CoLRiC

Council for Learning Resources in Colleges

IMPACT

April 2020

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The voice of Further Education and Sixth Form College Libraries and Learning Resource Services

STRONGER TOGETHER

EDITORIAL – HELEN SHERWOOD

The theme for the second 2020 issue of Impact was always going to be Stronger Together…but struggling through a pandemic wasn't quite what we had in mind! We have an article which looks at building up local support and another which shares some innovative induction activities.

Thank you to a CoLRiC member who suggested an improvement to our 'back page' submission guidelines. The suggestion was that articles that are about your service contain a summary of key service information to provide context for colleges interested in adopting new practices. Staff and campus numbers, roles or opening hours, can all help to build up a background picture for our readers. Keep the submissions and suggestions coming. Stay safe.

stay safe and stay positive

A WORD FROM CORINNE WALKER, CO-CHAIR…

Hang On In There

Well, I hardly know where to start with this! Little did we think that when the last CoLRiC Impact went out, that most of us (if not all) would now be working from home and possibly self-isolating. It was with great regret that we had to cancel our annual conference in Birmingham as a result, but hopefully when we decide to reschedule it will be back bigger and better!

Hands up who is finding home working/self-isolating challenging? I freely admit that I'm finding it very difficult to get into a routine and have had major wobbles, let alone the challenge of spending all day every day with my husband, who is also working from home - we only do that at weekends and when we have our annual jolly to Corfu! Reader - he's still alive, just!

How do you balance working from home with partners, home schooling kids, pets, social distancing, looking after elderly relatives, or being on your own, self-isolating? In other words, trying to work and keep sane in all of this. I'm not sure that it can be done to be honest.

There will be a weekly email from us keeping you up to date with things, so feel free to chip in with any ideas, tips, hints etc that might stop us all going quietly crazy during this time. Please keep yourselves safe and well during all of this and hopefully we'll see all of you on the other side.

Corinne
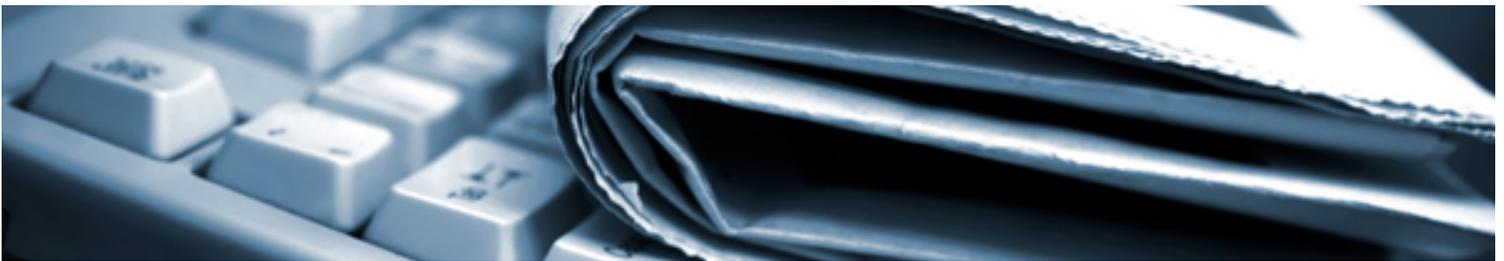
COLRIC NEWS

Full or partial college closures, isolation and quarantine are making us transform the way we work. These are challenging times for our students, colleagues and team members.
Our landscape has changed dramatically since we were updating you with news in our February 2020 issue. CoLRiC's focus has switched from the excitement of planning for a face-to-face conference for our members to working to ensure that our community stays strong, connected and feels supported in these unprecedented times.

Awards – extending the deadline to help you celebrate achievements

We know how busy our members are members are during this very stressful period, so we've decided extend the deadline for our 2020 Awards to give you more time to put forward your nominations. You now have until **Friday 12th June** to submit your nominations.

This is the perfect way to celebrate the impact and achievements of your teams, projects, initiatives and colleagues.

❖ The Best Practice Award (BPA) celebrates teams that can demonstrate the value and impact of their service provision in any capacity. We are delighted that this year's Award has been sponsored by IS Oxford.
❖ The Jeff Cooper Award Inspirational Information Professional of the Year is presented to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to change lives and empower students.

