![NoWAL North West Academic Libraries]

Academic Librarians' Group

Minutes

Date	Thursday 26 November 2020	
Chair(s)	Tracy Breheny (Salford) Jenny Warren (Chester)	
Attendees	Anne Williams	University of Chester
	Paul Catherall	University of Liverpool
	Dawn Grundy	University of Bolton
	Anne Sherwin	University of Salford
	Jo Ashley	University of Cumbria
	Louise Speakman (LSp)	Edge Hill
	Olwen Pennington	Edge Hill
	Alison Derbyshire (ADe)	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
	Sonia Edwards	Edge Hill
	Geoff Thomason	RNCM
	Angela Duckworth (ADu)	Liverpool Hope
	Nicky Freeman	NoWAL
	Lisa Hawksworth	University of Liverpool
	Louise Smith (LSm)	UCLan

1. Welcome

Introductions from TB. Minutes from the August meeting accepted as a true representation.

2. Good news stories/updates

- TB thanked for sending reports in advance and opened to discussion and additional points or highlights. Reports attached separately.
- Liverpool Hope are trialling opening on Saturdays (10-3) to further support distance learners and PGCE students for next two weeks, to see if demand is met.
- 'Resource of the week' promotions at UCLan. Launched 3 weeks ago via Instagram account running alongside Twitter accounts, enabling to go beyond limited characters of Twitter and

on a platform students seem to be using, introducing 'guess the resource' via the stories function to create interaction. Aiming to see if increase in promoted resources increase following promotions but not run yet. Followers on Instagram still relatively low.

- Discussed methods and progress on recording usage statistics from videos created in place of, or alongside, live sessions. ADe indicated use of Panopto at LSTM has been helpful for understanding who is using (staff and students, 100 students). JA found creating videos in partnership with lecturer and embedding into sessions meant engagement with videos took place. Complication of access to content via platforms such as Microsoft Stream where authentication poses a barrier and may reduce usage. General agreement synchronous sessions preferred to asynchronous, with opportunities to interact, contact with students and sense of community.

3. Lessons learned from online teaching

- Discussion around posts shared on Padlet. The Padlet will remain open for future review and conversation.
- Online teaching has led to opportunities and higher turnout than traditional face to face for both staff and student focused sessions. More engagement found from within chat function despite videos/microphones not in use by students. Challenge for teaching with these reduced visual cues and also having the confidence/comfort to provide pauses for processing and questions from audience.
- Felt able to reach more overseas students / PhD students and build relationships from online delivery.
- Mixture of success with breakout rooms. Article shared:
  https://thetab.com/uk/2020/10/19/we-were-all-silent-for-45-minutes-students-share-their-worst-break-out-room-stories-179247
- It has been recommended for students in some courses to at least add photos if they don't want their camera on. Then the students can at least recognize their peers (SE).
- Number of upcoming events on this topic. NOWAL hope to provide a series on the topic of delivering academic skills throughout 2020/21 - two already in the diary including:
  10 Dec – Delivering academic skills support in an online or blended way in the 'New Normal' and 13 Jan - Twist or Stick? Which online innovations in Library teaching will continue even when in person events are safe? Details and bookings available:
  https://www.nowal.ac.uk/events.
- NF asked for suggestions for further sessions to be passed to each institution's training and development representative for or directly to Nicky n.freeman100@salford.ac.uk .
- Also Relationship Management in HE group advertised an online event (shared on mailing list).
- Discussion of polling tools. All using polls to various extents. Menti is popular, inbuilt polls on Blackboard Collaborate (can't set up in advance, but is anonymous (JA)) and option to use emoticons for quick reactions rather than filling the chat (TB), Vevox (AW), Poll Everywhere,

Kahoot can be used in asynchronous sessions as a 'challenge' (LH) still helpful to show engagement.

