

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

Welcome to the first issue of CoLRiC Impact for the 2023/24 academic year. We're in a celebratory mood, featuring the 2023 winners of our Innovative Practice Award and the Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award. We feature the recipient of the latter in our 'Spotlight on' Bradford College's Lakshmi Banner. She reflects on her career in the Further Education sector, personal achievements, aspirations, and inspiration for the future.

"What I value most in our library is empathy towards our students. FE colleges welcome an incredible diversity of people every year who attend for various reasons, but all come with the desire to develop their potential. Those of us who work in libraries are in the privileged position of supporting them at all stages of their education, from entry level through to masters. We must be sensitive to their different backgrounds and experiences of education; many will never have used libraries before and may feel anxiety when using them. Libraries are the spaces where people come to learn how to learn, to direct their own study and to learn outside of the classroom."

In this issue we also showcase the CoLRiC Innovative Practice winning team for 2023 with an article by David Porter, Academic Liaison Librarian at Bradford College. How do you solve a problem like mathematics? He lifts the lid on 'not just any other maths club.'

"While the library has implemented strategies to help improve the literacy of our learners, we were incredibly keen to identify how we would be able to provide engaging support with numeracy, mathematics and problem solving. Bradford College's teaching staff do a tremendous job in delivering the curriculum side of the subject and we were eager to identify ways of complementing this as a library and engage with learners in a new and interesting way."

Kelly Baker, Programme Officer Adult Reading at The Reading Agency issues a rally cry for the power of reading and is keen to engage you all in current initiatives and projects.

"The Reading Agency is a charity with a mission to empower people of all ages to read. Our work tackles adult and child literacy, mental health issues, and social isolation through the power of reading. At the heart of everything we do is our very special relationship with colleges across the UK. As community anchors, our colleges and HE partners are central in making reading accessible for all, and we look forward to deepening our relationship with them in the years to come."

On 30th November Emma Braithwaite and Kelly Baker from The Reading Agency will be presenting a special Zoom session for CoLRiC members. To book your place on **Reading is Power**, please contact the Admin Team .

'Libraries are the spaces where people come to learn how to learn, to direct their own study and to learn outside of the classroom'

Tom Hewitt, Centre Librarian at Northampton College, describes an initiative to migrate its hardcopy subject guides to the web, initially in response to the pandemic.

We have news, a selection of national media reports and some great contributions from our valued sponsors.

Browns Books shares information about its Tailored Academic Collections.

“In an era where innovation and individuality reign supreme, colleges are seeking ways to stand out and cater to the unique needs of their student bodies. We offer a remarkable suite of services dedicated to creating bespoke collections that help institutions not only meet but exceed their academic goals. Our commitment to excellence and our passion for educational enrichment are at the heart of what we do.”

Gale highlights 'News, Business and Reference', a comprehensive multidisciplinary digital resource indispensable for students.

IS Oxford has contributed an excellent feature on the potential of game-based learning tools to attract and engage a new cohort of students at the start of the academic year. 'There is a danger of overwhelming students at induction time, as they have so much information to take on board. A fun and interactive game is a perfect way to capture their attention.'

PTFS Europe has been working with open source library software since 2007. They have developed their products and services with the goal of making this technology easy to enable library and learning resources staff to get involved. 'Open source means all users globally share their ideas and help push the products forward. If you work in a college, why not benefit from all it has to offer!'

We hope you enjoy this issue, and please feel free to share your thoughts on the CoLRiC discussion forum. If you'd like to contribute an article, please refer to 'Writing for CoLRiC Impact.' If you have any suggestions for features, drop the Admin Team Gary and Val a line at: colric@colric.org.uk.

CoLRiC News

CoLRiC is delighted to announce ...

In April 2023 CoLRiC announced a call for nominations for its annual national awards. As part of our celebratory 30th anniversary celebrations we wanted to showcase 'creativity, value and impact' with submissions that demonstrated the quality, excellence and organisational impact of library and learning resource service provision on the teaching, learning and student experience. All nominations were reviewed, scored and shortlisted by a judging panel comprising an external library and information services expert and members of CoLRiC's Executive Committee.





Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year

The winner of our prestigious Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award for 2023 is Lakshmi Banner, Library Services Team Leader at Bradford College.

The Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award is named in honour of CoLRiC's founder and presented to an outstanding and enthusiastic individual who has a proven commitment to library and learning resource services. It celebrates proactive and dedicated individual contributions to:

- Creative and innovative teamworking
- Student academic, personal or vocational development and lifelong learning
- Engagement and collaboration with academic staff, curriculum colleagues, professional support services and students.

Lakshmi's contribution impressed the judging panel for several reasons. She has been a great advocate for the service across the College, successfully campaigning for two new academic skills roles supporting English, critical thinking, structuring assignments, creating documents and presentations and independent study skills. Her contribution to the [ESOL Global Learning Project](#) has been outstanding.

Emma Luby, Senior Library Assistant at Bradford College praises her passion and drive:

"Lakshmi has completely changed the working environment of the library in the most positive ways. Her tireless energy and enthusiasm to support staff and students has enabled the entire team to go from strength to strength in delivering an outstanding service."

Lakshmi is elated to receive the award:

"I am honoured. With so many talented and creative professionals throughout our sector, I really feel proud to be the recipient this year. Obviously, any recognition must be shared with the whole of the library team who are enthusiastic and forward thinking. Our collective aim is to create an inclusive and inspiring space and service to motivate all our students to achieve the best of their potential. I am excited about what we have already accomplished and look forward to further innovative projects in the future."

Timothy Lupton, Head of Department of Learning, Development and Innovation writes:

“Lakshmi is one of a kind, she is relentless in her pursuit to develop herself and her team. Her passion to provide an outstanding service has meant she is always researching about how she can be innovative in her approaches to support the staff and learner experience at Bradford College. Lakshmi’s kind and passionate personality has meant she is always there for the learners and puts others before herself. Lakshmi has been at the centre of reshaping and inspiring the team, providing everyone who uses the library services at Bradford College an outstanding experience.”



Special thanks go to Liz McGettigan, Senior Consultant, Future Library Strategy, Technology and Design at The Design Concept, for being the external judge for this award.

“This award is presented to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to change lives and empower students and WOW! I can’t think of a more worthy winner than Lakshmi. Leadership, enthusiasm, passion, energy - she has delivered all of it in abundance! It’s incredible in the current financial climate that Lakshmi has managed to introduce two new library and academic skills coaches into the team. This is incredible evidence of advocacy and influence! Congratulations Lakshmi.”

Innovative Practice Award

The winner of the Innovative Practice Award for 2023 is Bradford College Library for its ‘The Art of Problem Solving’ initiative, designed to develop skills to demystify maths and build resilience.

The Award is presented to a library and learning resources team in recognition of:

- Innovative service development or exceptional enhancements to existing services
- A commitment to student academic, personal or vocational development and lifelong learning
- Engagement and collaboration with academic staff, curriculum colleagues, professional support services and students.

