



UNIVERSITY *of*
WORCESTER
Library Services

Knowing Me, Knowing You

Examining the Library Induction Process for Academic Staff

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Aim for today

To share findings from a recent study by library staff at the University of Worcester focusing on the effectiveness of the library induction process for new academic staff.

Plan for today

- Background and rationale
- The project
- The findings and implications
- Outcomes so far
- Next steps

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Myself and the project team are keen to hear your thoughts about the project as well as your own experience of organising, supporting or delivering library inductions for new academic staff in your institutions.

Please do share your thoughts, if you are happy to contribute. Comments will remain anonymous but will be shared after the conference.

Background and rationale

Relationships are the foundation of academic liaison work



Knowing me

(knowing librarians)

As an academic liaison librarian, my role involves working closely with course teams within the schools I support. It is through these **relationships** that I am invited to speak to students, sit on key meeting and contribute expertise to proposed developments.

My work, like the work of many university librarians, is dependent on strong working relationships with academics.



Knowing the issue

(knowing our academics)

Yet, although the importance of librarian-academic relationships is well established within the research literature, there is little evidence showing how to initiate these relationships.

Moreover, from our teaching stats/audits and anecdotal evidence, it was evident that engagement from some of our academics was better than others.



Library Induction for new academic staff

In September 2025, Library Services at the University of Worcester conducted a study looking at the effectiveness of current library induction practices for academic staff.

The aim of this study was to determine if and how this initial induction period influenced subsequent library use and how staff support their students to develop their own knowledge of libraries and information literacy.

The Project

“I don’t know what I don’t know”

Two surveys

In September 2025, the University of Worcester library team set out to examine current induction practice for academic staff. A mixed-methods survey was sent to all academic staff at UW regardless of contract. This survey was sent via the school admin teams with the permission of department leads. Another mixed-methods survey was sent to library staff working in UK HEIs via LIS mailing lists.



UW Academic Staff

Survey A — the recipient's view

- Experience of current library induction process.
- Whether it met their needs as new starters.
- Subsequent library use.



UK HE Library Staff

Survey B — the sector view

- Current induction practice across UK universities
- How academic staff induction is designed and delivered
- A benchmark for comparing UW's own approach

Responses



UW Academic Staff

28 responses

- 50/50 split between individuals on teaching only contracts and those on standard academic contracts.
- At least one representative from each school at the university.



UK Library Staff

95 responses

- A mix of subject librarians or equivalent roles, library managers, assistant librarians, directors and library assistants.

Findings: UW Academic Staff

Disparity between induction experiences. Inductions were felt to meet the needs of academics, however, there was notable room for improvement.

[61%]

Were offered a library induction session (18% were unsure).

[94%]

16/17 respondents felt the induction they received met their needs. However, suggested improvements.

[76%]

Noted that their induction consisted of a meeting with an academic liaison librarian.

“Am I making the most or best use of Library Services...?”

Subsequent library use

Only 17/28 respondents provided answers to questions about subsequent library use. Of those 17 confidence was very high and respondents all noted being very engaged with library services. Some respondents noted prior-experiences of university libraries played a role in their confidence level, e.g., being a previous Worcester student or working at a different HEI.

[100%]

Strongly agreed or agreed

To all questions relating to awareness
of library services and support.

“The Library Services are excellent and the academic liaison librarians so helpful and accommodating. I can not fault the team and they are the best”.

Findings: UK HE Library Staff

Lack of formalisation was apparent across the findings in terms of being consistently alerted about new starters and recording the effectiveness of current induction processes.

[55%]

Were notified by
admins/professional services about
new starters. 32% noted that there
was no formal mechanism.

[44%]

Were not sure what the take up was
like for library induction for new
academic staff. 22% noted that this
was 0-25%.

[83%]

Noted that at least part of their
induction process involved a meeting
with a member of the library team.

“Finding out about new staff is not foolproof, and many who join out of the usual September intake are missed. New staff are bombarded with lots of other information and the library can often be sidelined”.

How effective is library induction?

Whilst there was felt to be good practices when inductions took place, there are challenges across the sector with maintaining engagement and with uptake of library inductions. Library staff often noted experiences where academics were surprised by just how much the library does.

