

Digital Hothouse

<https://www.digitalhothouse.co.nz>

IA RECOMMENDATION

OERU

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1. Introduction

Once a site is technically healthy and able to be found there are three on page pillars that need to be considered to increase a site's ranking. These are:

- Information architecture
- Internal linking
- Content

These 3 pillars allow a site to build topical authority in certain subject areas. They need to be effectively combined in order to build this authority. Each of these is informed by keyword research.

Information architecture (IA) refers to the organisation of pages on a website and looks at the organisation, hierarchy and URL structure of pages. Getting the information architecture right on the OERu site will be instrumental in allowing it to attract users. This document covers the new proposed IA for the main OERu site and how this will link into the other subdomains currently used by OERu.

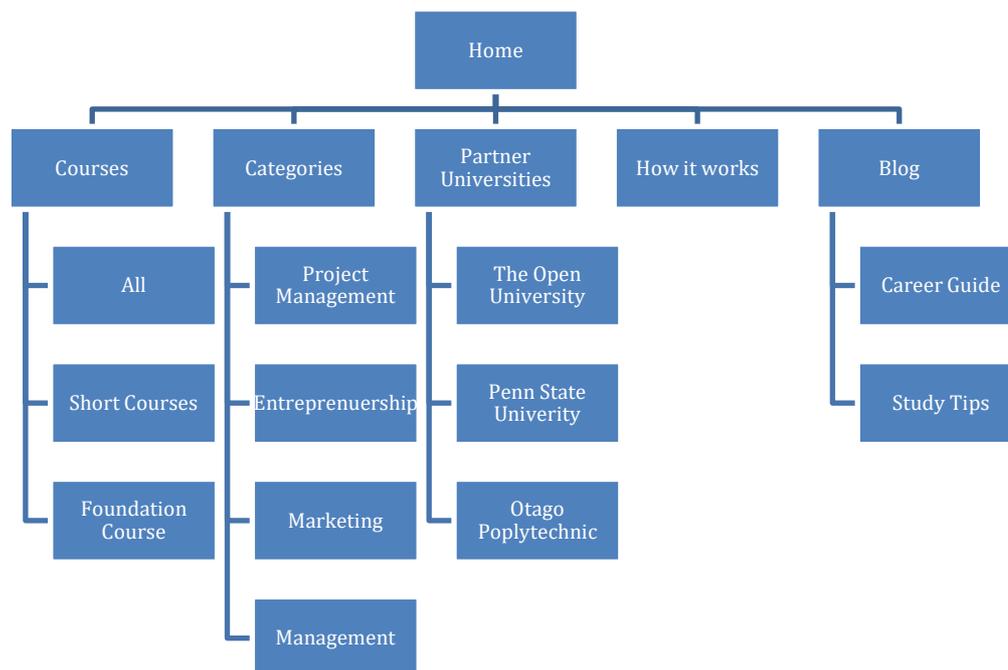
As part of this IA it is necessary to make sure that internal links are effectively used to create authority in the right places. Internal links refer to those links that link two pieces of content on the same website. This is most often done through anchor text or additional page modules. Internal links are also important for improving the crawlability of a site. A page can be well optimised but if no search engine can find it, it won't matter, it will not appear in search results.

Content is the last pillar but is just as important as the previous items. Content needs to answer user's intent and be quantifiably better than your competitors. Digital Hothouse will provide content updates to OERu inline with their goals.



2. Main IA

This is the information architecture for the main site that we recommend. Some of these sections are new and so will require some development work to implement. This will allow OERu to build topical authority in a number of areas and also rank for a wide range of terms.



By setting up the information architecture in this way, OERu provides four paths that users can enter the site from and as well as four distinct areas to build topical authority in. These are covered in more depth later on in this document, but a brief overview is provided below:

- **Courses:** This section would contain all of the courses that OERu offers. It would also contain sections such as short courses that would aggregate all courses in that category and provide more information of that type of course. This would create opportunities for OERu to rank for course types, as well as individual courses.
- **Categories:** This section would contain grouped by types of courses, for example project management. All of the courses related to that particular discipline would be grouped together on this page, along with any additional information.
- **Partner Universities:** The partners section will feature all of the partner universities. From an SEO perspective it will mostly serve to provide internal links to the courses and categories page but in the future, they may be able to start ranking for additional keywords.

