



LIBER Case Study:

Essentials 4 Data Support

AUTHOR: Ellen Verbakel, 3TU.Datacentrum

KEYWORDS: generic, institutional, collaborative, training

1 What was the starting point?

Librarians at the three technical universities in the Netherlands (Eindhoven University of Technology, Delft University of Technology and the University of Twente) need to support researchers with research data management. 3TU.Datacentrum developed the training course Data Intelligence 4 Librarians in collaboration with the librarians. The project was initiated by 3TU. Datacentrum and Marina Noordegraaf was “hired” as project leader. Data Intelligence 4 Librarians wants to contribute to the professionalisation and positioning of support staff as a trusted partner in the support of data-intensive research.

The training consists of four modules: Current Topics, Data Management, Technical Skills, Acquisition and Advice. It is a blended learning course consisting of information on the website and face-to-face meetings. During face-to-face meetings, experts in the field explain the topics.

Three groups of students have been trained as of the end of 2013. The first session was run by 3TU.Datacentrum alone. The subsequent two sessions, DANS joined in. 3TU.Datacentrum and DANS both delivered a trainer/coach and the website which was focused on technical sciences, and DANS added text for the social sciences. After three sessions, the evaluations of the students were put together and the decision was made to adjust the training course. 3TU.Datacentrum and DANS have joined forces in a coalition called Research Data Netherlands (RDNL). One of the activities of RDNL is to upgrade the training course in terms of both content and form. The course aims to train all kinds of support staff so that they can support researchers with data management before, during and after the research period.

The course now has a new name: Essentials 4 Data Support (<http://datasupport.researchdata.nl>). An English version of the website will be available by June 2014.

The students pay a fee for the course. The costs of developing the course and materials are paid for by 3TU.Datacentrum and DANS who are also responsible for all the materials and for organising the courses.

2 What is the organisational framework?

Roles and responsibilities

The training course is developed under the umbrella of the new Research Data Netherlands (RDNL) collaboration which was founded in May 2013 by 3TU.Datacentrum and DANS.

3TU.Datacentrum and DANS will provide a trainer/coach who facilitates the learning process, and experts in the field of data management will explain the topics. The students pro-actively contribute towards their own learning process and that of their fellow students by sharing learning experiences. Students pay a fee for the course.

The costs of the development and technical infrastructure (online component of the course) will be equally divided between 3TU.Datacentrum and DANS.

June 2014



3 What kind of support services are provided to researchers?

Essentials 4 Data Support is a training course for support staff. The supporters are trained in Essentials 4 Data Support. Most of the people who have attended the course will work at the front office of their institution. They are trained to assist their researchers directly and, in other cases, redirect researchers to relevant back offices or other front offices. Trained support staff is urgently needed to support researchers in RDM. After upgrading the support staff course, a course for PhD students will be developed by reusing as much of the course content as possible.

4 What kind of infrastructure is provided?

The platform for the course is T3Elearning, the Typo3 Learning Content Management Framework (<http://www.t3elearning.de/e-learning/learning-content-management-typo3/>). This framework allows a lot more features to be used. The website is now more interactive. A forum has been integrated into the website, so students can communicate with each other as well as coaches.

Quizzes are provided at the end of each course topic to allow students to check they have understood the course content.

Some videos have been made, e.g. on Persistent Identifiers, Data Management Plans and Reproducible Research to make the lessons more tangible and therefore easier for students to understand.

The training can be attended in three ways:

1. Online only

The materials are provided on the Essentials 4 Data Support website. Students can take the course at their own pace and in the order they like. The quizzes and assignments are not available in this version.

2. Online only, as a registered user

Upon registration, students can submit comments, using the Post Comments feature. A public forum (Forum 4 all) can be used to contact fellow students and start discussions. There is also a possibility to see their course progress.

3. Complete course (online + face 2 face with certificate)

—The complete course has two face-to-face days. The first day is used to meet fellow students, the coaches and some experts from the field.

—In between the two days the students have time to study the lessons and to work on the assignments. The students and the coaches can communicate and discuss the assignments in a restricted forum.

—After 6 weeks the students and coaches meet again. This day allows students to present some of the assignments they have completed. At the end of the day the students receive a certificate.

5 What have you learned so far? What's next?

Some important issues put forward by participants and coaches were:

- Participants enjoyed and appreciated their discussions resulting from the homework assignments, which were seen as the most valuable element of the course.
- Four days of face-to-face tuition were seen as a considerable time investment, but useful because of the relevant discussions and networking possibilities.



- Participants were interested to hear from researchers themselves in terms of how they deal with data management issues, and about differences between disciplines.
- Participants missed the opportunity to practice writing an actual data management plan.
- Participants urgently needed practical information about setting up a front office for data management services.
- The participants appreciated the images included in the course material on the website, which they thought were a memorable way to clarify concepts.

We reduced the face to face meetings to two meetings per training. Our newly developed website will have a forum and other communication tools to promote interaction among students. In addition, we will include more audio and video material in the course.

We are currently conducting our first course with all the new features. We will evaluate this course as we did with Data Intelligence 4 Librarians.

Further information

WEBSITE: www.datasupport.researchdata.nl. Now available in Dutch, the English version will be available from June 2014.

CONTACT: Ellen Verbakel, Research Data Netherlands, p.m.verbakel@tudelft.nl