



Council for Learning
Resources in Colleges

IMPACT

Issue 1 2020/21

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Editorial
- A Word from our Chairs
- CoLRiC News
- CoLRiC Community - Browns Books for students case study, The Manchester College
- BPA: William: the story of a library dog, Chichester College
- BPA: Supporting independent learning, St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College
- CPD: Online networks: a cost-effective way to boost your professional development
- Spotlight on... Benjamin Poore, Library and Study Skills Assistant



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

EDITORIAL – HELEN SHERWOOD

Welcome to the first of four issues of Impact for the 2020/2021 academic year. I hope you all managed a well-earned break, home or away, over the summer months. This 'new normal' issue shows how colleges are adapting to a very challenging set of circumstances.



**KEEP
CALM
IT'S THE
NEW
NORMAL**

As I write this in West Yorkshire, we are in Tier 2 and trying to keep up with what that means. Wherever you are reading this, keeping colleges and schools open is a priority. We have all adapted our services to ensure the best possible experience for our students. All the articles in this issue demonstrate that Libraries continue to look out to other parts of their college or beyond to make sure they are closely aligned to curriculum needs and keeping themselves up to date with professional developments.

If you would like to contribute to a future issue, submission details can be found on the back page.

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIRS

We are now well into the autumn term and things look and feel very different from the norm. By now we would have concluded our library inductions. Our days would have been filled with all kinds of drama and we would have been glad to go home at the end of the day. I for one really miss it. That old adage 'If we knew then what we know now..' really resonates. What advice would we have given ourselves I wonder?

I am heartened by the sheer focus and determination of our workforce to continue to provide quality services to staff and students. We have upskilled ourselves to ensure students can still access the library services virtually, and that study support remains intact. We attended so many webinars during lockdown and remained a community of people determined to continue helping our colleges. We adapted ourselves to new ways of working and adjusted our working hours to suit new lesson timetables and the emergence of bubbles. We have worked out how to keep everyone safe through risk assessments. What seemed like an impossible task was made possible by you.

This issue of Impact shines the spotlight on Ben Poore, this year's Jeff Cooper Award Winner. I am pleased to say he is a member of the team at Leyton Sixth Form College and has had an amazing impact on student learning. His wider focus has been on creating small communities within the college, through The Choir, The Blog and the staff reading groups. I have been impressed with the diversity of his activities which combined have helped the Library become a focal point in the college.

We continue to celebrate the work of our college libraries through our best practice awards. We find out more about how St Francis Xavier in South London have updated their access to online resources. They generated multiple access points for their resources, enabling students and staff to find resources they need quickly. Lockdown has emphasised the importance of having a variety of good quality e-resources and making them easily accessible for staff and students.

Chichester College responded to student feedback ingeniously. Students had said that the library was boring, so the library team brought in William, the therapy dog. He had a positive impact. He has improved staff and student relationships and has had a calming influence on students revising for their exams. William also visits the onsite nursery and pops into classrooms. He has made the largest impression on students with additional needs and those working on the foundation programme. Currently social distancing, William hopes to return as soon as he can.

Our new website, currently under construction, will be ready for launch early in the new year. We are all really excited about this. It will provide access to the latest news and information, showcasing membership benefits including our private discussion forum and document repository. Our Admin team are currently populating it with content, and we will update you soon on the launch date.

We will be focusing on the promises made in the three-year strategy. Three themes - Opportunity, Community and Influence - are central to the future vision of CoLRiC . We have been partially successful in ensuring that some of our e-resources have remained free. Some

**We should
congratulate
ourselves on
a job well
done**

however have become paid for, so we will continue to work with all relevant agencies to provide best value and much needed resources for our students to use. We expect the new term will see lots of questions, ideas and experience sharing as we all attempt to get back to work in an ever changing new normal. Remember the discussion list is private, only open to our members, and is a place to share ideas and questions/concerns safely. Please continue to use this should you need any support and advice.

Our very best to you all

Mirna Peach and Corinne Walker
CoLRiC Co-Chairs

COLRIC NEWS

CoLRiC Executive Committee activity

The CoLRiC Executive Committee met in late September with an extensive agenda of items for discussion. Some key issues and projects include:

- ❖ Creating a new website for launch early in the new year. It will highlight key CoLRiC resources and services, emphasising the important role CoLRiC plays in supporting the FE/Sixth Form College community, championing quality across the sector and supporting organisations in evidencing the impact and value that our members bring to teaching and learning support and the student experience. We will keep you informed and updated throughout this project via our regular member email bulletins.
- ❖ Work is ongoing on CoLRiC's three-year strategy. It's under review in light of the pandemic, with an increased emphasis on remote learning and digital capabilities. We will consult with the CoLRiC community about your concerns and priorities and how best we can support you in the future.
- ❖ We are keen to develop and nurture collaborative relationships with relevant external organisations, working with them to help improve FE services and resources.



