

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



CoLRiC

Council for Learning
Resources in Colleges

IMPACT

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Editorial

They say that time flies.

It's thirty years since CoLRiC's inception in 1993.

Five years since we celebrated the 25th anniversary at our Birmingham conference – 'The Road Travelled: Surviving and Flourishing 25 years on' – in June 2018.

Our June 2019 event contemplated the future - 'The Road Ahead: being stronger together.' Little did we know that there would be a roadblock around the corner...

The irony of 2019 was that our keynote speaker, Liz McGettigan, Director of Digital Library and Cultural Experiences, SOLUS UK and external judge for CoLRiC's Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award, presented on thriving in what she called 'the new normal.'

'Libraries and learning resource centres are facing many challenges, not least the chronic underfunding of resources and staffing that have become "the new normal" for most of us. How do we revitalise our libraries to deliver a bold new future - an engaging, exciting and collaborative future? How do we thrive in what has become the new normal? Can we envisage, and create, a bolder, stronger normal that underpins and inspires a better, fairer, smarter society?'

Then along came Covid ...

2023 will be a year of celebration, reflection and horizon scanning of an even more challenging environment for the further education sector.

Back in October 2022 CoLRiC was delighted to announce the winners and highly commended recipients of our two national awards for active engagement with academic staff, curriculum colleagues and students and making a demonstrable impact on the teaching and learning experience:

- The CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award (CIPA) - presented in celebration of highly innovative and enthusiastic contributions to team working
- The Inspirational Information Professional Award - presented in celebration of proactive, creative and enthusiastic individual contributions.

All the recipients demonstrated their value to and impact on the wider College community; proof positive that the library and learning resources sector continues to thrive and demonstrate excellence, resilience, commitment and creativity.

'It's exciting to hear that CoLRiC has been with us for the last thirty years. May it thrive for many years to come!'

It has been incredibly uplifting to witness their enthusiasm about the awards in College presentation ceremonies attended by senior leaders across the organisation. They proudly and prominently displayed their certificates and engraved glass trophies for all to see, and made national and local FE news.

In our January 2023 issue we featured contributions from two winners. In this edition we showcase two more. The Chichester College Group Library Service initiative 'Creating an Actively Anti-Racist Library Service' was Highly Commended for the 2022 CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award. Chichester impressed the judging panel for several reasons:

- Its commitment to creating an anti-racist library service that will help 'change lives through learning' and address the underperformance of non-white students in FE
- Significant research, discussion and collaboration around racial literacy and 'decolonising the curriculum'
- Motivating the teaching community to reflect on curriculum content
- Empowering the student community to engage in conversations on an emotive, sensitive topic
- Positive academic feedback that evidences the impact decolonisation could have on the learning experience.

The College Librarian Frances Fryer enthused at the time: *'The library team is thrilled to receive this recognition. We will continue our journey to make the Chichester College Group Library Service truly representative in terms of our collections and the students we serve.'* Stella Hine, Site Librarian at Brinsbury Library, was delighted with the inspiring recognition from CoLRiC and explores the backstory to the award-winning project in this issue.

Bradford College's James Golab was Highly Commended for the 2022 Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award.

James' contribution as Library Learning Facilitator impressed the judging panel for several reasons. His:

- Commitment and dedication to the job
- Regularly acknowledged respect, affection and feedback from students
- Collaboration with academic staff
- Proactive and engaging role in reading groups to support English for speakers of other languages
- Sensitivity to the needs of a diverse student group, including those with special educational needs and disabilities
- Personal investment in professional development based on his work experiences, (most notably his recent graduation as Young Persons Mental Health First Aider).

James was delighted with the award. 'It's a wonderful feeling and a privilege to be recognised by my peers, something that I greatly appreciate. I have loved the new challenges that we've embraced.' Lakshmi Banner, Library Team Leader, said 'this is wonderful news! James is such a friendly, resourceful and creative colleague.' In this issue he talks about his work in our 'Spotlight on...' feature.

Nicola Nosworthy, LRC Assistant at The Sixth Form College, Farnborough contributes an article about enhancing learning through wider reading. She describes an enrichment programme for students that is tailored to individual subjects and departments and maximises their potential by developing their research and information literacy skills.

As part of our 30th anniversary celebrations we'd like to thank our valued sponsors for their support and collaboration. In this issue Weston College takes us on its journey with LapSafe and Heritage Cirqa shines a light on its new library user interface. EBSCO also showcases its Points of View Reference Centre that offers balanced perspectives on current events and issues.

On the subject of news and recent developments, CoLRiC MediaWatch provides you with overviews of thought-provoking, sometimes controversial stories across the education and library sectors. It references topics as wide ranging as the opportunities and threats of artificial intelligence, social mobility, digital elevation, online learning and cyber security. This issue also provides the latest CoLRiC news, including advance warning of the impending call for submission to our 2023 awards and a brilliant free online seminar coming up in late April.

We hope you enjoy this issue. Please share your thoughts and feedback on the CoLRiC discussion forum or drop us an email at any time with comments and suggestions for future articles.

CoLRiC News

CoLRiC's 30th anniversary

2023 is celebratory for CoLRiC; our 30th anniversary. We are planning a series of free Zoom member seminars throughout the year alongside features for upcoming issues of CoLRiC Impact. All ideas, articles and suggestions for content are welcome.

We value your support as a part of the diverse CoLRiC community and rely on the income from member Colleges to fund our work representing the interests of colleagues in libraries and learning resource services across FE and the Sixth Form College sector. In this context, we've included a feature in this issue reminding you of the benefits of your membership. Lots of additional information is available on the [website](#).

Every individual working at your College has access to the portfolio of CoLRiC publications and resources. Your organisational membership includes access to our members' discussion forum, free attendance at online seminars, discussions and presentations and four issues of CoLRiC Impact published over an academic year.

CoLRiC's 2023 Awards – start planning your submissions

Another significant CoLRiC membership benefit is the eligibility to nominate your team or a colleague for one of our two prestigious annual awards. We are committed to acknowledging and celebrating excellence across the FE and Sixth Form College sector. We are looking for applications from teams or individuals that can demonstrate the value and impact of their service provision in any capacity. We want to showcase creativity, resourcefulness, enterprise and ingenuity in the delivery of library and learning resource services and will announce the 2023 call for the:

- CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award
- Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award

over the next few weeks. Keep a close eye on your email inbox and the discussion forum for further updates and information. The CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award (CIPA) is for **teams** that can demonstrate innovation and success. The Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award is named in honour of CoLRiC's founder and presented to an **individual** who has demonstrated a commitment to student development and support.

