

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 spring edition of CoLRiC Impact, our third issue for the 2023/2024 academic year.

In February 2024 Ken Chad (Ken Chad Consulting) presented an online seminar on the technology ecosystem and future directions for library technology in FE. He has worked on trends in the educational tech market for several years and his presentation was inspirational and thought provoking. In our feature 'LibTech and EdTech: transition, challenges and contradictions', we explore some of the issues he raised, and set it in the context of the recent media focus on the social media-induced 'anxious generation' and the push for digitally minimalist mobiles and phone free schools.

The Easter honours list included Dr Demis Hassabis, the CEO and co-founder of AI firm Google DeepMind. He started out as a gamer and encourages gaming as an essential foundation for coding and programming skills. It was timely, as in March 2024, we hosted 'Engagement through digital game-making in libraries', presented by Ash Green, Goldsmiths, University of London. There is a link to the video of this presentation in our CoLRiC news column.

Resource acquisition, library procurement and tendering processes have been raised recently on the CoLRiC discussion forum, so we have two special features for you on the work of The National Acquisitions Group (NAG) and the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC).

'CPC is a not-for-profit charity and purchasing consortium, owned by the further education sector. We work to assist institutions in their use of public money, helping them procure goods, services and works in an efficient and compliant manner. CPC membership is free of charge to educational establishments and, with around 10,000 members across the United Kingdom, it is highly likely your FE college/sixth form is already a part of this growing community.'

'The National Acquisitions Group, known to everyone as NAG, has been around since the 1980s linking libraries across sectors and commercial organisations who supply or work with libraries to talk to each other about all things library acquisitions related. We believe this direct communication improves relationships and creates opportunities for change and development in the sector.

Membership is spread geographically across the UK, but historically has rarely included libraries from the FE sector; something we would love to change! The potential benefits of access to such a wide range of library people and events could be significant, especially for library staff working as solos or in very small teams.'

It's time to prepare to submit your CoLRiC Awards nominations for 2024! A call will be issued shortly, and we look forward to hearing from you.

The e-book market still stumbles along riddled by prohibitive pricing, bundling reducing choice and unstable access, so look out for CoLRiC Executive Committee member Tracey Totty's (Library Services Manager, Middlesbrough College) article on 'The crazy world of e-books.'

'In February 2024 ARLG Northeast hosted the second of three webinars about e-books. It covered e-book expectations, purchasing, and how Middlesbrough College manages its e-book collection.'

This issue also includes CoLRiC MediaWatch, our specially compiled and edited overview of January to March 2024 news stories, research projects and developments from across the education and library sectors. The eyes of the UK educational media have been focused on the future of teaching and learning in an age of disruptive technologies: strategies for the successful integration of AI into education, digital transformation, the impact of educational technology and developing an holistic approach to lifelong learning. Numeracy and 'making maths count' is also featured.

Huge thanks to our valued sponsors for their contributions to this issue. Previous CoLRiC Executive Committee Chair Sam Goldsmith (Business Development Manager at PTFS Europe) writes about 'Budget saving strategies in FE libraries: current and future impacts.'

'Like many of the staff here at PTFS Europe I come from a library background, in my case college libraries, and the concerns, needs and pressure points of FE are close to my heart. I would like to discuss the impacts and possible long-term effects that will be felt by college libraries after so many years of budget pressure.'

Maryska Connolly (Cloud Source Director of Partnerships & Communication, SirsiDynix), reflects on the 'Evolution of Open Access scholarship,' navigating 'the history and future of open access content.'

So, please enjoy this latest issue. We actively encourage you to write for CoLRiC Impact and to share your success stories. We'd like to showcase specific College achievements in future issues. Drop us a line and we'll endeavour to publish your news and share it on social media.

CoLRiC News

The CoLRiC team hopes that you all had a relaxing Easter break. We have lots of news to catch up on in this Spring issue of CoLRiC Impact.

Digital game making

In March 2024 CoLRiC hosted [Engagement through digital game-making in libraries](#), presented by [Ash Green](#), Goldsmiths, University of London. Ash also spoke at CILIP's Libraries Rewired Conference in November 2023, which Gary Horrocks reported on for the Winter 2024 issue of CoLRiC Impact (pages 25-27). The CoLRiC seminar offered a fascinating insight into the benefits of game-making in a range of contexts, including lifelong learning, cultural exploration and engaging students with learning and library resources.

Game-making is 'not just for kids' and offers potential to develop coding and programming experience. Ash noted that 'libraries are full of stories' and game-making facilitates access and community.

Ash kindly shared a list of links to resources discussed during the session.

- [Guildford Library Makerspace](#)
- [Gothic Novel Jam](#)
- [Heritage Jam – University of York](#)
- [British Library Labs game jam](#)
- [British Library Off the Map video](#)
- [This Girl codes](#)
- [Creswell Crags heritage site](#)
- [Mother Grundy's Protection game](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Positive voices online exhibition](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Positive Voices @ Goldsmiths project](#)

Game making tools

- [Twine](#)
- [Bitsy](#)
- [Pocket Code](#)
- [Pocket Code video](#)
- [Inklewriter](#)
- [A list of many more small and free game making tools](#)

Reading Agency Quick Reads Advisory Group

Back in November 2023 CoLRiC hosted an online seminar [The Reading Agency: Reading is Power](#). The presenters were Emma Braithwaite, The Reading Agency's Head of Skills and Engagement and Kelly Baker, The Reading Agency's Programme Officer for Adult Reading.

We're delighted to announce that CoLRiC member Stella Hine, Site Librarian at Brinsbury College (Chichester Colleges Group), has accepted an invitation to be a representative from the FE sector on the selection committee for The Reading Agency's 2025/2026 Quick Reads Advisory Panel. Quick Reads provides accessible reads by great authors to boost reading skills and confidence. The organisation was keen to have input from an experienced and knowledgeable CoLRiC member to advise on which authors and topics would resonate most with their communities.

The Reading Agency's priority is to ensure their selection process is inclusive and embeds diverse perspectives.

'We are currently in discussions with publishers and authors about submissions for our Quick Reads books due to be published in April 2025 and April 2026. This year, we are aiming to commission six Quick Reads titles, including one which will be supported by the Foyle Foundation and be open to submissions from SME (small and medium enterprise) publishers, with a view to including regional and diverse voices in the Quick Reads collection.'

The Reading Agency will be seeking Stella's expert advice to support the selection of a diverse range of quality authors and great stories to get everyone reading.

Stella is looking forward to representing her FE colleagues on the Advisory Panel: *'I was thrilled to receive the invitation to contribute to this important project. Working at Chichester College, one of my greatest joys lies in empowering individuals by supporting the development of basic literacy skills and fostering a love for reading across all levels. Having personally used these valuable resources over the years, I am deeply honoured to be part of their selection.'*

Assistive Technology - Access and Assistance for All

We'd like to alert you all to the Access and Assistance for All initiative. Access and Assistance for All (AAA) is a campaign that aims to increase access to assistive technology across further education colleges as well as raising awareness of how to make resources accessible by design, so they are compatible with assistive technology. *'Although good practice of promoting assistive technology can be found in colleges, young people at the British Youth Council highlighted some poor learning experiences they had had due to a lack of support with assistive technology in College. Research by the Thomas Pocklington Trust evidenced that colleges are failing in their compliance with website regulations with few focussing on inclusion, accessibility and anticipatory adjustments. Follow-up research a year on has seen some improvements but 63% of college accessibility statements are still poor.'*

In an online CoLRiC seminar in October 2022, Andy Eachus, Digital Skills Trainer at the University of Huddersfield, and former member of CoLRiC's Executive Committee, introduced the challenges faced by students with Specific Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (SpLDD) when learning.

[Assistive technology: freely available tools to support learning](#)

He covered software and apps that can assist with studying more effectively. The seminar helped participants to:

- Recognise the main challenges students with SpLDD face when learning
- Develop an understanding of the software that can be used by students with SpLDD
- Identify apps and strategies that make it possible for students with SpLDD to engage with learning
- Recommend appropriate Assistive Technologies to students with SpLDD.

Andy welcomes AAA. *'Digital accessibility is imperative to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, can access and engage with digital learning materials thus enabling students to better meet study requirements, resulting in more confident, independent learning and better academic outcomes.'*

Celebrating your success stories

We'd like to showcase specific College achievements in future issues of CoLRiC Impact. Perhaps you've won an award or appeared in the media? Drop us a line and we'll endeavour to publish your news and share it on social media.