CoLRiC's members-only Document Repository – how you can help

A key element of the new website will be a Document Repository. This will be a diverse collection of documents, including role descriptions, learning resource guides and strategy documents shared by our membership. Members will be able to download and adapt any document and submit content for inclusion in the repository. Our Admin Team will redact, anonymise and index documents before making them available.

We will regularly publish a call to our members to submit documents on specific topics to share with the CoLRiC Community. Our first call for documents is for ROLE DESCRIPTIONS. Please help us by submitting your role descriptions to the Admin Team.

Unlocking Libraries

'Unlocking Libraries', CoLRiC's response to the global pandemic, lockdown and subsequent re-opening of schools and colleges, captured many of your concerns, ideas and experiences. We're still keen to hear your views so please share them on our JiscMail discussion forum or contact the admin team.

The Jeff Cooper Award 2020

In September we were delighted to announce that the winner of the 2020 Jeff Cooper Award for Inspirational Information Professional of the Year was Benjamin Poore, Library and Study Skills Assistant, from Leyton Sixth Form College library. The judges felt that Ben is a "committed, creative and innovative individual, who is making a really impressive contribution to library service delivery".

They were impressed by the variety of student support activities in which Ben is involved and felt that his focus on facilitating outcomes for individual learners is truly inspirational.

In response to the news, Ben said “of course it is very humbling to have my colleagues think so highly of me as to nominate me for the award – and doubly so that the judging panel would feel the same way. It is a real testament to the quality of the work that goes on here [Leyton Sixth Form College] that I am able to do things that help, I hope, enrich the life of the College and our students, and everything I have done has been thanks to wonderful colleagues”.

Ben is featured in this issue of CoLRiC Impact.

Congratulations to Ben who received a trophy and certificate in a presentation at Leyton Sixth Form College celebrating his achievements.

Best Practice Award 2020

This year we announced the call for BPA nominations shortly before we entered the Covid-19 lockdown. The circumstances we all found ourselves working in changed dramatically. What would have been considered extraordinary just a few months ago became, for many colleges, the ‘new norm.’

For our members, their priorities shifted to finding innovative ways to provide day-to-day support for students and staff. Many were busy creating and rolling out new types of services and support. Our members were making significant efforts in the face of difficult circumstances.

These unprecedented circumstances impacted the quantity and type of nominations we received for our BPA.

With these considerations in mind, the Executive Committee took the decision not to award a Best Practice Award this year. Instead we celebrated the lessons shared by Highly Commended each of the entrants:

- ❖ Chichester
- ❖ Isle of Wight
- ❖ South Gloucestershire and Stroud
- ❖ St Francis Xavier

We are working with each of these Highly Commended colleges to share their case studies with the wider membership.



Reminder: CoLRiC membership rates aligned to the new Jisc FE Bands from September 1st, 2020

New Jisc bands C-J for FE came into effect on 1st August 2020, following a review in 2019. Jisc indicates that these new bands use 'the same officially published measure of college teaching and learning related income as that used by the previous scheme as the basis for band allocation. This Total Relevant Income (TRI) measure is averaged over the three academic years 2015/16 to 2017/18 to mitigate fluctuations.'

CoLRiC's membership rates have been updated to align with the new bands and now provide a fairer reflection of institutional size and income. Your membership renewal period will remain unaffected, and you will notice a much improved, more transparent invoicing process without you having to self-assess your membership fee in future. CoLRiC's membership rates have not been revised for over a decade. If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact our admin team.

Peer Accreditation Scheme (PAS)

CoLRiC's Peer Accreditation Scheme (PAS) gives Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges the opportunity to initiate a supportive and rigorous assessment of Library and Learning Resource Services against a set of specific criteria.

The Scheme engages the entire organisation, raising the visibility of Library and Learning Resource Services to senior College management, evidencing return on investment and helping to demonstrate the value and impact of the service in support of the wider teaching and learning agenda.

PAS offers many benefits. The Scheme:

- ❖ Provides a stringent evaluation of the service within the context of the resources at its disposal
- ❖ Assesses how effectively and consistently an organisation supports the development of its Library and Learning Resources Service
- ❖ Identifies gaps in service provision, offering impartial professional advice on opportunities for service enhancements from senior library and information management professionals from across the UK
- ❖ Confers a recognised and prestigious quality mark that can be showcased in quality assurance inspections, including Ofsted visits.

PAS is organised into four sections for assessment: vision, leadership, management and collaboration in teaching and learning. The Scheme embraces the holistic role that a Library and Learning Resources Service should play in the wider organisation. A key element of the assessment will be to determine the intent, implementation and impact of services on determining academic success and a positive learner experience.

For full details of the Scheme please contact the admin team

CoLRiC community

A key membership benefit of CoLRiC is access to [our private discussion forum](#), hosted by JiscMail.