Trending topics on CoLRiC's discussion forum

Members continue to be active on the forum. It's a great place to ask a question, elicit feedback, share ideas or concerns or simply to reach out to your peers.

Recent topics provide a snapshot of your everyday priorities, considerations and concerns:

- How to raise awareness and offer support on Safer Internet Day
- Working with student library volunteers
- Free, open access learning resources versus subscription content and discovery tools: pros and cons
- Job and role descriptions for library assistants
- Financial planning and budgetary management to inform library resource acquisition
- Catch up tuition: teaching and learning support opportunities.



The opportunities and threats of AI and its impact on plagiarism and pedagogy has initiated debate, and we have highlighted some recent observations on the topic in our **MediaWatch** feature.

Don't forget that you can use the CoLRiC discussion forum to publish job vacancies. It can be an invaluable tool to support your HR and recruitment activities.

The forum is hosted by JiscMail. To access it you must register for an account with them. Registration is free and employees at any member College can join using their work email address.

CoLRiC's free online seminars programme – a date for your diary

We are delighted to announce that [Lis Parcell](#) - Subject Specialist (teaching, learning and assessment) FE Library/LRC community facilitator, Jisc - will be presenting on 'Knowing our place: reflections on thirty (ish) years with FE and libraries' on Friday 28th April 2023 between 12 and 1 pm.

Lis writes: 'The library world has faced many changes since the birth of CoLRiC, not least through the impact of digital technology. Where do library or learning resources services figure in today's education landscape? What are the biggest challenges we're seeing? How can we advocate for these services so that they are fit for the next 30 years? This session will give a chance to consider these questions and imagine, together, how the future might look.'

We'd love to see as many of you there as possible, and all you need to do in the first instance is email our Admin team at colric@colric.org.uk with an expression of interest in attending. You will be added to a delegate list on a first come first served basis, and a Zoom link will be issued nearer the date. If you are unable to attend, please don't hesitate to have a colleague register on your behalf.

Embedding Catch Up Provision in Teaching and Learning

On March 8th 2023 some of you attended the first of our Zoom presentations for 2023.

The presenter was Mirna Peach, Head of Library Services, Leyton Sixth Form College. There was a thirty-minute presentation, with fifteen minutes of questions and discussion. A report of the seminar will be published in a future issue of CoLRiC Impact, and we encourage anybody who attended to share your thoughts of the event on the forum so that we can include them in the article.

The session explored:

- Format and models of catch-up provision
- Resource and staff implications
- Managing workload, rising expectations and escalating demand for reading, ESOL, digital and study skills
- The nature of the library and learning resource professional's role supporting wider employability and life skills
- Embedding support programmes in teaching and learning
- Academic staff and student feedback
- Evidencing value, impact, effectiveness and return on investment to college senior management.

CoLRiC seminars YouTube channel - All CoLRiC's seminars are recorded and are available to members on our unlisted YouTube channel. Access to the recordings, along with copies of handouts, presentations and additional material, is via our Document Repository on the CoLRiC website. Please let us know if you need to set up a password to access this members only material on the website.

Suggest a topic - We'd love to have your suggestions for future seminar topics please. We want to ensure that the CoLRiC seminar programme is relevant to your needs, so please email us with any ideas, or perhaps you have something you'd like to present on a project or theme yourself? We look forward to hearing from you.

Do we have all your recommended local email contacts?

We're keen to ensure that we engage with members on a regular basis and are continually updating our contact database. Are there additional colleagues that you'd like us to add to our records? A deputy head of service, or a campus manager? Please let us know.

Access to member only content on the CoLRiC website

Everybody in your team will require a personal CoLRiC password to access content, most notably current and previous issues of our e-newsletter CoLRiC Impact and the document repository. If you have not received an email from us inviting you to create your own password, then please email us for further advice and information. We will create an account for you and email you with further instructions.

CoLRiC Executive Committee is recruiting new members and volunteers

Exciting opportunities have arisen for you or your colleagues to contribute to the future of CoLRiC.

CoLRiC is keen to expand its Executive Committee (EC) as its resource and service portfolio develops to embrace an increasingly diverse and challenging Further Education / Sixth Form College environment. We are looking for committee colleagues and volunteers keen to contribute strategically and operationally in specific EC roles or to lead or support projects on a task finish basis.

This is a major professional development opportunity to:

- Support CoLRiC's senior committee officers, shadowing and learning from our Chair and Treasurer, for example
- Contribute to the strategic and operational planning of FE and SFC library and learning resource services
- Boost your CV
- Network with and learn from colleagues from a diverse range of backgrounds and organisations
- Manage or contribute to projects
- Raise your professional profile and that of your organisation across the national library and learning resource community
- Work collaboratively with colleagues committed to the development of quality assurance standards, championing value, impact, exemplary practice and innovation.

CoLRiC members from any background - from senior staff to new to the career or early career professionals keen for the development opportunities that committee working can offer - are encouraged to apply.

The EC works collaboratively, agreeing responsibilities, roles and tasks, working in teams to deliver agreed targets and outcomes. It is supported by an administration team and meets via Zoom approximately three/four times a year.

Benefits of CoLRiC EC membership and volunteering

If you don't want to commit to a formal committee role, we would be delighted to co-opt information professionals who might want to contribute to some of our current projects without necessarily attending formal EC meetings.

These include:

- Creative input into our CPD/online seminar programme, commissioning speakers and topics of interest to the membership
- Digital service development, including web content creation and management using the WordPress platform. The CoLRiC website is our key public facing resource for publicity and member recruitment

- Writing, proof reading and editing publications including our e-newsletter CoLRiC Impact, press releases and reports
- Repository management and development, helping shape a key member resource and collection of exemplar documents and resources shared by the community
- Peer Accreditation Scheme: PAS is CoLRiC's flagship service, helping evidence value and impact through rigorous self-assessment and quality assurance. This role would be ideal for a senior manager with a strategic focus
- Social media: contribute content and ideas to support the expansion and development of our social media portfolio.

Interested? Here's what to do next. Please contact us with an expression of interest.

Email: colric@colric.org.uk Tel: 07879 667347. A member of the CoLRiC Executive Committee will contact you to discuss further.

CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award highly commended 2022: Creating an anti-racist library service – the start of our CARLS journey

Stella Hine, Site Librarian, Brinsbury College, part of the Chichester College Group

Chichester College Group (CCG) comprises ten campuses covering West Sussex and Brighton & Hove, each with its own characteristics and demography. Deep in lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic and amid shifting work patterns, the College Group libraries (at the time comprising of five colleges) set out to create an anti-racist library service to better represent and serve our community, supporting the Group's mission to 'change lives through learning' and preparing students for life in West Sussex and beyond in response to the BLM (Black Lives Matter) events of 2020.

Our starting point was to set up a series of cross-college staff meetings to explore what an anti-racist library service might look like in practice. Working from home in the main, due to Covid-19, Microsoft Teams meetings provided a fresh and unprecedented (to us) opportunity to include most of the staff in one discussion. We believed that creating space for conversation was our key focus and message.



The urgency

We found that our discussions were completely in line with events in wider society and this impressed on us the urgency to align our service with current and future needs. One event that had an undeniable impact was the inaugural conference in February 2021 of the Black FE Leadership Group where the huge disparity in the apparent success of the FE sector over the previous ten years and the woeful underperformance of non-white groups of FE students was highlighted. The conference also highlighted the rapidly changing demography of FE students not being addressed by the sector. The report is available here: [BFELG-ConferenceReport-2021_Double-V2.pdf \(medacrii.com\)](#).

As a College Group with a predominantly white student intake overall and a predominantly white staff team, the Library team felt it both urgent and necessary to address the needs of our community, local and wider, now and for the future. We felt that adopting an anti-racist stance was vital in exploring the issues that affect each one of us in our global world. The conference also noted the particular impact of the pandemic on digital inequality which is a theme that we are beginning to take forward for all our students.

Decolonising the curriculum

Decolonising the curriculum has long been the subject of academic debate. The library team completed the Bristol University Future Learn Course - *Decolonising Education: From Theory to Practice*. This made us aware of the legacy of colonial thinking and its implications for education today. SLN (Sussex Learning Network) Connect sponsored a project (involving a Library team member) to consider the voices of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) students from our five colleges during the 2020-2021 academic year. A copy of the internal report is available on request. Responses suggested the need for safe conversations around race in the classroom and for greater representation.

During the third lockdown (January 2021) we held a series of cross-college Library team meetings about creating an anti-racist library service. Establishing a safe space was essential, allowing us to discuss race honestly and openly, without fear of judgement or recrimination. We created a Wakelet charting this journey and collating resources which can be viewed at: https://wakelet.com/@Creating_an_antiracist_library_at_CCG1961. All Library team members are encouraged to contribute to the Wakelet. The Wakelet is promoted across the College Group and shared on our streaming system.

These initial conversations about race were often awkward, halting and at times emotional and draining. But we persevered and found a new, deeper respect for each other as we shared relevant life experiences which often evoked strong, even raw emotion. The personal and professional impact on each of us has been quite profound and life-changing. Although emotive and difficult at times, our team has been strengthened through this collaboration. Undoubtedly, the success of the discussions stemmed from having an already close and strong team, and careful management of such discussions.

In June 2021 we presented our CARLS journey to Quality Forum (more than 60 senior leaders and heads of learning). Since October 2021 we have delivered more than 14 bespoke CARLS presentations to different curriculum groups e.g., motor vehicle, creative and performing arts, land-based and more, with several follow-up sessions. We continue to have discussions as a team, but these are now based on a foundation of shared understanding, and willingness to learn and challenge our practices. We consider how our promotional materials (e.g., for the Reading Ahead challenge) present the anti-racist message and we are beginning to look at all we do in light of promoting our message clearly. Our Reading Ahead challenge will be a fantastic opportunity to promote our new books. We are building steadily on our digital offer. Since lockdown, we have expanded our online library tutorials and we have started to offer focused inductions in classrooms, in addition to our in-library inductions. This has improved staff relationships, breaking down barriers and enabling connection with students who may never meet library staff face-to-face. Responding to requests by lecturers, we have created a video to support lecturers in holding conversations around race in their classrooms. We will continue to develop this area of our work as we source and host new online resources such as [Exact Editions: Black Lives Matter](#) and [ArtReview Asia](#).

Impact

"I'd really like to chat to you about the presentation you led at the Quality Forum ... I would like to get the staff here to work towards creating more inclusive and diverse course materials and discuss the way we can be more representative in our exploration of practitioners and stimuli for projects". Programme Manager Creative and Performing Arts.

"The feedback from my group was excellent as it ...started us thinking about what can be done within curriculum to de-colonise and become anti-racist. Thank you for your personal reflections too - it makes any session so much more powerful to hear". Head of Learning Support.

"Let's hope we are moving things forward in the right direction – who knows what seeds of good practice we are scattering?" Director of HR.

"Please pass on my congrats to the library team for a brilliant session, really powerful, thought-provoking, explorative and honest. To hear white people speak passionately about their actions towards decolonising library resources and adopting an anti-racist approach was inspiring and motivating ...". Quality Analyst.

Stella Hine and Frances Fryer with their CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award



Being on this journey has enriched all our lives, increased our awareness of the challenges that we all face, promoted empathy and understanding and has elevated the library's position in the College Group. Relationships with teaching staff have improved greatly in both number and quality. Our libraries look more welcoming and inclusive, as our collections, digital signage and displays reflect increasingly diverse sources.

Next steps

At individual sites we engage directly with students, inviting feedback and recommendations for new texts and resources. We have spoken with Student Executive members to gauge student feelings and we look forward to facilitating similar discussions with students and empowering them to engage in and normalise anti-racist conversations. We are delighted that several training sessions by accredited external practitioners on topics such as microaggressions, representation, and equity have been hosted by the College Group and recorded for staff access. There is a new drive on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, spearheaded by our Executive Principal, including focus groups, which we welcome although we still believe that discrete ongoing discussions around race are vital to facilitate a necessary and lasting societal shift for our future generations.

Acknowledgment

The author would like to acknowledge the support she received from Frances Fryer, College Librarian, Chichester College Group when preparing this article for submission.

Spotlight on ...

James Golab, Library Learning Facilitator, Bradford College – Highly Commended, Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award 2022



James with his award

How did you become a Library Learning Facilitator?