Bradford College Library impressed the judging panel for several reasons:

- Proactive engagement with students and the College community beyond library walls
- Significant potential for sustainability with plans already afoot to develop the initiative over 2024
- Evidence of value and impact through feedback and supportive statements
- A potential numeracy/mathematics skills blueprint for other Colleges to follow.

Timothy Lupton, Head of Department of Learning, Development and Innovation

“The award is highly deserved by this amazing team at Bradford College. From its inception to its outcome, collaboration was at the heart of the project’s success. Staff from the Library team, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment team and the Maths team created an innovative way for learners to develop critical thinking skills whilst also improving their maths skills, which prepared them for their exams and improved their universal skills. The award demonstrates how working together can transform lives of both staff and learners.”

Sarah Applewhite, Vice Principal, Quality, Teaching and Learning

“We are absolutely delighted that this innovative and collaborative project has been recognised by CoLRiC. This project has sought to find innovative ways to support student engagement in maths while also developing the transferable skills of problem-solving and critical thinking. The ongoing work of the library team, in collaboration with colleagues across the college, to support our students in their wider skills development is something we are proud to celebrate. It is fantastic that this has been recognised nationally.”

Special thanks go to Emma Duffield for being the external judge for this award, and to CoLRiC's valued sponsor IS Oxford Ltd. Emma is Sales Manager at IS Oxford and a Library and Information Management Consultant.

“The submission from Bradford College was a great example of a simple idea that was effectively employed. It was innovative, extended beyond the walls of the library and demonstrated great collaboration with teaching staff. Well done to all involved.”

Innovative Practice Award - Highly Commended

In recognition of its 'Library Re-engagement' initiative reconnecting students with the value and power of the library and its physical and digital resources, Hills Road Sixth Form College has been awarded Highly Commended for the Innovative Practice Award, 2023.

The judging panel praised the Hills Road SFC Library and Digital Resources Team nomination for its proactive and creative outreach programme, effectively designed to reengage post-pandemic students and re-establish the importance and value of the library and learning resource services. It has the potential to inspire colleges across the FE sector grappling with the impact of Covid on student morale and motivation.

Ian Pryer, Assistant Principal – Quality and Systems

“I am delighted to see the work of our Library and Digital Resources team recognised through this award. They are passionate about working in partnership with teaching departments to support our students to develop as independent learners ready to progress into higher education and employment. The team work tirelessly to promote all that the library has to offer, both to support young people with their studies, but also for wider enrichment and enjoyment of reading. It has been fantastic to see their work pay off and watch the college community reconnect with the library post-pandemic.”

Kathy Ashby, Library and Digital Resources Manager

‘As a team it is so important to see our students flourish and grow into self-confident independent learners. We are delighted to have our work with students recognised by this award. We look forward to continuing to find ways to develop innovative practice to best support our students.

External judge Emma Duffield writes:

“I thought this was a really good example of how a combination of diligence, creative ambition and in-depth knowledge of the tools and applications available to library staff can make a real difference to library users.”

Get ready for 2024!

Partnerships and dialogue with students, teaching and support staff are essential to develop and deliver relevant, flexible and dynamic student services. We want to encourage you all to showcase your creativity, enthusiasm and proactivity in the delivery of library and learning resource services by contributing articles to our e-newsletter CoLRiC Impact and participating in the members' only discussion forum.

2024 isn't far away, so start preparing your award nominations for next year!



CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award Winner 2023

How do you solve a problem like mathematics?

Not just any other maths club

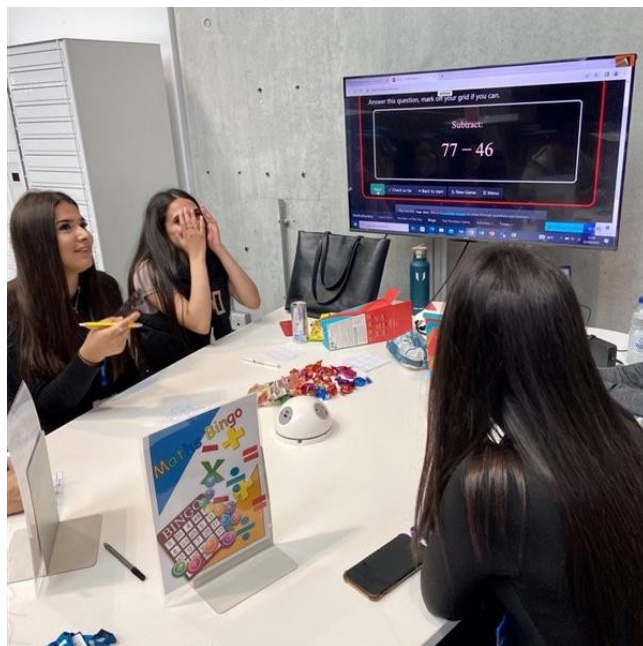
David Porter, Academic Liaison Librarian, Bradford College

While the library has implemented strategies to help improve the literacy of our learners, we were incredibly keen to identify how we would be able to provide engaging support for our learners with numeracy, mathematics and problem solving. Bradford College's teaching staff do a tremendous job in delivering the curriculum side of the subject and we were eager to identify ways of complementing this as a library and engage with learners in a new and interesting way.

We recognised that our learners have often spent most of their academic lives studying mathematics and so we needed to rethink how we could engage with learners who may have struggled to get to grips with the subject for whatever reason. For many there is a lack in confidence when faced with mathematic and numeracy problems, while others may struggle when it comes to interpreting what they are being asked.

Developing the tasks

After careful consideration we began working on ideas we believed could promote and nurture our learners' mathematical problem-solving skills, enable them to develop their critical thinking abilities, and to apply the correct mathematical component effectively when required. When we had a broad idea of what we wanted to achieve through the initiative, we reached out to other college departments. The reception we got was very positive and both the Mathematics and the Learning, Teaching & Assessment (LTA) departments were eager to be involved. This not only gathered valuable ideas and feedback but also prompted Michelle Swallow from our LTA department and Adam Longden and Vaneeta Garg from 16-18 Maths to join the initial development team alongside David Porter and Emma Luby from the library.



With a clear shared vision of what we wanted to achieve we started to identify how we were going to deliver a successful initiative which had lasting appeal.

Obviously with a title of 'The art of problem solving' we wanted the emphasis to be on problem solving skills. We looked at what popular puzzles and challenges were being used elsewhere, as we wanted to encourage learners to think critically and analyse a problem to develop a strategy to solve it, but we also wanted it to be fun.

We wanted to have as wide a variety of content as possible and provide a diverse range of challenging problems. We needed to create content beyond what we needed each week as any long-term success would be judged by the continued engagement and enjoyment of our learners. Every week, we aimed to present a variety of tasks that would require creative thinking and problem-solving techniques to solve.



Creating a positive learning environment

As a college it was important for us to foster a positive and supportive learning environment as we wanted our learners to have fun. But the main objective was to encourage our learners to develop their own personal skills and be able to apply these skills when necessary. The creation of a convivial atmosphere was key to achieving this and very early on learners were encouraged to take part knowing there was no evaluation or appraisal of their participation. Some of the tasks and puzzles we had selected may have had a single solution, while others could be solved in several ways.