Registration with JiscMail is free and employees at any member College can join using their work email address.

It's a great place to ask a question, elicit feedback on a topic, initiate a research project, share a document or simply sound off about any issues that are concerning you. The forum underpins the CoLRiC community and is often cited as a key source of support for library and learning resource services professionals across the FE and Sixth Form College sector.

Recent topics include library management systems, online e-safety, access to laptops for students learning at home, e-books, the migration of VLEs, the management of digital assets and the use of Zoom/Teams for large group teaching.

[You can access the CoLRiC discussion forum here.](#)

Val Skelton and Gary Horrocks
CoLRiC Administrators



CoLRiC COMMUNITY - Browns Books

Tina Levesley from Browns Books gives us an update on their company offer and provides us with a case study from The Manchester College, who decided that Browns Books were the supplier who best fitted their needs.

Browns Books has a long-established reputation as a respected major book supplier to schools, colleges, universities and other forms of institutions. Renowned for delivering a quality service to all our customers, we pride ourselves on providing a cost-effective and seamless supply chain from order to delivery without ever compromising on our level of service or quality.



[Browns Book website](#) is home to every UK publication in print and we have the largest UK stock holding of over 800,000 titles, along with over 1.4 million eBooks, 110,000 DVD's, CD's & audiobooks. The Browns Books website is packed full of the latest collections, suitable for any library, classroom or reading scheme. From new curriculum resources, classic titles, the latest releases across a wide range of genres and material for all reading/interest levels, we can provide for all readers. We are also one of the few providers to be able to offer incredible discounts on all our materials, with regular promotions of up to 50% off RRP.

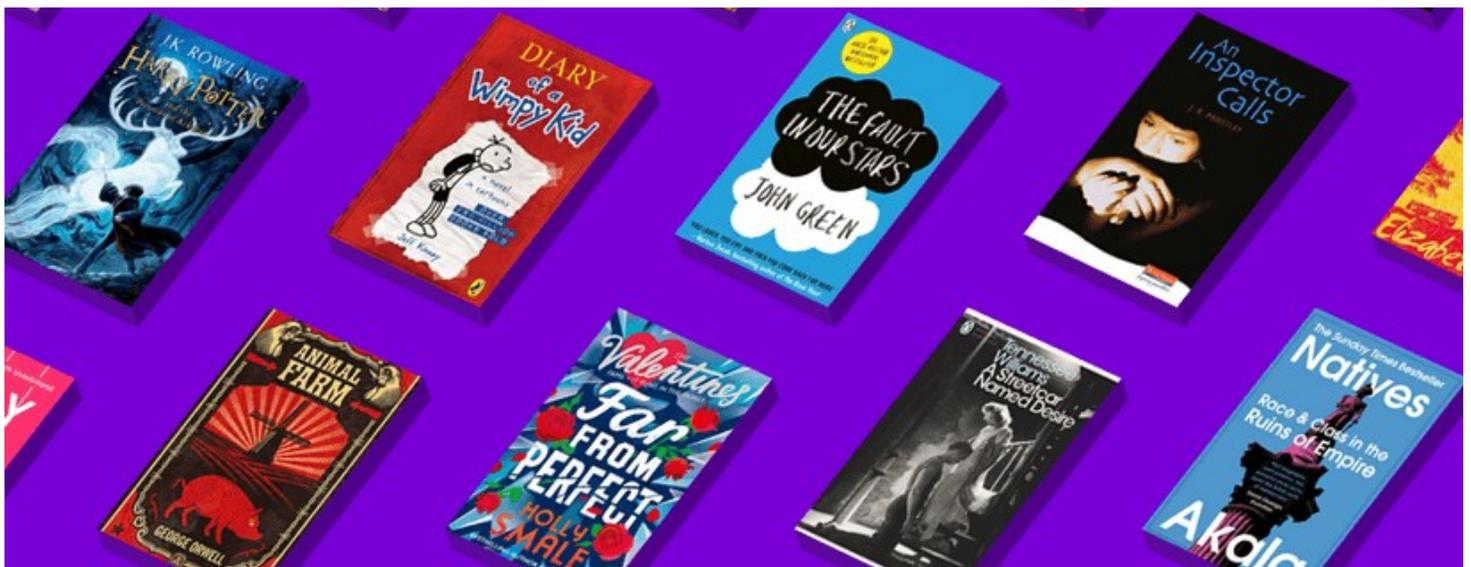
We are also exceptionally proud of our attention to detail when it comes to customer service. Our experienced customer care team is here to provide support throughout your entire experience with Browns Books. From dealing with personalised selections, website support, order placement and tracking, our friendly in-house team are always here to help. For further advice and assistance, you can even request an in-person appointment with one of our Nationwide Area Sales Managers at any available time. Should you wish to discuss your requirements with one of our Area Sales Managers, please call 01482 384660 to request an appointment.

