices and resources is a world-wide movement gathering momentum. The purpose is to enhance education and life-long learning, the underpinning ethos is that knowledge is a public good and access should be enhanced through the various means at hand. The library sector has long supported such a view, how do we face the challenge of ensuring that barriers to accessing educational resources are minimised?

The trend towards openness includes such established movements as Open Source Software, Open Standards and Open Access; more recently within these environments scholars are sharing their digital resources openly and freely over the Internet as Open Educational Resources. This development has important implications for educational institutions in promoting a sustainable model which addresses cultural and mindset change and organisational barriers.

For libraries, some of the pre-eminent issues are

- System integration
- Software integration
- Policy changes to encourage institutional self-archiving
- Supporting innovative IT-enhanced forms of instruction and access to educational content
- Training and support to incorporate the concept of open content into resource and service provision
- Familiarity with the contextualised learning environment and technologies
- Integration of social software tools and services
- Growth of educational repositories or digital libraries
- Negotiate licensing arrangements to allow greater flexibility in use of resources
- Creation of rich metadata to support resource discovery
- Professional development
- Creating expanded networking relationships
- Identifying champions of Open Source initiatives to allow capitalisation of benefits

What we are witnessing is essentially the integration of Libraries 2.0 and e-Learning 2.0, this opens up a whole new scenario for us.