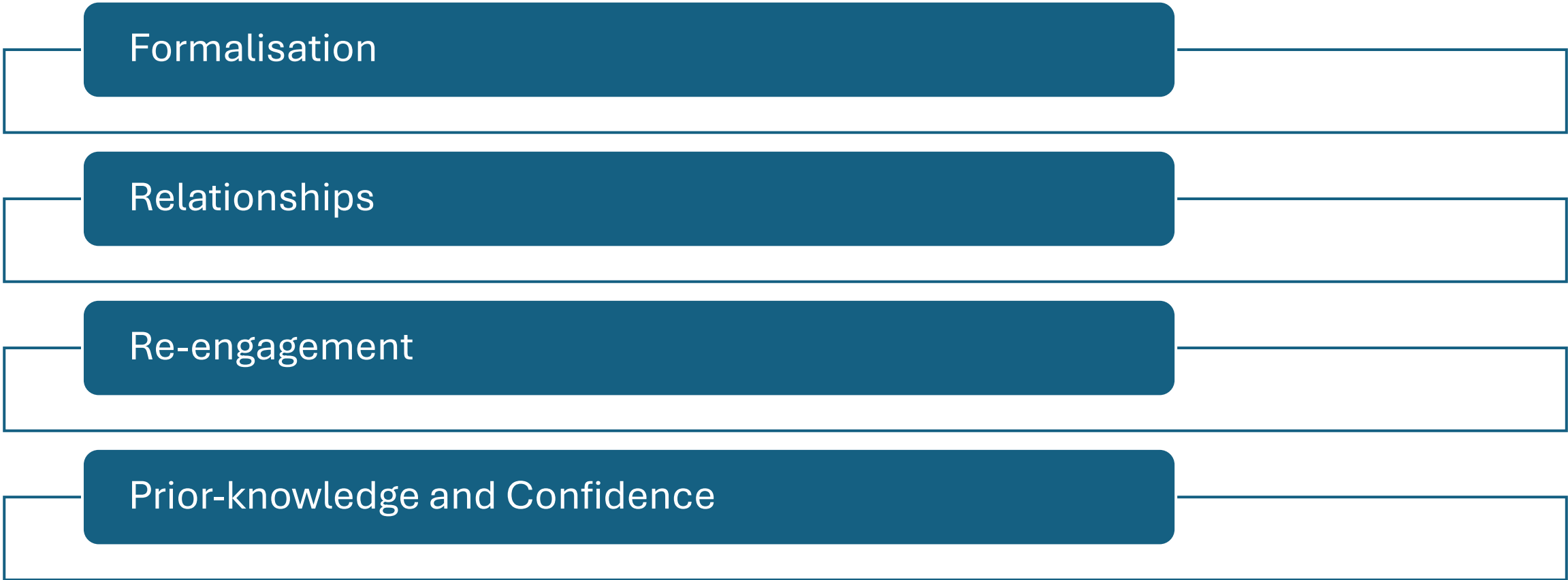
[61%]

Somewhat effect

11% very effective, 28% not effective.

“Academics who do attend library inductions often say things like 'Oh, I never knew that' or 'I have learned so much in this session' and are very grateful for our time. Sadly, for whatever reasons, we just don't seem to be able to get many academics signing up to our inductions”.

