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Version of item: Presented version
Scaffolding Librarians: Enhancing student success

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Background

Collaborative project took place between the Department of Information Services and the School of Education during 2009/10, to address challenges faced by students as they make the transition to HE study.

The following were concerns for the Library:

- Students’ low level of engagement with library resources and support – identified during informal discussions with the course leader and module tutors.

- Students expressing slightly less satisfaction with library facilities compared to the rest of the university in the University’s Internal Student Survey (ISS).
What did the project involve?

Initially the course leader surveyed a new cohort of undergraduates to ascertain their previous experience of:

- Support for assignments
- Library usage
- Information Skills support e.g. Internet searching advice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library use</th>
<th>Information Skills support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- 52% Rarely, or never
- 48% Regularly
- 31% Poor, or none
- 69% Good, or excellent
Library interventions for new cohort

- Librarian attended welcome session
- Library tour
- Information skills session – week 2
- Harvard referencing session
- Assignment support sessions for 2 modules
- Assignment support guides
- Timetabled drop-in support
- Open door policy access to Academic Librarians
- Opportunity to book one-to-one appointments with Academic Librarians

New provision ➔ Existing provision
End of year feedback

Course Team Survey:
64% of students found the Assignment support sessions useful, or very useful
67% of students found the assignment support sheets useful, or very useful

Improved Internal Student Survey scores:
2009/10 - 82% expressed higher satisfaction in relation to the library – increase of 11% on 2008/09

Improved student retention!
Sharing good practice

Following positive outcomes we were keen to disseminate – UoN Learning and Teaching Conference (transitions theme)– Journal article publication.

On submission of article for peer review 3 questions were raised:

- **Time intensive?**
  - Yes, but time saved elsewhere

- **Spoon feeding?**
  - Not intended, so what were we doing?

- **Patronising?**
  - Students did not have this concern
Scaffolding Librarians
Scaffolding

‘An important aspect of scaffolding instruction is that the scaffolds are temporary. As the learner’s abilities increase the scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable other is progressively withdrawn. Finally the learner is able to complete the task or master the concepts independently.’

(Chang et al., 2002 cited in Van Der Stuyf, 2002, p.2)
Following on in 2010/11

Continued to listen to student voice and work with course team to inform developments

Focus group of students from the project raised issues around:
  • Size of library
  • Service provision – expectation mismatch
  • Number, age and availability of books

Extra provision:
  • Welcome leaflet – pre-arrival
  • Activity based induction and referencing sessions
  • Ongoing support in year 2 – dip in confidence at start requires underpinning

Initial questionnaire distributed to Yr 1 teacher training students and a similar picture obtained regarding students limited previous use of, and research experience in libraries
What can you do on Monday morning?

Engage in dialogues!
References

