

# Staff Online Skills - A Case Study in Networked Learning

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In February 1998, the Staff Online Skills (SOS) project was launched at the University of Sheffield. The project aims to provide both staff and students with high quality on-line training and education materials through a networked open learning environment. At present the main areas of focus are information technology and personal and management development, but provision will expand to support other areas such as research and teaching. SOS operates on an existing network structure and has a potential market of 25,000 users. Materials are available for PC and MAC users, and via the RATS system which allows access for network users working from remote sites off campus. All 40 current packages were commercially available from either National Education Training Group (NETG) or AC Interskill. However, there is the potential for developing customised materials to meet user needs. A model has been developed for effective user support. Present research focuses on both monitoring patterns of use while testing the effectiveness of the model. Future developments will include establishing links with industry schools and colleges and local communities.

