Research reporting using Eprints at The University of Northampton

Eprints User Group 'Show and Tell'

Open repositories 2010

6-9 July, Madrid, Spain

Miggie Pickton

NECTAR Queen Bee

ABSTRACT

Each year The University of Northampton research administrators produce an 'Annual Research Report' for each of the university's six Schools. Before 2007, and in the absence of any centralised research database, research details were simply collated and word-processed into one-off documents. NECTAR provided the opportunity to store bibliographic details in a systematic manner and the potential to re-use these data for research reporting.

The following changes were made to the Eprints software:

- New fields and item types were created to support the specific needs of university researchers (e.g. the School of the Arts in particular produces a wide range of non-text research outputs).

- Citation displays were amended to follow the 'Harvard' style of referencing.

- A bespoke report was created, to be generated on demand by 'Editor' level repository users. Report content is selectable by Year and School and sorted alphabetically by Creator. The format of the report exactly follows that of previous Annual Research Reports, ensuring its acceptability among the research community.

Impact of the research reporting function on the repository:

- Benefits:

  o 'Nearly a mandate' - if research output details are not in NECTAR they will not be reported, so engagement with the research community is high.

  o University senior management value the reports so are supportive of the repository.

  o Researchers expect to submit details of their research activity each year; in comparison with previous research reporting practice NECTAR offers them much more in return.

- Challenges:

  o Metadata has been rapidly collected and we are confident that coverage of total university research output is high, but full content (text and non-text) lags far behind. Metadata alone is often sufficient to meet the researchers' needs for dissemination of their work (as they see it).

  o For the final report to look good, data entry to NECTAR must be comprehensive and consistent. The production of high quality metadata is time-consuming and resource intensive.