- **Blog:** The blog section will feature content to support the other sections of the website. In the beginning this will be content fitting around the themes of career guidance and study tips. As this section grows more sections can be added.



3. Website sections

Each of the following sections is divided into four main parts. These are:

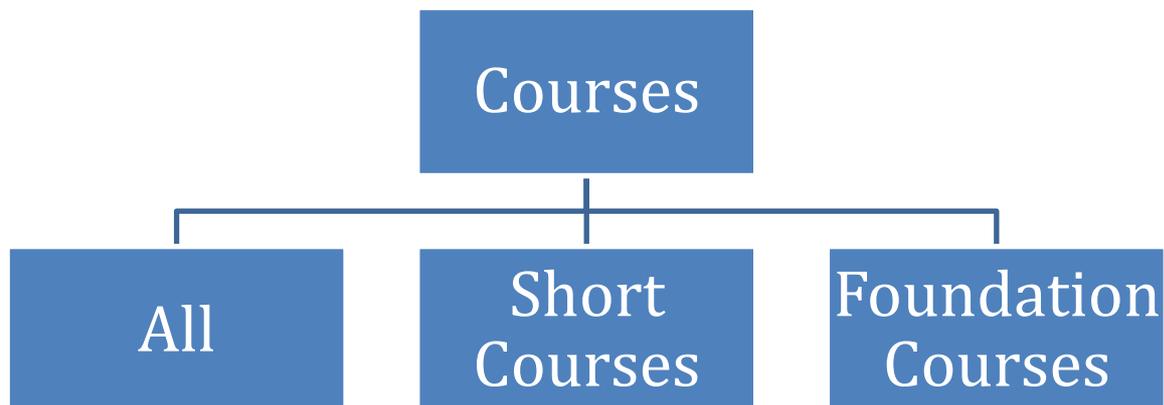
- **IA:** This provides a brief overview of that sections IA. The IA is usually how Google and users find each of your pages.
- **URL Structure:** This provides an overview of the structure of the URL. This is important as URLs that are closer to the root are generally seen as more important.
- **Keywords targeted by each individual page:** Each page should target a keyword or a cluster of key words. The keywords we think should target each section are listed in here.
- **Page overview with internal linking opportunities:** The way a page is structured, and the internal links provided on a page provide Google with an idea of the importance of certain topics on a page. Structuring pages correctly and making sure the opportunity for internal linking are maximised is key to making sure a page ranks well.

By considering these items in the websites architecture we can increase the likelihood a page ranks for what we want it to rank for.

3.1 Courses

3.1.1 IA

The courses section will contain all of the courses currently offered by OERu. It will also provide space for courses to be grouped together into “buckets” around searchable keywords and logical groupings. This will help users find the site and also provide easy ways for users to navigate the site. It will also allow for new categories to be added as new types of courses become available. As the site currently stands the IA would look as follows:



3.1.2 URL Structure

The URL structure for this section differs slightly then the current URL structure for courses:

Courses currently sit on a URL attached to the partner university they come from. They should instead sit on the following URL structure:

<https://oeru.org/courses/>

The short courses and foundation courses sections should sit on the following URL strings:

Short courses: <https://oeru.org/short-courses>

Foundation courses: <https://oeru.org/foundation-courses>

3.1.3 Keywords to target

The main pages in this section will target the following keywords:

Page	Primary Keyword	Secondary Keywords
Courses	Free online courses	Online certificate courses, free online courses with certificate of completion, online training courses
Short Courses	Short courses online	
Foundation Courses	Foundation course	Adult learning online