Do you want to suggest a seminar topic?

We'd love to hear your ideas for future seminars. We want to ensure that the programme is relevant to your needs, so please email us with any ideas. We look forward to hearing from you.

Suggestions for future seminars include:

- Free, open access learning resources versus subscription content: pros and cons
- Financial planning and budgetary management to inform library resource acquisition
- Strategies for numeracy support.

CoLRiC's free online member seminars are recorded and available to members on our unlisted YouTube channel.

It's time to prepare to submit your CoLRiC Awards nominations 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 starting to prepare your award nominations for 2024! Look out for the call for nominations for the CoLRiC Innovative Practice team Award (CIPA) and Inspirational Information Professional of the Year Award.

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:

- Microsoft authentication
- Anti-social student behaviour in libraries and study areas
- Tendering processes in resource acquisition
- Ofsted criteria for Academy inspections
- Copyright fees for newspapers.

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 quarterly publication CoLRiC Impact. 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.

LibTech and EdTech: transition, challenges and contradictions

Gary Horrocks, CoLRiC

Ken Chad ([Ken Chad Consulting](#)) often presents on the 'library technology ecosystem'. He has worked on [trends in the library tech market](#) for several years and CoLRiC was delighted to host his seminar '[Directions for library technology: Enhancing librarian impact and library value propositions](#)' in February 2024, where he reflected on directions for library technology in FE.



Ken set up his consulting business in 2007. His mission is to help make libraries, information services and archives more effective. Ken works with libraries, archives, universities, colleges, local and central government, sector bodies, the NHS and businesses. He helps with strategy, user experience, understanding needs, business models, value propositions and innovation. He also reviews services and helps procure new technology solutions. Ken has published and presented widely and manages several free, open community resources including Higher Education Library Technology (HELibTech) and Local Government Library Technology (LGLibTech).

A complex landscape

During the presentation I was struck by the complexities and contradictions that the profession faces navigating this challenging teaching and learning support landscape. The FE sector is in a continual state of flux; racing to catch up with itself; endeavouring to align library and learning resource services with wider institutional goals.

His presentation traversed a spectrum of topics. Cloud computing, 'technology, not library led' AI, social media, the flawed e-book market. He noted that, aside from specific library tech, general technology like Microsoft Copilot will have a profound impact on working practices and user behaviour. He highlighted:

- **Digitalisation and Access to E-Resources:** *'Libraries will continue to expand their digital collections, making e-books, e-journals, and other digital resources more accessible to users. The focus will be on providing seamless access to these resources through user-friendly interfaces and mobile applications.'*
- **Open Access and Open Educational Resources:** *'Libraries will play a critical role in promoting open access publishing and the use of open educational resources. They will provide platforms for hosting and disseminating scholarly works, textbooks, and educational materials freely to a global audience.'*
- **AI and Machine Learning:** *'AI technologies will enhance library services in various ways, including personalised recommendations for users, intelligent search capabilities, and automated metadata tagging and cataloguing. Chatbots and virtual assistants may also become common for answering user queries.'*
- **Virtual and Augmented Reality:** *'Virtual and augmented reality technologies may be used to create immersive learning experiences within libraries, allowing users to explore historical archives, simulated environments, or engage in interactive educational activities.'*
- **Internet of Things (IoT):** *'IoT devices may be integrated into library spaces to enhance security, improve energy efficiency, and provide real-time information to users about available resources, space availability, and events.'*
- **Enhanced Collaboration and Networking:** *'Libraries will increasingly collaborate with other institutions, such as museums and community centres, to create integrated cultural and educational hubs. Networking among libraries will also strengthen resource sharing and collaboration on projects.'*
- **User-Centric Services:** *'Libraries will focus on creating user-centric services and experiences, tailoring their offerings to meet the evolving needs and expectations of their communities. This may include flexible spaces for collaboration, workshops, and community engagement programmes.'*
- **Privacy and Ethical Considerations:** *'Libraries will need to navigate the ethical implications of collecting and managing user data while ensuring user privacy and data security.'*

The blurring line between EdTech and LibTech

Chad notes there is 'a dichotomy between the provision of library resources and learning resources.' It's increasingly difficult to identify what constitutes a resource that is managed (and paid for) by the library and what is an educational resource paid for from a learning budget. Within this context, what future does a traditional library management system have in delivering an increasingly diverse and eclectic portfolio of learning resources when Google (and now ChatGPT or Google Gemini) dwarf conventional library systems?

Are the library management systems we know and love dead in the water? Chad poses a challenging question as these learning systems and services assimilate. Who pays for the ecosystem? 'LibTech' becomes 'EdTech.' He argues that some current library vendors are mired in supporting legacy systems preventing the visionary transformative approach needed. 'Only those that can deliver new higher value platform solutions will thrive in the longer term.'

Enhanced personalisation and student engagement

The library and information services role in supporting teaching excellence and the student experience is integrating into a much wider learning paradigm. We can all list information innovations and disruptive technologies; the opportunities and possibilities are endless. Not only AI, but enhanced personalisation and student engagement using mobile apps, for example.



However, we're experiencing a proliferation of mobile educational apps and mobile learning tools at a time when parents are calling for a 'smartphone-free childhood.' We're all acutely aware of Brianna Ghey's mother calling for social media safeguarding. Nearly a third of UK secondary pupils avoid school due to [anxiety](#). The Covid-19 pandemic that helped create this situation also catalysed the transition to online learning and reliance on mobile technology. How do we get that balance right?

AI and the demise of student literacy

For every rally cry to embrace AI in education, there are concerns for student literacy and the demise of academic skills. A recent survey reported that ['more than half of UK undergraduates say they use AI to help with essays ...](#) One in four are using applications such as Google Gemini or ChatGPT to suggest topics and one in eight are using them to create content. Just 5% admitted to copying and pasting unedited AI-generated text into their assessments.'

Another US headline screamed: ['College Students Basically Don't Know How To Read Anymore. This is Grim.'](#) This 'marked decline' in 'reading resilience' started before the pandemic but was significantly hot housed by it; a reticence to read large volumes of prescribed text, partially down to the mobile tech culture and 'smartphones becoming the main medium for reading.'

The e-book market still stumbles along riddled by prohibitive pricing, bundling reducing choice and unstable access. One study concluded that: 'Reading print texts improves comprehension more than reading digital materials does...', so perhaps we are barking up the wrong digital tree?

The data and learning analytics that underpin most of these EdTech developments offer huge potential to map student behaviour, tracing digital footprints to determine support needs but also to evidence the value and impact of library and information services on student achievement and success. However, privacy and cyber security issues loom if a student is unaware that their data is being processed, regardless of the purpose or outcome. 'Libraries will need to navigate the ethical implications of collecting and managing user data while ensuring user privacy and data security,' says Chad.

And the greatest contradiction of all is that the information and data age, the 'fourth industrial revolution', is an age of mis- and dis-information, where technologies like deepfake audio and voice cloning have the potential to influence millions. On Safer Internet Day in February 2024 students listed misinformation, cyberbullying and the inadequate regulation of apps as key concerns when it came to their online safety.

Never have the opportunities to support teaching, learning and the student experience been greater, but the terrain is perilous.

