**Week 4 Reflecting in the open**

**Introduction**

Welcome to the last week of this open research course. During the past three weeks you have had a chance to understand what it means to do open research, what are some of the ethical issues that may arise from doing research in the open, and to discuss the benefits and shortcomings of public dissemination. This week we invite you to reflect on your own experience of being an open researcher.

**Learning objectives**

You will gain an understanding of:

1. Why open researchers reflect in the open

2. When to reflect and who is involved in open reflection

3. Some tools to help open reflection

**Activity 1 (15 mins)**

**<Asset = audio/video podcast – what is the role of reflection in research?>**

You may not realize it but the act of reflecting is a constant activity, which for the most part remains elusive. We go through our day thinking about what’s been happening, how we feel about it, how we react to events and what are the next steps to take. In research, we tend to record these thoughts as a way of evaluating our progress. Take a few minutes to think about the role of reflection in research, then watch/listen to this short video/audio podcast where some academics talk about their take on reflection when doing research.

**Activity 2 (45 mins)**

**<Asset 1: Catherine’s blog post:** <http://catherinecronin.wordpress.com/2014/02/12/openeducation-and-identities/>

**Asset 2: Megan’s blog post:** <http://meganbeckett.wordpress.com/2014/03/13/on-sharing-and-my-interview/>>

Reflection in research is closely linked to evaluation: it is about making sense of what we have done, what we are doing and how we are going to evolve. What do we gain or lose when we share this evaluation publicly? Why reflect in the open?

We invite you to read two blog posts: in the first one, Catherine Cronin, a lecturer in Information Technology at the National University of Ireland, Galway, reflects on her topic of research: digital identity practices in open education. The second blog post is a reflection by Megan Beckett, Project Manager at Siyavula, on her experiences of sharing. Read both blog posts and think about the following questions, then post your answers and comments in the forum.

* Why do Catherine and Megan blog?
* Do you think they achieve what they set out to do?
* Would you be comfortable sharing as they do? If not, why not?

**Further reading:**

Gráinne Conole’s blog <http://www.e4innovation.com>, blogging her book chapters ahead of publication.

Steve Wheeler’s blog <http://steve-wheeler.blogspot.com.es>, especially his post on April 1st 2014 and the follow up on April 2nd on the rewards and challenges of having your ideas “out there”.

[Academic blogging and collaboration make demonstrating pathways to impact an easier matter](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/11/03/blogging-pathways-to-impact/), Peter Mathews details the benefits he has achieved by publishing his impact funding statement and inviting feedback from colleagues online.

**Activity 3 (15 minutes)**

**<Asset = audio/video podcast – Leigh-Anne talking about when, how and with whom to do research reflection/evaluation.>**

Who is involved in reflection in the context of evaluating an open project? Do we have to reflect in isolation? Can reflection also be collaboration? Is the value of reflection only important at the end of a project? How important is it to reflect in a structured manner?

Listen to Leigh-Anne Perryman, OER Research Hub fellow and author of the OERRHub Evaluation Framework <http://oerresearchhub.org/about-2/reports/oerrh-evaluation-framework/>, answering these questions. Do you agree with her? Post your comments in the forum.

**Activity 4 (30 min)**

Blogging is probably one of the easiest platforms to share your thoughts publicly, but reflecting doesn’t necessarily mean having to write a long piece. You can record a video or audio podcast, publish a series of tweets, draw a webcomic, keep a photo journal, create an infographic, etc. What follows are examples of reflection in different open formats. Have a look and pick the one for you.

Using storify <https://storify.com/djsamson/learning-reflections>

Becoming an open educator <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V32RofEA6OM>

Day 1: Blackboard T&L Conference #BbTLC2014 <http://www.dontwasteyourtime.co.uk/blackboard/day-1-bbtlc2014/>

How open research works <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrtXdXpUx0k>

One World, One Web <https://www.flickr.com/photos/psd/2731067095/in/set-72157604703336122/>

What do you want kids to do with technology? <http://www.pinterest.com/pin/246572148322428897/>

**Further reading and useful links:**

Technology Tools for Reflection <https://sites.google.com/site/reflection4learning/technology-tools-for-reflection>

Comic creator <http://chogger.com>

For creating infographics:

<http://www.easel.ly>

<http://visual.ly>

<http://inkscape.org/en/>

**Activity 5 (45 min – 1 hour)**

In this last activity of the course, we invite you to reflect about how open you have been when conducting research in the past, how open you are now and how open you can be in the future. If you’d like, be creative about the tool that you pick and about who you do your reflection with. When you are ready, share your reflection with us by post a link to it in this GoogleDoc.

Here are some questions to help your reflection:

* How open were you when conducting research before you started this course?
* What parts of your research did you share openly?
* What do you think works well for you about doing open research?
* What do you think might not work so well for you?
* What are you going to do to be a (more) open researcher in the future?
* How are you going to change your practice? What would you plan differently in the future as a result of having done this course?