3.1.4 Page layout and internal linking opportunities

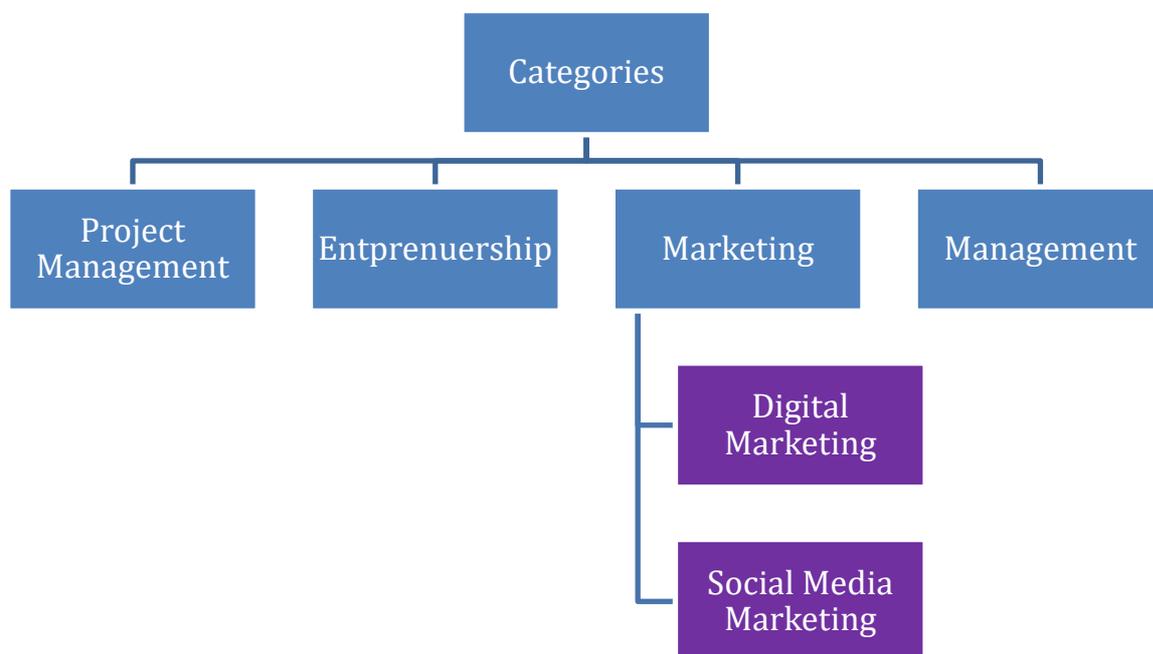
Header		
Menu		
Course overview		
Related Courses	Related Courses	Related Courses
Blog posts related to subject area		
Why OERu?		
Information on partner institution		

3.2 Categories

The categories section will contain pages that group particular courses into highly searched for categories. As OERu grows, more categories will be added, and more pages will be created – with room for potential subcategories as the opportunity presents itself.

3.2.1 IA

The categories in blue are examples of subject landing pages that should be created now based on OERu's current courses. Additional categories should also be created. The categories in purple are examples potential sub categories that could be created, once OERu's course list has been expanded.



Based on OERu's current courses we think the following categories should be created:

- Project management
- Entrepreneurship
- Marketing
- Management
- Economics
- HR
- Psychology
- History
- Science

- Sustainability
- Life Skills

We will work with OERu to keep apprised of any new course developments and advice on categories as appropriate.

3.2.2 URL Structure

The URL structure for the categories section will be very straight forward. The main category page, which will host a page linking to all of the categories will sit on the following URL:

<https://oeru.org/categories/>

The individual categories will sit one step down the URL path. For example, the entrepreneurship category will sit at the following URL:

<https://oeru.org/categories/entrepreneuership/>

3.2.3 Keywords to target

The keywords this section will target will mainly be related to specific course types. We have assigned target keywords to the above categories. These keywords will inform the recommended page copy, meta descriptions, page titles and header tags. The keywords are provided below:

Page	Primary Keyword	Secondary Keywords
Categories Overview Page	To be decided	
Project Management	project management courses online	project management courses online free, free online project management courses with certificate
Entrepreneurship	start-up courses	online entrepreneurship courses
Marketing	online marketing courses	free online marketing courses, free online marketing courses with certificates
Management	online management courses	free online management courses with certificates
Economics	free online economics course	online economics course, free online economics courses with certificate
HR	hr courses online free	hr courses online, human resource courses online free
Psychology	free online psychology courses	online psychology courses, online psychology courses with certificates
History	free online history courses	online history courses
Science	free online science courses	online science courses
Sustainability	sustainability courses online free	sustainable development courses, environmental sustainability courses
Life Skills	life skills courses online	life skills courses, life skills training for adults
Writing	free online writing courses	online writing courses

3.2.4 Page layout and internal linking opportunities

We have provided example layouts of what the top category page and a category page should look like:

Top category page:

Header		
Menu		
Category	Category	Category
Category	Category	Category
Category	Category	Category
Why OERu?		
Popular courses		
Popular blog and career articles	Popular blog and career articles	Popular blog and career articles

Example category page:

Header		
Menu		
Title and introduction to the subject		
Course	Course	Course
Why OERu?		
Related blog and career articles	Related blog and career articles	Related blog and career articles
Testimonials		
Similar Categories	Similar Categories	Similar Categories
Links to universities that OERu courses are from		

3.3 Partner Universities

The partner universities section is already well laid out and not too much needs to be changed. The overall layout and URL structure is primed for SEO, so the main consideration will be getting the most out of the brand pages through copy and internal linking.

3.3.1 Keywords to target

The keywords that the partner universities section will target will be the university or institution the page is about. This way they should appear alongside the partners institution is searched for, providing users another option.

We will keep track of how OERu is performing for these keywords.

3.3.2 Page layout and internal linking opportunities

The layout of the partner institutions page will only require a few adjustments to maximise the internal linking opportunities. An example of how this may look is provided below:

Header		
Menu		
Information on the institution		
Courses	Courses	Courses
Courses	Courses	Courses
Courses	Courses	Courses

3.4 Blog

The career guide and blog sections will house multiple types of content. This content will serve two purposes:

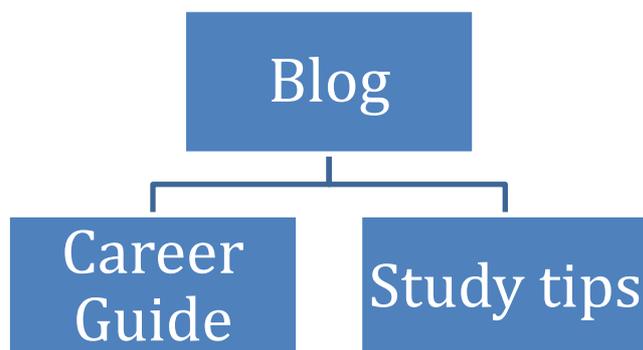
- Provide new paths for users to access the site.
- Provide topical authority for individual courses and course hub pages.

The two main sections that will be included in the blog in the beginning will be:

- **Career Guide:** This will focus on different careers that are accessible after completing OERu courses.
- **Study Tips:** This will provide information on how to study, especially to those students who have been out of education for a long time.

3.4.1 IA

The IA in this section will be pretty straight forward, with the two sections sitting below the blog. As the content is written it may make sense for new types of blog content to be created.



3.4.2 URL Structure

The URL structure for this section will be very straight forward. The individual blog posts will sit on the following URL:

<https://oeru.org/blog/>

The two categories will sit on the following URLs:

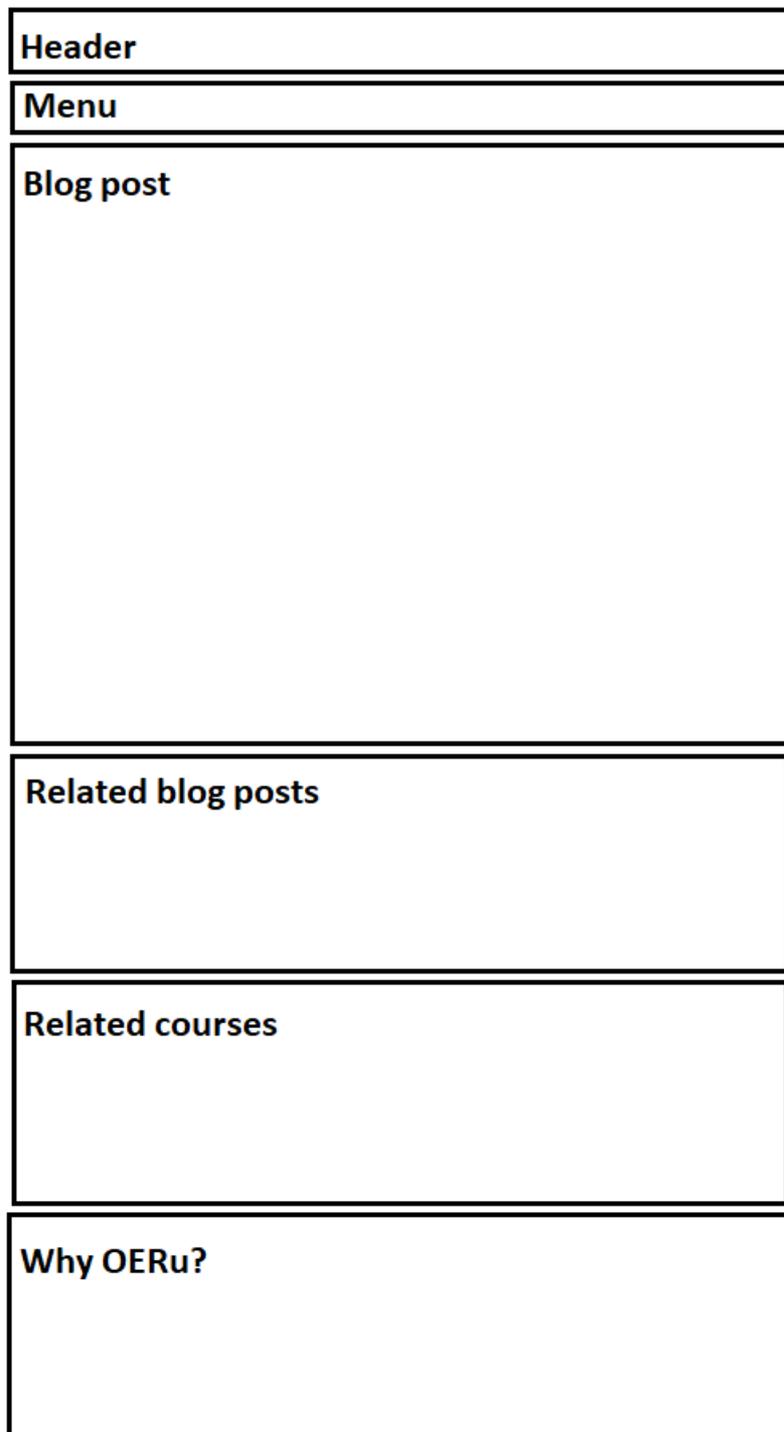
Career Guide: <https://oeru.org/blog/career-guide/>

Study Tips: <https://oeru.org/blog/study-tips/>

3.4.3 Keywords to target

Keywords will be selected at time of writing. These selections will be based on keyword volume and relevancy to the topic we are writing about.

3.4.4 Page layout and internal structure



4. Action Plan

The recommendations in this document cannot happen overnight. In order to proceed OERu must first agree that this is the right way forward. We have outlined below what the first three months of this recommendation could look like:

4.1 Month One

Task	Owner
Create new website categories	OERu
Perform any necessary redirects	OERu
Write new content for top category pages	DHH

4.2 Month Two

Task	Owner
Write project management category page	DHH
Write blog content for project management	DHH
Rewrite project management course pages	DHH
Assess partner university partner opportunities	DHH

4.3 Month Three

Task	Owner
Write entrepreneurship category page	DHH
Write blog content for entrepreneurship	DHH
Rewrite entrepreneurship course pages	DHH
Plan and write content for the study tips section	DHH