This was an important element to include as it allowed learners to work their own way through a problem. We encouraged collaboration between learners, as well as friendly competition, when tackling problems. Initially we provided rewards (in the form of sweets) which were made available not solely for getting the correct answer but for perseverance and for those who we could see were actively learning from their mistakes.

The initial setting up was straightforward. All we needed were coloured sticks, coloured cards, a peg solitaire board, and a selection of vegan and Halal sweets. (It was decided to substitute sticks to replace matchsticks for some puzzles as they were bigger and far easier to manipulate.) The laminating of coloured card made the shapes and counters more rigid and reusable. Having originally set up the puzzles using counters we noticed that learners had started replicating the problems for their friends using the sweets we had given out.

Positive feedback

Indications from feedback we received at the end of the last academic year was that learners had really enjoyed participating in the club. We didn't want to rely on rotating our existing content and we have been actively looking at how we can develop it in interesting and engaging ways. The positive reaction from students this year has mirrored our experience last year. Bingo, one of the new components we have added this year, has proved incredibly popular with the learners, with requests being made to extend the sessions and even for it to be run more times during the week.



Next steps

The utilisation of technology and learning tools would be one obvious method of developing and expanding the challenges on offer to learners. While we were initially focusing on tabletop tasks and puzzles the implementation of additional content using virtual worlds using Minecraft education, or plotting the path for a drone to navigate through a maze or series of obstacles are in development. A few additional details can be found on our blog post [The Art of Problem Solving](#).

Reading is Power

Kelly Baker, Programme Officer Adult Reading, The Reading Agency

The Reading Agency is a charity with a mission to empower people of all ages to read. For the last 20 years, The Reading Agency has been working across the UK to transform lives for the better. Our work tackles adult and child literacy, mental health issues, and social isolation through the power of reading.

In the UK...

- 1 in 6 (5.8 million) adults struggle to read
- 1 in 4 children in England cannot read well by the age of 11.

This limits life chances and choices, and we're on a mission to change this through our offer for adult readers.

At the heart of everything we do is our very special relationship with colleges across the UK. As community anchors, our colleges and HE partners are central in making reading accessible for all, and we look forward to deepening our relationship with them in the years to come. Over the next three years, The Reading Agency aims to change five million lives for the better by promoting reading as a crucial tool for developing skills, improving wellbeing, and bringing people together.

Through our adult reading programmes and initiatives, The Reading Agency aims to:

- Deepen engagement with communities and work to understand local needs and barriers to reading
- Continue to gather strong evidence on the impact of our programmes through rigorous research
- Ensure diverse voices and interests are represented in our work by extending our partnerships across all sectors, so we reflect the passions and needs of our audiences.

Get involved with our programmes

Reading Ahead

Reading Ahead improves reading confidence, builds skills, and encourages everyone to read more. It is designed to engage people in reading for pleasure, often for the first time, which in turn helps them to improve their language and literacy skills. Reading Ahead asks participants to choose six reads; these can be books, magazines, recipes, letters – anything. After completing each read, participants can share their thoughts on what they've read by filling out a review in their personal reading diary and work towards receiving a certificate of achievement. The programme includes a unique online database to search for reads at the right reading level and a hub of supporting guidance, learning resources and promotional materials.

The impact

In 2021/22, our Reading Ahead evaluation found that:

- 72% of participants read for pleasure more than before
- 60% of participants felt more confident about reading
- 88% of organisations running Reading Ahead reported that participants improved their literacy skills.

[You can find out more and sign up for Reading Ahead 2023/24 here.](#)

Reading Well

Reading Well supports people to understand and manage their health and wellbeing using recommended reading. The statistics speak for themselves:

- 13.5 million adults (1 in 4) and almost 1 million children aged 5 to 16 years old (1 in 10) has at least one diagnosable mental health condition ([NHS](#))
- 18.87 million adults (35%) in the UK reported living with a long-term health condition in 2019 ([ONS](#))
- 10.7 million adults (nearly 1 in 6 or 16%) had experienced depression in 2022, higher than the proportion prior to the pandemic (10%) ([ONS](#))
- In 2022, nearly 1 in 2 (49%) adults (25.99 million people) in the UK reported feeling lonely occasionally, sometimes, often or always ([campaigntoendloneliness](#))
- A million more adults became chronically lonely during the pandemic (3.7 million in February 2021). It is estimated that people who were already more disadvantaged or who face specific barriers to connection are likely to find it particularly challenging to recover from loneliness ([campaigntoendloneliness](#)).

We work with health experts and those with lived experience to create curated booklists designed to help people to understand and manage their health, promote Reading Well books in public libraries and encourage social prescribing. Since 2013, over 3.3 million Reading Well books have been issued from public libraries. With funding from DCMS, every English library delivers Reading Well for Mental Health and Reading Well for Children, with the scheme now available within college settings. There are currently five Reading Well schemes: Children, Teens, Mental Health and long-term conditions, and Dementia.

Explore the books and find out where to borrow them at reading-well.org.uk.



Quick Reads

Quick Reads provide a route into reading that prioritises great story telling and adult-focused content while ensuring the books are written in an accessible and easy to read style. The books are written by some of the most popular authors in the UK including Roddy Doyle, Peter James, Vaseem Khan, Jojo Moyes, Dreda Say Mitchell and Bernardine Evaristo. They are a brilliant entry point to new genres and authors, reigniting or building up the joy of reading. The Quick Reads programme has collaborated with over 30 publishers to produce a total of 135 titles since 2006.

These are widely available to borrow from libraries or buy from The Reading Agency's bookshop, with over five million copies distributed and over six million library loans to date. We work with colleges and other organisations to ensure these books are accessed by those who may find reading difficult as they are a perfect entry point to reading for pleasure. We offer learning materials, book group discussion guides and promotional posters and videos for use with the titles in the Quick Reads resources database. In addition, Quick Reads are perfect for supporting the Reading Ahead programme, either as reading material or to use as rewards and incentives.

[You can find out more about this year's titles here.](#)

Reading Groups for Everyone

Reading Groups for Everyone is the UK's largest network of registered reading groups (approximately 5,000 to date). The Reading Agency promotes a wide range of publisher offers including 'read and reviews', online author events and competitions, supports with group set-ups and finding recommended reads. Our reading groups meet in all kinds of places and are made up of all kinds of people. The one thing they have in common is that they love reading and talking about books. Reading connects communities, enabling social interaction.

At The Reading Agency, we know how important reading for pleasure is and the positive difference it makes to our lives. Reading groups are a great way to make friends, feel connected and empowered and try books you'd never have come across otherwise.

[You can find out more and find groups near you here.](#)

Join us for a CoLRiC Zoom presentation on 30th November 2023

This autumn, The Reading Agency will be delivering a lunchtime seminar with CoLRiC, discussing our adult offer and programming. We very much look forward to sharing our work with members and answering any questions you may have.



For more information, please visit www.thereadingagency.org.uk.

Spotlight on...

