Research skills teaching across the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS) in the University of Surrey

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USTLG
Aim

To present the implementation of the information literacy plan for the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS).
Outline

- University of Surrey and FEPS some numbers and pictures
- The ALL role before and after
- The information literacy plan – a pragmatic approach
- What worked
- Problems
- Next steps – Learning Outcomes
- Conclusion
University of Surrey

- [http://www3.surrey.ac.uk/virtualltour/campus.html](http://www3.surrey.ac.uk/virtualltour/campus.html)
Numbers

- Library collections: 600,000 printed items, 225,000 electronic books, 900 printed current journal subscriptions, more than 45,000 electronic journals and over 125 specialist electronic databases

- Students:
  - 14,500 in Surrey
  - 4,500 in FEPS
10 Departments

- Aeronautical Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Computing
- Electronic Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Medical Engineering
- Physics
Academic Liaison Librarian – the complexity of the role

- research-skills
- minimum-supervision
- information-handling
- senior-professional
- communicative
- confident
- initiative
- teaching-experience
- proactive
- budget-responsibility
- communicate-developments
- responsive
- creative
- aware-of-strategy-and-policy-framework
The role - Academic Liaison Librarian for FEPS

- Reading list, collection and budget responsibility for information resources for 10 Departments
- Member in Board of Studies and other committees in the Departmental committees and Faculty Teaching and Learning committee
- Member in committees in the library
- Lecturing on Information Literacy - all levels
- Differences between role expectations from the Library’s point of view and from the Faculty’s point of view
Before (Jan 2010)

- Attended Board of Studies meetings in some Departments
- Had some Library reps
- Offered only inductions to students in the beginning of the year
- No information literacy sessions
- A need was identified for a new improved role
Bridging the gap

- Our vision of excellence in teaching and research

- Information literacy training needed to be implemented

- To get to students to ensure that they have equal opportunity to resources and support it was necessary to have academics on board
After (May 2011)

- A regular member of all Board of Studies meetings in all my Departments given a regular slot to present papers
- Invited to attend other staff meetings and student staff liaison meetings in the Departments
- Library reps in all Departments with whom I meet regularly
- A regular member of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee
- Recently invited as a regular member in the Research steering committee of my Faculty
- Teach all my students of all levels information literacy
How did it happen?

1. Confidence in meetings

- Described my role to help them appreciate the seniority
- Presented what I did as if it was already happening...and negotiated
- Stressed that other Departments and other Universities offer this training and the fact that our students will be missing out
- Met with all Heads, all UG and PGT programme directors, I asked for Library reps, I met with all of them I then met with level coordinators to identify modules, I met with all the administrators etc
- I had 78 meetings to get started
2. Colleagues and the Library

- Very supportive colleagues and a friendly environment where people are happy to share
- Independence to develop the role
- Supported by the library senior management who moved strategically at top level for information literacy
3. Getting connected

- Cilip
- Lilac
- Other libraries, Kingston, Imperial, UCL, Warwick, Cranfield, Bristol, Cardiff
- Engineering and Technology library groups
- Reading in the profession
4. Academics and our common ground

- High profile
- Extremely busy
- In need of solutions
- Not always seeing the relevance

- Found common ground: we want students to progress, to complete, to succeed, we want them to use good quality sources and good referencing.
5. Language – using the right vocabulary

Proposal for Information Literacy Sessions – Inductions to the University Library

Evi Tramantza, University Library

According to CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) Information literacy is “Knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner.” This definition implies several skills. We believe that the skills (or competencies) that are required to be information literate require an understanding of:

- A need for information
- The resources available
- How to find information
- The need to evaluate results
- How to work with or exploit results
- Ethics and responsibility of use
- How to communicate or share your findings
- How to manage your findings”

(2010)
My Information Literacy 2 hour sessions for levels 2, 3 and M can include:

- Using the library catalogue for books, journals, dissertations
- Interlibrary loan for items we do not hold
- Reading lists
- Subject guides
- Online newspapers and journals
- Reference search
- Remote access to the online resources
- Distinguishing between search engine and database search
- Google scholar
- Web 2.0 technologies like twitter, slideshare, bloglines, delicious etc
- Internet search
- Need to critically appraise the information found and ways to do this
- Plagiarism
- Copyright
- Keeping record of research done
- Bibliographic styles and referencing
- Search strategy
- Database search
- Boolean logic in searching
- Keeping search histories and more
- Help your students achieve and raise the standard of their intellectual contribution to the University. Contact me to book one for your students:

- e.tramantza@surrey.ac.uk
6. Using meetings

- Being present and communicative
- Being the bridge of communication between the library and the Faculty
- Using every opportunity to remind and inform about resources and services and educate
7. A show case

- Using show cases, name them pilot, to promote new developments, sessions etc
- Inviting lecturers
- Promoting best practice
8. Yes we can attitude

- Delivering. Whenever there is a request either from an academic or a student offering consistently fantastic service.
9. Being involved

Being present at events like project fairs or other internal to Departments events makes you internal.
10. Being flexible

- Offering alternatives
- Offering sessions within students schedule or outside.
- Offering sessions outside normal hours.
- Teaching groups of just 6 or 300
11. Gathering evidence

- Using statistics to impress
- Before and After checking your information literacy quiz. Some of the questions:
  1. Do you know what information literacy is?
  2. Do you understand the difference between a database and an internet search?
  3. Do you know which databases are relevant to your subject?
  4. Do you know what Boolean search and truncation is?
12. Letting your success stories talk for you

- Faculties are small communities and they share
- Lecturers and students will talk to each other to promote what we do
13. Using a platform: the website

- Subject pages
- Learning Skills Portal page
- Blog
- VLE
- http://www.surrey.ac.uk/library/
- http://www.surrey.ac.uk/feps/departments/
14. Dealing with problems

- Time is limited and multitasking the everyday truth
- Academics being very busy sometimes initially not receptive
- Firm when faced with negativity
- Backing away and identifying people willing to support
My information literacy plan – a pragmatic approach

- Lilac 2010 in Ireland: attended the Salford presentation on mapping information literacy.

- Used the Information literacy skills grid based on the Sconul pillars from Birkbeck.

- Mapped information literacy skills to different levels using the above at least 2 hours contact class time for all students.
Next steps - Learning Outcomes

- The University is restructuring to 15 credit modules
- Opportunity to embed information literacy formally
- Currently writing learning outcomes for all levels 1, 2, 3, M and MSc to be included in the relevant module descriptions and handbooks
- Presenting a paper in the Faculty teaching and learning committee to have this plan endorsed
Recommended model

- Working closely with lecturer
- Sessions compulsory and highly supported by lecturers
- Lecturer attending with students
- Embedding slots within students’ module and timetable
- Linking assignment requirements with information literacy learning outcomes
- In a time when they are starting research, linked to assignments
- Hands on with relevant activities
- Assessing to guarantee involvement
The appreciation and the nominations

- Increasingly appreciated and valued
- Nominated for two teaching excellence awards in the University of Surrey.
Summing up

- A pragmatic approach one that is viable
- A relationship of communication, of give and take
- Not easy but an utterly fulfilling journey
- Always aiming at improving the student experience
Bibliography

Bibliography

- University of Salford. [2010] Information Literacy Skills Audit. Unpublished ILS Liaison and Support document. University of Salford
Thank you

- Any questions?