In addition to the above, [our website](#) also has the largest and most comprehensive Accelerated Reader™ database and search facilities. Our partnership with Renaissance Learning ensures there's a book to suit any student, regardless of their reading level and interests. In addition to being home to such a varied and wide collection, we have also organised our titles into lists, such as "What Kids Are Reading" and "Recently Quizzed Titles" in order to make our customers experience as perfect as we can.

Our in-house servicing team provides fitted library servicing from jackets & AR Labels, to full bespoke profiles including shelf-ready solutions tailored to your individual requirements. All our servicing is conducted in a timely, cost-effective and professional manner. Should you have any queries regarding our servicing options, please get in touch with us via telephone: +44(0)1482 384660.

Some of the key advantages you could benefit from with Browns Books are:

- ❖ Browns Books have the largest stock holding in the UK.
- ❖ We offer next day delivery on orders placed before 4 pm.
- ❖ Transparent pricing and discounts.
- ❖ Regular promotions are available with up to 50% discount throughout the year.
- ❖ Advanced website & product search functions.
- ❖ Tailored Collections & Lists.
- ❖ Selection Support Team.
- ❖ Experienced Customer Care Team available from 8.30 am until 5 pm.
- ❖ Jackets can be added order by order.
- ❖ Bespoke library servicing including Shelf Ready solutions.
- ❖ Financial Management Systems Integration.
- ❖ Deduplication, List Manager, Copy Invoices & Reports



CoLRiC COMMUNITY - Browns Books case study, The Manchester College

In April 2019 we set up a working group to look at a new book supplier as we were not happy with our existing supplier. Our drivers for change were:

- ❖ Delivery time with the current supplier was often slow
- ❖ It was often difficult to find resources on the current supplier's website using just a title search
- ❖ Pricing was not always clear

We decided to list what we required from a supplier. Our criteria in order of importance was:

- ❖ Competitive and transparent pricing
- ❖ Speedy delivery
- ❖ Flexible delivery- to be able to deliver to multiple sites
- ❖ An easy to navigate website
- ❖ Reliability and capacity
- ❖ A range and different types of resources
- ❖ Suitable terms and conditions
- ❖ Up to date reports
- ❖ Competitive servicing price
- ❖ New supplier to be part of the Joint Consortia Agreement.

Using this criteria we researched a number of book suppliers and decided that Browns was the supplier who closely matched our needs. Browns' pricing was far clearer and simpler than that of its competitors, making the purchasing process easier for both the Library team and the Finance department. Their free next day delivery was very appealing, as it meant that we would no longer need to use Amazon for urgent orders.

**'Their
customer
service is
outstanding'**

**'We
ascertained
that they
could
deliver to
multiple
sites free of
charge.
This was an
important
factor as
we have
nine
campuses'**

We ascertained that they could deliver to multiple sites free of charge. This was an important factor as we have nine campuses. When we looked at their website, it was far more user friendly than our current supplier. It shows prices, new editions and release dates of upcoming titles/editions clearly; it is very easy to navigate and to search for specific titles and has the facility to create and save shopping baskets, which we felt would not only help to manage site-specific orders, but potentially budgets as well.

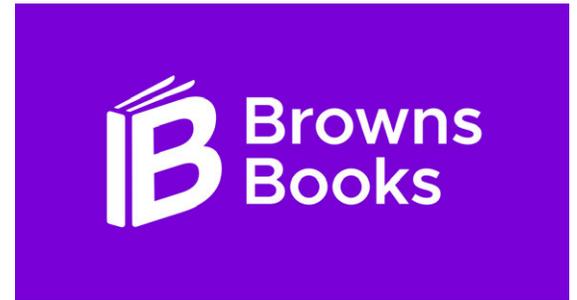
We have now been using Browns as our main supplier since the start of the 2019/2020 academic year and we have been happy with the service they provide. Everything they promised when we first met with them, they have delivered. The whole team have found the website really easy to navigate and use and we have not had any teething issues. Their customer service is outstanding and any e-mail queries are responded to really quickly. Lucy is our support contact and nothing is too much trouble for her. Their commitment to excellent customer service means that we feel fully supported and valued as a customer.



CoLRiC IS DELIGHTED TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THESE SPONSORS



EBSCO



Best Practice Awards 2020

Four colleges were Highly Commended in our Best Practice Awards 2020. We have two articles for you in this issue. They offer two very different but equally interesting examples of best practice. We have the story of how William, the Library dog, brought comfort and confidence to students at **Chichester College**. In contrast our second article is a practical checklist of the things **St Francis Xavier College** did to improve their support for online learning.