We are delighted that this year's BPA is sponsored by IS Oxford.

"IS Oxford is delighted to sponsor CoLRiC's Best Practice Award. We have spent the last 30 years working with librarians in developing and supporting the Heritage Cirqa library management software and we are aware of the challenges they face. This is a great opportunity to honour the efforts of all of the enthusiastic and committed library and learning resources teams in further education and sixth form colleges that collaborate with us to improve teaching, learning and the student experience."

Emma Duffield, Sales Manager, IS Oxford

Our winners will be celebrated with fanfares, publicity, certificates and trophies and their achievements shared in CoLRiC Impact and across our social media accounts.

Contact the CoLRiC Admin team for nomination forms and guidelines. Good luck!

Benchmarking and Impact Survey – May 1st deadline is fast approaching!

Our new online benchmarking and impact survey is still open. Your feedback, views and ideas are crucial to the development of Library and Learning Resource Services. The new survey is designed to ensure that the information and data we gather is relevant and useful for operational and strategic planning.

We encourage as many of our member Colleges as possible to complete the survey to ensure the relevance and integrity of our findings. The Survey should be completed by the Head of Service/Library Manager. Year on year this survey will enable us to build a critical mass of invaluable benchmarking information to improve decision making and build high quality, impactful resources and services.

The deadline for submissions is 6 pm on **Friday 1st May 2020**

Click here to access the online survey.
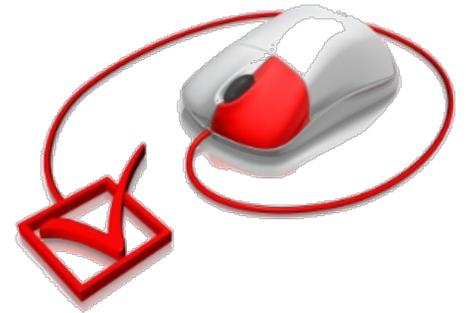
Help and support from suppliers

Many publishers and providers have been working to offer new collections and resources including many of our own sponsors. We'll share these updates with you via our weekly messages and on JiscMail.

The first of these initiatives is from our sponsor Gale.

Gale is making available several support resources for the education community in response to COVID-19, see the **CoLRiC Community** article below for further information.

Stay connected via our private JiscMail forum

CoLRiC's members only discussion forum is a great place to keep up to date with news and discussions, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Registration with JiscMail is free. To get started all you need is an active email address and the name of a mailing list you wish to join.

Click here to subscribe to our forum.

If you require further advice and information on any topic, please don't hesitate to contact the CoLRiC Admin team.

CoLRiC COMMUNITY - GALE AND IS OXFORD'S SUPPORT FOR REMOTE WORKING AND DISTANCE LEARNING

Gale is making available several support resources for the education community in response to COVID-19:

- ❖ **Gale's COVID-19 Hub Site**: Gives open access resources about the virus, professional development eBooks, thematic webinars, and a questions message board.

- ❖ **On-Demand Webinars:** Sessions for staff or students to provide guidance for your Gale resources as well as on teaching, researching, and learning virtually.

- ❖ **Gale FE News, Business, and Reference Extended Trial Access:** To support FE colleges, we are making GNBR available for free from now until **31st July 2020** to help support teachers and students who are teaching and studying at home.

If you're interested, please email your subscriptions representative Allison Zink at **allison.zink@cengage.com** to set up your access.

Heritage Cirqa – support for your library during the shutdown

Emma Duffield of IS Oxford writes about her efforts to provide support throughout the shutdown. "I have been sending a weekly 'hints and tips' email to all Heritage Cirqa users every Tuesday for the past eight years. I have found it to be a great way of both staying in touch and providing a personal and responsive support service.

Thinking of a new topic each week is normally quite challenging, but COVID-19 and the shutdown of libraries has meant that suddenly there is plenty of advice that needs imparting. I've therefore added a second email each Thursday for the foreseeable future.

