

Preserving AV at The Open University Archive: A case study

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1. What do we hold?

- Around 20,000 *titles* duplicated across different formats
- OU TV and radio teaching programmes – produced for TV and radio and distributed to students on tape/disc
- Magazine-style student programmes
- Internal events and recordings
- Co-productions with broadcasters

Some of the ¼ inch audio tapes in the OU Archive

2. What formats do we hold?

Lots of different formats!

A selection – in no particular order...

- Film
- 1 inch tape (type A, B, C)
- 2 inch tape
- ½ inch tape
- D3
- VCR (Phillips)
- Umatic
- DVCPro
- VHS
- DVD
- ¼ inch audio tape
- Audio cassette
- Technicolor Sound Movie Cartridge (super 8 film)
- DVCam
- MiniDV
- DVCPro
- CD
- LV-ROM (Laser disc)
- Vinyl records



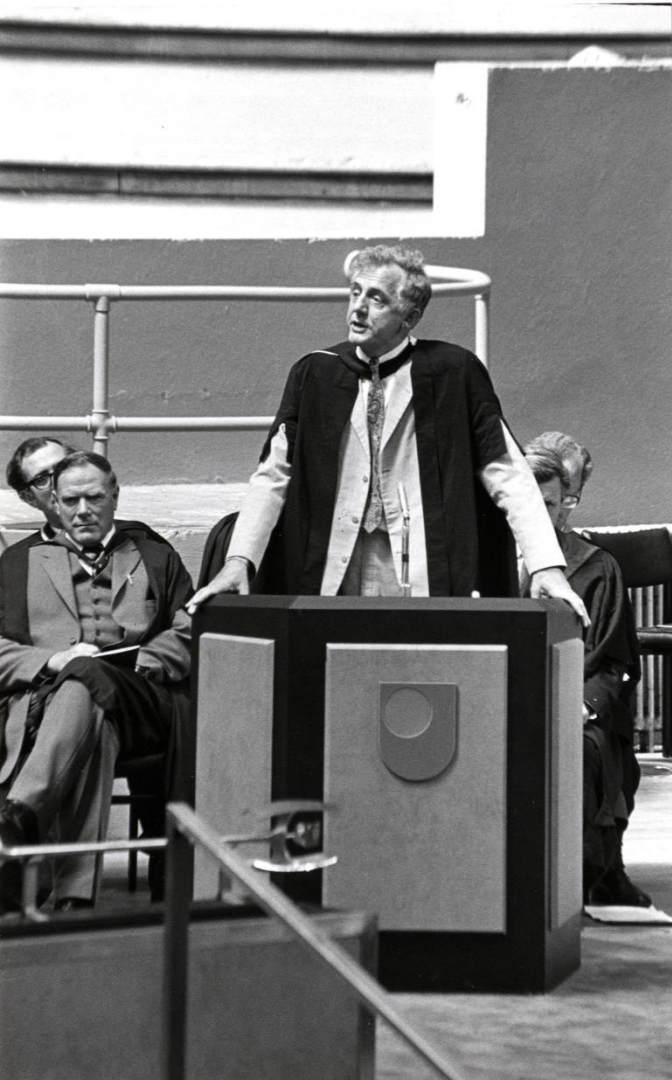
3. Migration and Digitisation

- Prior to 2009 – materials were migrated to newer formats – usually BetaSP and DigiBeta. Process worked on courses closed in the last few years – early courses not included.
- 2008-2011 – AVA (Access to Video Assets) Project
 - audit of formats
 - investigation of best way forward
 - start of digitisation for preservation
 - creation of a prototype access system for OU staff

Identified large collections on at-risk formats and prioritised those items for digitisation. 1657 video items were digitised over the course of the project – prioritising 1 inch tapes, Umatic, D3 and VCR (Phillips)

Since the project the Archive team have continued to outsource a batch of video and audio digitisation each year – prioritising at-risk and requested materials.





