

A new and unique development will provide a national digital repository to enable teachers and lecturers to share, access and adapt learning materials. Paul Davey reports on how this innovative service has the potential to transform the way we create and access resources for use in the classroom

Give and take with JORUM

'JORUM will help to build a community for sharing,' according to its project manager Moira Massey. As a collaborative venture to collect and share free learning and teaching materials, *partnership, engagement with the education community and value for money* are all key themes of the new JISC-funded service.

The JORUM project began in October 2002 under Exchange for Learning (X4L) funding, where the focus was on enhancing the considerable investment that has taken place in the UK in developing online content for use in learning and teaching. Initial close consultation with staff in both further and higher education gave strong direction to the project in its early stages.

'As part of that original exercise,' explains Moira Massey, 'we not only worked with the X4L projects, but we also scoped user requirements by providing an online questionnaire, to which we had 300 responses. We also ran six focus groups made up of teachers and support staff!' The most important outcome from the requirements work was the clear evidence that resources *developed* by the community should be *used* by the community, right across the UK.

The JORUM repository offers a searchable online library of learning and teaching resources and uses a system called

intraLibrary, procured from Intrallect Ltd, an established software company. Project staff, based at the JISC-supported national data centres EDINA and MIMAS, have worked closely with each other and with Intrallect to develop a highly useable system, driven by the needs of those who will use the service.

There are two main elements to the service – a Contributor Service and a User Service, both launching later in 2005. JORUM Contributor allows colleges and universities to share learning and teaching materials with one another, while JORUM User provides access to the materials themselves.

Teaching and support staff in colleges and universities that take this service will be able to find, preview, download, reuse and adapt materials for use. Teaching support, staff development and case study materials will be available to assist them in using the learning materials. Moira explains that the JORUM team have worked in conjunction with partner



Out of Darkness and into JORUM

This is an example of a resource to be found in JORUM. 'Out of Darkness' is a learning object, on the theme of film noir, produced by one of the 23 JISC-funded Exchange for Learning Phase 1 Projects.

Staff working on the E-Studio Project, based at Wolverhampton University,

created the resource in Macromedia Flash.

Using this resource, teaching staff can introduce students to the growth of Hollywood and the popularity of film noir as a movie genre. Learners engage with the subject matter by playing the role of an LAPD detective in 1936. The

resource provides objectives and tasks, as well as film trailers, links and tutor notes. While being highly interactive, the learning object has customisable settings which improve accessibility.

For further information please go to:
www.e-studio.ac.uk/HOME.html

organisations to ensure that 'materials are standards-compliant, so they can be used across different software platforms.'

Hosting materials that have been publicly funded, but also materials that have been developed within colleges and universities, JORUM has developed a robust licensing system through which colleges and universities using either service sign appropriate licences. Individuals agree to terms and conditions

on access, either as contributors or users, although a wide-ranging set of permissions ensures that the content can be used flexibly and dynamically according to the individual needs of teaching staff.

The word JORUM is of Biblical origin and means a collecting bowl. Available free through Athens and in due course Shibboleth, JORUM will, Moira Massey says, 'help to foster a spirit of sharing

and collaboration in the community for the benefit of all staff in colleges and universities.' We look forward to the launch of the service.

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www.jorum.ac.uk