We're a few weeks into the shutdown now and I have covered the following topics so far:

- ❖ Preparing for remote working: installing a Heritage Cirqa client at home
- ❖ Globally renewing all items on loan
- ❖ Sending an email notification to all your users
- ❖ Sending push notifications to all your users via the MyCirqa app
- ❖ Deferring library fines
- ❖ Updating the 'News and Information' section of Heritage Online
- ❖ Updating the 'Opening hours' information on Heritage Online

- ❖ Ensuring your scheduled jobs (sending out notices to users, emailing reports to your inbox, importing/exporting data to other systems) are still running during the closed period
- ❖ Putting returned items into 'quarantine' if you are still running a self-issue service
- ❖ Hiding all print resources from your online catalogue (showing e-resources only)

We have also just started producing video tutorials, which we are making available on our YouTube channel.

Sending email notifications via Heritage Cirqa video on YouTube

Most libraries are now closed, but remote access to Heritage Cirqa, particularly for our hosted customers, means that lots of our users are now catching up on lots of tasks that they don't normally have time for. We are happy to help and advise with any data tidying, online catalogue enhancements or service expansion tasks you might be planning.

If you use Heritage Cirqa but don't currently receive the weekly emails then please drop me a line and I'll be happy to add you to the mailing list.

Of course if you're not a Heritage Cirqa user, I am also available to give free online demonstrations and have a chat to you about your requirements and how we might be able to help streamline and improve your library service".

Emma Duffield, Sales Manager, IS Oxford (**emma@isoxford.com**)

CoLRiC IS DELIGHTED TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THESE SPONSORS

COLLABORATION, CO-OPERATION AND SUPPORT –
LEGO (LIBRARIANS IN EDUCATION GROUP, OLDHAM)

Background

Until recently Oldham was classed by the ONS (Office for National Statistics) as **the most deprived town in Britain**. Here at Oldham Sixth Form College, 51% of our students are in receipt of financial help in the form of the Bursary and free school meals. This means the household income of these students is under £16,100 p.a.

Oldham is one of 12 Opportunity Areas selected by the Department for Education. The purpose of Opportunity Areas is improving social mobility, using education as a key driver to achieve this. Oldham's plan sets out a series of ambitions to support parents to improve early literacy at home; build high performance across the school system; and boost support for mental health.

I had mused about a local network for Librarians in my area, but never got around to seeing if one existed. I had provided informal support to a couple of local schools over the years, but in late 2017, I started to wonder if there could be benefits in setting up a local support network/ group. This could benefit students in the area, improve literacy, share good practice and collaborate and help support librarians working in isolation.

Actions

In late 2017 I did some preliminary research regarding viability and uptake of such a group and sent out a scoping email to all the secondary schools in Oldham as well as the Public Library Service, FE College, NHS hospital and the University College, to see if there was any interest in setting up a network in the area. The idea was to meet once a term, with everyone taking it in turn to host so they would get a chance to see other libraries. The responses were overwhelmingly positive and the inaugural meeting of LEGO (Librarians in Education Group, Oldham) was held in January 2018. There were ten local librarians in attendance, from secondary schools, FE College, and Public Library Service. Unfortunately, the remaining secondary schools never responded to my email, and despite repeated attempts to make contact over the last eighteen months, sadly I assume they don't have a library or librarian.

It very quickly became apparent that this group was sorely needed in Oldham. A large number of the secondary school librarians aren't qualified, or even had any experience before they went into the post, and all but one are lone workers. We had a mix of teaching assistants, finance assistant, part time school photographer and an admin assistant. All were struggling to balance additional roles with ensuring continuity of service, and trying to learn how to run a library, often with only a couple of hours a day to do it in. One memorable afternoon I spent forty-five minutes talking through basic cataloguing and Dewey with the school photographer,

who suddenly found herself having to catalogue and classify items, with no idea where to even start. Most of the group had no idea about what groups or help was out there e.g. Reading Agency, SLA, SLG etc. and three members of the group are from the top performing secondary schools in the area, including the local independent school.