Sponsor news and articles



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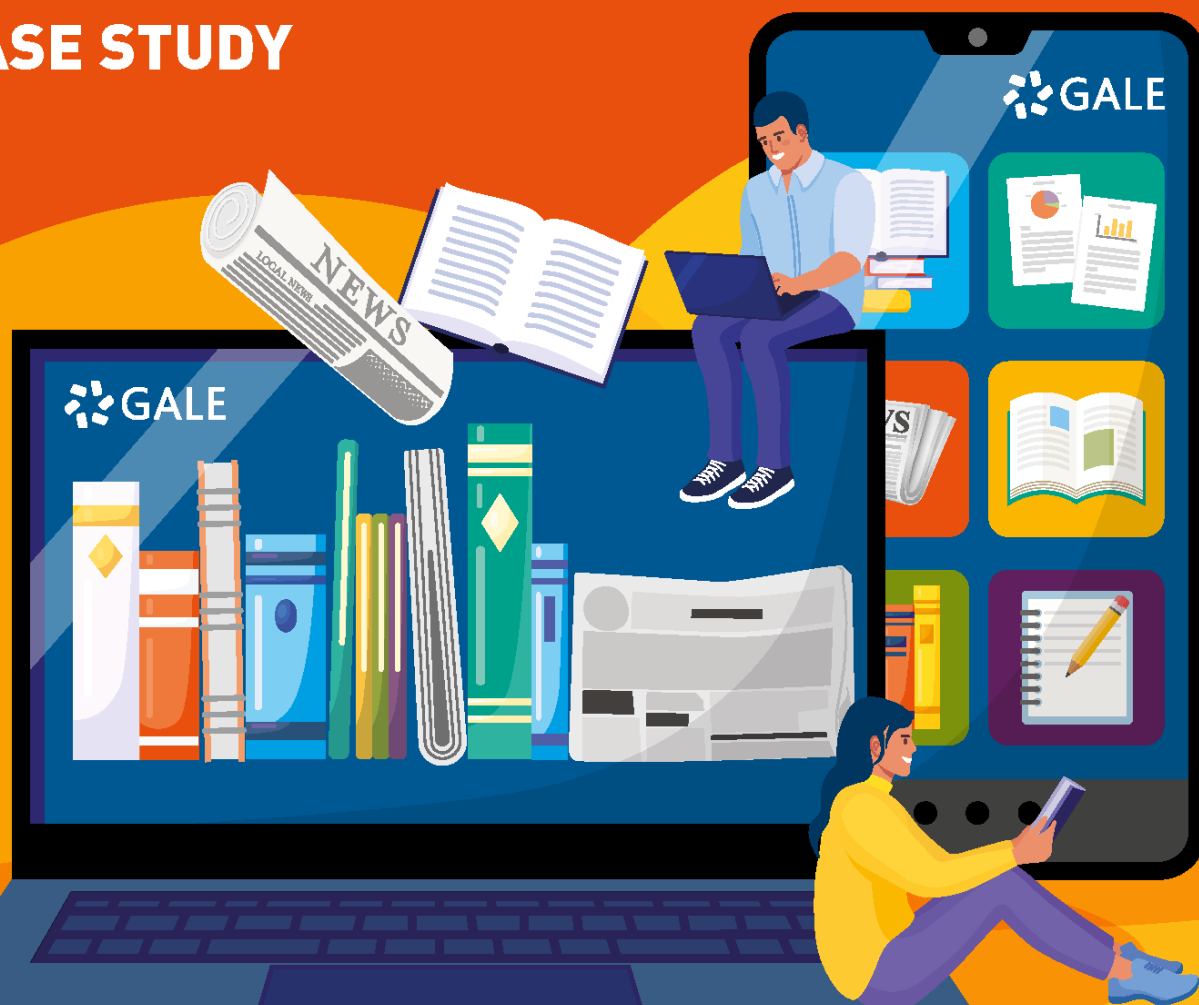
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CASE STUDY



BRINGING INFORMATION
TOGETHER - MAXIMISING IMPACT WITH:

GALE NEWS, BUSINESS AND REFERENCE

Academic and Digital Library Liaisons (ADLLs) at Edinburgh College maximise the impact of Gale resources by bridging the needs of students, faculty, and the library.



CASE STUDY



Role and experience

At Edinburgh College, the liaisons between academic departments, students, and the library are known as Academic and Digital Library Liaisons, or ADLLs. The team of five ADLLs, who have over 60 years of combined experience, work with curriculum areas, integrates collections, and delivers information literacy courses to assist learning and teaching.

“Our role is the bridge between academic departments, students, and the library.”

Library Goals and Objectives:

The main objective of the library is to empower library user experiences by providing a physical and digital environment that meet their needs and will improve their opportunities for future study or work.

The aim is to contribute to an excellent student experience alongside supporting staff and departments to achieve their curriculum targets and outcomes. The library also aims to contribute to College goals by being agile, impactful, and responsive to challenges.

“Our mission is to empower library user experiences by providing a physical and digital environment that meets their needs.”

Managing Budgetary Constraints:

Managing a small and decreasing budget is a major challenge for the library. They tackle this by prioritising acquisitions that successfully satisfy curricular and student needs by using data-driven insights and a needs-led approach to purchasing.

“Our biggest struggle is our small and ever-decreasing budget, but we manage this by taking a needs-led approach to purchases.”

Student and Staff Demographics:

Edinburgh College serves over 27,000 students from diverse backgrounds, supported by approximately 1,200 staff members. Each ADLL engages with thousands of students across various courses and qualification levels, including full-time, part-time, evening, and distance learning students.

Faculty Engagement:

The ADLLs employ flexible communication strategies tailored to each department to inform faculty about available resources such as *Gale News, Business, and Reference*. Methods include targeted discussions, emails, faculty training sessions, and integration into virtual learning environments.

Student Outreach:

Promotion of Gale resources to students occurs through information literacy sessions, research demonstrations, suggested reading lists, and assistance from front-line Library Assistants.

CASE STUDY

The aim is to provide multiple access points to resources both physically and virtually.

Successful Outreach Initiatives:

Staff awareness and use of Gale resources has successfully expanded thanks to programmes like development days and library drop-in sessions. These workshops provide opportunity for practical investigation and customised guidance.

Tailoring Communication Efforts:

Sessions on information literacy are tailored based on course levels and subjects, guaranteeing that students learn how to use resources such as Gale for certain assignments in a relevant and efficient way.



Popular Features within Gale:

Gale PowerSearch serves as an entry point for students, while features like the topic finder and the Readspeaker function cater to diverse learning needs and preferences.

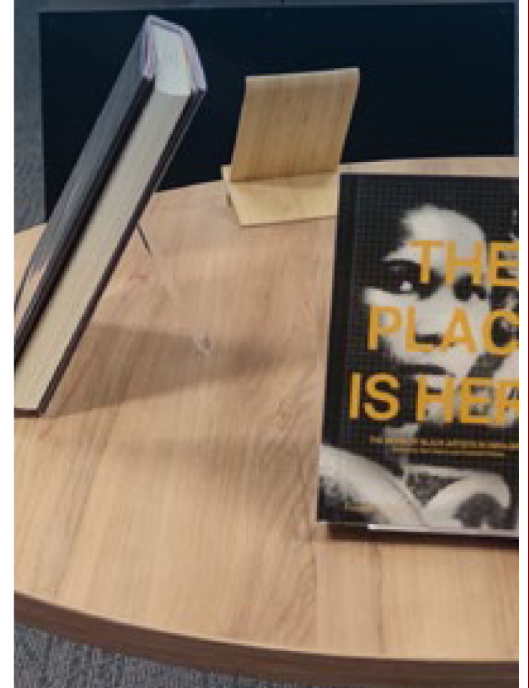
Curriculum Alignment:

Collaboration with faculty members ensures resources are aligned with curriculum requirements, increasing student engagement and usage. Clear demonstrations of relevance enhance faculty buy-in and support.

Overcoming Challenges:

Challenges such as limited time for resource promotion are addressed through strategic use of the library blog and Subject Research Guides to spotlight specific resources throughout the year.

“Feedback from the session was positive, with staff showing an increased awareness around the availability and scope of our online resources.”



CASE STUDY

For both staff and students searching across several different databases can be both confusing and time consuming. To help resolve this issue Edinburgh College incorporated Gale and other resources into their EDS. This not only gives staff and students a single search box to access a range of resources, but also introduces them to databases they may not have been aware of or considered using.

Keeping Students Informed:

Regular updates about newly available resources or updates are disseminated through the library website, Subject Research Guides, blog posts, and direct communication with lecturers.

Gathering Feedback:

Feedback from students is collected through various channels including session evaluations, 1-1 meetings, and surveys. Faculty feedback is obtained through ongoing discussions, collection reviews, and staff drop-ins.

Improving Usage:

Links to Gale resources are provided across multiple platforms including A-Z lists, LibGuides, and reading lists, tailored to specific courses and needs.

Through strategic collaboration, tailored communication, and targeted promotion efforts, Edinburgh College's library maximises the usage and impact of *Gale News, Business, and Reference* resources, enriching the learning and research experiences of its diverse student body.



For more information, please visit
gale.com/discovergnbr



Bridging the digital divide in education

Bridging the digital divide in education involves ensuring that all students have equal access to technology and digital resources to support their learning.



