Institution as e-textbook publisher workshop
Birmingham, 16 June 2017
Q&A sessions

1. Questions for UCL Press

Q: What is the word count in the call for proposals?
A: No word count in the call. Plastic Surgery was 500 pages and the other book will be about 250 pages long.

Q: Quality and peer-review: how do you ensure quality?
A: All book proposals are submitted to the UCL Press Board. Manuscripts are peer-reviewed.

Q: Uniqueness of the titles: was there a conscious decision on the books because they were unique or were they chosen because they were competing with commercial publishers?
A: We seek books that are unique if possible.

Q: Do you have evidence that e-textbooks are adopted by other HEIs?
A: Books were created for UCL but have the potential for wider adoption. Late summer/early autumn will be the time to try to disseminate the e-textbooks externally.

Q: Did you do a survey on the intention to publish with authors? Why did they choose to submit a proposal?
A: No survey was undertaken but UCL asks why in the call for proposal and many authors say that they want to do it because they want to publish OA, because they want to publish internally/within the institution, and because the downloads rates are high.

Q: What were the greatest costs?
A: Digital costs, creation of the app.

Q: Why a mobile app?
A: We wanted to offer our readers something different and innovative.

Q: What were the challenges that you have faced?
A: Multi contributor volumes are more complex in general, art work re-drawing (which also involved high costs).

Q: Are chapters released in order?
A: It depends on the book.

Q: Will you evaluate the value of the books for students?
A: We will evaluate that and get something out before the end of the project.

Q: Responsibility in the library: which group?
A: UCL started from scratch. It has a team of 6 people that have published 40 books and plan to publish another 50 by the end of 2018.

Q: Did you proofread the e-textbooks?

A: We liaise with various stakeholders and use freelance and in-house support. We haven't had any issues with copyrights as authors cleared their copyrights before submitting the e-textbooks to UCL Press.

Q: Was there a pre-evaluation done with students?
A: Yes for Plastic Surgery. However, the students were not involved in pre-evaluation of areas covered by Key Concepts in Public Archaeology.

Q: Authors publishing OA: did you ask them why they were publishing OA?
A: Because they want their books to be widely read, because monographs have a low print sales, because having the e-textbooks online in open access ensures that they get a wider reach.

Q: 250-300 students with disabilities: how do you meet their needs?
A: UCL is reliant on pdf format, it is not using audio format.

Q: Are there guidelines for authors on pdf mark up?
A: UCL is not doing that but would like to learn more about it.

Q: Do you assign DOIs for each chapter?
A: No.

Q: How much thought have you given to print versions, i.e. when do you plan to run a second print edition to include any updates and new chapters?
A: No answer yet on the 'living book'. UCL needs to think about whether it is feasible to do an updated print edition every year.

2. Question for UHI/Napier

Q: Are the e-textbooks distributed in pdf format?
A: No, they are available via Amazon's Kindle.

Q: Do you have ethical concerns about Amazon? Amazon may have global control of publishing. Don't you have concerns about the power they have?
A: The purpose was to assess the publication route from an academic perspective. We wanted to have control over what was produced and that it would be cheap for students. Other agents were not so efficient.

Q: Reading lists: how are these e-textbooks embedded on course content? Is Amazon's e-textbook format embedded in VLE?
A: No.

3. Question for Liverpool

Q: BiblioBoard?
A: The main url is for the homepage of the resource, but you can save the urls for individual chapters and pass these to students if you wanted them to go straight to a chapter or a primary source. Biblioboard is an excellent platform that is ideal for visual teaching resources such as *Using Primary Sources*.

Q: Do you have plans for other e-textbooks? Would you use BiblioBoard or other platforms?
A: Whilst we don't have definite plans for further e-textbooks, we do have considerable interest from academics at the University of Liverpool to contribute to *Using Primary Sources* as well as use Biblioboard for other e-publications. It has sparked considerable interest at the University at student, academic and management levels so it will be interesting to see how this develops in the coming months. For future e-textbooks, it will ultimately depend on the type of publication being published and more importantly the needs of the student when it comes to decisions about which software or platform to use.

Q: Other e-textbooks may be less tied to Liverpool University resources?
A: The primary purpose of *Using Primary Sources* is to show students how they can use primary source material in their work, as well as provide easy access to the rich material in Special Collections and Archives at the University of Liverpool Library. Future e-textbooks may very well be less tied to resources at the University of Liverpool and this is fine as long as the publication supports the students.

Q: Paid contributors: can you say roughly how much?
A: Contributors to Using Primary Sources were compensated financially on publication of their chapter, however we can't disclose how much. Sabbatical leave was also provided for the General Editor of the e-textbook.

4. Question for Nottingham

Q: Incentives: how?
A: Financial, profile (visibility), prestige.

Q: Recruitment element of the Corporate Responsibility e-textbook?
A: Trying to recruit students for MBA, Executive MBA single modules. The e-textbook has a commercial model and seeks to recruit students for MBA programmes.

Q: Peer-review?
A: Reviewed within the department, not externally.

Q: 6,000 public views: how has the public found the e-textbook?
A: Speculation that the Business School may have announced it in visits to international campuses but there is still work to be done on analysing the data to understand where the high number of views come from.

Q: Defining the pedagogical aims before choosing the technology: what would you do differently next time?
A: Use epub3.