4. Our digitisation specification

a. Master file (video):

The Decklink Blackmagic codec specification - Video
Standard definition in PAL format in uncompressed
.AVI wrapper. (resultant file size about 93GB/hour)

b. Master file (audio):

24bit, 48Khz with 2 channels on uncompressed
wav format

Copies:

- (Digibeta)
- Hard drive
- LTO data tape held off-site

5. Access: Defining the value of the Archive

The AVA project created a proto-type repository for staff

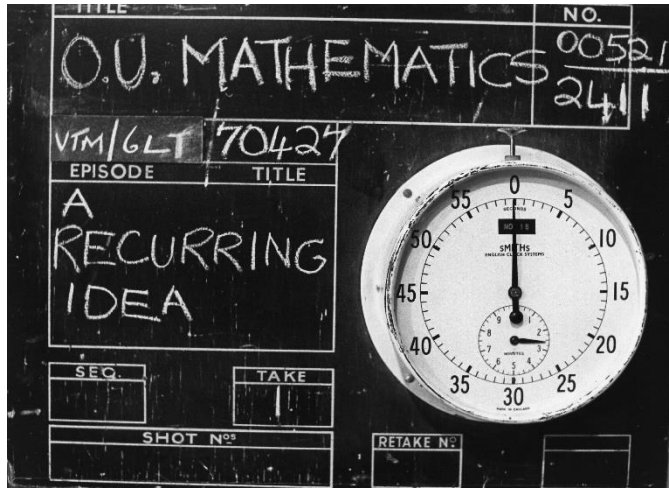
Now needed additional internal investment to build a more comprehensive digital archive repository.

2012/2013: STELLAR project (JISC funded)
Semantic Technologies Enhancing the Lifecycle of Learning Resources

One of the objectives of the project was:

“to develop a detailed understanding of the value of legacy learning materials as perceived by academic staff and other key stakeholders”

Project gathered evidence that the archive was highly valued – for historical value and for ongoing re-use – but also confirmed that material was hard to find and access



6: Access: The OU Digital Archive

Following AVA and STELLAR – started to develop a more comprehensive system

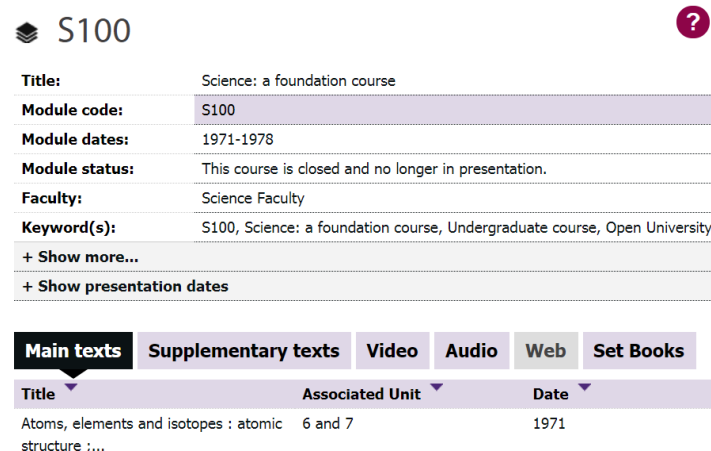
Some of the requirements:

- Hold metadata records and playback functionality for multiple types of object: text/books, images, video, audio, web archive
- Show objects in context – hierarchy – relational metadata
- Keep a record of physical “holdings” as well as digital ones
- Multiple permissions levels – staff, student, public
- Powerful cross-search including filters
- Flexible browse views of collections
- Functionality for online exhibitions and “features”

Based on Fedora (3)

Launched 2016

Core project team: Project manager, University Archivist, Digital Archive Development Officer, Digital Services Development Officer, Metadata Development Manager



The screenshot shows the S100 module page. At the top, there is a stack of books icon and the text 'S100'. To the right is a red circle with a white question mark. Below this is a table of metadata:

Title:	Science: a foundation course
Module code:	S100
Module dates:	1971-1978
Module status:	This course is closed and no longer in presentation.
Faculty:	Science Faculty
Keyword(s):	S100, Science: a foundation course, Undergraduate course, Open University
+ Show more...	
+ Show presentation dates	

Below the metadata table is a navigation bar with tabs: Main texts, Supplementary texts, Video, Audio, Web, and Set Books. The 'Main texts' tab is selected. Below the tabs is a table with the following columns: Title, Associated Unit, and Date.