When I was doing my degree at the University of Huddersfield I spent a lot of time in their library, which was a fantastic resource, and from this point on I always fancied working in a library. After finishing university, I first worked in the Leeds City Council Library Service and then as a Library Resource Assistant at Bradford College. Here my role has evolved and expanded and so has my job title which changed to Library Learning Facilitator to reflect this.

Tell us a bit about your work with ESOL and Progression to Learning and Work students

Working with ESOL and Progression to Learning and Work students is extremely rewarding and inspirational. Not only are they dedicated and determined students who want to improve their English skills to enable them to progress, they also have inspiring and touching stories on why and how they have arrived in the UK. You may hear these stories in the media, but it's much more poignant when heard first hand. We run reading groups with them, catering to their different ability levels. Here they not only improve their reading skills, but they also improve their understanding of British literature and culture.

Many of the Progression to Learning and Work students have special educational needs and disabilities, and some are visually impaired, and they too have benefited massively which is heartening to see. Tutors of our students involved have seen significant improvements in their student's reading ability and their exam success rates, which is fantastic.

What is your favourite part of the job?

It alternates between being creative when designing the library's social media posts and displays, and the reading groups and the diversity they bring. Both enable me to be creative in different ways from creating interesting images, to describing the meaning of words and phrases to students in the reading groups in the most interesting way possible to make reading and learning fun.

What has been the biggest challenge with running the Library Instagram account?

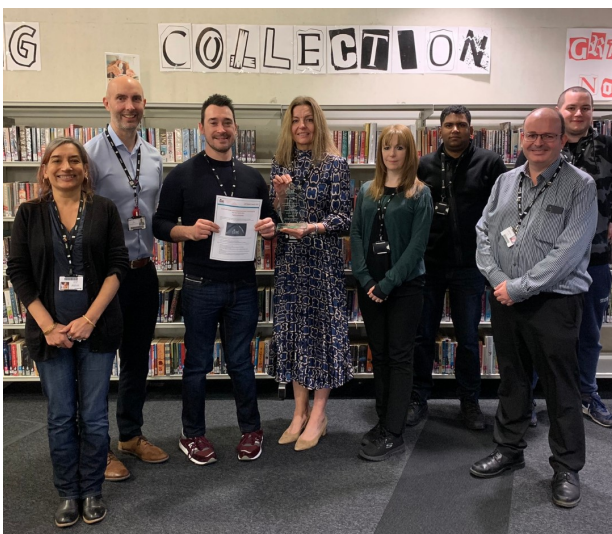
Consistently producing new and innovative ways to promote the library can be a challenge. Also, how to best support social awareness issues, and how to best create positive messages around current topics, which is something we always strive to do better and is a challenge I relish.

What is the main focus of your project work at the moment?

Working closer with the Students' Union on events and a new Book Club which will be open to all students. With the aim of increasing our student engagement and getting more students to read more. We are also working with the ESOL and Progression to Learning and Work departments to further enhance our provision with them.

And finally... sum yourself up in three words

Inquisitive, approachable, humorous.



The Bradford College library team



James with Sarah Cooper and Tim Lupton

*(You can read an article written by James and his colleague Itab El-Ghariani about their work on Bradford College's TikTok account in **CoLRiC Impact January 2023**, available in the [CoLRiC document repository](#))*

Enhancing learning through wider reading

Nicola Nosworthy, LRC Assistant, The Sixth Form College, Farnborough

The Learning Resources Centre at The Sixth Form College, Farnborough consists of two made-for-purpose computer-led study spaces, and a Library with subject books, journals, audio-visual resources and fiction reading material for all its customers to enjoy. The team that works there puts student learning and potential at the heart of everything they do.

An enrichment programme for students

As part of their student offering, the LRC team delivered an enrichment programme to the students, tailored to individual subjects and departments, to maximise students' potential and enhance their learning through wider reading.

Lucy Davis, LRC Manager says: 'Our objective was to provide an enrichment programme of events consisting of subject specific sessions taking place outside of the classroom, in order to enhance the students' learning by developing their research and information literacy skills'.

To successfully implement their programme, the team created a schedule of events, ensuring all subjects were covered. Promotion of the sessions to the students was key in ensuring the programme's success.

"We promoted the sessions through good collaboration with the teaching staff when planning the programme, and effective communication when advertising the programme to customer groups, both staff and students, prior to the sessions themselves.

Social media played a vital part in reaching the student cohort, using posts and tweets to reach the relevant departments and Student Union representatives.

Creating a reciprocal relationship with our counterparts meant that we were able to clearly advertise the relevance of these sessions to those studying each subject, strengthening interdepartmental relationships and offering a unified staff approach across faculties."

The sessions were advertised in class time with a ten-minute subject specific taster. Marketing materials were displayed around the College and given to students within those lessons. An example of some of the marketing materials shared can be seen in Figure 1.

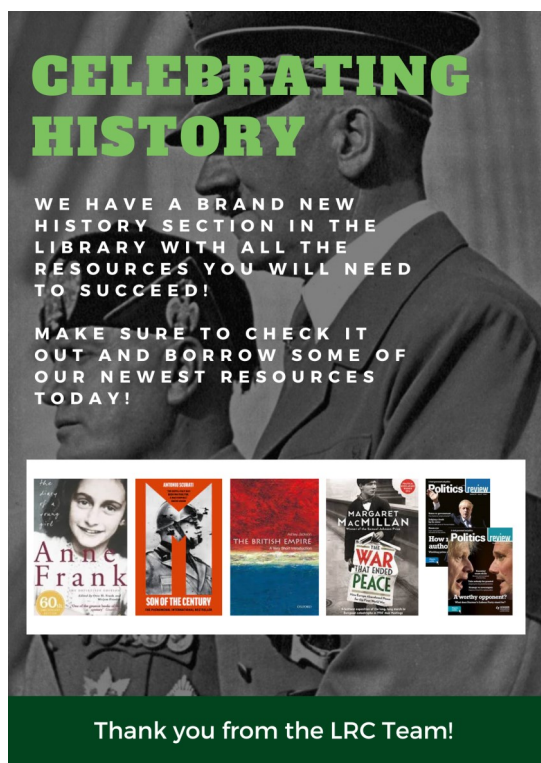


Figure 1: Marketing materials promoting the Subject Resource Sessions at the College

Prior to the commencement of the sessions, the LRC Team also reached out across the College to other departments, including the Careers Centre and Study Support, to examine the relationships in place and understand how the sessions could potentially be tailored to meet the needs of students with additional requirements. It is important to us to ensure that we foster our relationships between both teaching and support groups; ultimately, we have one unified goal, which is encouraging the students' learning potential.