CCG

Chichester
College
Group



CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

WILLIAM: THE STORY OF A LIBRARY DOG - Laura Piper, Library Assistant, Chichester College Group

The group is based across five campuses: Chichester, Brinsbury, Crawley, Worthing and Haywards Heath. The organisation of the libraries and sharing of resources varies between campuses. In this article, we will be referring to the libraries at Chichester and Brinsbury. On these campuses, the library sits within the Additional Support department. There are two term time only members of staff at Brinsbury and eight at Chichester, in a mixture of full and part time roles. These include librarians, library assistants and an apprentice.

Why a library dog?

We carry out a regular student survey to find out how to improve our service. We target both students who are users of the library and those who are not, allowing us to see why some students choose not to use the library. A recurring theme over the years has been that non-users perceive libraries as 'boring'

We wanted to shake up the image that libraries have, as places to study silently. Although it remains a quiet study environment, we did not want students to think it has to be silent and joyless. To achieve this, we decided we needed to try something new, something that the students would never expect.

Enter: William!

We decided to bring in a library dog because we had seen how successful they could be in other environments. Research has shown the beneficial impact therapy dogs have had in schools and William is not the first dog to work at the college. There have been therapy dogs working with Additional Support previously, who have been effective in helping students with concentration and pastoral care. This would be a completely new way for a dog to engage with students, however.

**'non-users
perceive
libraries as
boring'**



William is my miniature wire haired dachshund who, from a very young age, demonstrated an incredible ability to understand people's moods and a love of children. I applied to Therapy Dogs Nationwide, a charity that assesses dogs' temperaments for therapy work. He passed with flying colours, allowing us to start planning for him to come into college.

There were risk assessments to carry out and discussions to be had about how we could ensure the safety and wellbeing of both

students and William. I would urge any library that would like to introduce a therapy dog to be very careful, seek advice and not rush into it. The safety and enjoyment of everyone is paramount; the moment anyone becomes uncomfortable, William is removed.

What does William do?

Our main aim when introducing William was to engage non-users with the library and its services, increasing library footfall. He achieves this simply by being present. We put a sign on the door to warn people who are uncomfortable around dogs or have allergies that there is one in the building but this seems to act as a beacon and "William days" are now our busiest.

We have found that just by having a dog in the library, students who never previously visited, come in to play with him and speak to us. Our relationship with the students has changed, as they now feel that they can chat to us and are more willing to ask for help. This change in dynamic has also meant that we are better equipped to spot when a student is struggling or unhappy and pass this on to the relevant people. In most cases, simply having a cuddle with William is enough, but we can also see when more help is needed.

Having William has made the library a relaxed space to study. We now have students from the nursery through to level 7 using the space, often all at the same time! In the 2020 Student Survey, when asked "What do you like about the library?", responses included "William is the best part about coming to college" and, our favourite, "William is singlehandedly and unequivocally the backbone of this college."

It's not all lying about for tummy tickles though; William also has specially targeted groups to promote literacy and reading. Each week, we have a GCSE English revision drop-in session, for those who have concerns about their exams and do not feel they can ask for help in a classroom setting. We hope that by having William present as a non-judgemental set of ears, students feel they can ask for help with confidence and feel supported.



He also goes to the onsite nursery with stories for the children and hosts visits to the library. This is intended to provide a positive literacy foundation for the children and introduce them to libraries in a memorable way. It also teaches them appropriate behaviour around dogs, as we show them how to approach a dog and what to do if a dog is scaring them. These are all life skills that perhaps a library wouldn't be expected to provide but have encouraged users to keep returning.

Outside of the library, teaching staff have heard of William's popularity and ask for him to attend lessons. We have been asked to provide pastoral support for students after a stressful

exam or coursework hand-in, allowing them to relax before getting back to learning. We also help with students on an individual basis; perhaps when something has happened at home and they are likely to miss lessons without a reason to stay.

***'William
days' are
now our
busiest***

William has modelled for animation and art classes and stood very still whilst costume design students adjusted his work coat for him. He was also a favourite at Freshers' Fair and the Teaching and Learning Takeaway event for staff. These kinds of opportunities make the library's presence felt throughout the college and increase knowledge of the services we offer.

William's most successful group, however, has been the Foundation students, who come to read and listen to stories. The Foundation Programme is a specialist provision for young people aged 16-25 with additional needs. When we started these sessions over a year ago, many of these students were disinterested in reading and rarely spoke to us. After building up a bond with William, they now look forward to coming for their weekly visit and interact with us far more. There are students who will only speak to William, which is wonderful to overhear. There are also some students whose confidence has increased so much that they are willing to read to the group.

What next for William?

Before lockdown, the plan had been to work on building up our relationship with the Maths and English GCSE department, continuing to increase numbers of students attending William's drop-in sessions and going into classrooms. However, those plans have currently had to go on hold as we have had to implement new rules throughout the college which makes having William here difficult. We are still trying to work out ways to allow him to be on campus whilst adhering to social distancing rules. Hopefully, it won't be long before he can come back regularly and get back to doing what he does best!

