**Title of the Research Project:** "The ethics of student digital publication".

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**Background**

The students of the module SPPO3650 “Discovering Spanish Voices in a Digital World (OpenLIVES) are given, as part of this course, the opportunity to publish their final coursework and some interim non-assessed coursework as Open Educational Resources (OER) in HumBox, the UK Arts and Humanities Repository of OER, and subsequently in Jorum. Some of them published all their work in June 2013 and some did not publish it.

The module tutor had already designed some basic rules for the publication of these assets that students seemed to be satisfied with, but future students and the learning community in general will benefit from research on the actual feelings, aspirations and reservations of this cohort of students on the question of their learning outputs being made publicly available. There are a vast range of courses across the world offering or requiring students to create and publish digital content, but no specific ethical framework or research on the ethics of student digital publication are known to date.

**Aims**

a) explore the ethical underpinning of coursework publication by students, in particular, but not exclusively, in a digital format and under Creative Commons Licences (This includes any kind of ethical motivation regarding publication) and

b) to define some educational principles and an ethical framework for courses requiring or allowing student publication.

**Methodology**

The research informants will be former students, now graduates, of the module SPPO3650 “Discovering Spanish Voices in a Digital World (OpenLIVES) during the academic year 2012-13. Given that the students are now graduates and there is not a hierarchical relationship with the tutor any more, this is the right time to research this question with a greater degree of validity and reliability.

The research methodology contemplates using semi-structured interviews.

Participants will be able to discuss with the research assistant of the project issues such as these:

• How and why the prospect of publishing their coursework at the end of the year influenced their decision to sign up in this module for the course and their motivation to learn;

• How and why their perceptions about publication evolved throughout the course;

• The ways the course design and delivery, including assessment, prepared them (or failed to prepared them) to a) create work that they felt could be published in an academic OER repository with a CC Licence and b) make a conscious decision as to publishing;

• The type of incentives and disincentives did they experience relating to publication and what led them to their decisions to publish or not;

• Their feeling and perceptions regarding the rules that were established in the module in 2012/2013 for them to publish;

In the case of written responses, there will not be a discussion, although there can be a follow-up for clarification purposes if the written responses are unclear.

**Objectives**

a) To establish why, and under what circumstances, it may be acceptable, or even desirable (ethically and/or educationally), to require, facilitate or allow students to publish some of their coursework;

b) to determine what type of ethical safeguards and editorial controls should be contemplated;

c) to establish the implications of these ethical and editorial requirements for course design and delivery.

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