Investment from the Senior Leadership Team also proved to be positive in terms of getting the message across to the students.

Rebecca Rhodes, Assistant Principal, notes:

“As a college we are acutely aware of the importance of developing research and information literacy skills in our students. With almost 4000 students, many of whom will progress to university but also into apprenticeships and work, we want to invest time in developing their skills that prepare them for lifelong learning. The programme put together by the LRC Team has meant an increasing number of students joining us develop these skills, and then move on with confidence, curiosity, and a thirst for knowledge. Our learners have had such disrupted learning and we know we will be working with students who are currently in primary and secondary schools with significant gaps in their learning and literacy - so in part we feel we have a duty to supplement their learning experiences with this programme. It has been exceptionally successful and well received by all who have attended - students and teaching staff alike.”

Student benefits

The sessions took place over the course of several months, during lunch breaks. Located in the Library, so that the resources were close by for ease of access and promotion, the sessions covered several relevant areas which would promote student understanding.

By offering this programme of events, we are actively encouraging the students in the College to develop their research and information literacy skills, and their ability to study and work independently, all of which are necessary life skills. Testimonials from the students strongly advocated for the success of the Subject Resource Sessions and their importance in their studies.

One student said “Understanding how wider reading benefits me and my education is useful, and the Learning Resources Team ensured that I was able to do this”. Other students remarked how the sessions were “helpful”, “effective”, and that they would “make studying easier for students” in the long term.

Response from curriculum staff

In addition to the many students who attended these sessions, several staff members also took the time to bring their classes down for bespoke and tailored information and tours of the library and resources on offer. The sessions on offer provide an opportunity for students to engage in wider reading that will benefit them, not only here, but when they move on to Higher Education.

Some members of staff even commented on how the sessions have benefitted their own learning. “The sessions and team have reinvigorated my scholarship by enabling me to take part in extra reading to improve subject knowledge”, notes Nathan Scott, Politics Curriculum Manager. “This knowledge has then been fed back into my teaching practice”. He also notes that “students have a reticence about reading and this is very dependent upon social background and class. We need to encourage a love of learning in our poorest students. We need to think of ways to continually embed references to the library”.



A Subject Resource Session taking place

It is clear to see that the Learning Resources Team at the College are keen to promote their resources to the students, to enhance their learning and maximise their potential, both whilst studying at the College but also as they move onto Higher Education. Innovation such as this is born from the care and tenacity of such members of the College community who only want what is best for their students.

"We're always looking for new ways to enhance, support and enrich the learning of our students with new practices, learning opportunities and services", concludes Lucy.

For more information about the Subject Resource Sessions, for recommendations to enhance and support student learning, or to find out more about the Learning Resources Team at The Sixth Form College Farnborough, please contact Lucy Davis, LRC Manager via email, LRC@farnborough.ac.uk .

Reviewed by Salina Dhega, LRC Assistant and Lucy Davis, LRC Manager, The Sixth Form College, Farnborough.

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UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre™ - Offering balanced perspectives on current events and issues

UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre provides rich, diverse content to help students assess and craft persuasive arguments and essays, better understand controversial issues and develop critical literacy skills. Read this Q&A with the team behind the creation of this robust resource to find out how *UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre* can support your students research needs today.



Why did EBSCO feel it was important to bring *Points of View Reference Centre* to the academic sector in the UK and Ireland?

Whilst Academic institutions are used to subscribing to journal and magazine content via EBSCO's full text databases, we recognised the need to create a different kind of resource to support students as they develop information literacy skills in an academic environment. EBSCO understands the value of teaching critical thinking to today's students and having already successfully launched country-specific versions of our *Points of View Reference Centre* product in the USA, Canada and Australia, we know just how beneficial young searchers will find a resource like this when it is targeted to address topics of relevance to them.

UK & Ireland *Points of View Reference Centre* presents high-quality content covering key topics of interest to students in the UK and Ireland. Multiple sides of current issues are presented to help students assess and craft persuasive arguments, better understand controversial topics, and develop critical literacy and questioning skills.

How will this new product help students throughout sixth form or in their Further Education College studies?

UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre is a valuable online research tool that provides balanced perspectives on current events and issues. Our media-driven world requires students to be able to think critically and voice their thoughts in a constructive way. *UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre* helps students grow in their ability to analyse current events and issues, understand their impact, and discern between fact and opinion. It also serves to encourage open, respectful discourse with people who may hold alternate viewpoints.

UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre includes more than 600 point-of-view essays covering over 130 topics, each with the following supporting documents:

- Overview (objective background/description)
- Point (argument)
- Counterpoint (opposing argument)
- Guides to Critical Analysis

A blue rounded rectangular box containing the text "UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre" in white, sans-serif font.

UK & Ireland
Points of View
Reference Centre

How does EBSCO get UK authors to write the Point and Counterpoint articles and Guide to Critical Analysis?

EBSCO hires experienced and talented writers from the UK and Ireland to ensure quality and comprehensive coverage with an informed local perspective. We make sure our writers uphold high editorial standards and adhere to firm guidelines to maximise the accuracy and readability of the content.

How does the format and inclusion of Point and Counterpoint articles support student development of critical thinking?

Students can browse categories to discover topics of interest. Once a topic is selected, the Overview provides general background information on the issue. Within each topic, the Point and Counterpoint essays present opposing perspectives on the same issue. All Point and Counterpoint articles are well researched and supported by authoritative sources. While there may be many opinions on the issue, these sections are designed to provide a base from which students may engage in further analysis. Students can develop their debate skills further with the Research and Debate Guides provided. Using these materials together, students develop important analytical, critical-thinking, and communication skills.

Could you briefly explain how the Guide to Critical Analysis benefits students on their research journey?

A Guide to Critical Analysis is provided for each of the 130+ topics. These guides are intended to help students evaluate the topic presented and organise their own thinking about the issue. They help students read critically, construct their own analyses, develop their own perspective on the issue, and make effective arguments on the topic — in writing or in a debate. These guides also help students make judgements regarding what is fact and what is opinion.

We also include twenty additional Research and Debate Guides to further develop skills. The guides help students in key areas, such as writing a thesis statement, writing a persuasive essay, evaluating a website, and understanding debate strategies.