In the meantime, he has an apprentice to train up. Watch this space to see whether Etta makes the team!



*Kirnan, J., Ventresco, N. E., & Gardner, T. (2018). The Impact of a Therapy Dog Program on Children's Reading: Follow-up and Extension to ELL Students. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 46(1), 103–116. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-017-0844-z>

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING - Mags Griffin, LRC Manager, St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College

St Francis Xavier Sixth Form College (SFX) Balham is a single site independent sixth form college with a student cohort of 1300 students aged between 16 and 19. Our student body is very diverse in terms of academic/pastoral need. We support students aiming for a Russell Group university place and are inclusive of those with learning needs. Our students commute from across London which in some instances can mean four hours travelling a day.

This term the LRC is operating differently. The physical collections are only available through closed access. The LRC is open 10 till 3pm for individual students to collect books, study, photocopy and reset passwords. To preserve the curriculum bubbles a separate class booking area has been set up.

Review of the LRC role

In 2017 I was asked to review the role of the LRC in supporting independent learning. I began by reviewing the accuracy of the content on the college's virtual learning environment (VLE) Moodle, the content of LRC Moodle pages and the supporting course resource guides. I engaged with staff and students and identified potential improvements to the content and how it was accessed.

The key objective of all this work has been to make the collections as current and accessible as possible. Ensuring they reflect both course needs and the way student want to work.

We have made the following changes to our supporting materials:

1. All our course guides now contain subject class marks to key areas of our physical collections and hyperlinks to subject related subscription databases and/or qualitative open source sites.
2. Each database has 'how to' slides to help students and staff to get the most from the resource.
3. We now provide guides on wider customer support issues, from accessing the college WiFi to getting started with Moodle.

We have worked either as an LRC team or with other college teams to improve student support materials on the VLE more generally:

1. Working with the IT department I embedded the main LRC resources and Careers menus in multiple course locations within the VLE. Again, this provided multiple access points to subject related subscription databases and/or qualitative open source sites.
2. The LRC team created a 'Student Study Hub' as a gateway to study skills support. Topics covered include:
 - a. Academic honesty
 - b. Exam revision
 - c. Research skills
 - d. Harvard referencing
 - e. E-safety
 - f. Critical thinking
3. We signpost written and visual mental health resources.
4. We make sure that all relevant IT application guides are available to students



The key LRC task of clearly indexing and arranging resources has been stepped up in the following projects:

1. A new OPAC homepage including database widget links.
2. Improved keywording on catalogue records
3. Full text access to EPQ (Extended project qualification) projects
4. Subject specific links to the TV and radio programmes available through the college's education licence.
5. Current awareness collections on topics such as Fake News and Coronavirus.

Teaching staff have benefitted from the improvements we have made to the Staff Intranet:

Best practice materials are available on the following topics:

- ❖ Plagiarism
- ❖ Moodle course management
- ❖ Copyright
- ❖ Turnitin

Each now have a set of resources including PowerPoint guides and video support. New teaching staff are introduced to the resources through a training session.



Promotion of student resources

The key selling point is accessibility. All LRC resources are linked through:

- ❖ Moodle
- ❖ Course guides
- ❖ Tutorial guides
- ❖ College TV
- ❖ College newsletter
- ❖ QR codes on posters around college

Building on our successes

The last few months have emphasised just how fundamental our e-resources and independent learning tools are to teaching. A summer training session for teaching staff at the beginning of July was followed by 2803 LRC Moodle pages viewed over the following fortnight. Teaching staff have familiarised themselves with available resources. There has been a 33% increase in e-resource usage between 18/19 and 19/20. Students and staff have been quick to notify college when an e-resource has not been available.

Our core LRC visitors became our core online users. The college has quickly moved across from Moodle to Google Classroom for 20/21. We are currently moving our content across to a St Francis Xavier portal linked to Google Classroom. We will remain central to the student learning experience.

'Students and staff have been quick to notify college when an e-resource has not been available'



ONLINE NETWORKS: A COST-EFFECTIVE WAY TO BOOST YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Sam Goldsmith HE & Research Librarian, University Centre Leeds

Sam is a member of our Executive Committee. In this role and in her role as an HE & Research Librarian she is always looking for ways to stay up-to-date with an ever-changing profession. In this article she shares her cost-effective tips with us.

Continuing Professional Development

These days there is very little money for events and training, and we need to find other ways to continue our professional development. The 'new normal' may influence how we access training for months or even years to come. I use RSS feeds, Email Lists and Twitter.