Title	Associated Unit	Date
Atoms, elements and isotopes : atomic structure ...	6 and 7	1971

7: Video and audio access formats

To make materials as accessible as possible we transcode the viewing copies into several formats which work with different browsers:

Video:

- Flash file .flv/.fv4 (may drop this format soon)
- .mp4
- .ogv
- .webm

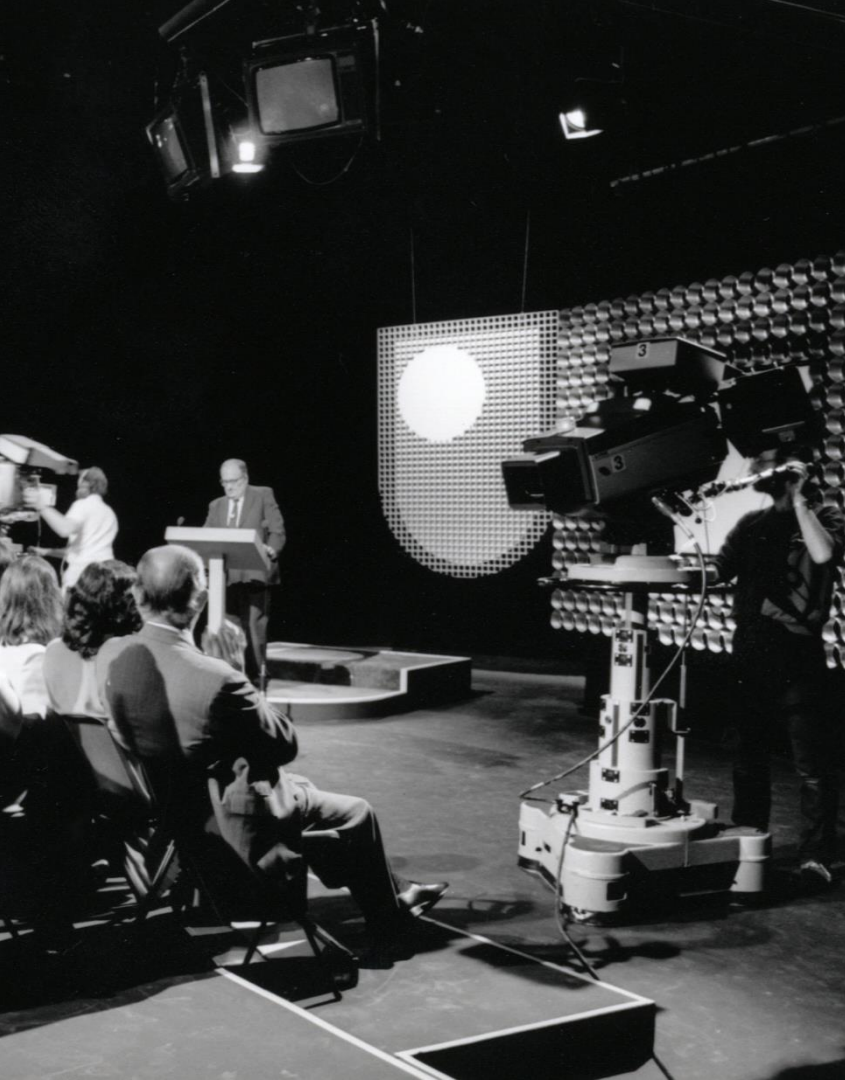
Audio:

- .mp3
- .ogv
- .webm

 Foundation course in science: an introduction



Video	Media	Synopsis	Transcript	Subtitles	Storyboard	Clips
Module code and title:		S100, S100 Science foundation course				
Item code:		S100; 01				
Recording date:		1971-01-10				
- Show less...						
Producer:		J. Stevenson				
Contributor:		Michael Pentz				
Publisher:		Open University				
Production number:		JOUZ356H				
Videofinder number:		2779				
Available to public:		no				



8: Copyright

OU programmes often contain non-OU content:

- Images
- Music
- Non-OU contributors
- External footage

Often original contracts were for a limited time.

- Part of the AVA project was to digitise all the rights paperwork, transcripts and programme synopses.
- Archive team works closely with the CLIP (Content Licensing and Intellectual Property) team – who assess and re-clear materials where necessary.



9: The collection today...

In the OU's 50th anniversary year we are seeing substantial use of archive material – through the Digital Archive – by internal and external enquirers

Undertake regular preservation checks on our digital content:

- Hard drive checks
- File integrity checks

10: Our future wish list!

- Online storage with in-built checks and duplication
- Preservation actions being recorded in the digital archive
- Enhanced reporting functionality for the digital archive – dependent on accurate holding records



The Open
University

50
YEARS

www.open.ac.uk/library/digital-archive