Lakshmi Banner, Library Team Leader, Bradford College, winner of the CoLRiC Jeff Cooper Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award 2023

Please introduce yourself and your current role

My name is Lakshmi Banner and I'm the Library Team Leader at Bradford College. I have been in this post for four years – before that I was an Academic Liaison Librarian and I still have subject responsibilities alongside my team leader role. The library team includes librarians, library assistants and the senior library assistant, and we have recently appointed two Library and Academic Coaches which is a hugely exciting development.

How do you feel about being CoLRiC's 2023 inspiring info pro?

I'm delighted to win this award, knowing as I do how many dedicated and creative professionals are working in our sector. It really is an honour to be nominated by my peers, reading some of the wonderful things that were said about me, and then actually being selected by the awards team. I would like to thank CoLRiC for organising annual national awards which allow us to celebrate library staff and services. As a new team leader in 2019, they certainly inspired me to aim higher and nominate some of our projects and people. Four years later and we are award winners of both awards (The Jeff Cooper Award and the CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award), which is an achievement I am very proud of.

What or who inspires you? What are your strategies for instilling creativity, ambition, enthusiasm and innovation in your colleagues?

I get inspired by other college and university libraries and find it useful to attend webinars, online training sessions and discussions where possible, listening to other approaches and chatting with colleagues. Recent free webinars about ChatGPT and decolonising the curriculum were particularly useful and have helped inform our own projects. I am of course inspired by my own colleagues both in the library and the wider college. I would have to mention the ESOL and Progression to Learning and Work departments, who work closely with us and embody the college's commitment to Transforming Lives. Working with students and teaching staff to co-deliver meaningful activities and services really is the highlight of my role, and I learn so much from them. I think the key to a successful library team is collaboration and communication. We collaborate with our teaching staff, other support teams – particularly Student Services - and of course our students, all of whom give us ideas and feedback which challenge us to keep improving and innovating. I think communication and consultation within the team is essential to make sure that the service is harnessing our varied interests and talents. In our library we have colleagues who are amazing at engaging students, others who are great at social media, our resident film expert, our web designer, those good with data and IT systems. If I have a strategy, it is to encourage involvement, listen to all ideas, give confidence to the team to get involved, and try and facilitate where I can.

In the post-pandemic FE library and learning resource sector, what do you think has changed the most?

The obvious answer is the legacy of the move to online learning and teaching that took place during lockdown. The library could really demonstrate our value as we already had a strong online presence in the form of e-books, e-journals and online guidance. We were able to develop our website to become the primary online source of library services and we introduced a Chat function which was hugely popular. Post-pandemic we have found that many students prefer to use online resources and continue to request support via Teams. This particularly benefits those who find it difficult to meet on campus due to family or work commitments, or who are on campus just one or two days a week. Using Teams, particularly with the camera switched on, allows us to retain that sense of personal support. I've also found that when students use the share screen function while using their own computer and while in their own study environment, their confidence improves. They can follow our guidance while doing the clicks and searches themselves, and then can continue once our chat has ended. It also lets us see the challenges that students have when off-campus and reminds us of some of the distractions that they cope with. Many of these sessions have been interrupted by small children, cats, knocks at the door... ! Other positive changes include the use of Teams for internal communications as it allows groups to meet and collaborate without having to find a shared time and space to meet. In the Library we still have a lively informal Teams chat, while our various library channels allow us to discuss work issues or ask questions with everyone having an opportunity to contribute. There are also various cross-college Teams which have really improved communication and engagement across the institution, such as the Bradford College Microsoft Educator community which aims to improve digital competencies and includes webinars, Q&As and celebrations of individual achievements.

If you were offered a limitless budget for professional development, what competencies and skills would you focus staff training on?

What I value most in our library is empathy towards our students. Further Education colleges welcome an incredible diversity of people every year who attend for various reasons, but all come with the desire to develop their potential. Those of us who work in libraries are in the privileged position of supporting them at all stages of their education, from entry level through to masters. We must be sensitive to their different backgrounds and experiences of education; many will never have used libraries before and may feel anxiety when using them. Libraries are the spaces where people come to learn how to learn, to direct their own study and to learn outside of the classroom. I feel that our staff need to be knowledgeable in print and electronic resources, but also have the skills to coach, encourage and support. We are lucky to have access to a range of training within college such as on trauma-informed practice, which aims to increase our understanding of how personal circumstances can impact on the behaviour of some of our students. As a team, we have received training from our SEND colleagues on working with students with Autism and Dyslexia, and it would be great to develop that knowledge further. I'd also love to have some staff trained on BSL and Makaton.

If I had a limitless budget, I would encourage all staff to continue to study, whether to progress in their careers or to further their own interests and knowledge. I believe that a Level 7 Apprenticeship in Librarianship is in development; this could be a chance for library assistants to move into librarianship. There are also teaching, guidance and advice qualifications that would really benefit the service. Any form of study is a useful reminder of what it's like to be a student, and I also believe strongly in life-long learning. If you work in a college, why not benefit from all it has to offer!

AI in education - utopia or dystopia?

The aspect of AI/Machine Learning that is having the most impact on education currently seems to be ChatGPT. Obviously, there are huge concerns around cheating, and it appears that Turnitin isn't completely able to spot its use. Some lecturers I've spoken to feel they will be able to identify the discrepancies in student work, but others are concerned – particularly if students are new and lecturers haven't been able to check any written work. Some feel we may have to go back to paper for at least some assessments or use vivas which can be stressful for students. Despite the challenges, it does seem that if we are willing to embrace the technology and encourage students to use ChatGPT ethically, there are huge possibilities. Students can use it at the start of their research to generate ideas and decide on which aspects of their topic to focus on. They can ask for more detail on sections they don't understand or are more interested in, and they might also request examples, which they would be expected to research further themselves. They may also learn about academic writing – ChatGPT usually provides an introduction and conclusion, while paragraphs are structured clearly and logically. However, regardless of how good these technologies seem, the same fundamental challenges exist as we saw with Google as far as authenticating the veracity of the information. ChatGPT does produce 'fake news'. When asked for a list of resources on a certain topic, I found that book titles were completely made up, but it wasn't until I checked on the publishers' websites that I realised. It's also important to note that ChatGPT is using data only up to September 2021 to form its language model, so there are already two years of information since then which will not be included in the results. In addition, the same biases existing on the Internet will be replicated in ChatGPT results. When a PGCE lecturer and I used ChatGPT for lesson planning, asking for a list of key educators in the UK and worldwide, all the results were European white men and further questions needed to be entered to elicit a more diverse list (we did end up with a pretty impressive resource in the end). Students will need to be aware that they must test and check all the information provided – they cannot take ChatGPT as an authoritative source but should find evidence to evaluate each point. Educators will need to ensure that this message is communicated successfully, training students to recognise the importance of critiquing information and using reliable sources in their work.



Lakshmi Banner

Of course, librarians have always had these conversations, but while access to information becomes more democratised, and with the proliferation of polarised and inaccurate information all over social media and the Internet, it becomes ever more vital that we teach the value of critical thinking. With all this in mind, it is clear that teachers, librarians and academic skills staff need to have a lot more cross-college conversations on the best way to manage ChatGPT in our institutions.