Let's take a look at the five key aspects involved to ensure that all students have an equal chance of fulfilling their potential:

1. Access to devices

Providing students with access to devices such as laptops, Chromebooks, and tablets is crucial for ensuring that they can participate in digital learning activities both at school and at home. Many campuses now loan devices through self-service Smart Lockers, ensuring access is seamless, efficient, and equitable.

Resources: [Automated Smart Locker Solutions](#) | [LapSafe](#)

2. Internet Connection

Access to reliable internet connectivity is essential for students to access online resources, participate in virtual classrooms, and complete digital assignments. Bridging the digital divide in education involves efforts to ensure that all students have access to high-speed internet both at school and at home. This may include providing aid allowances for low-income families to access internet services.

Resources: [Get Help with Technology Programme](#) | [GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

3. Digital Training

Ensuring that students have the necessary digital skills to effectively use technology for learning is essential for bridging the digital divide. This includes teaching students how to use basic computer applications, navigate the internet safely, evaluate online information, and use digital tools for communication, collaboration, and creativity.

Resources: [Equipping young people with digital skills](#) | [The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

4. Digital Resources

Ensuring that all students have access to digital educational resources, such as online textbooks, educational apps, multimedia content, and digital learning platforms, is important for bridging the digital divide. Educational institutions can work to provide equitable access to these resources for all students, regardless of their background and/or location limitations.

Resources: [Mobile device management solutions: laptop storage, Chromebook cabinets and tablet storage](#) | [LapSafe](#)

5. Teacher Training & Support

Supporting teachers in integrating technology effectively into their teaching practices is crucial for bridging the digital divide in education.

Providing professional development opportunities, resources, and ongoing support can help teachers leverage technology to enhance student learning and address individual learning needs.

Resources: [Embracing technology in school has changed how we teach - Teaching \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://www.blog.gov.uk/2015/05/embracing-technology-in-school-has-changed-how-we-teach/)

To summarise, bridging the digital divide in education requires an approach that addresses issues related to access, connectivity, digital literacy, and resource availability to ensure that all students can thrive in a digital learning environment.

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Budget saving strategies in FE libraries: current and future impacts

By Sam Goldsmith Business Development Manager at PTFS Europe

Like many of the staff here at PTFS Europe I come from a library background, in my case college libraries, and the concerns, needs and pressure points of FE are close to my heart. I would like to discuss the impacts and possible long term effects that will be felt by college libraries after so many years of budget pressure.

UK Schools and FE libraries have faced budget cuts over the past ten years due to uncertain and changing student funding and (alarmingly) OFSTED not requiring a library service to achieve excellence in teaching and learning. When budgets are constrained the leaders of the institution will prioritise ways to maintain funding and a good OFSTED result whilst saving money, often leading to a loss of library staff, space and budget.

It has become the norm that publishers' annual increases will exceed inflation with an average of 4% and some a staggering 11%, no matter what libraries do to save costs, these publishers claw the loss back.

The pandemic also brought a huge and rapid shift of services to online; with budget and even staff loss; yet there seems to be a reticence to return to pre-Covid levels of library funding; despite the fact that C19 period publication deals and freezes are long gone.

College libraries are having to provide more for less and be more strategic in an environment where the service may be under constant threat.

What strategies have been used? What will be the longer term impact of those strategies?

Reliance on Discovery services to ensure full use of subscriptions and archives

Impacts: Discoveries have become an essential for students to be able to find resources as our expansion into online continues BUT...

FE can be restricted in the choices of discovery with only two main players (Ebsco and Proquest) pricing according to FE budget levels.

This means that prices are kept at "what the market will bear" and that new exciting prospects in open source which would save institutions money - become a daunting task to switch to due to certain key resources being locked into a particular provider.

The key players do not seem to be developing their discoveries either, instead relying on this "lock in" of interconnected systems. Discovery systems in academic libraries tend to connect only subscriptions and the catalogue, they don't make it easy to include databases from their competitors, websites, Google connectors, archives and local collections via OAI-PMH. There are not yet any uses of machine learning or AI innovations. Some of these things are offered by newer discovery systems such as open source Aspen, but the majority of academic libraries are locked into one of the four key players because of the need to access resources that are uniquely accessible (or discounted) via that provider.

Moving to open source software

Impacts: No licence cost means it is often cheaper overall, even when a support company such as PTFS Europe is employed and therefore a very popular choice for FE. Going open source offers the “feel good factor” in supporting open and sharing values in a global community that mirror the ethics of librarianship. Free upgrades and constant innovation and development. Stability and reliability of such as Koha LMS that has been developed for almost 20 years.

Investigating “cost per use” and cancelling unused resources

Impacts: Cancellation may mean loss of the back catalogue, particularly if electronic. Will loss of the archive affect future need? Can we be sure that one year's monitoring is a true indication of the value of the resource? Does this impact in the future by costing more in ILLs and “pay per use?”

Using more data analysis on the impact of the service on student outcomes and retention - to influence spending and protect from further budget erosion

Impacts: It is important to reflect the values and needs of the organisation and proving impact is vital to the service's survival. There are some great solutions for analytics such as open source Metabase which is LMS agnostic and will combine your LMS data with external data for impactful graphics. In my experience a good visualisation is worth 100 spreadsheets.

Joining consortia and purchasing organisations such as Crescent, UKUPC and JISC allowing for combined purchase power and the ability to get the best deals

Impacts: All positive in regards to pressure on publishers to get the best deals. The JISC free e-resources is brilliant, but JISC collections also offers good discount power on other resources.

Focusing on digital and information literacy and induction: leading to more cost effective usage of resources

Impacts: An entirely positive approach. There are of course impacts on the focus of staff time, but with innovative new solutions and good reach these programs will ensure resources purchased get the most use. Positive interactions with the library team will also build the influence and impact of the service over time.

User experience tracking: knowing what the students need and adjusting services accordingly

Impacts: Can take a lot of staff time. One off annual surveys are not now adequate to ensure you are fulfilling student needs. The age old problems are still relevant - easy to ask a regular library user what they like or want to see changed; but how do we find out who we are missing and why?

Working more closely with curriculum: to ensure the greatest positive impact on student learning and experience

Impacts: Lots of positive benefits here as curriculum staff, when made aware of services, will help to promote them to students. They will become great advocates for the service and integrate the service into their teaching and learning. There will be impacts on staff time. It may be difficult to get involvement from some curriculum areas.

Moving away from BLDSS and using shared catalogues and reciprocal borrowing arrangements such as the JISC Library Hub Discover project, RapidILL, Rapido and local arrangements

Impacts: Reciprocal arrangements especially if entirely free are an excellent solution for academic libraries, sharing archival and specialist resources across the UK. This will require LMS systems to allow for new methods of ILL, such as Koha open source which is ready to support ISO18626. There is a danger however, that some LMS providers will gain a monopoly by refusal to include other LMS systems in their (subscription based) ILL agreements despite them using the same ISO protocols and standards. This concept is so far being taken up by universities who can afford the annual subscription. In the case of FE the future for reciprocal borrowing will be in the form of free ILL agreements between those with shared library systems - the Koha system already allows for easy sharing of resources between Koha libraries.

In summary:

- The world of FE is filled with constant change and financial challenges and that is likely to continue.
- Libraries are becoming well versed in methods to control spending but are now seeing the emerging impacts and consequences of our collective buying strategies of the past 10 years.
- A positive however, is that this environment, along with the ethics of librarianship, fosters amazing creativity and innovation, and I look forward to seeing how FE libraries adapt and thrive

About the author

Sam Goldsmith is the Business Development Manager at PTFS Europe and a former Chair of the CoLRiC Executive Committee.

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CloudSource and the Evolution of Open Access Scholarship: Part 1

**By Maryska Connolly, MLIS,
CloudSource Director of Partnerships
& Communication, SirsiDynix**



SirsiDynix

Follow this series as we navigate the history and future of open access content – and illustrate why CloudSource, a new discovery platform from SirsiDynix, is uniquely positioned to make a difference.