Does the resource allow for integration with any other systems used in the classroom, such as Google Classroom, etc.?

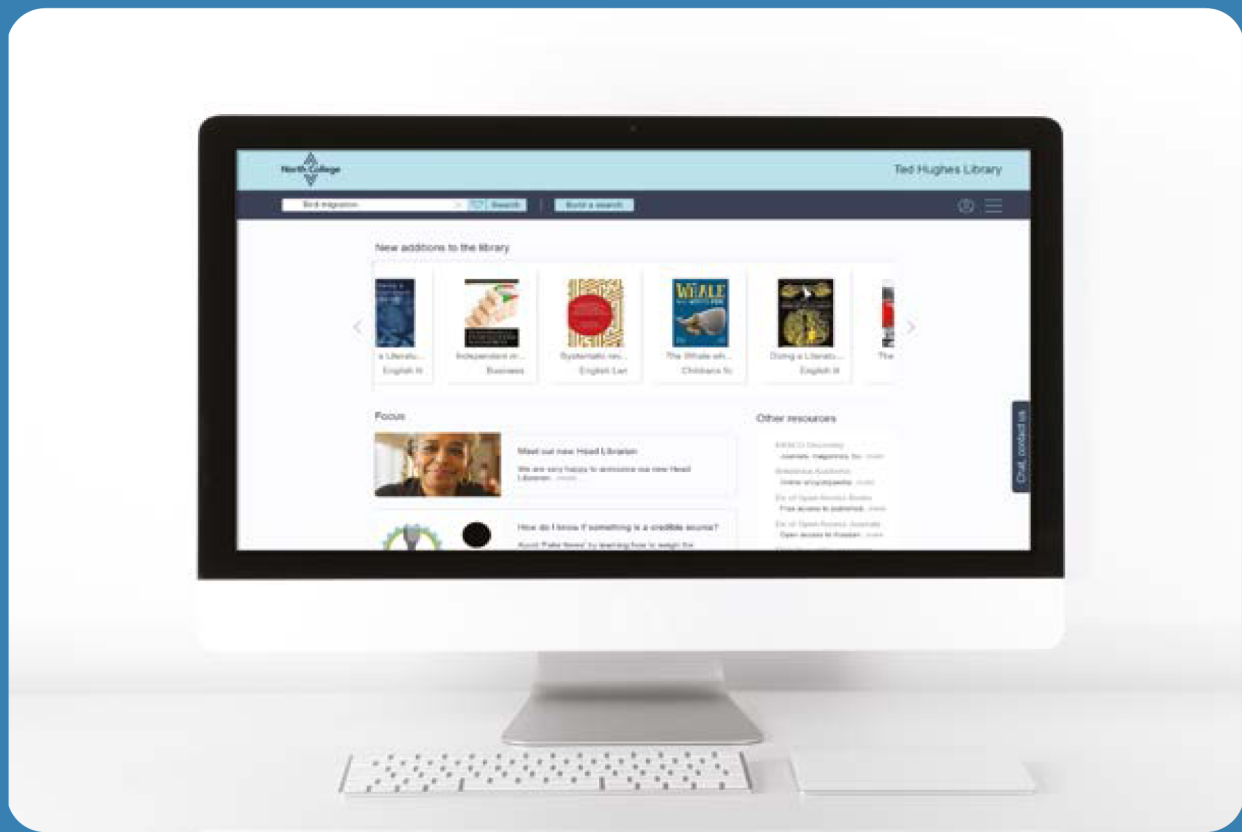
Yes! The following Google integrations and other features are included:

- Students and educators can share content to Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive
- Educators can quickly share content to Google Classroom
- Text-to-Speech for HTML articles assist readers, auditory learners, and those developing English-language proficiency
- The citation tool helps students format references
- The translation tool allows users to translate text to 130 different languages

UK & Ireland Points of View Reference Centre
Offering balanced perspectives on current events and issues



A new look



with the same great service

The new library user interface for Heritage Cirqa has a clean, simplified appearance, making it ideal for current FE college requirements. A new landing page gets things off to a great start, with everything your users need at a glance. Buttons are simple but powerful and lend themselves to a try-it-and-see approach, which requires little induction time. We also included some innovative new features:

- **Promo banner** - create your own powerful banner adverts, quickly and easily.
- **Other resources** - your searchable external provision, grouped together.
- **Focus feed** - a dynamic resource for information literacy, news and training.

Give your users a fresh new environment and maximise their engagement, through clear presentation and logical organisation, all in one place.

Weston College's Journey with LapSafe®

Weston College provides over five hundred device loaning bays to students across campus. Initially introducing LapSafe®'s self-service lockers in 2016, Weston has grown its self-service offering to be one of LapSafe®'s largest sites.

LapSafe® visited Weston College to discuss the growth of its self-service lockers (smart lockers) and the positive impact they have had on costs, sustainability, and timesaving. Across the campus it was clear that the smart lockers are loved by students and are frequently used for device loans.

Weston College has been on an impressive journey when it comes to device management. Around fifteen years ago the college decided that students could borrow all kinds of equipment from the library. Each campus features a hub, known as 'Library Plus,' which allowed the college to have a more integrated approach to IT Management.

Device management began with manual loaning, which was an expensive process in terms of time and meant staff had to always be available to staff the Tech Desk. Not only this, but Weston also found that devices would go missing or get damaged.

In 2016, Weston College ordered its first set of LapSafe® Diplomat™ Self-Service Smart Lockers, and over the years the service has grown to 504 device loaning bays, making Weston one of LapSafe®'s largest college customers.

Weston College was impressed with the cost savings that LapSafe® could provide. Using desktop PCs wasted a lot of energy due to them being left on when not in use. The LapSafe® smart lockers combat this issue by switching off power when devices reach maximum charge.

Another benefit that Weston College experienced from introducing the robust lockers was the accountability provided. As loss of devices was an issue, they were impressed by the security and traceability functionality that the lockers provided.

"Introducing self-service was a massive benefit to us. There is less staff involvement in terms of admin, they are self-sufficient, once students are familiar with how it works, they do not need to find staff for assistance."

Looking towards the future, Weston College is not planning to stop here. They are aiming for further growth which includes making full use of LapSafe®'s new ONARKEN® software which will give them full granular control over their IT equipment. The new software allows staff to have even more control and provide more loaning options.