CoLRiC is delighted to have the support of these sponsors



Tailored Academic Collections

In an era where innovation and individuality reign supreme, colleges are seeking ways to stand out and cater to the unique needs of their student bodies. That's where Browns Books comes into play, we offer a remarkable suite of services dedicated to creating bespoke collections that help institutions not only meet but exceed their academic goals. Our commitment to excellence and our passion for educational enrichment are at the heart of what we do.

Curriculum Customisation: We understand that no two educational institutions are the same, and we embrace this diversity. Our team of educational experts will talk to you and find out exactly what is needed for your staff and students and build bespoke collections to suit your requirements.

These collections are tailored to align with the institution's unique culture, ethos, and long-term objectives, whether it's constructing a curated list for your library or for a specific course.

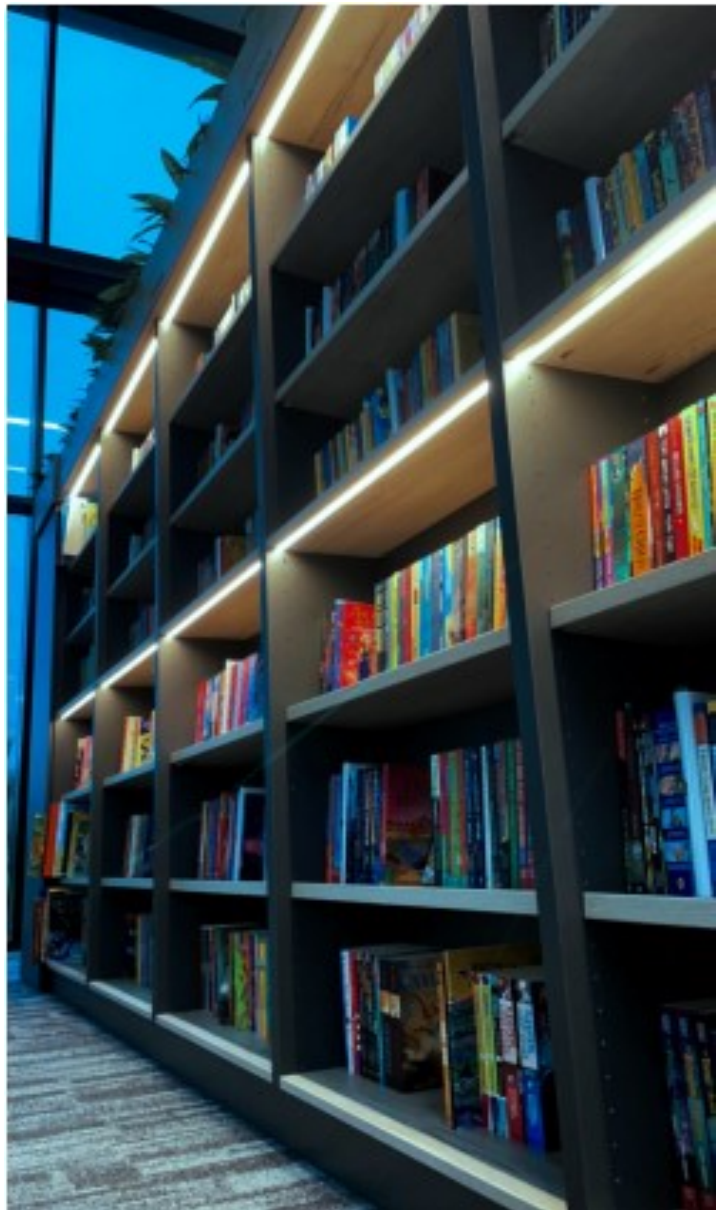
Library and Resource Development: We recognise that a well-rounded education is greatly dependent on access to extensive and relevant learning resources. Our team conducts in-depth research to ensure that each resource aligns with the curriculum and enhances the learning experience. From print collections to eBooks, our commitment to knowledge accessibility is unwavering. Our collections span across all types of categories and themes from Well-being to True Crime. We have reading for leisure collections that will help bring the best titles available to any institution.

Our Selection Team: Our team of qualified Educational Experts can take your vision and budget and create the best possible collection for you. No matter what you are trying to achieve the team will talk to you and gain an understanding of your vision, and they will help implement this into a bespoke collection for you and your students.

Bespoke Collection emails: Once multiple collections have been curated, we are able to create PDFs that can be shared with your students. These can include links and information to make it simple and efficient for your students to discover the material they require.

In a rapidly evolving educational landscape, our company is dedicated to helping not just adapt but flourish. We believe that the future of education is bespoke, innovative, and inclusive, and our services are designed to make this vision a reality. With our expertise and commitment, we empower institutions to transform educational journeys and pave the way for a brighter future for students across the UK.

To keep up with all the latest trends and book industry news, please subscribe to our Newsletter: <https://www.brownsbfs.co.uk/forms/Marketing-Preferences>.



How Gale News, Business and Reference supports students !

Students' academic success and future career prospects depend on the library's available resources.

If you subscribe to Gale News, Business and Reference, a comprehensive digital resource, it is indispensable for students across disciplines.

The package offers access to a wealth of information, from reputable news sources and in-depth business content to scholarly references.

How the package benefits students:

1. Real-time news updates

Gale databases provide students with real-time news articles from a wide range of sources, allowing them to stay up to date with global events, trends and developments.

2. Rich business information

Business Insights is a business database with financial reports, market research, industry trends and company profiles. This wealth of business information is essential for coursework, market analysis, and preparing for interviews or internships.

3. Academic credibility

Access to an extensive collection of scholarly references, journals, and articles ensures that students have access to reliable and peer-reviewed sources.

4. Streamlined research

User-friendly interfaces allow students to efficiently search, access, take notes online, cite sources and download content with notes. A streamlined research workflow saves them time navigating through countless websites and databases.

5. Skill development

Each platform empowers students with essential skills like information literacy, critical thinking and data analysis. These skills are not only for their academic journey but also for their future careers.

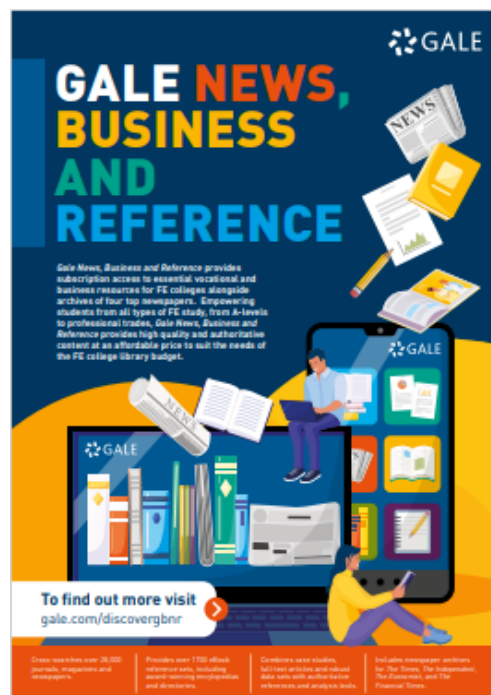
6. Access anywhere, anytime

Access the databases 24/7 from any device with an internet connection. Students can access the information they need whenever and wherever they need it.