RSS feeds/ Newsfeeds

These can be set up to 'feed' you relevant information from a range of websites. You need to use a 'reader' software (these are free and include [Newsblur](#) and [Feedly](#)). Once you have joined one you can select by keyword the type of article and news you would like to see. I prefer Feedly as it allows selection via subject category rather than keyword. In all cases you can turn on an alert to email you if anything is new; or you might prefer just to periodically browse what has been retrieved for you. All systems allow you to save the item or delete it after reading.

GREAT - overview of what's new across the world in your subject. Gathers the information for you to read later.

NOT SO GREAT - some cross-posting. Volume can increase rapidly if you do not read regularly.



feedly

Email Lists/Discussion Forums

The main ones used in the UK are hosted by JISC. You sign up to a list (subject specific) and then you are in the group email for that. You can use them to just keep up to date with what is going on, but I use them to share issues, ask for research participation or check if anyone has come up with solutions to a problem. Many of the lists appropriate for college learning resources start with LIS such as:

LIS – LINK (A general library and information science list for news and discussion)

LIS-ARLG (CILIP's Academic & Research Libraries Group)

LIS-INFOLITERACY (Information literacy and information skills teaching discussion list)

GREAT – the emails come automatically when someone shares anything and usually offer practical advice.

NOT SO GREAT - if your email inbox is already full, they might not be for you.

How to join the CoLRiC mailing list

[Click here to go to the CoLRiC JISCmail subscribe page](#)

You will be asked to put in your email and details. A confirmation email will come through to you which you have to click to start your subscription.

You can share your own tips for keeping up to date with current trends via the CoLRiC Jiscmail. Use the **Post new message** option to share good practice or ask a question.

JISC M@il

The CoLRiC mailing list is:

To be used by CoLRiC members as a forum for exchanging information and advice and by CoLRiC to inform members of CoLRiC news, publications and events

Twitter Hashtags

The # symbol immediately followed by a keyword or phrase is a hashtag. They are used to organise content into themes. The Library world has established several hashtags which promote discussion and show current thinking/current Library events. They include:

#uklibchat - a monthly discussion group that takes place on Twitter, usually from 7 to 8.30pm on a Monday.

#LISResearch - news and information for the UK library and information science research community.

GREAT – Usually very up to date. You can also create [RSS feeds](#) from Twitter.

NOT SO GREAT – Twitter can be very distracting if you aren't careful!

If you focus on professional contacts it should be less distracting.

If you don't already, why not follow [@Colric_Tweets](#). CoLRiC share national and international news and good practice.

@Colric_Tweets



SPOTLIGHT ON.....

**Benjamin Poore,
Library and Study Skills Assistant, from
Leyton Sixth Form College library - winner of
the 2020 Jeff Cooper Award for Inspirational
Information Professional of the Year.**

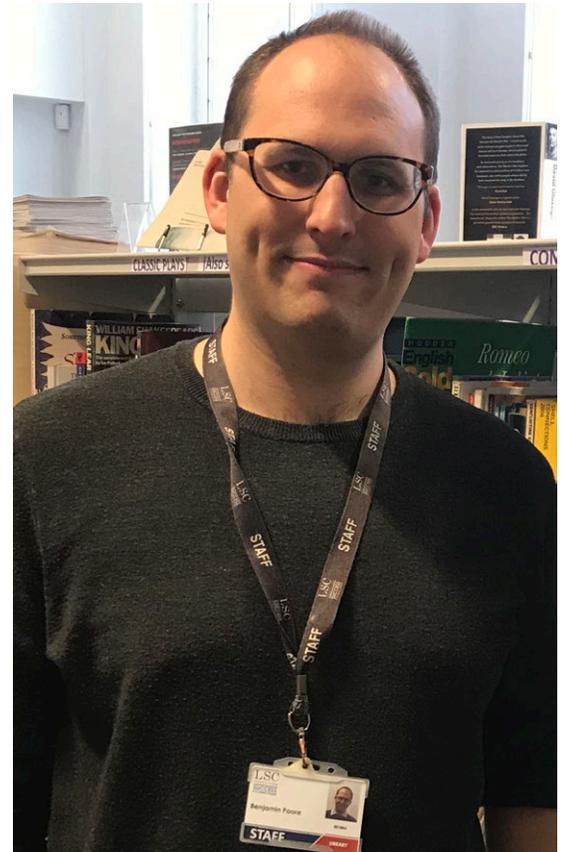
The judges were impressed by the variety of student support activities in which Ben is involved and felt that his focus on facilitating outcomes for individual learners is truly inspirational. We asked Ben to tell us a bit more about the work he does.

How did you become Library and Study Skills Assistant at Leyton Sixth Form College?

I've worked in education in all sorts of different roles – I've been an English teacher in a secondary school, and taught English literature at degree-level at Queen Mary University of London, SOAS University of London, and King's College London, after I completed my doctorate in 2015, which was on modernist literature. I have also worked extensively in Widening Participation, particularly with the charity The Brilliant Club. Through them, as a postgraduate student I got my first taste of teaching in schools – we ran short courses based on our area of academic expertise. As an academic and researcher, I spent a lot of time in libraries too. Taking a job in one made me feel quite at home.