The group provides an opportunity to talk through problems and share good practice. It's particularly beneficial for the librarians with minimal experience as it puts people in touch, provides support to lone workers and helps build their confidence. They can see what others are doing and there is a contact list so that people can ask for support or ideas with something. Yes, I do advocate for libraries having qualified librarians. However, that doesn't address the immediate problem of helping and supporting unqualified library staff who are striving to ensure that children and young people in Oldham have the best possible learning experience. I also aim to provide some free tailored CPD at the meeting, as most don't have a budget for it or the time to be allowed out to go.

Below are some examples of topics covered in recent meetings.

- ❖ Accelerated Reading schemes
- ❖ Reading for pleasure - promotion, competitions etc.
- ❖ Cross sectoral support – Promoting the work of the public library service – BorrowBox, RD Digital, getting them into schools
- ❖ Using social media to promote services
- ❖ GDPR
- ❖ Support for high ability pupils
- ❖ Great School Libraries campaign
- ❖ Feedback from CILIP Conference in July 2019
- ❖ Creating more diverse book collections and sourcing foreign language materials
- ❖ Our latest member is from the local NHS hospital so we're exploring how they can support any health promotions that schools might have
- ❖ Oldham Literacy Strategy across all key stages – 3-year plan, Reading for Pleasure hubs
- ❖ Promotion of services
- ❖ Breaking New Ground resource sent out to all members
- ❖ Anything free!
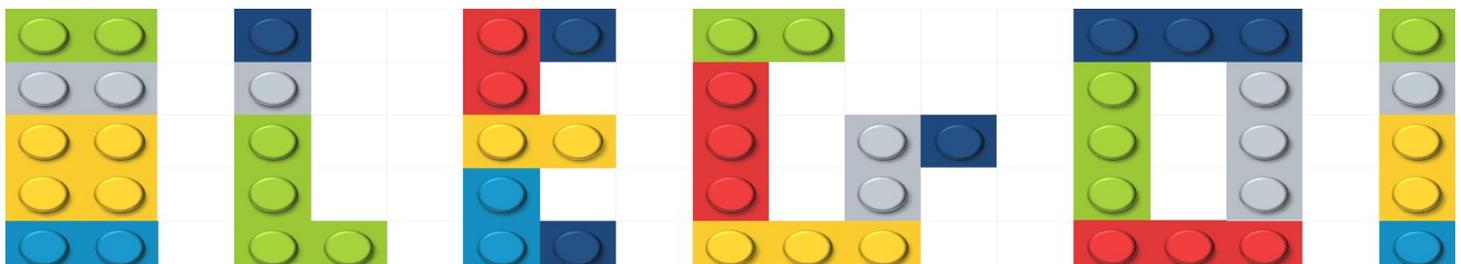
Challenges

It hasn't been without its difficulties! As most of the group are lone workers, frequently they are not allowed out. Most have very low budgets, so I'm always on the lookout for free resources and training for them. We want to start putting examples of good practice and training online rather than sharing via email, so finding a digital solution to this has become a priority. A number are constrained by institutional policies and attitudes, so building confidence and giving them the tools to be able to show their worth is also key.

Next steps

- ❖ Explore a digital solution for members to access help and resources
- ❖ More free CPD for members
- ❖ Try and increase membership/attendance at meetings by looking at different methods
- ❖ Encourage more sharing of examples of good practice
- ❖ Sharing of costs regarding author events etc.

Final thoughts

Overall, it's been a huge success and the feedback I've had has been overwhelmingly positive. They appreciate the ability to get together and discuss mutual problems and come up with solutions, as well as the opportunity to have some free training and take a look at other institutions. Nothing is more gratifying than bringing people together to mutually support each other and being able to improve services as a result.

Corinne Walker - Co-Chair CoLRiC & Chair of LEGO (Librarians in Education Group, Oldham), Learning Resources Manager, Oldham Sixth Form College CWR@osfc.ac.uk

ESCAPE ROOMS AT BUXTON AND LEEK COLLEGE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

Introduction

The Academic Librarian team at the University of Derby has found it difficult to develop innovative induction activities which engage students but do not cause information overload. The University's portfolio of programmes is wide ranging; in addition to undergraduate, post graduate and online study, its Buxton and Leek College offers FE courses and various articulated progression routes into higher education such as Access to HE and Foundation Degrees.