A brief history of the OA movement

The traditional publishing model of peer-reviewed academic output being mediated by scholarly journals (and their publishers) dates to the 17th century (Unwin, 2015). These publications were often elite, erudite, and seldom read by the general public. The internet changed everything. As its potential became realised by the academic world, efforts to democratise research were soon underway. Although much of the early guerrilla efforts to liberate scholarly research and literature came from the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) community in the form of listserv-distributed publications, anonymous File Transfer Protocol (FTP) servers, and early archives such as the Physics repository arXiv, the humanities and non-STEM researchers were also making their voices heard (Mering & Hoeve, 2020; "History of open access," 2024). Many academic disciplines were calling for an alternative to the "Faustian bargain" (Harnad, 1994) that is the relationship between traditional publishers and scholars, citing the new technology of the internet as the means to that end.

By the early 2000s, the open access movement already had a clear purpose and forward momentum. The first formal document to coin the term "open access" was the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) in 2002. It called upon the scholarly community to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the internet to remove access barriers to scholarly literature, with the intent to "accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the rich with the poor and the poor with the rich, make this literature as useful as it can be, and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge" (Budapest Open Access Initiative, 2002).

BOAI was only one of three powerful statements from within the academic community in just three short years – the other two being the “Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities” in 2003 and “An Open Letter to Scientific Publishers” in 2001 which called for “the establishment of an online public library that would provide the full contents of the published record of research and scholarly discourse in medicine and the life sciences in a freely accessible, fully searchable, interlinked form (“History of open access,” 2024). It would be a long time before that dream would become a reality with global OA aggregates such as CloudSource OA.

A paradigm shift in the research funding world would be the boost the OA movement needed. OA mandates attached to grant funding provided both an impetus and a pipeline for traditional publishers to accept OA research with all the gravitas of traditional peer-review. It is perhaps unsurprising that medicine would be the discipline on the forefront of grant funding mandates regarding open access. In 2000, the National Library of Medicine (NIH) Public Access Policy established PubMed Central (PMC) as a public repository for NIH funded research (“About PMC,” 2023). The mandate required the recipients of those funds to submit their peer-reviewed manuscripts to PMC within a 12-month window after publication. As pure OA journals – gold and diamond journals – began to emerge in the publishing landscape over the next decade, more mandates and policies were put in place in the United States and Europe. In 2013, the first Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) memorandum was issued in the U.S. followed by the European Union announcement, in 2016, that stated that “all scientific articles in Europe must be freely accessible as of 2020” (Holdren, 2013; Esmo, 2016). Traditional journals simply couldn’t omit grant-funded papers as the most cutting-edge research was being done by scientists and scholars who received grant funding with OA mandates attached. The practice of publishing OA right beside traditional articles became known as hybrid publishing. Today 84% of peer-reviewed OA articles can be found outside of pure OA journals.

Tension has emerged between traditional publishing models and open access mandates in the years since. The former works to adapt to the new OA-centric landscape through transformative and “read and publish” agreements designed to “shift the contracted payment from a library or group of libraries to a publisher away from subscription-based reading and towards open access publishing” (Hinchliffe, 2020), while OA mandates become more comprehensive and inevitable. The OSTP update in 2023 removes the optional 12-month embargo, making all U.S. Government funded research available to the public immediately upon publication no later than December 31, 2025. The eleven European funders, organised under cOAlition S, announced Plan S in 2018, which required that all research output based on funding from these organisations to be published in full Open Access journals by 2021, disallowing both publishing in hybrid journals and embargos (What is cOAlition S?, 2024).

A PeerJ Publishing study done in 2018 predicted that if current trends continued nearly 100% of scholarly output would be published under some kind of OA license by 2040 (Portenoy, 2018). As of 2023, we are at 60% or 3.9 million articles published just that year (Lens.org, 2024). If anything, actual trends are ahead of those predictions. Unfortunately, discovery of these OA resources is often the biggest challenge faced by librarians and their patrons.

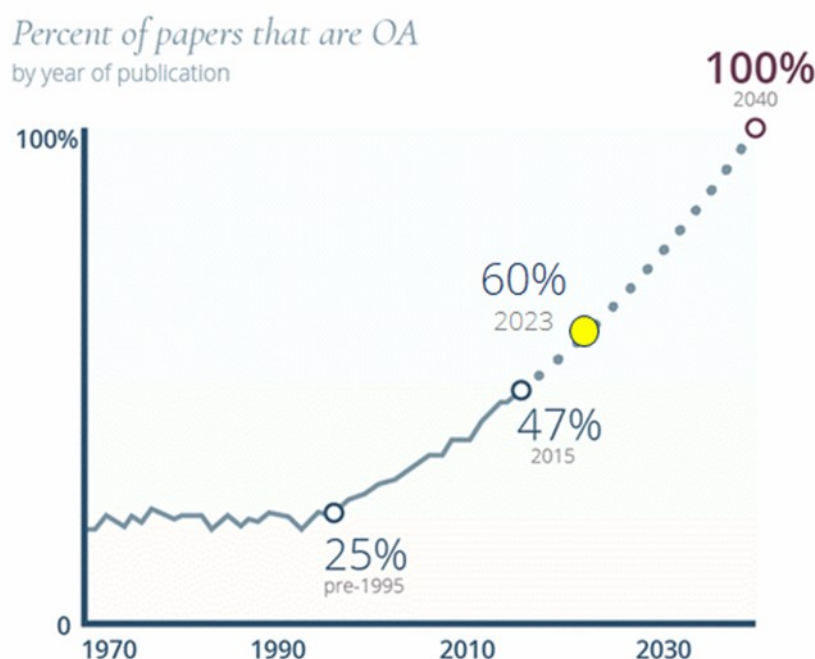


Figure 1: Updated graph from Portenoy, 2018, showing the actual percent of OA scholarly journal output in 2023

What is CloudSource OA?

Most discovery platforms are incentivised to promote paywalled content first, then offer OA resources as a secondary option. In fact, turning on OA content often includes just DOAJ's gold and diamond journals, which amounts to about 16% of all OA scholarly output (DOAJ, 2024; Lens.org, 2024). Chris Bulock of California State University Northridge observed that *"Library systems are just as much about preventing people from researching as they are connecting people to resources. This emphasis on paid, protected access is sometimes just too difficult to reconcile with OA resources"* (2020). As a pertinent example, the Mering & Hoeve article cited earlier in this article is published under an OA license, however, the DOI link takes you to the publisher page where the reader is invited – if their institution is not a subscriber – to pay \$53 (£42) to download a PDF copy. There is simply no indication that this research is available for free. This article is available through CloudSource OA.

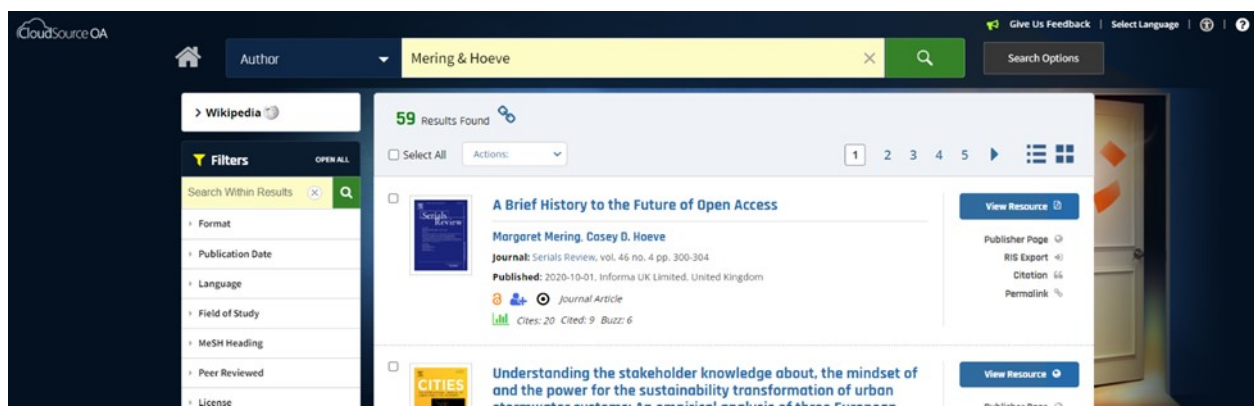


Figure 2: CloudSource OA results for "Mering & Hoeve"

CloudSource OA (CSOA), a new discovery platform from SirsiDynix, aggregates and fully exposes the global body of OA and OER resources. Unlike traditional discovery platforms, CSOA is publisher neutral and prioritises the least restrictive path to obtaining resources. This means less frustration for both librarians and patrons as one-click, no-authentication-required results are offered first, even for CloudSource+ (CS+) customers who include their paid subscriptions in the index.