“The drop off and collect functions will really help. The Library Plus and Learning Technologists are not always available, laptops can be pre booked to be made available outside of the staffed help desk hours.”

The smart lockers reduce energy and running costs which is a huge attraction, along with additional functionality that the new software provides.

Contact our sales team today on 0800 130 3456 alternatively to find out more about the functionality of our smart lockers email sales@lapsafe.com



CoLRiC MediaWatch

2023 has a special relevance for CoLRiC as we initiate celebrations to mark our 30th year representing Further Education and Sixth Form College libraries, librarians and learning resource professionals across the UK. We have twelve months of features lined up for you, including MediaWatch, where we delve momentarily into the vast pool of news and developments impacting on the sector and contemplate how we can deal with them as a community.

The further education sector continues to be a gateway to university, apprenticeship, the workplace, transferable skills, lifelong learning and social mobility, and all feature in this issue of Impact, helping us define CoLRiC's future advocacy agenda, online seminar programme and publications.

AI: opportunities, threats, plagiarism and pedagogy

Generative artificial intelligence and AI-assisted chatbots as disruptive technologies are omnipresent in the news, impacting on everything from digital task assistance to teaching, learning and education.

The media hype and onslaught about AI text-generators like [ChatGPT](#) and the ability to produce high-quality essays with minimal human intervention has been relentless verging on hysterical, with calls for teaching staff to review course assessment. *'ChatGPT has triggered concerns about the potential for hard-to-detect plagiarism and questions about the validity of the essay as a future form of assessment. It has been described as "a gamechanger." Though GCSE and A-level courses are assessed through traditional end-of-course examinations, experts are concerned pupils who use the technology to do their homework will become dependent on AI-generated answers without acquiring the knowledge and skills they need.'*

Chibeza Agle in ['AI, the rise of exam cheating, and what it means for the future of further education'](#) discusses the implications of adopting the multiplicity of powerful new AI tools. Is the current educational infrastructure future-proofed for an online world of increasingly hybrid and blended learning? 'Ultimately, the sophistication of ChatGPT is limited, and reports of its factual inaccuracy are extensive, but it draws attention to the increasing challenges faced by the education system and poses the question: where do we go from here?' In February 2023 The Guardian reported on the 'built-in bias', 'offensive' and 'badly wrong' answers of AI tools, including politically extreme, racist and sexist output. 'Generative AI is doing some extraordinary things, but it's still not remotely intelligent. It doesn't understand the outputs it's creating and it's not additive, in terms of insight or



Chat GPT

is homework dead? Will more in-person assessments, presentations and interviews be the only solution? How does this potential new paradigm fit with a diverse student community with different learning styles? What of the impact on plagiarism detection, the evaluation of associated software solutions and the management of copyright and IP adherence across FE? This is a fascinating topic, and certainly one that has initiated discussion on the CoLRiC discussion forum.

Michael Webb, the director of technology and analytics at Jisc, advised calm reflection and offered his insight: 'The knee-jerk reaction might be to block these tools to stop students cheating, but that's neither feasible nor advisable. We should really regard them as simply the next step up from spelling or grammar checkers: technology that can make everyone's life easier. This is a great opportunity to explore new assessment techniques that measure learners on critical thinking, problem-solving and reasoning skills rather than essay-writing abilities.' Or, as another Guardian opinion piece put it: 'ChatGPT is causing a panic now – but it'll soon be as mundane a tool as Excel.'

Jisc's National Centre for AI has offered [guidance on 'getting AI terminology right'](#) for those of you contemplating creating guidelines on using AI. You may want to circulate this information to professional services colleagues and teaching staff across your college. 'We are seeing the first guidance to students on the use of ChatGPT and AI tools in assessment starting to emerge. Getting terminology correct on this is challenging, so we exploring it.'

Library user experience

OpenAthens has [published its findings](#) on the library user experience based on research with students and researchers. Michael Smith, marketing officer, notes: 'It's an important study into the challenges students and researchers face when they search for resources online. We hope the report and its recommendations will give librarians, publishers, network providers, utility companies and national governments impetus to work together to support the research journey better.'

Social mobility: onwards and upwards

We're all aware of the challenges and opportunities of serving a diverse student community, so it was uplifting to hear Alun Francis OBE, [Interim Chair of the Social Mobility Commission](#), articulating the fundamental role FE plays in promoting equity, diversity and inclusion and encouraging achievement and economic success. As current Principal and Chief Executive of Oldham College he is well-placed to do so. The Commission set out a 'fresh approach to social mobility' in 2022 publishing a State of the Nation annual report that 'highlighted their new Social Mobility Index, a rigorous new framework for measuring social mobility over time. Each year, they will report on mobility outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and the drivers of social mobility (the background conditions that enable social

mobility to happen).’ This year’s report will dig down deeper and provide regional metrics giving ‘additional breakdowns by other characteristics including sex, ethnicity and disability. These breakdowns will connect personal characteristics to a place and can help to inform early thinking about policy solutions.’

Sunak – the maths magician?

Prime minister Rishi Sunak threw down a cynicism-generating gauntlet earlier in the year announcing ‘[Maths to 18 for all](#).’ Support for numeracy, as well as reading, digital and information literacy, has long been on CoLRiC’s agenda. In our 25th anniversary year in 2018 we presented one of our awards for best practice (now entitled the CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award - CIPA) to the Library at Northampton College for engaging students in numeracy skills. ‘Maths Magician’, an original and innovative twenty-week numeracy scheme, was developed by library assistants at the College in support of the Government’s agenda to improve numeracy in the UK. You can read all about this and other excellent initiatives by visiting the CoLRiC Impact back issues section of the members’ only [Document Repository](#).

On a positive note, the PM’s ambitions will provide the CoLRiC community with the opportunity to reflect on its support for numeracy. ‘People have pointed out that [the PM’s aspirations] are going to be very hard to achieve with shortages of maths teachers across all phases. For FE and post-sixteen leaders and teachers there will likely be a sense of “Groundhog Day” – another education policy announcement with big implications for FE without funding, a plan, or consideration of the implications, let alone meaningful consultation. So, it’s not a surprise that Sunak’s announcement was received with scepticism by providers. Some have even argued that it is not a serious proposal anyway, but a cynical political distraction from the funding crisis education is facing and our wider social and economic problems.’

