eLearning and Libraries
A UK academic librarian’s perspective

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eLearning

Users

Libraries & the role of the Librarian
eLearning
What is eLearning?

“eLearning …can be defined as 'learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology'. It can cover a spectrum of activities from the use of technology to support learning as part of a ‘blended’ approach (a combination of traditional and e-learning approaches), to learning that is delivered entirely online. Whatever the technology, however, learning is the vital element.”

JISC (2012) from: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/elearning
“Knowledge” equals body of information

“Understanding” equals comprehending and appreciating meaning which equates to learning

To achieve the above requires “skills”, defined as the capacity for carrying out a complex and well-organised pattern of thinking or behaviour in order to achieve a particular goal.

In libraries, users need skills and competences to be able to search, find, access, synthesize, critically evaluate, use, manage and present the information in an ethical manner.

Digital Literacy

The seven elements of digital literacies:

- **Media literacy**: Critically read and creatively produce academic and professional communications in a range of media.
- **Information literacy**: Find, interpret, evaluate, manage and share information.
- **Communications and collaboration**: Participate in digital networks for learning and research.
- **Digital scholarship**: Participate in emerging academic, professional and research practices that depend on digital systems.
- **Career & identity management**: Manage digital reputation and online identity.
- **Learning skills**: Study and learn effectively in technology-rich environments, formal and informal.
- **ICT literacy**: Adopt, adapt and use digital devices, applications and services.

JISC(2014)
Digital Essay
Kafka’s Wound by Will Self
http://thespace.lrb.co.uk
“Information Literacy lies at the core of lifelong learning. It empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion of all nations.”

Users
Online User Behaviour Studies

2008

Researchers of the future

Students’ Use of Research Content in Teaching and Learning

2009

User behaviour in resource discovery

eJournals: their use, value and impact

2009

2010

2010

“If It Is Too Inconvenient, I’m Not Going After It:”
Convenience as a Critical Factor in Information-seeking Behaviors

L. Silipigni Connoway
T. J. Dickey
M. L. Radford

OCLC

2011

2012

2012

Digital Literacies as post-graduate attributes

Recent trends and research in scholarly discovery behaviour

2013

2013

2015
1. These students are heavily reliant on secondary sources;

2. They find access to relevant resources a major constraint;

3. They are confused about open access and copyright which stops them from networking and collaborating;

4. They do not use the full potential of innovative technology.

5. These students are insufficiently trained to be able to fully embrace the latest opportunities in the digital information environment.
Findings
SERO Consulting

- **Google** is still central to the search/discovery process, particularly for UG students and content on **Wikipedia** is often the only source used. **YouTube** and **Flickr** are mentioned as the two web sources used.

- Students at the upper levels of their studies do use **library catalogues** or NG discovery layers and **databases** (including subject specific portals). However, **Google Book** previews were often sufficient for them.

- **Citation chains** are highly valued and are often used to expand knowledge.

- **Email lists**, personal and shared **blogs** are used to exchange information by both students and researchers. **RSS** to track relevant blogs and set up journal alerts from **TOC** services.

- **Twitter** and **Facebook** are used to share resources and keep in touch with experts and many students users peer networks (f-2-f or online) to obtain information.

- Recommendations (personal & from reading lists) were preferred sources.

- **Convenience** (access anytime, anywhere, from any device) shows higher expectations.
Libraries
UK #savelibraries

School Libraries:

“We identified a third of secondary schools have had cuts of 40% or more since 2010, with 20% redundancies in library staff at their school.”


Public Libraries

343 UK libraries have closed and another 111 are proposed to close next year;

8,000 jobs have disappeared over six years;

There are now 31,403 unpaid volunteers working in UK public libraries.

US booklesslibrary
This international report seeks to justify a history component in a computing curriculum by providing resources and a framework for a curriculum. Computing curricula recommendations often neglect this aspect of study [and it is important that] the history of computing should be considered as a part of human understanding and how the development of computing has affected the human environment.

“Great libraries have changed lives. [The Florida State University Library may] ... reflect the digital life today but I don’t think in the long run it’s going to give people the same quality of experience of walking through shelves of books ... that very quiet and intimate connection between people and the printed word could be lost. It’s just not going to give people the serendipitous experience of walking through shelves of books – [which in itself is] a tremendous rite of passage”

(Professor Kathleen McCook, 2014).
“The serendipity of browsing has yet to be successfully recreated in electronic form. An online encyclopedia can show you links to related articles, but what about all the unrelated ones? The printed codex allows its user to gain an impressionistic overview of the whole, and to skim through at high speed until something intriguing catches the eye: something that no online resource can replicate… For in a world where we can search for anything, it is getting harder and harder to happen across what we never knew we wanted to know”

Librarians
The role of the librarian has changed.

The vast developments in the information and technology landscapes have meant that our roles have evolved from information custodians to information curators and educators.