7. Support and training

There is unlimited user support available. There are dedicated trainers who offer onsite or online support for all users. We can also support with LibGuide creation to better link content to subjects.

Gale News, Business and Reference is thus an ideal resource for students and a useful partner to librarians and teachers. For more information go to [Gale.com](https://www.gale.com).



Mystery in the library – creating and delivering a game-based learning tool

Emma Duffield, Sales Manager, IS Oxford Ltd

In the Summer 2023 issue of CoLRiC Impact I highlighted the importance of library inductions and how game-based learning tools could be employed to attract and engage a new cohort at the start of the academic year.

A key part of any successful library induction is teaching students how to access library resources online. As part of the launch of Look4, the brand-new online catalogue for Heritage Cirqa, my team and I decided to devise a game-based introduction for library users. We know library staff are busy at this time of year, so our goal was to provide something our customers could simply use 'out of the box'.



Game-based learning

Game-based learning is an educational approach that uses games to engage learners while teaching them specific skills or knowledge. There is a danger of overwhelming students at induction time, as they have so much information to take on board. A fun and interactive game is a perfect way to capture their attention, teach them how to discover resources for themselves and gain confidence by solving the clues and achieving a successful outcome. A positive initial experience such as this can translate into a long-term habit of using library resources and services throughout a student's academic career.

The challenge

Our original aim was to devise an activity that could be used via Look4 to introduce users to the library space, resources and key services. We realised we would need to abandon ambitious plans for physical tours of the library environment as there were too many variables. We had to focus instead on just the elements that we could control. The obvious solution was to concentrate on delivering an introduction to the search facilities in Look4 itself.

We needed to create a game that would be relevant for library users of all ages. It had to be quick and easy to implement. We couldn't assume knowledge, or that library staff would have access to tools outside of our system. Ideally the game could be offered as a semi-permanent feature on the Look4 interface, which library staff could simply enable and disable as and when required.

'An entertaining way to learn how to use the library, wonderful!'
(Karen Oliver, London South East Colleges)

We considered a broad range of themes that might appeal to library users and we were aware of existing game-based programmes in college libraries that use generic concepts, such as zombies, aliens and murder mysteries to convey ideas. Rather than offer a choice of stories we decided to devise a gameplay template to which we could apply different 'skins' in future. For our first iteration we settled on Sherlock Holmes, an instantly recognisable character. He is popular with people of all ages and, as a detective, is strongly associated with solving mysteries, making him perfect for our game.



Mystery in the library

Join Forces with Sherlock Holmes to solve a mystery via clues hidden in the library catalogue.

What surprised us most was the challenge of making the game make sense! A compelling narrative was essential. It is very easy to create clues that are hidden within the library catalogue, but coming up with a plausible reason for why they were hidden there took far longer than we would care to admit. After much going back and forth the final story was very different to our first drafts. Our advice to anyone embarking on a project like this is to storyboard it from the outset. Also, test it frequently on people outside of your project group. Our guinea pigs were invaluable for spotting holes in the narrative and confusing elements in the game play.

Our first versions of the game involved visiting a series of catalogue records, with the clues hidden in each one, like a treasure hunt. Upon testing, however, we realised that this would undermine the learning experience, by misrepresenting what the fields are designed for. It also risked them missing the clues entirely and therefore losing their place in the challenge.

We decided instead to present the challenge elements in the form of a graphic novel, with a strong visual anchor and a clear narrative. This also offered the advantage of being readily accessible as a stand-alone document in an adjacent tab, allowing users to easily refer back to it for instructions as they advanced through the game. We felt this approach

would help attract users that wouldn't usually find themselves engaging with the library. To make sure we held their attention, we decided to limit the game to two challenges. It was important that the user succeeded, so we also incorporated links to instructional videos that would help less confident library users.

'This all sounds fabulous; I'm already considering inserting this game into our next academic year LRC Inductions.'
(Shaguffa Amer, Newham Sixth Form College)

A valuable outcome

The introduction of any new initiative such as this requires a way of measuring success. The challenge, therefore, ends with library users being given a code that they can present in order to claim a 'reward'. As well as providing them with an additional incentive to participate with the library system, this reward system ensures that they interact with library staff. The reward system also, handily, delivers an objective measurement of the number of users who participated. After all, if you start with 100 lollies behind the library desk you can keep a count of how many are left.

Earlier this year we asked our users about induction strategies and were surprised to learn that only a third of them had introduced game-based learning: now we know why! Games can be incredibly effective, but complex and time-consuming to create. Employing an iterative design process, where ideas are tried, tested and then honed, works best. It is an approach we are familiar with as we work every day with software designers. Our project has resulted in a well-functioning and user-friendly utility with scope for future themes and adaptations.



Designing a simple game, it transpires, is far from simple. In fact, honing, decluttering and decomplexifying takes time and effort, but it is worth it. Whilst the game play may be straightforward, teaching users basic and advanced search techniques, it contains a wealth of learning opportunities. Library users learn more about the search environment. Library staff will almost certainly discover more about the wider tools available in Heritage Cirqa and Look4 as they set up the challenge. We introduced the game to our customers via a free webinar (available for Heritage Cirqa users to view at cirqasupport.com), complete with downloadable resources and a quick setup tutorial video. The game is available to view at <https://ct4.cirqahosting.com/cirqa-web-app>. It is already being used for real on live systems and we are very much looking forward to hearing how it is received by library users.

You can contact Emma at: emma@isoxford.com.

Collaboration and community

Sam Goldsmith, PTFS-Europe

PTFS Europe has been working with open source library software since 2007. We develop our products and services with the goal of making open source technology easy; to help and enable library users and ultimately to free libraries to do the things they do best.

The products we work with include Aspen, Folio and Koha LMS. Our hosting, integrations, development knowledge and excellent support gives you reassurance and confidence in joining the innovative and constantly evolving open source global community.

Collaborative working

The very nature of open source projects and products is collaboration, transparency and community-focused development. Every year the Koha community comes together at a conference to share ideas, solve problems, and learn from each other. In August 2023 the international Koha community travelled to Helsinki for an intense week of presentations, workshops, meetings (and networking).

Sharing ideas

A team of PTFS-Europe staff attended, with each of us volunteering to lead workshops, participate in panel discussions or share our experiences and ideas in presentations. This included:

- Our Managing Director Jonathan demonstrated the work that PTFS Europe has been doing over the last three months to incorporate usage statistics and usage reporting into the new Koha Electronic Resources Management module which was created in-house and introduced at version 22.11
- Software engineer Matt gave an overview of his journey from a completely different career path to becoming a Koha/Perl developer, including some of the challenges he faced in the early stages. He also shared his ideas on where both the Koha and Perl communities could improve and remove some of the entry barriers for new developers
- Customer Service Consultant Aude partnered with Mark from ByWater Solutions to talk about sharing through the Aspen platform. Aspen is an open source discovery tool focused on bringing library content into one place, making it easy for users to navigate and for library staff to customise. Mark and Aude covered building a community around the software, from library staff to developers
- Our Head of Development and Community Engagement Martin worked remotely with Matt to deliver a workshop accessibility sharing the work we have done recently with the British Museum following an external accessibility audit on their Koha catalogue by the Shaw Trust.