Magda Wood asserts that ‘[Making Maths Compulsory to 18 Won’t Solve the Digital Skills Gap](#), but it does open up a chance to rethink post-16 level 2 maths teaching.’ The CoLRiC Executive Committee encourage you to join in the discussion on our forum, and we hope to initiate wider debate in a future online seminar on this topic.



Reflecting on the legacy of two years of pandemic trauma on students

Covid is being blamed for 'cultural shift' as more pupils skip school. In January the Guardian newspaper reported on absenteeism and the attendance crisis; heightened fears of illness and mental health issues compounded by problems in the NHS, outbreaks of strep A, scarlet fever and the cost-of-living crisis. So, what is the impact on FE? In 2022 the alarming rise in Covid infections across the UK indicated that this debilitating pandemic was far from over and it continues to adversely impact the education sector. The Department for Education's announcement of changes to Covid safety measures in April 2022 left staff struggling to deliver teaching, learning and a high-quality student experience.

Earlier this year we published the findings of our CoLRiC report '[Reflecting on the Legacy of Two Years of Pandemic Trauma on Students - Implications for Library and Learning Resources Services](#)' in the public domain and raised awareness of the ongoing impact of lockdown on the student community. The report explores student mental health and wellbeing issues, behaviour, attitudes and the impact of Covid on student induction, skills and information literacy.

The pandemic has undoubtedly catalysed fundamental digital transformation. The pressure on library and learning resource services to deliver 'catch-up' student tuition is immense, and a report on the findings of our March 8th, 2023 online seminar on this topic (featured in CoLRiC News) will be published in the next issue of Impact. The seminar addresses the opportunities and challenges of catch-up tuition, how to embed it in teaching and learning and how to evidence its value, impact and effectiveness to College management.



Digital and online learning

Estyn, the education and training inspectorate for Wales, has recently published '[Digital and online learning in further education colleges](#).' The report summarises the findings from engagement with FE colleges between October and December 2022. 'The report is based on the information discussed during face-to-face and online meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, digital leads, and small groups of learners. The focus for discussions was online and digital learning in relation to extent of usage, recent developments, quality assurance, professional learning, and partnership working.'

Digital elevation in colleges

Paul McKean, director of further education skills and training at Jisc, has published an update on how colleges are utilising its [digital elevation tool](#) – ‘elevating the FE and skills sector through digital transformation.’ It couldn’t be timelier to refer back to [Jisc's three-year FE strategy 2020 – 2023](#). It articulates plans for supporting the FE and Skills sectors across the UK. ‘We're all about helping our members improve user experience and build organisational agility and resilience - but every member has different needs and priorities.’ Jisc's strategy describes the digital elevation model and how you can ‘elevate key aspects of your operations with digital technologies.’

Cyber secure?

February heralded the annual [Safer Internet Day](#) (#SaferInternetDay #SID2023.) Library and learning resource teams across CoLRiC have done so much to support digital professionalism, safeguarding and online safety awareness in this crucial area.

CoLRiC member Kirklees College has been [fighting cyber threats with qualifications for staff and students](#).

‘Research from the DfE highlighted that 88 per cent of UK’s colleges had identified breaches or attacks in the last twelve months. To combat this growing threat, Kirklees College in West Yorkshire has invested in cybersecurity education and awareness for both staff and students. As Head of Adult Education at the college, Sharon Archer has seen first-hand the importance of investing in cyber security education. “As educators, it is our duty to prioritise the safety and security of our students and staff and investing in cyber security education is a

crucial step for us in achieving this goal. Cyber security is not just a concern for the IT department, but for everyone within the college. From our 16–18-year-old students who spend a significant amount of time online, to our adult students who may be less tech-savvy, we felt it was essential to educate and prepare them for the potential risks they may face.”’



"Libraries play a critical role in supporting organisational goals and strategies. Our resources and services have demonstrable value and impact helping create and sustain an institution-wide lifelong learning environment."

CoLRiC is the voice of Further Education and Sixth Form College libraries and learning resource services. An independent organisation, we represent a diverse group of librarians and learning resource professionals across the UK, influencing the development of quality assurance standards, encouraging and showcasing best practice



ADVOCACY

We support our members in evidencing the impact and value that they bring to teaching, learning and the student experience.



IMPACT

We publish CoLRiC Impact, our e-newsletter featuring case studies, projects, resource updates and news shared by our members.



COMMUNITY

We provide opportunities for networking and sharing knowledge and experiences, including free online seminars.



AWARDS

We celebrate creativity, resourcefulness and enterprise in Library and Learning Resource Services across the sector with our annual professional awards.



SPONSORS

We value the support of vendors and suppliers who deliver content, resources and technology to support teaching and learning.

MEMBER BENEFITS



Free attendance at online seminars, discussions, presentations and events



Discounted attendance at face-to-face CPD and conferences



Four issues of our e-newsletter CoLRiC Impact published over an academic year



Access to our repository – a growing collection of documents that can be submitted for sharing and adapted locally



Access to our private members' discussion forum



Opportunities for heads of service and senior managers to participate in informal strategic discussions on hot topics impacting on the sector



Job vacancies can be posted for free on our private members' forum



Opportunity to participate in member surveys on current issues impacting FE and sixth form colleges



Advice and guidance on evidencing service quality, value, impact and demonstrating return on investment



Eligibility to register for our prestigious Peer Accreditation Scheme



Eligibility to submit nominations for two high profile national Awards



Professional development opportunities for colleagues through volunteering to participate in CoLRiC activities and projects



Regular member email updates and bulletins, featuring CoLRiC MediaWatch

For more information, please visit:
www.colric.org.uk @Colric_Tweets

Notes for contributors

CoLRiC encourages the submission of articles by all members for publication in CoLRiC Impact. To discuss ideas for articles in advance please [send an e-mail](#) with a short outline of proposed content.

If you submit an article about the service at your college, please include 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.

If you would like to submit an article, please note the advice below and the closing date for submission.

June 2023 – deadline 5th May 2023

To submit an article please email the following to colric@colric.org.uk:

- an unformatted Word document
- any associated files or good quality images, if prompted send images as 'Actual size', head shots should be sent against a clear background
- any recommended further reading
- any links to any external content to be embedded into the final e-newsletter

Word count limits will be confirmed with members ahead of submission. The CoLRiC Impact editorial team will be responsible for formatting, editing, and proof-reading all contributions before publication. Please include the email addresses and job titles of all contributing authors. All authors will retain their copyright.



Celebrating

1993 - 2023

30
Years