As curators, we need to bring resources together for the user

As educators, we need to teach information literacy in order to create a ‘metaliterate’ user.
Role of the Librarian: Curator

Researching
- Researching
- Searching
- Finding
- Accessing

Evaluating
- Evaluating information

Managing Information
- EndNote, Mendeley, Zotero
- Keeping Current with Research: RSS & Email Alerting Services
- Evernote
- Copyright & IPR

Using new technologies
- Disseminating on Social Media (digital footprint)
  e.g. Twitter for Researchers
- Digital Researcher to network/share/disseminate information
- Research Data

Using ethically

Developing Information Literacies

Communicating/sharing in an ethical manner
Curating DERA

**DERA: Digital Education Resource Archive**

- Key OA education resource: No. 21 in UK according to World Ranking of Web Repositories
- Born-digital government publications on education and related social sciences
- 200,000 unique visitors a year!

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Cabinet Office  
Centre for Educational Development, Appraisal and Research (CEDAR)  
Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)  
Children's Commissioner for Wales  
Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC)  
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)  
Commission for Local Administration in England (CLA)  
Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)  
Commission for Rural Communities  
Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)  
Connexions  
Construction Skills (CSkills)

**OERs:** Research Data, Theses & Dissertations, Children’s Book Corner, OER Literacy Attainment: Historical Sources, Curriculum History: MACOS etc.
Role of the Librarian: Educator

Information and Literature Searching
Access

Image source: http://s3.amazonaws.com/rapgenius/small-open-door.jpg
Concluding Remarks
Taking control

Re-evaluate our roles as **curators** by asking how we can bring our collections (including data) to the forefront (nationally and internationally).

Re-evaluate our role as **educators** within the context of social justice

Re-evaluate our roles by taking control of our relationships/partnerships with our users, academics, management, other service departments, publishers so that we are better able to collaborate

Image source: https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/blog/have-you-joined-e-learning-revolution-1
Questions
Information & Literature Searching

Online Module for MPhil/PhD
Video: The Literature Review and Research Process

Readings:


Tasks:

1. Find a thesis and use the rubric discussed in the readings to evaluate the literature review; post your work on the Discussion Forum
2. Reading the blog post by Pat Thompson on ‘Mapping your literatures’ and create a concept map (freehand or using freely available software).

Case Studies:


Tasks:
1. How does the historical inquiry relate to your research question and what primary sources can you identify for your research?
2. Using the resources (videos demos on searching catalogues & databases), find resources that will help you begin a historical inquiry.
Bibliometrics and Information Evaluation

Video: Citation Searching

Reading:


Tasks:

1. Find a highly-cited article that is relevant to your research and explain why you chose it; next compare the citations to those on Google Scholar. Why do you think the counts are different. Discuss this on the Discussion Forum.

2. Now evaluate the article using the REVIEW, CRAAP or PROMPT method. Explain your evaluation process on the Discussion Forum.
New Technologies & Social Media

- Google Scholar
- Researcher IDs
- LinkedIn
- Academia.edu
- Research Gate
- Twitter & Facebook
- Mendeley & Zotero
- Blogs
- Open Access, IPR, Copyright
- Impact measures: Altmetrics

New technologies:

- RSS
- Text and Data Mining Software
- Cloud Storage Solutions
- Research Data Management
Reality Check

- **Diving into the unknown**
  - Don’t know what to expect; you dive in and wait to come up for a breath of air (usually when the students start engaging in the introductions)

- **Relationship Building**
  - Relationship building takes time as it’s not like the f-2-f where it’s easy to engage through gestures, smiles, jokes, eye contact (and you can’t overdo the emoticon as you have to maintain an ‘easy’ distance – approachable and friendly but yet the expert. The importance of a friendly tone cannot be overemphasized.

- **Establishing Credibility**
  - Not easy to deal with difficult students who can’t be bothered to participate or complain about the work load (and the workload is higher for both parties – you have to create more context; they have to engage with more resources and participate more).

- **Extremely time-consuming but…**
  - Feel like a 24-7 librarian as you are having to work in several modes
  - Offline (creating content or reading posts and drafting responses). This takes skill!
Feedback

Compulsory or not, get feedback because it is part of your learning

Disappointing
– If it’s negative but this is part of your learning and how you can improve
– Listening to them is important:
  ▪ My course was 4 weeks; then 5 weeks; and now 7 weeks long
  ▪ My course now gives students an idea on how much time they are expected to spend per day on the tasks
  ▪ It is scheduled at a time when the other courses are not running so that they can invest all their time on getting the basics right.

Equally satisfying
– Gratifying when they compliment but equally important when they make suggestions for improving the teaching/course/content
– Backhanded compliment: “A big thank to the persons behind the conception of the module and to Nazlin who is perfect at mediating, answering questions, giving comments. Bravo!”