Finding your ‘library champion’: increasing engagement with the School of Computing & Communications at Lancaster University

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Overview of the session

• Introducing the ‘players’

• A short history of our relationship with SCC

• Successes

• Challenges

• What happens when we lose our library champion?
The players

Lesley (Faculty Librarian)

Paul (Director for Undergraduate Teaching)

Robert (Learning Developer)

Module convenors, Mike, Jaejoon and Barry

Tim and Lucas (Computer Science Society)
A short history…

10 min talk in Welcome Week

We find our ‘library champion’

Co-teaching/embedded sessions in 3rd and 4th year

“Disappointing quality of dissertations” (External examiner, 2017)

Involvement in Curriculum Review planning

Dec 17

2018

May 18

2019

Pre-Dec 2017
“In my previous report I commented on the rather disappointing quality of the dissertations, and this was again evident this year.

Candidates not only lacked the ability to present their ideas clearly (not uncommon to be fair), but also seemed to have poor grasp of the nature of research methods as well as of evaluation and measurement.

My impression was that they were technically able and did produce good work, but were rather weak in terms of their ability to articulate what they had done, and why”

External examiner, December 2017
A short history...

- No engagement
- We find our ‘Library Champion’
  - Involvement in Curriculum Review planning
  - Co-teaching/embedded sessions in 3rd and 4th year

- "Disappointing quality of dissertations” (External examiner, 2017)

- Dec 17
- 2018
- May 18
- 2019

A short history…
Successes

- Involvement in Curriculum Review
- Integrated dissertation writing workshops
- Strengthening links with the Computer Science Society
- Collaborative bid for Widening Participation funding
- Attendance at staff: student committees
The programme team want to embed more support for writing and information literacy directly into modules at appropriate times, to

“better incorporate communicating, writing and presenting from the beginning of our degree through to the end”

Mike Hazas, Part II Tutor
Involvement in Curriculum Review

Integrated dissertation writing workshops

Strengthening links with the Computer Science Society

Successes

Collaborative bid for Widening Participation funding

Attendance at staff: student committee
• Co-delivery of workshop with academic, without which there is a risk of “neglecting the integral relationship between writing and knowledge construction in academic disciplines” (Somerville and Crème, 2005, p.18)

• Flipped classroom approach

• Use of exemplars as “Key examples chosen to be typical of designated levels of quality or competence” which promote the transfer of strategies and skills to the assessment task (Sadler, 2002, p.131)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the workshop</td>
<td>Format/timings of session Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Module Convenor</td>
<td>10 mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-it note exercise</td>
<td>Students share queries/worries (revisit at end of workshop)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marking criteria &amp; assessment guidance</td>
<td>Make sure students are aware of the criteria in the module handbook</td>
<td>Module Convenor</td>
<td>15 mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key features of a scientific dissertation</td>
<td>Explore structure (sections &amp; shape), writing for an audience, critical writing and paraphrasing</td>
<td>Learning Developer</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
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<td><strong>COMFORT BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>10 mins</td>
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<td>The literature review</td>
<td>To develop skills in creating a search strategy &amp; using library databases/open access resources</td>
<td>Faculty Librarian</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group task: analysing student exemplars</td>
<td>Encourage student led discussion</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion of exemplars</td>
<td>Highlight good practice, areas for improvement &amp; discuss grades given</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-it note feedback</td>
<td>Respond to any queries not already answered</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>15 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further support</td>
<td>Signpost to bookable appointments for LD, FL and online learning material</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
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Successes

Involvement in Curriculum Review

Integrated dissertation writing workshops

Collaborative bid for Widening Participation funding

Attendance at staff: student committee

Strengthening links with the Computer Science Society
Collaborative bid for Widening Participation funding

- Pre-arrival materials via mini-MOOC
- Support tutorials in weeks 1-5 & around exam periods
Challenges

- Low participation in LIS programme
- Lack of engagement from departmental library rep
- Low NSS score compared to other FST departments
- Little take-up of library appointments
What happens when our library champions are no longer in positions of power?
How can we demonstrate our impact?

How can we prove that our input is valuable to departments?

How do we get our senior managers and people with influence to advocate for us?

How do we ensure academics see us as partners?

Is an IL or AL strategy only useful if it is included in the University’s T & L strategy?
“In terms of skills, academic librarians need to be equipped with effective communication, as well as persuasion and marketing competencies, and also need to offer good teaching and facilitating strategies… although in practice librarians tend to use skills and hooks that fit their personality and the situation at hand”

(Stubbings and Franklin, 2006, p.2)
QUESTIONS
References


