

Working in Partnership

Developing Students' Graduate Skills in collaboration with the Library

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The Aim

- To align our teaching offer to the University's Education Strategy and new Graduate Framework.
- To encourage a collaborative and consistent approach to the planning of embedded information and digital literacy skills across all Faculties.
- To ensure students develop a broad range of relevant information and digital literacy skills at a pace suited to their stage and course of study.

Opening a dialogue

Greatest benefit to the student is achieved when academics and librarians work together to develop appropriate training (Peters, Jones and Matthews, 2007). Our first step therefore was to engage academic colleagues in a dialogue around both our offer and the skills students could be expected to gain at each stage of their degree course.

Our **Working in Partnership** dialogue consists of two key documents that are available from the Library website:

- An outline of our offer and how we can collaborate with academics and students.
- A Student Development and Progression document, based on Information Literacy curriculums from SCOUNL (2015) and ANCIL (2011), that provides an outline of the information literacy skills and competencies students can be expected to have at each stage of their undergraduate degree.

These documents were initially shared with School Library Representatives then, more widely, at Faculty Education Committees.

“I think this will help raise awareness amongst academics of how you can help us – not just to deliver a library session for the first years in induction but throughout the whole student journey.”

- Senior Lecturer, Newcastle University Business School

“The Library team were happy to extensively consult at all stages, particularly with regard to how their resources could complement our new emphasis on skills-based training for our students.”

- Senior Lecturer, History, Classics & Archaeology

Partnership in Practice

Following their introduction, our Working in Partnership documents have helped us to initiate **positive conversations with academic colleagues** across several Faculties:

- Biosciences used our Student Development and Progression document to help them **successfully embed Information Literacy skills within their wider Academic and Professional Skills module for all first-year students** in semester one. Our Working in Partnership materials are similarly being used by Engineering and Chemistry to help them map out key skills across their new first-year skills programmes.
- Architecture and Urban Planning (AUP) used our Student Development and Progression document to **map out learning outcomes at each level against the AUP programme**. Modules were selected at each stage where embedded Information Literacy workshops would be best placed. History and Law are taking a similar approach to embedding key skills.
- In Speech and Language Science and Natural and Environmental Sciences skills programmes **we collaborated with programme leaders to restructure our embedded teaching to ensure appropriate progression of skills**; for example students develop key referencing skills before being introduced to reference management tools.

We were also able to **adapt our documents to respond to the challenge of online learning** in 2020, producing a **Supporting Flexible Learning webpage** as a guide to our approach.

References

ANCIL (2011) 'Use ANCIL in your institution.' *A New Curriculum for Information Literacy*. 25 August. Available at: <https://newcurriculum.wordpress.com/using-ancil/> (Accessed: 26 February 2020)

JISC (2019) *Jisc digital capabilities framework: The six elements defined*. Available at: <http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/7278/1/BDCP-DC-Framework-Individual-6E-110319.pdf> (Accessed: 26 February 2020)

Newcastle University (2019) *Graduate Framework*. Available at: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/careers/planning/graduateframework/> (Accessed: 26 February 2020)

Peters, K., Jones, R and Matthews, D (2007) 'Training for Independent Learning.' *InfoSkills*. 5(1) pp. 4-8

SCOUNL (2015) *Seven Pillars of Information Literacy*. Available at: <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/seven-pillars-of-information-literacy> (Accessed: 26 February 2020)

Developing Graduate Skills

Our Student Development and Progression document links to the following **Graduate Framework strands**:

Critical Thinkers

We **engage students in critical thinking** around the resources they choose for their work; justifying these decisions and understanding where information comes from helps them to **identify and select appropriate academic knowledge and express informed views**.

Digitally Capable

In line with JISC's (2019) Digital Capability framework we focus on developing information literacies by **improving students' capacity to Find, Evaluate and Manage digital information**, making use of active and blended digital learning opportunities where possible.

Curious

Our teaching sessions and online guides embedded in the VLE **promote independent exploration of resources and tools** available to our students.

Skills Audits

Digital self-assessment tools aimed at undergraduate and postgraduate levels were created and embedded in Canvas modules and on the ASK website to **encourage student engagement with their own information and digital skills** development.

Next Steps

- To develop a booking system that **encourages a collaborative dialogue with academics** at the point of request.
- To collaborate with academic staff in **reviewing lessons learned from a year of online teaching**, with the aim of developing a mix of non-synchronous, synchronous and Present in Person (PIP) options for 21/22.