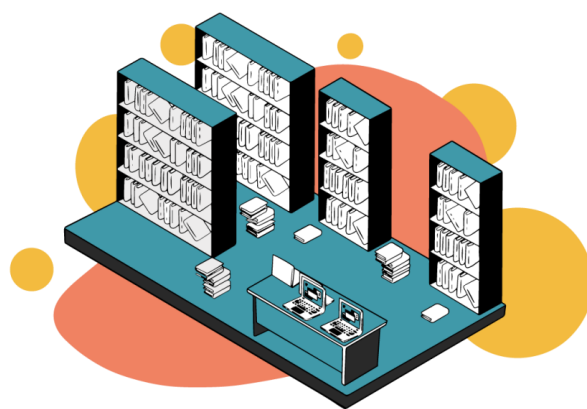
How library staff can get involved

Open source means all users globally share their ideas and help push the products forward. This can be as little as using the online manual, posing questions on the community pages or watching other members' useful training videos. If your library is working with an open source library management system (LMS), an easy way to get a little more involved is by contributing to the manual. There are always things to improve, gaps to fill, screenshots to update, or perhaps you have language skills and can help refine a translation?

With a little more technical confidence you can join the community Bugzilla and test updates and fixes in the free open sandboxes. It takes several rounds of testing to get a new feature though - so if you really want an improvement, you can help speed the process along!

PTFS Europe's academic customers

PTFS Europe works with many schools, colleges and universities, providing (customised) open source library software solutions. Our managed solutions are constantly evolving and improving, they work excellently with other software and therefore help future proof your library service. It's great value too with no extra costs for updates or new modules. You can read more about the work we do on our website - or contact me at sam.goldsmith@ptfs-europe.com



Online subject guides: not just for the pandemic

Tom Hewitt Centre Librarian, Northampton College


NC Libraries Plus (Northampton College) has developed its website with the aim of bringing together all aspects of the library's services and resources. The library website itself is independent from the College website and this allows us to evolve its content to reflect the changing needs of the students and become an invaluable hub of information for our learners on courses ranging from Entry 3 to University and Access Level.

In 2020, when the College was closed due to the pandemic, the library team decided to translate its existing physical subject guides on to the website. Not only was this the perfect job for staff to carry out during a period of home working, but once completed, it gave students the opportunity to view everything needed for their courses and subject areas in one place, allowing them to study from home much more effectively.

Each subject guide combines all library resources, both physical and online, that students may require to become independent learners. Physical resources for each subject, are listed by their Dewey classification numbers and linked to the pre-determined search results on the library's online Heritage catalogue.

Finding Art and Design Resources

All books have a classification number on the spine. Here are some class marks to get you started. Click on the class marks below to find out what the Library has to offer for each topic. To request to borrow resources, please use our [Online Catalogue](#) or go to the on-site library desk.



Click to search the catalogue

701.8 Colour Theory	730 Sculpture	745.5 Handicrafts
709 Art History	658.3 HR Management	746 Textiles
709.024 Renaissance Art	738 Ceramics	751.4 Painting
709.04 Modern Art	741 Drawing	751.73 Street Art
709.04063 Surrealism	741.6 Graphic Design	759 Painters
709.041 Art Nouveau	741.67 Posters	760 Printmaking
709.043 Art Deco	741.672 Fashion Illustration	770 Photography
720 Architecture	745.4 Design	

Online Subject Guide for Art and Design: Physical resources


Additionally, popular eBooks for each subject area are listed and linked straight to the URL so that students can read them online quickly and easily. It was decided to use the actual book covers as links because students tend to recognise these from the physical editions. Historically, eBooks have proved less popular than their physical counterparts, so this has been a real chance to promote them to students directly.

Online e-resources subscribed to by the college are included, as are several weblinks which have been suggested by teaching staff.


eBooks

You can access Art and Design eBooks for free from home or college 24/7, which means no lugging heavy books around! Click on one of the eBook covers below or [visit our eBooks section to search for even more titles](#). You may need to enter your College log-in details to access the eBooks.

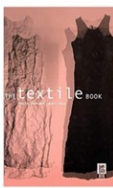
To open these in a new tab, right click and select open in new tab, or press ctrl and click




Read on Ebook Central




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Online Subject Guide for Art and Design: eBooks

The library uses Planet eStream to record television shows which are requested by teaching staff and are relevant for certain courses. The subject guides also give the library a chance to promote this resource to students, and again includes a link to the categorised eStream page where the recordings are held for each subject area.

Finally, all subject guides include details on the library's offering of study skills materials as well as general library information such as contact details and an embedded induction video.

The library still produces paper subject guides which are handy to give out at inductions and open events. However, despite now being out of the pandemic, the online subject guides continue to be the most well-used section of the website and are now firmly embedded into teaching and learning as they are promoted by teachers in lessons and shared on VLEs. All library staff are involved in the creation and content of the guides and work with teachers to update the guides periodically, keeping the content relevant and up to date.

Most recently, the decision was made to move the subject guides over to SharePoint. The main purpose of this is so multiple staff can update the guides more efficiently. This will require the student to log in with their college credentials and thus make it easier when logging in to individual online resources such as ebooks and Planet eStream, which are featured on each guide.

It will also allow us to list passwords required for certain resources, which previously could not be listed on the old open access version.

Essentially the subject guides are a way of signposting students to the resources they need, but are most importantly clear, well presented, and accessible. Links to each guide have been added to the side menu of the website to encourage their use, and so that students, wherever they are on the website, can always return to the information relevant to them, at a click!



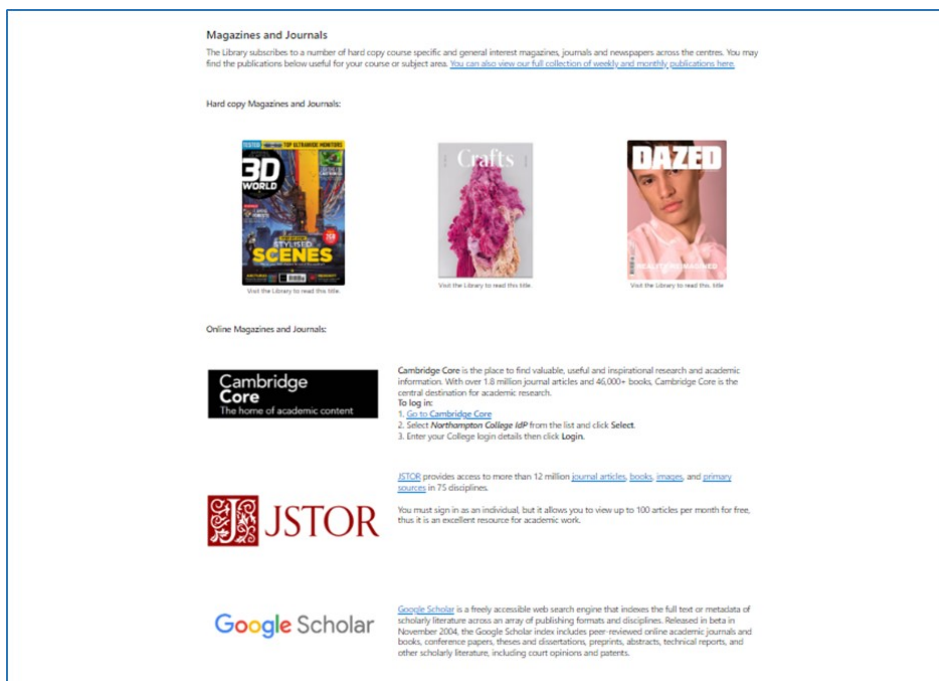
Physical Subject Guides

You can see examples of what our website looks like below.