Usually, library induction consists of a twenty/thirty minute physical tour where groups of ten to fifteen students are led round the facilities by a librarian or other member of library staff. Not only is this a very labour-intensive method of delivering information but student engagement tends to be poor. The concept of educational escape rooms provided an excellent opportunity to review and reinvigorate the normally 'boring' induction experience.

When I started as Assistant Academic Librarian in late 2016 one of my first tasks was to design a new induction session for Level 3 Year 1 students alongside our Facilitator team. After discussing a few ideas, a Crystal Maze style was the favourite which morphed into an escape room format.

The Internet has many examples of escape room puzzles with helpful websites that provide instructions on how design your own. We set about adapting some of these to fit a library setting and to ensure that they were appropriate for the level and message we wanted to get across. The challenge was not providing explicit instructions, while still including enough information to allow students to work out what they must do.

The session was planned so that, following an introduction to the Library website and how to search the catalogue, each class was split into up to five groups, assigned a colour and sent to start on a different puzzle.

While solving the puzzles, we wanted students to be able to find a book's shelf mark on the Library Catalogue, learn how to access the printer, borrow a book using self-service, learn how to borrow a laptop and become familiar with the books in the study skills section as well as acknowledge and understand the Code of Conduct. To match these, we came up with five puzzles:

❖ The team must decode a sentence (using a spinning decoder) which reveals how to borrow a laptop. There are hints around them to tell them how to set the decoder.

❖ A briefcase must be opened – the combination lock codes are the shelf marks of two books, details of which are stuck to the briefcase. The team must use the Library catalogue to find the two sets of numbers. Once open, they can remove a jigsaw piece in their team's colour from inside the briefcase.

❖ The team must borrow a book using self-service and request a receipt. They record the time printed on the receipt before returning the book.

❖ The study skills bookshelf conceals parts of a sentence within six books – the team needs to find them! A photograph shows the shelf with those six books missing and the team needs to work out which they are. Once they find the book, there's a card with a part of a sentence in their team's colour. They must find all six and unscramble the sentence.

❖ Next to the printer is an iPad which has a recorded message. The students listen to the message and pick out the information given to answer a question.

Once all the puzzles are complete, students return to the start and are issued with a jigsaw piece in their team's colour for each correct response. The first team to complete their jigsaw wins the challenge. The jigsaw is of a map of the library, but there's a spare piece with each team. Once students realise that they need to work with the other teams, the jigsaw displays the Code of Conduct.

Completing the escape room puzzles enables students to experience and demonstrate teamwork, become familiar with the layout of the Library and develop the library skills and behaviours that will support their learning and studies. The feedback for the 2019 induction season told us that 95% of students found the session useful, 95% enjoyed it and 98% felt more confident at using the library following the induction. Despite this positive feedback we shall be evaluating the session and tweaking it to keep it as fresh as possible for next year's intake.

Liz White (Assistant Academic Librarian at Buxton and Leek College, University of Derby) l.white@derby.ac.uk

Library Lockdown: Zombie Attack originated from a scheme at the university called the 'Vice-Chancellor's ideas forum' which provides individuals with the opportunity to ask for financial support to develop innovative teaching initiatives. In 2017, the head of the library service and a professor in forensic science jointly applied to the forum for funding to employ two student researchers with the aim of developing a new student resource for library orientation based around the escape room concept.

A project group was formed, and I was invited to participate along with a colleague. As librarians, we were tasked with identifying the learning objectives—or skills—that we wanted the students to develop. The student researchers then built the clues and the game around the objectives.

These included:

- ❖ Using the library catalogue to search for a book
- ❖ Finding a book on the shelves using its Dewey decimal number
- ❖ Finding and accessing an e-book
- ❖ Using the reservations system
- ❖ Using the self-service machines
- ❖ Using our online guides (LibGuides)
- ❖ Using our E-Journals Finder resource to locate and access a specific e-journal and article.

The project was a collaborative effort between us and the students and presented us with challenges as well as benefits. Having the student researchers' input whilst developing the learning objectives was extremely valuable. We approached the objectives from a librarian mindset i.e. what we felt the students needed to know in their induction. However, the students, having experienced a library induction in their first year and having gone through almost three years of study at the university, highlighted things that we hadn't considered as being important - such as knowing how the print system worked for example. The students also had experience playing escape rooms and were very good at coming up with ingenious riddles and clues that met the objectives of the Escape Room. Unfortunately, regular communication from the students waned as their end of year exams and dissertation due dates approached. Due to these competing demands the students were unable to finish the game and I was asked to bring it to completion.