CSOA provides not only one-click access to full-text OA content, but also metadata enrichment and a robust search. Additional widgets provide features such as citation tools, scholarly metrics, easily identifiable Creative Commons licensing terms, and social media buzz. The growing OA content offerings – more than 60M articles, datasets, reports, ebooks, etextbooks, and OER – is enhanced with CloudSource-enriched metadata and subject headings. This includes more than 700M enriched data elements (fields of study, expanded publication data, MeSH headings, PubMed keywords, abstracts, author information), along with citation metrics, links to related materials, reviews, and alternate full text links.



Figure 3: CloudSource OA metadata enrichment points

CloudSource OA isn't just for academic institutions. Currently, about 300 public and school libraries have likewise found that utilising OA as the bulk of their collection is an effective way to provide their users with high-quality, peer-reviewed research material then supplement strategically with paid subscriptions. CloudSource OA is a managed resource that is easy to set up and maintain with little staff time needed. COUNTER-compliant reporting tools allow for the collection of usage statistics and analytics when it's time to do yearly reporting or make informed collection development decisions.

It can be easy to dismiss OA content as less relevant outside of STEM fields considering the early prevalence of STEM subject headings, but data shows that the OA landscape is rapidly becoming more inclusive of the arts, humanities, and social sciences. In Part 2 of this series, we'll look more closely at which subject headings have historically appeared most frequently in OA scholarly literature and what the landscape looks like today.

Visit CloudSource.net to learn more, register for a webinar, or request a collection analysis to find out how much of the content you are paying for is actually open access.

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The crazy world of e-books

Tracey Toffy, Library Services Manager, Middlesbrough College

In February 2024 ARLG North East hosted the second of three webinars about e-books. Called 'The crazy world of e-books' it covered e-book expectations, purchasing, and how Middlesbrough College manages its e-book collection.

Expectations

Staff and students expect e-books to work in the same way as Kindle editions on Amazon. Amazon does provide instant access, whereas some of the educational providers take a few hours to process and activate the e-book. Often our colleagues do not realise that we are not allowed to use Kindle e-books as they are for personal use not institutional use. They have no idea about institutional access prices and are shocked to find out how high they are.

Purchasing

There are different purchasing options that Middlesbrough College must consider. We look at access models, prices, and vendors to find the best purchasing option. Some titles are listed without a price, and this is generally thought of as being too expensive because it is not displayed. E-book bundling seems to be more of a problem for HE than FE. There are also some vendors that expect colleges to buy one copy of the e-book per student and this is not possible due to cost.

The issues surrounding purchasing include:

- Being priced out of the market
- Only being able to afford one-user access models
- New editions:
 - Not have the same access options as previous editions
 - Having their prices hiked
 - No e-book being available for the new edition.

Where prices are prohibitively expensive only paper copies can be purchased. This is not suitable for all students as many want to use e-books. Where one-user access is the model purchased, staff are encouraged to display the e-book on their whiteboard in their lesson so that everyone can see it. Reservations are also an issue because students want to use the e-book immediately and not wait two to three hours it may take for the book to become available.

What Middlesbrough College does

Middlesbrough College relies on JISC E-books for FE Collection for our textbooks. This brings its own challenges, as we do not know if the title will stay in the package. We would prefer using fewer platforms and staying with the ones the students are most familiar with. However sometimes the best options are from other vendors. We have Open Access books listed on our library catalogue, some of which are now on HE reading lists. Our virtual learning environment SharePoint has a page listing Open Access resources we have found. Another SharePoint page lists information sources by vendor allowing their Open Access to be searched (something that our discovery system is not set up to do.) Where there is limited access, downloads of e-books are either switched off completely or are set to the most restrictive hours to try to keep access as available as possible.

Feedback

A discussion took place after the presentation, people named their least favourite e-book publishers, discussed the use of Patron or Demand Driven Acquisitions and how to educate staff and students about the challenges of purchasing e-books for an institution.





Want to make a positive difference to your library's procurement projects?

Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) is a not-for-profit charity and purchasing consortium, owned by the further education sector. We work to assist institutions in their use of public money, helping them procure goods, services and works in an efficient and compliant manner. CPC membership is free of charge to educational establishments

and, with around 10,000 members across the United Kingdom, it is highly likely your FE college/sixth form is already a part of this growing community.

As a flagship feature of its support offering, CPC provides members with free access to circa 90 purchasing frameworks, including a number publicly recommended by the Department for Education (DfE). As time goes on, we strive to improve, revamp and refine various frameworks for members, ensuring we can continue to better meet their needs in an ever-evolving educational landscape.

We are currently moving towards the retender of our Library Resources framework, which enables institutions to compliantly purchase physical and electronic reading materials, including textbooks, journals and periodicals, plus library discovery services.

The present version of this framework is set to expire in October and we hope its next iteration will include an expansion of the library discovery services on offer (incorporating a range of relevant software, such as library management systems, reading lists and acquisitions modules).

CPC is conscious of how much of our stakeholder engagement when establishing and/or updating a framework is with other procurement professionals. Likewise, we recognise the significant value in communicating directly with the staff making the purchases or making use of the software. With that in mind, we are interested in speaking with library staff to ascertain common challenges you might have experienced. For instance, CPC has been made aware of the expense posed by some library management systems, with the suggestion that, as these might have been created for the use of multi-campus universities, they may not be suitable for college or sixth form set-ups. We would love to learn more about these kinds of challenges and duly provide some suitable direction that can shape a procurement process.

CPC is an organisation that exists to support the education sector, empowering its buying to achieve better results, unlocking new learning opportunities via superior procurement outcomes. As we look to deliver an enhanced and enriched Library Resources framework, we are eager to establish a closer relationship with CoLRiC members, collaborating effectively for the benefit of students.

If you have any information or opinions you would like to share that could form part of our new Library Resources agreement, or are curious to see if there are savings your institution could make through use of the incoming framework, feel free to reach out to Lisa O'Shea, Senior Procurement Officer at Crescent Purchasing Consortium via l.m.oshea@thecpc.ac.uk or by calling 0161 974 0947.



National Acquisitions Group

The National Acquisitions Group (NAG)

How could NAG help you?

The [National Acquisitions Group](#), known to everyone as NAG, has been around since the 1980s linking libraries across sectors and commercial organisations who supply or work with libraries to talk to each other about all things library acquisitions related. We believe this direct communication improves relationships and creates opportunities for change and development in the sector.

Membership is spread geographically across the UK, but historically has rarely included libraries from the FE sector; something we would love to change! The potential benefits of access to such a wide range of library people and events could be significant, especially for library staff working as solos or in very small teams.

We aim to provide both formal and informal training and discussion sessions both in person and online. Our [annual Seminar and Forum events](#) each May offer a selection of papers, and are also a unique opportunity to network with other acquisitions colleagues and meet commercial partners in a low pressure environment.

We try to replicate this informal discussion space throughout the year online with our "Coffee and a Chat" sessions which take a central topic from the "Hot Topics" suggested by our members and also allow for general chat amongst the Zoom Room too around anyone's issues or queries. They have proved extremely popular and usually reach around 30-40 people. Topics from these sessions can go on to become webinars, papers or even NAG Standards to offer recommendations to the sector and the industry.

NAG webinars are usually free and open to everyone so do sign up to [our free mailing list](#) to keep informed of what's coming up. Recordings of webinars are initially restricted to members only but most become open access after 6-12 months so there is an archive to browse on the "Learn" section of the NAG website for everyone.

Informal experience sharing also happens via our new NAG Blog which gives an insight into different potential job roles across the library sectors for our Members.

For more specific questions, we have our "[Ask Us](#)" service. Simply fill in a little Google Form with your query and we'll try and match you up with one of our team who might be able to help you. This can range from a quick email, through to a longer lasting peer relationship for support.

NAG Membership offers:

- Discounted booking at NAG events
- Access to online content such as webinar recordings and our “Intro to Acquisitions”
- Coffee and a Chat online discussion sessions
- Online access to the NAG blog
- Eligibility for [NAG Award](#)
- Opportunities to input into NAG Standards for commercial suppliers
- Access to “Taking Stock” content from NAG’s journal
- “Ask Us”
- Opportunities to influence direction as part of NAG Executive Committee

Membership for all staff at your Institution is £125 a year; or alternatively individual membership is available at £55 (+VAT).