NC Libraries Plus homepage - <https://library.northamptoncollege.ac.uk/>

NC Libraries Plus subject guides landing page (individual links will only work inside Northampton College) - <https://library.northamptoncollege.ac.uk/subject-guides/>

NC Libraries Plus Health and Social Care Guide – this is an example of how subject guides look on SharePoint - <https://library.northamptoncollege.ac.uk/healthsocialcare/>



Online Subject Guide for Art and Design: Magazines and journals

CoLRiC MediaWatch

In September 2023 Jisc published the 3rd edition of its [AI in tertiary education](#) report summarising the 'current state of play' in the sector. ChatGPT has instigated numerous developments in colleges in response to concerns about student support, assessment and workforce skills.

On October 5th we were delighted to host Sue Attewell, Head of AI and Codesign at Jisc, presenting on 'Artificial Intelligence: the impact on education.'

'In today's rapidly evolving technological landscape, the impact of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, is being felt in various domains, especially in education.'

She explored the four main strands of Jisc's work: pilots, events, information, and community, discussing how it has reacted to the unprecedented surge of interest in generative AI, and the challenges and opportunities we are seeing across the education sector in the UK.

AI detection – latest recommendations

Jisc's [National Centre for AI in Tertiary Education](#) – 'accelerating the adoption of artificial intelligence across the sector' - [has updated its advice on AI detection software](#).

An introduction to Generative AI in education

As part of Jisc's exploration of AI in the context of education, it has created a free [open online course](#) (MOOC).

'Through videos, current research and discussion forums, the module explores two main elements: an introduction to Generative AI technology and the implications of Generative AI on education.'

How do students perceive or currently use Generative AI? What is the potential impact on their learning experience?

Jisc's AI discussion forum

In previous MediaWatch articles we've showcased Jisc's AI resources and services including its [Generative AI Primer](#) guidance for those of you contemplating creating guidelines on using AI.

We encourage you to join its AI discussion forum for inspiration on student engagement, tactics for assessment and issues of work and employment. It's a great source of current awareness, advice, events, news and media stories, resources, articles and vendor announcements. You can also check out the JiscMail archive for previous information and discussion.

Visit [AIED on Jiscmail](#) and subscribe for free using your @ac.uk email address.

Microsoft announces Copilot free update to Windows 11

Talking of vendor announcements, undoubtedly the most immediate and practical impact of AI on the workplace will be the launch of [MS Copilot](#) – 'your everyday AI companion'. The blurb says:

'We are entering a new era of AI, one that is fundamentally changing how we relate to and benefit from technology. With the convergence of chat interfaces and large language models you can now ask for what you want in natural language and the technology is smart enough to answer, create it or take action. At Microsoft, we think about this as having a copilot to help navigate any task. We have been building AI-powered copilots into our most used and loved products, transforming productivity at work with Microsoft 365, redefining search with Bing and Edge and delivering contextual value that works across your apps and PC with Windows.'

Copilot will begin its roll out as part of its free update to Windows 11 released in September 2023.

'We're also announcing some exciting new experiences and devices to help you be more productive, spark your creativity, and to meet the everyday needs of people and businesses.'

Persistent pandemic

In August the Independent newspaper reflected on the persistent deleterious impact of Covid noting that the 2023 A-level cohort was the [‘unluckiest’ to come out of pandemic](#). This year’s school leavers experienced *‘the highest levels of anxiety and uncertainty’*, according to Lee Elliot Major, professor of social mobility at the University of Exeter.

The Guardian also reported on an Institute for Fiscal Studies study that concluded that the pandemic had [set back social and emotional growth](#) of children in England. *‘This latest study looks instead at the impact of parents’ experiences in the labour market on their children’s social and emotional development and finds that children from wealthier as well as poorer families have seen their social and emotional development adversely affected. Youngsters whose parents’ employment changed as a result of the pandemic, including those who were furloughed, were also far more likely to see their social and emotional skills worsen’* the report concluded.

In the same month the Education Policy Institute reported [on persistent post-pandemic absences](#) in England.

Absenteeism, mental health, wellbeing and social skills all impact on library and learning resource services and are well worth monitoring over time. Please share your experiences on the [CoLRiC discussion forum](#) and we will benchmark changes against our 2022 report [‘Reflecting on the legacy of two years of pandemic trauma on students – Implications for Library and Learning Resource Services.’](#)

Miscellany

- [Exploring the links between gender, numeracy and social mobility, July 2023](#) - worth a ponder if you are engaged in numeracy initiatives in your College
- [T-level thematic review: final report, July 2023](#) - research and analysis from Ofsted
- [AI trend drives rise in students wanting to study computing](#) – the BBC reports on the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) observation that school-leavers are choosing computing courses in record numbers. Perhaps this provides a great opportunity to review IT and computing course content at your College? *‘The increased interest in computing courses may in part be down to a growing public conversation around technology and artificial intelligence.’*

"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.

Writing for CoLRiC Impact – FAQs and guidelines

I am interested in writing for CoLRiC Impact – what should I do?

CoLRiC welcomes the submission of articles by all members. If you have an idea for an article, please [send an e-mail](#) to the Admin team with a short outline/description of your proposed article.

I've never written an article before – can you help?

Writing an article can be daunting but we've created a template that can help you get started and ensure you have included all the information required. The Admin team will send you the template via email.

How many words should I write?

As an e-newsletter, articles published in CoLRiC Impact can be of any length. As a rough guideline, an article of 750-1000 words will become 2-4 pages of CoLRiC Impact, depending on the number of images used.

What happens after I submit an article?

Your article will be reviewed and copyedited. If we have any queries or suggestions, we will get back to you within a week of submission. We will also proofread your article before it is published in CoLRiC Impact.

What happens when my article is published?

Key lessons from your article, including quotes, will be included in the editorial of the issue, and will also be shared on our JiscMail discussion forum, our Twitter feed and our LinkedIn group.

Publication schedule for CoLRiC Impact 2023-2024 academic year

Issue number	Submission deadline	Publication date
2	Friday 15 th December 2023	Mid-January
3	Friday 14 th March 2024	Mid-April
4	Friday 14 th June 2024	Early July