The result was Library Lockdown: Zombie Attack! The game was piloted in November 2018 with a group of criminology students and was well received; the group liked the interactive aspect compared to a walking tour of the library. Since then it has been delivered for various undergraduate groups, for staff as a development activity, and for the general public at our University Community Day. I also offer the session to school groups, in conjunction with our Widening Access team, as part of our University Experience Days.

The aim of the game is to open a locked safe which contains an anti-zombie formula enabling the students to escape the zombie apocalypse! Participants are **shown a short video introduction** after which they use the library resources to solve different puzzles and clues which ultimately gives them the code to the safe. The game can be delivered for up to twenty-five contestants at a time (five per group). There is a thirty minute and hour-long version. Each group uses the same resources e.g. the library catalogue to solve the puzzles.
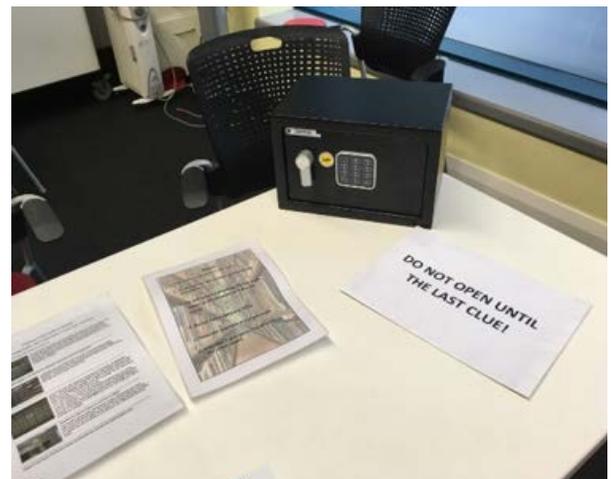
However, there are variations built into the puzzles to discourage cheating and to maintain a level of competition. Once the students complete the last clue and open the safe, they find a potion bottle filled with anti-zombie formula. Each participant receives a badge and the winning team usually gets chocolate or sweets. I **end the game with another video** showing students successfully escaping the library.

Feedback has been mainly qualitative in nature - at the end of each game students are asked to write on a post-it note what they learnt, what they enjoyed and how we could improve the game. Comments have been overwhelmingly positive, and I have also received some valuable constructive criticism which has helped me to evaluate and amend the game for future sessions. Although I wanted the game to develop basic library skills, I have also found it develops soft skills such as teamwork, problem-solving and communication.

Hazel Glasse (Academic Librarian University of Derby)
h.glasse@derby.ac.uk

Hazel and Liz would be delighted to answer any questions you may have. Just drop them an email and please share any of your experiences or lessons learned from this article with the CoLRiC Impact team.

SPOTLIGHT ON……Helen Foster, Jisc

How did you become 'e-books for FE' Coordinator at Jisc?

I've had quite an odd career path so far. After leaving university (and not knowing what to do with an English Literature degree) I worked in Waterstones, before getting my first job in libraries as a Library Assistant at Runshaw College. This was a great place to work and I worked with lots of lovely colleagues, and it was because of this job that I decided that I wanted to work in the library profession. I then moved to a secondary school working as a school librarian, before training as an English teacher. I taught for two years but my heart wasn't in it, and I knew I really wanted to work in libraries. Luckily, around this time the government introduced postgraduate student loans, so I added to my increasing pile of student debt and went back to study for my library and information management diploma whilst still working part-time as a school librarian. After this, I got my first job at Jisc in 2018 as FE and Skills Curriculum Service Support Officer, which involved working across all of Jisc's FE services. Now I specialise in e-books as the e-books for FE Coordinator, which combines two of my favourite things – books and librarians!

Knowing what you know now what would you say to your 16-year-old self?