NAG has agreed that CoLRiC members will receive a special one-off year fee of £75. This offer is available to new and existing NAG members as defined here <https://www.aoc.co.uk/about/list-of-colleges-in-the-uk>.

And how could you help NAG?

In general we would like to hear more voices from FE within the NAG world. We would be delighted to feature an FE Librarian in our blog “A day in the Life of” series, or to host your webinar or hear you speak at a NAG event. Beyond that, FE representation on NAG Executive Committee is a key goal too and our existing Exec would be very happy to chat to anyone interested in putting themselves forward about what that entails.

CoLRiC MediaWatch

An especially compiled and edited overview of January to March 2024 news stories, research projects and developments from across the education and library sectors that are of relevance to our members.

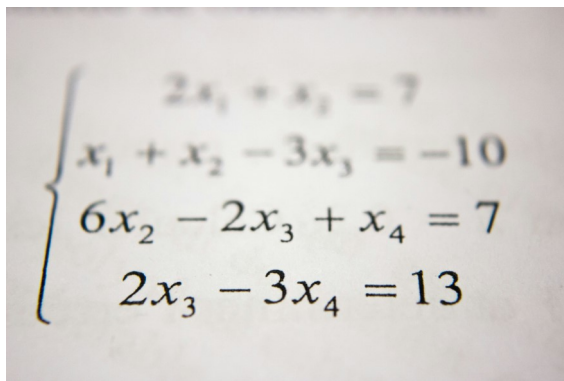
The eyes of the UK educational media have been focused on the future of teaching and learning in an age of disruptive technologies: strategies for the successful integration of AI into education, digital transformation, the impact of educational technology and developing an holistic approach to lifelong learning.

In a thought-provoking and must-read article for FE News in March, Ben Thuriaux-Aleman, Simon Guyomard-Norman and Rayhaan Surve posed the fundamental question: ‘What will the further education teaching mission be in the future?’ They reflected on the opportunities and challenges of digital and online learning, emphasising ‘the need to balance improved in-person learning with online options and outline strategies for success in a world increasingly driven by lifelong learning.’

'While the pandemic forced an overnight change in the delivery of university and further education teaching, in many ways it simply turbocharged an existing shift toward digital learning, which caused many students and institutions to question how and where learning should take place. This rebalancing is still playing out, driving innovation in course delivery against a backdrop of a greater focus on improving the quality of in-person learning, lifelong learning, and non-traditional teaching options.'

Making maths count

Recently undertaking some desktop research to plan a CoLRiC lunchtime seminar on the challenges of student engagement in numeracy, we came across a scholarly paper by C Rashaad Shabab from the Department of Economics at the University of Sussex Business School. Published by the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, the UK's chartered professional body for mathematicians, it's entitled '[Understanding mathematics anxiety](#)'


$$\begin{cases} 2x_1 + x_2 = 7 \\ x_1 + x_2 - 3x_3 = -10 \\ 6x_2 - 2x_3 + x_4 = 7 \\ 2x_3 - 3x_4 = 13 \end{cases}$$

and deals with the conundrum of teaching maths and engaging students; an issue you all will be familiar with. Many of us will remember the dreaded childhood fear of navigating maths homework. 'Some students may experience anxiety and disengage because they are overly affected by the threat of failure.' The authors articulate multiple strategies to overcome number phobia, including gamification and fun problem solving.

In March, the Guardian reported on an [Education Policy Institute](#) study that has concluded that [disadvantaged pupils have fallen further behind in maths since Covid](#), and that the pandemic has intensified existing inequalities between students from low income families and their peers. Geoff Barton, the general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), said:

'Schools have moved heaven and earth to support children in catching up with lost learning from the pandemic but as these results show this has not been an easy task, and in terms of maths that is likely to be because missing key elements of numeracy at an early stage makes later progress much more difficult.'

He cited the government's failure to provide sufficient investment in education recovery as a key issue.

In February The Independent published the outcomes of a survey reporting that '[More girls lack confidence when studying maths and science than boys.](#)' Eleanor Busby writes:

'The Teach First charity is calling for more high-quality Stem teachers to be recruited and trained to inspire the next generation. More female pupils lack confidence when studying mathematics and science than their male peers. The gender confidence gap poses a "threat" to the UK's future science, technology, engineering and mathematics (Stem) workforce. Two in five (40%) pupils said they did not enjoy learning maths in school and 30% said they did not enjoy learning science. Among the pupils who reported not enjoying maths in school, more than half of female pupils (54%) said they did not feel confident in learning maths, compared to two-fifths (41%) of male pupils.'

Look out for BBC Radio 4's March 13th Sideways programme [For the Love of Maths](#). An entertaining insight into making numeracy compelling.

AI - don't fear it...embrace it

Artificial Intelligence continues to dominate the media with considerable debate on the implications for the future of education. The common mantra has been 'don't fear it... embrace it and reap its benefits,' and the sector is buzzing with discussions on what those benefits might be. To temper any enthusiasm for the tech innovation, there has been a rally cry to not throw the baby out with the bath water and to 'ensure that the vital human elements of education are preserved.'

In February [FE News](#) reported on a fascinating study that reveals the UK cities where students are most likely to use ChatGPT AI to write their essays. A team of professional writers at [EssayPro](#) 'analysed Google search volume over the last year for terms related to using artificial intelligence tools to write essays. The team looked at twenty-nine search terms, including "ai essay writer" and "how to use ai for essays" to find out which cities have students who want a quick and easy way to get essays finished, then ranked them according to the number of searches each month per one million residents.'

Apparently, Bath is currently top of the league. The article quotes EssayPro's blog author Adam J on the findings:

'Students are bombarded with information and homework every day, making time one of the most precious commodities in college life. As busy as they are, turning to artificial intelligence to help them efficiently complete work seems like a no-brainer. ChatGPT and models like it can be used as an assistant but should never be used to write an entire essay or piece of work. For structural assistance or support with vocabulary to provide a better reading experience, AI models excel and enhance the hard work a student puts into their essays. It can even help generate ideas and put thoughts into a coherent sentence. However, overuse of AI can cause students to lose essential critical thinking and research skills. Generative learning models draw from existing material, opening the door for plagiarism.'

We'll leave you all to find out the top ten.

In February the Education Endowment Foundation initiated a Teacher Choices trial exploring [different approaches to lesson planning](#). It will 'test the impact of ChatGPT-assisted lesson and resource preparation on teacher time, with implementation support via a toolkit for teachers, against approaches unassisted by generative AI technology.'

The ChatGPT Toolkit will support the use of ChatGPT for teaching and learning providing:

'Technical support on getting started on ChatGPT, teacher-led demonstration videos, and example scripts showing the prompts that a user entered. It aims to support teachers to find activity ideas, adapt materials for their pupils and find effective examples and ready-made practice questions and model answers.'

Defining an educational future

Jisc's National Centre for AI is leading the way in defining an educational future with the technology, supporting policy making, guidance, operational and strategic planning and emphasising 'the importance of taking a comprehensive organisation-wide approach'.

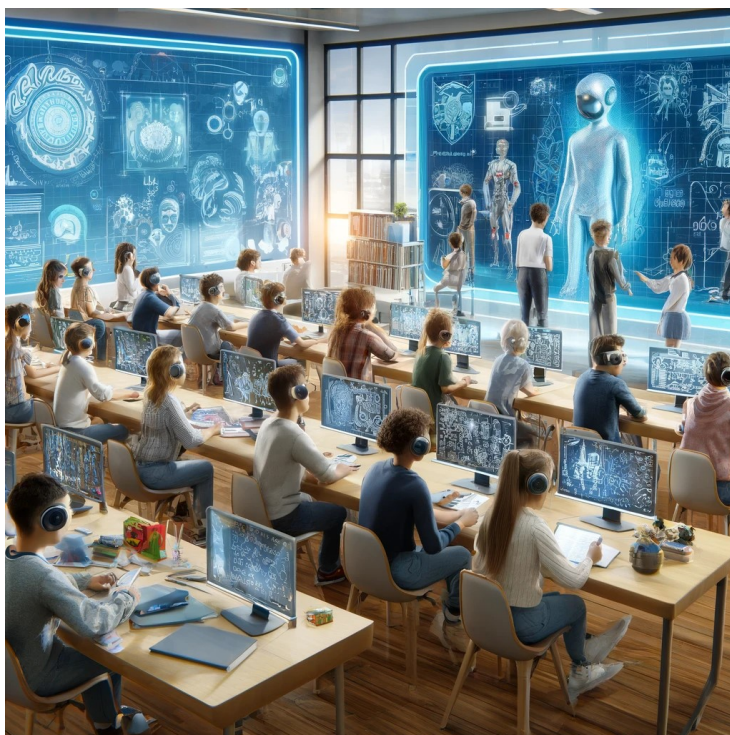
In February Scott Hibberson asked '[What AI skills will learners need?](#)' - sharing key findings from a series of staff development workshops delivered at a further education college in the north of England.