Tell us a bit about the work you do with reading groups.

We have tried a few different things out. I got together with my colleague Josie, a Sociology teacher, and we decided that we wanted to create an environment for the students that really simulated a university experience. This was because the fantastic students that we work with often go on to really great degree courses at top universities – but there is a lot of evidence that students from the various backgrounds we cater for at the College – BAME students and/or students who are amongst the first in their families to attend university – often struggle to transition to university life, and are amongst the highest proportion to drop out in their first year of study. We felt giving them a taste of seminar-style teaching – helping them build their confidence in discussing ideas in a small group – would help them find their feet in the future, at least in a small way.



We have run the groups for a couple of years now, starting with a focus on Sociology. We wanted students to get a flavour of the kind of high-level content in the Humanities and Social Sciences that will be part of the intellectual currency at university. We wanted them to encounter big ideas and concepts – the Anthropocene, Marxism, decolonisation, feminism, that kind of thing – that would make them ready to engage with academic ideas and the wider world. Lockdown meant that we had to stop meeting in person – but the students were so keen that we continued over Google Hangouts into the summer. It is a wonderful way for someone who works in a library to see how the materials we put together can have an impact on students. The library should be a place that is just as much the heart of our students love of learning as the classroom.

What do you think a good academic skills programme should cover and what is the best way to deliver this to students?

‘Academic Skills’ can be an unhelpful term. Most academic disciplines ask students to do things that superficially look the same but are in fact domain-specific and quite different. Not recognising this means that workshops or schemes of work can be far too general, and students end up not being able to apply these ideas in different contexts. The solution is to ensure that a workshop – say on referencing – is grounded in the reality of their subjects, by tying it to specific content and topics with which students are already familiar. This means working closely with teachers and really knowing the topics – even if you are a complete outsider to it. And it means having structures to allow this – creating subject librarian roles and ensuring there is enough time for staff to work on their areas, read around them, and ensure they are well-served.

What are your biggest professional challenges?

Lockdown has proven a huge challenge. Adapting our service to an online environment and ensuring students can navigate it has been eye-opening but has also shown us the way forward when it comes to operating in a digital space. It has been a good prompt for us to understand our cataloguing system as well as encouraging us to create different kinds of displays in a digital space. It’s a challenge that is also an opportunity.

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

As a librarian I am deeply alarmed by the latest pronouncements from the Department for Education, on the PSHE curriculum, that seeks to proscribe materials in schools that are very narrowly viewed as somehow dissenting or subversive. This kind of attitude has a chilling effect on freedom of expression and intellectual culture in schools, discouraging diversity of thought and encouraging of compliance, as well as demonising forms of thinking or ideas that don't fall into the line with current government's ideological agenda. Everybody understands the importance of protecting students from extremism – as we are legally mandated to do – but it's hard to see this latest move as anything other than another culture war being played out through schools. Libraries – particularly in colleges and schools – should be places full of diverse viewpoints, dissenting ideas, and visions of how injustices can be redressed, and the world changed (whether in fiction or nonfiction), not bland repositories of approved books. Everyone in the sector has a real responsibility, right now, to make sure their libraries are places of discovery and diversity.

What training do you provide for teaching staff?

One of the main challenges we face is making sure teachers know i) what resources we have and ii) how to use them in the context of their own teaching and learning. One of the things we do, therefore, is to spend some time showing teachers what resources we have, how to access them, and how they work, particularly trying to include topics or ideas that they themselves teach so as to really demonstrate the value of these things. We also run sessions for staff about critical reading, developments and debates in contemporary pedagogy, as well as on how they can develop wider reading and reading groups with their own students. I also run the staff choir, which is a learning experience for everyone involved...especially me.

And finally... sum yourself up in three words

I asked around my colleagues, but their responses are unprintable.



THE BACK PAGE

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

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

Three more issues of Impact are scheduled for the 2020/2021 academic year. The theme of each is outlined below. If you would like to submit an article, please note the advice below and the closing dates for submissions.

March 2021 – Learning from each other – submission deadline 22nd January 2021

May 2021 – Teamwork – submission deadline 26th March 2021

August 2021– End of year reflections – submission deadline 25th June 2021

To submit an article please email the following to colric@colric.org.uk: (a) an unformatted Word document; (b) any associated files or images; (c) any recommended further reading; and (d) any links to any external content to be embedded into the final e-newsletter. There is a word count limit of 1,200 on articles. Word count limits for other regular features will be confirmed with members ahead of submission. The CoLRiC Impact editorial team will be responsible for formatting, editing, and proof-reading all contributions before publication. Please include the email addresses and job titles of all contributing authors. All authors will retain their copyright.