Don't worry if you don't know what you want to be 'when you grow up.' You will probably end up doing a job that doesn't even exist now that you could never imagine being. Even when you grow up, you probably still won't know what you want to be when you grow up!

How do you keep up to date with trends in your profession?

Keeping up with trends in the sector is vital to ensuring that the e-books for FE service meets the needs of users across the UK. The most effective way I do this is through communicating with librarians across the country, who are an invaluable source of information and always willing to share ideas. I do this by running a focus group which informs the annual procurement process, hosting regular webinars to share best practice, and following many active mailing lists where librarians share developments. Twitter is, of course, a great source of information and has a very active librarian base!

What are your biggest professional challenges?

In my current role I would say my biggest challenge is trying to make sure that 'e-books for FE' is representative of the needs of the whole sector, and relevant to students in all four nations of the UK. With the vast amount of qualifications available, it can be difficult to make sure the collection has something for every student, so it's important to research qualifications and student numbers to make sure we are covering the most popular qualifications. It's a careful balance between managing the tight budget with title requests that come in throughout the year and making sure the collection is meeting the needs of as many students as possible. Ultimately the title selection is down to the publishers offering us the titles we want, so my role also involves liaising with publishers, which can sometimes be tricky. Thankfully we have great relationships with publishers who are just as keen as us to get their books out to as many students as possible.

If you can think of someone we could turn a spotlight on please let us know. Contact details can be found on 'the back page'

What is your favourite book?

This is always the hardest question for me! It changes frequently and is often the latest book I read (Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout – a great escape from the current crisis). I would probably have to choose The Great Gatsby as my ultimate favourite book. I love the story and the setting, and I can still quote my favourite passages from studying it for A-level!

And finally… sum yourself up in three words

Bookish animal-lover! (Does that count as three words?)

SHOWCASING AND SHARING EDUCATIONAL TECH – DIGIFEST 2020 - Sam Goldsmith HE & Research Librarian, University Centre Leeds

On 10th March 2020 I attended the first day of Jisc Digifest which took place at the ICC Birmingham.

The premise of the annual event is to showcase and share educational technologies. As with most educational events there is a slight university/HE bias, but it is a FREE event and I have always gained some useful insights from it.

The venue is excellent with a large central space for breaks/lunch and products being showcased and separate auditoriums and rooms for the other presentations. Being a technology-based event there was of course an app which helped you plan your sessions and was attached to notes and a social sharing opportunity. This was great because it allowed you to have a brief insight into other sessions you could not physically attend.

DIGI FEST 2020

Hots

- ❖ It's FREE (apart from travel)
- ❖ You can switch sessions to your heart's content
- ❖ You can try technologies
- ❖ You can get ideas for new approaches
- ❖ It's run over two days, so there's more chance for one of the dates to be doable
- ❖ There's a useful app to help plan and organise your day
- ❖ Jisc always asks for feedback which influences the development of the event.

Nots

- ❖ Be careful with phone app usage! These days we need battery power for e-tickets, so try to pack a battery pack charger that does not require you to find a wall socket!
- ❖ Some of the sessions are thinly-veiled plugs for software and services
- ❖ Pay attention to the format of every session, particularly if you are uncomfortable with an interactive format
- ❖ Relying on volunteers for speakers can be a hit and miss process in terms of quality. Sometimes I came away thinking that my own institution was well ahead of them.
- ❖ There is a heavy HE focus.

This year the programme had different content and themes on each of the two days. Obviously, this suited those who could attend both days, but frustrating for day delegates who might have liked some of the content from both days.

If you want to find out more **go to the Jisc website.** In addition to Digifest, Jisc runs other courses and events around the country as well as webinars and virtual meetings.

THE BACK PAGE

CoLRiC encourages the submission of articles by all members for publication in CoLRiC Impact. To discuss ideas for articles in advance please give us a call on 07879 667347 or send an e-mail with a short outline of proposed content.

If you submit an article about the service at your college, please consider including a summary of key service information that will provide the reader with some context and help them to compare with their own college e.g. staffing numbers/types/opening hours.

One more issue of Impact is scheduled for the 19/20 academic year. If you would like to submit an article, please note the advice below and the closing date for submissions.

July 2020 – deadline 19th June 2020.