4. Discussion: Long-term remote working and support issues

- Focus on supporting students on campus when we're not working on campus
- Type of support they need when normally be on campus
- PC [summarised work] he had completed in order to highlight challenges that were emerging in spring 2020 (previously shared with group) to UoL senior management. Students overseas unable to access conventional services (new document supply service not accessible to students overseas, connectivity problems, network access, latency - regions with poor network infrastructure, student preferences for support via email/documentation). Highlighted new JISC service [Ali BABa project] (cost involved).
- ADu shared how she has arranged for a room on campus to be available for students to use for 121 video support when she is working remotely if they need a space to do so. Set up with mic/webcam etc.
- Discussion of impact on 121s from remote working. Mixed reflections on significant reduction of 121s for some colleagues and users preferring email support, whereas others saw an increase. Increases from the start of remote working and over the summer. Edge Hill operate a central booking system, and have had to create a waiting list for appointments. RNCM queries don't always lead to 121s but change in nature of queries with adapting to online environment. TB shared at Salford some students would expect to see for support are potentially shying away from 121 in the electronic environment. Base time offering for 121 appointments vary across institutions (tended to range from 30 – 60 mins, with additional support to 90 mins). Various means of managing appointments – centralised and local teams.
- Reflected yet to see impact on international students and gaps in support (more generally across institutions).

5. Discussion: Publisher and e-resource prices

- Item arose from previous ALG meeting (August 2020).
- Discussion on how liaised with academic staff about the increase in costs and experiences over this trimester. Agreed complicated to explain when prices are so erratic anyway. Free access to e-resources from publishers and platforms since the start of Covid-19 has set high expectations. DRM issues also create complications for usability. Considerable number of materials single user only for high costs. Observed fewer books seem to be available to purchase as eBooks - removed by publishers entirely or only available through collections. ADu shared Hope had experienced fewer titles being available to buy as single purchase

licences as more textbooks were only being made available via the subscription platforms like Kortext.

- Cumbria have allocated webpages explaining the situation, standard phrasing to direct staff towards. Edge Hill shared proactive taking information to Board meetings, newsletters, team meetings. Now have web pages and creating a check sheet for academics. Liverpool (PC) explained have concise policies and created a workflow to visually simply these for sharing with academic staff.
- Discussion where some companies directly contacting individual staff members (even if unrelated to subject matter) approached under pressure to renew. Context of companies needing sales for services and licences, suggests wider communication issues with academic teams and suppliers.
- Experiences of despite it not being a new message about costs and intricacies of purchasing e-resources current circumstances (Covid-19) have led to a 'level playing field' and understanding of difficult messages. Helpful to maintain audit trail of conversations and communications.
- Agreed transparency and openness is needed. LSm shared how she shares screenshots of costs, use of Twitter, and need for greater involvement in developing reading lists with academics to support and highlight gaps to address before released to students.
- Alternative support offered led to brief discussion on copyright breaches and education around this for appropriate sharing.
- TB shared relevant articles on this topic on Wakelet (https://wakelet.com/i/invite?code=ea4c6bc) and invited colleagues to contribute.
- Further upcoming NOWAL CPD events on related topics: 29 April - To Select or Deselect? Evidence-based Approaches to Subscription Questions and 10 Feb - Changes to collection management to support the move to online teaching

6.AOB / Date and location of next meeting, TBC (May 2021)

- LSp shared Edge Hill nominations for THE awards taking place this evening – 3 nominations including outstanding library team, outstanding support for students (helpdesk), university of the year. RNCM are also nominated for outreach.
- LSTM (ADe) highlighted a couple of posts to be advertised (1) full time grade 7 post to be advertised shortly and (2) head of information services post (grade 8 expected to be full time) likely to be advertised in Feb 2021/
- NF updated that it has now been agreed that the Northern Collaboration and NOWAL will join together and create a new organisation from 1 January 2021. One of the initial projects of the merger will involve looking at the functional groups. There is no equivalent to the ALG group in the NC and with 50+ members on the group's mailing list will be advocated for this to continue. So future meetings will look to expand and include members from the North East.

TB&JW2020

- The date and location of the next meeting will be confirmed in the new year. Planned to take place in May 2021 via Microsoft Teams.

7. Summary and close

TB thanked all for attending.