Major themes



Formalisation

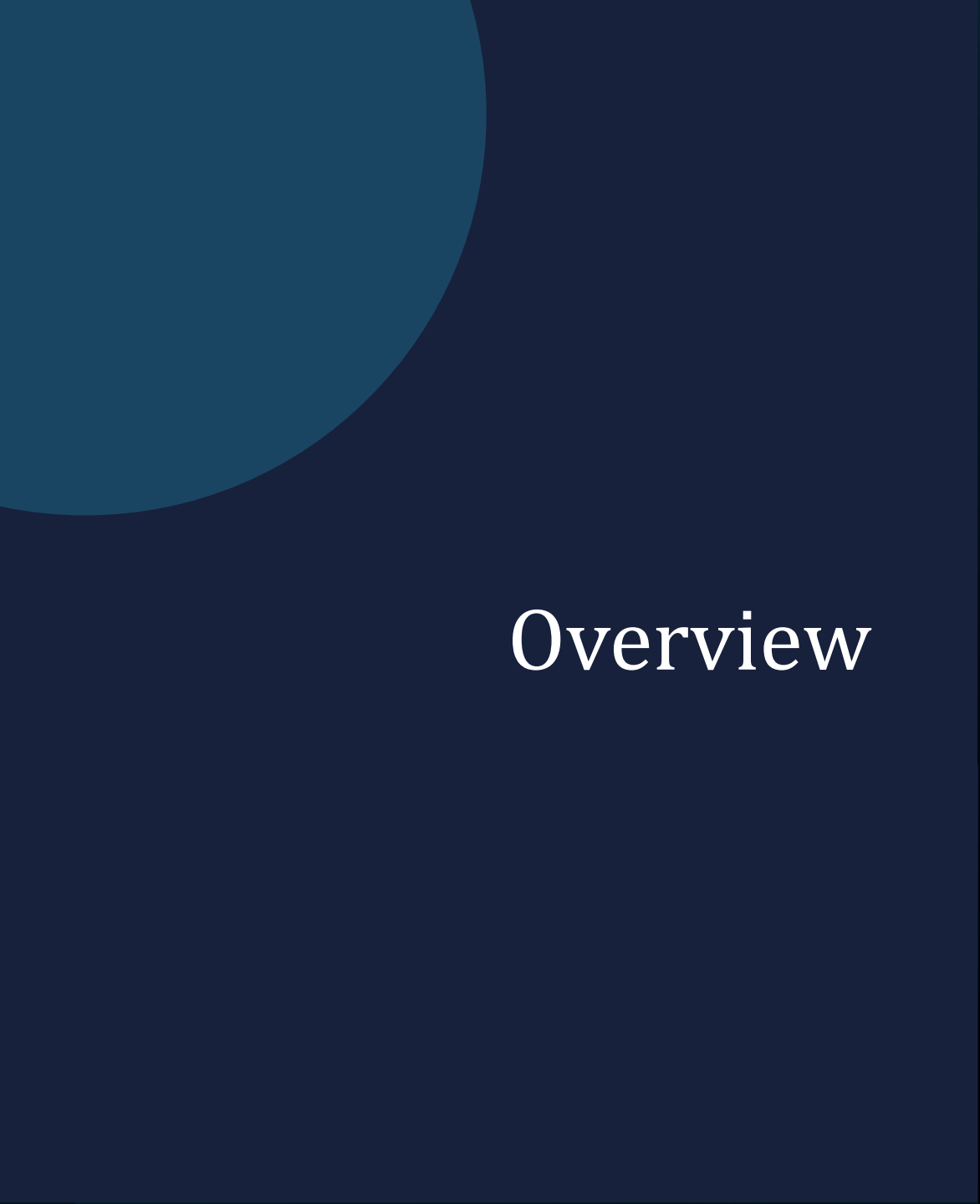
Relationships

Re-engagement

Prior-knowledge and Confidence

Implications and Next Steps

What have we started to do at Worcester



Overview

Both surveys highlighted a lack of formalisation with current library induction processes. Within the wider sector challenges around engaging and re-engaging academics are prevalent. Lack of awareness from academic staff around the extent to which library staff can support both staff and students is also evident.



Limitations and challenges

- Sample size and incomplete surveys from UW staff.
- Length of time at the institution.
- Re-engagement and maintaining partnerships.
- Time poor academics and librarians.
- Lack of take-up of induction offers.
- High library confidence doubled with lack of awareness.



Measuring effectiveness of library induction?

The initial aim of the study was to measure the effectiveness of our current library induction process. However, what we've uncovered is the challenges around this:

- Many library staff surveyed weren't formally measuring the effectiveness of their inductions. Therefore, were unsure how effective they were.
- Many of the academic staff surveyed couldn't remember their library induction or didn't feel strongly about this.

Key takeaway

Induction is one opportunity, but it is not the only opportunity.

Next steps (and what we've done so far)



Sharing internally
and externally



Reviewing the
library website



Working with
wider university
teams



Offering support
at the point of
need



Formalising
processes



Keeping the
conversation
going



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Thank you! Any questions?

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