'In the workshop I asked staff what they understood about how artificial intelligence is likely to impact the skills required by industry in the future. A range of curriculum areas were present, involving over one hundred staff, covering many perspectives. The findings provide a snapshot of how AI is impacting a range of vocational areas. In some cases, many AI-related skills are already in use, but in others, there is an expectation of how skills might change. Forecasting AI's impact on the future job market is always going to be a challenge. A degree of aspirational thinking and speculation is inevitable. In fact, one of the participants in the workshop said it best when I asked how AI is likely to affect jobs in their vocational area: "I don't know, but I don't know what I don't know." We are seeing new and innovative uses for AI surface all the time; in ways we cannot yet begin to anticipate. It's vital that staff tasked with developing learner skills are given the opportunities to explore AI properly. It's the only way to build confidence and a responsible and informed approach to AI.'

The National Centre is also sharing [examples of AI use across FE](#), spanning various subject areas using different AI tools and establishing a [Resource Hub for AI Success Stories in Education](#). Have you got any achievements to share with the CoLRiC community? We'd love to hear about them. Examples could include: AI for [workload reduction](#), using ChatGPT to create essay plans, create multiple choice quizzes, preparing lesson plans and video or image generation. Are you using AI for any library specific projects?

In January Sue Attewell, Head of AI and codesign at the Centre said:

'Recent discussions with our community have emphasised the importance of sharing best practices and promoting successful examples of AI use in education. Following this feedback, we are looking to create a comprehensive Resource hub for AI success stories in education. Please get in touch with shareable examples. We are keen to hear successful, specific examples of how AI has improved your educational practices, whether that be examples of prompts you used to create an excellent lesson plan or a description of a more complex workflow involving different tools. Do you have a standout example that worked well for you? How did your students benefit from this? We would like to know the context, tools used, outcomes, and any insights gained.'



How to ...

The National Centre has also published a portfolio of [‘how-to’ resources](#) ‘empowering educators to use AI effectively.’ These include how to use ChatGPT, Google Gemini and Microsoft Copilot.

Quick links :

- [Exploring uses of AI across the FE community](#)
- [Generative AI – a primer](#)
- [Principles to Practice: Taking a whole institution approach to developing your Artificial Intelligence Operational Plan](#)
- [Empowering Educators by Harnessing Generative AI](#)

The Centre has also published a learner advice blog, [Learner Guidance for FE](#) in an attempt to respond to queries about best practice in the provision of advice to students in colleges about AI. ‘One approach is to clearly separate more formal policies from friendly, student-facing advice.’

Acceleration

The third annual [Studiosity](#) Student Wellbeing report published the results of their independent survey of 2,050 students at universities in the UK and indicates that there is an increasing demand to accelerate the uptake of AI and integrate it more effectively into teaching and learning. It’ll be interesting to monitor the views of the further education student community. Is your College adapting fast enough?

Digital landscape

Jisc has published a guide to help FE colleges [navigate the digital landscape](#) with their discovery tool and the Gartner Hype Cycle.

Anxious, distressed and under-18

There is a consensus amongst students, parents and teachers that mental well-being impacts on academic success.

The Association of Colleges (AoC) is committed to health and wellbeing and in February issued a revised [Mental Health Charter](#) for college staff and students.

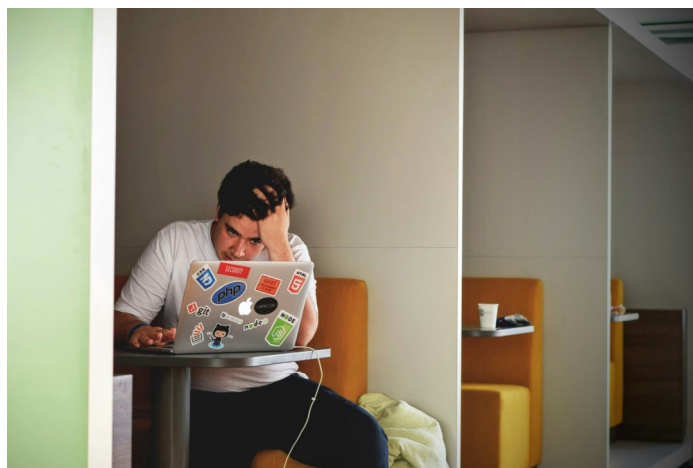
'The pressures on college services are exponentially higher than ever and it's important that the charter is updated to remain fit for purpose. The original eleven principles remain but are now embedded across four themes that make up the new Mental Health Charter framework, detailing good practice principles and standards.'

The four themes are:

- Leadership and ethos: through authentic leadership, model and champion an inclusive culture that meets the needs of the college community. Embed a consistent and coordinated whole-college approach to mental health through effective governance and leadership that ensures wellbeing permeates all aspects of college life
- Support for students: foster a physically and psychologically safe and welcoming environment that promotes wellbeing, proactively supporting students' mental health throughout their learning journey
- Workplace wellbeing: nurture a culture that supports and invests in people and their wellbeing and create an exceptional working environment where colleagues feel valued, supported and can thrive
- Evidence and impact: deliver and develop services, policies and strategy which are responsive to research and evidence of lived-experience and community need. Provide transparent accountability through consistent and effective mechanisms, regular evaluation and reporting, and have a partnership approach to college activity.

[Stem4](#), the charity supporting teenage mental health, indicates that 28% of 12 to 18-year-olds avoid school due to anxiety, Dr Nihara Krause, the charity's founder, told the [Guardian](#):

'Emotionally based school avoidance is a very worrying, growing phenomenon. It is different to school absence due to truancy. It is when a child or young person experiences extreme anxiety or distress relating to attending school. This fear can be so great that they avoid going to school.' 24% of those avoiding school said they did so because of family difficulties, 18% due to bullying or friendship issues and others because of exam stress. What



can start as a few days off school can quickly spiral into persistent absence.'

Deep dive into the future of education

The GoStudent [Future of Education Report 2024](#) is an annual 'deep dive into the future of education,' and a highly recommended and fascinating read. When UK children were asked to list the top ten topics they wanted to study, learning technology developments including Ed Tech, AI, Virtual Reality, coding and programming were on the list, alongside a demand for life skills, finance, ethics and morality, diversity and inclusion, and most notably wellness and mental health. 85% of parents in the UK indicated that mindfulness and emotional wellbeing would help their children manage stress and emotions, with 90% of teachers believing access to mental health support would better-prepare students for the future.

So, the future curriculum looks blended, hybrid and emotionally as well as artificially intelligent.

Safer Internet Day

It was Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 6th February 2024 with the theme of 'Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online'. The day aimed to 'inspire a UK-wide conversation about using technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively.' To mark the event the [Welsh Government](#) invited young people from across Wales 'to share their views and raise concerns about the ever-changing online world.' Cyberbullying, misinformation and the inadequate regulation of apps were major concerns.

Spring budget blues

The Association of Colleges criticised the [spring budget](#) as an 'own goal.' AoC Chief Executive David Hughes said:

'The Chancellor missed another opportunity today to back his quest for economic growth by investing in the skills which will drive it. The lack of much-needed funding for colleges in today's spring budget will mean skills shortages will continue to hamper employers who are struggling to find the skilled people they need to grow. There is a simple reality, that the Prime Minister's economic priorities cannot be achieved without a boost in investment in skills through colleges.'

In February, in advance of the budget, the AoC published a [fascinating statistical oversight](#) of the FE college sector covering facts and figures about the sector alongside funding issues. Key demands were reimbursing VAT for colleges, levelling pay with teachers and extending tuition funding for young people.

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
4	Friday 14 th June 2024	Early July