



## Mercian Metadata Group

Annual meeting 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021

### Agenda

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**Present:** Will Peaden (Co-Chair, Aston), Richard Birley (Co-Chair, BCU), Diane Boyes (Northampton), Sally Rimmer (Derby University), Masniza Sore (Northampton), Owen Thomas (De Montfort), Gaby Travel (Northampton), Corrine Lambert (Leicester University), Helen Smith (Harper Adams), Ed Kirkland (Warwick), Karen Lodge (Birmingham University), Jane Faux (Newman), Gaz J Johnson (Mercian Collaboration)

**Apologies:** Sue Ackerman (Sponsor, University of Nottingham), Galen Jones (Open University)

1) Welcome and apologies

Will welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) Minutes from last meeting (distributed prior to meeting)

The minutes were accepted as read.

3) Reflections on 2020

Although the group lost a bit of steam during the lockdown period progress had been made on some of the items identified at last year's meeting. Unfortunately, we were only able to host one event, the e-forum on shelf-ready/EDI, and had to cancel the Future of Cataloguing event despite its advanced stage of planning. It was noted that the lack of travel in 2020 significantly impacted on the group's networking goals, the central impetus for setting up the group back in 2019. Gaz added that budgetary restrictions, even post-pandemic, could mean that face-to-face meetings continue to be problematic. That said, it was agreed that getting people together online remained valuable, and served the group and the Collaboration's goals. While no actions were unaddressed, aside from the question of decolonising the subject index, it was noted that developments around JISC's Plan M have moved on considerably since we last discussed them.

Following the success of online meetings/training sessions held by the national MDG group, which Will participated in (e.g. Library Carpentry), it was felt that the MDG should try replicate these through the use of our e-forum and Teams/Zoom. The consensus was that the e-forum was a popular and useful format, as demonstrated by our discussion of Emma Boothe's document but, as Richard stated, he would hope to share the decisions and contributions of future discussions wider. Gaz noted they were a good model for an event, and the Collaboration hoped that other groups would adopt the format.

Masniza asked about the creation of the list of which LMS's/LSP's/Discovery Platforms are used across the collaboration that was discussed at last year's meeting. Richard explained while this had been started, thanks to those who got it touch, it was superseded by the discovery of an existing website ([https://www.helibtech.com/he\\_systems\\_review](https://www.helibtech.com/he_systems_review)) which collates this information nationally. The link was distributed on the mailing list in November 2020.

**ACTION: Richard to update the list about national platform/system site – COMPLETED: link is included in minutes (RJB 14/2/21).**

4) Event planning – suggested one session each side of the summer

a. RDA RIMMF session

This event had been originally planned for June 2020, but Will thought that it would be possible to run this event ‘virtually’ suggesting that people, if possible, use a dual screen format. Zoom also provides the potential to use breakout sessions, and Will was willing to lead on this. The intention is to invite someone from UK RDA Committee who is an expert on RDA to support the event. Other RIMMF events were noted as being useful, and certainly the development of RDA, particularly the Toolkit, was an issue for staff across the region. All of which supports the idea and value of an event like this.

June 2021 would seem to be an ideal time, given there are no competing events within the Collaboration. The dual screen format might be a problem, as not all staff would have them at home, but with the hoped for increase in numbers of people returning to their offices this would make access to dual screens less problematic.

**ACTION: Will to contact UK RDA Committee to invite a facilitator for the event.**

b. MarcEdit practical workshop

Will noted that while he, and others, make regular use of this tool, not everyone is a confident/skilled user. It was proposed that he, and others, would use examples of real data from their workplaces to demonstrate/illustrate how MarcEdit can be used to improve workflows and manipulate data. By using real data in the tutorial people will be able to work through various scenarios up to the point where the data is uploaded to their LMS/LSP. It was agreed that this approach would help add context for those members of the group less familiar with MarcEdit. Both the very active MarcEdit list and Terry Reese’s YouTube tutorials were recommended as good starting points for those wishing to find out more and hopefully elements from each of these will be drawn into the session. Sally, Will, Richard and Ed all offered to contribute some of their own MarcEdit examples and talk about their experiences of using this tool.

**ACTION: ALL to consider if they wished to participate in event with worked examples**

Masniza suggested the possibility of holding events, or combining sessions, with other groups (e.g. the Northern Collaboration or London/Southern Group) with Gavin Phillips of the Southern Group being suggested as a potential first contact. It was agreed this would be a useful way forward, and there were no cost conflicts, etc., as this would be a dual badged event. In terms of when to slot this event in, it was suggested that July be avoided. Will suggested he’d need a lead time of about a month to pull an event together. September was proposed as a potential date (avoid 8 September as clashes with other Collaboration event).

**ACTION: Masniza to facilitate contact for Will with Gavin Phillips about potential future event collaboration**

**ACTION: Will to lead on coordinating MarcEdit event practicalities**

c. E-forum

i. E-book management

Suggested as this is a very timely subject, especially with new suppliers entering the market due to the lockdown, many of whom are not as experienced as specialised suppliers. As a result there has been a lot more work for metadata teams to do dealing with the varying quality of data they are now receiving. Finding ways to work around these issues, would make for a useful online discussion, as people are largely dealing with the same issues but perhaps resolving them in different ways. It was agreed that this would throw up a lot of useful discussion in an e-forum, and hopefully some good practice examples to share with the wider membership.

Agreed to organise this as the first event of the year, a mid-March date was proposed, likely a Wednesday (10 or 17).

**ACTION: Will and Richard to coordinate on planning the eBook management eForum**

ii. Special collections

Last year the group asked someone to help organise this, and as Aston doesn't have a special collection, Will felt he was not best placed to lead on this. The difficulty persists that few members of the collaboration have a special collection within their library, and much of this material is physical, making online sessions challenging to organise. CILIP has a Rare Books and Special Collections group that may be able to provide some support, or input to this event. The lack of expertise in the region appears to be an issue in terms of structuring the event and content, although there would still be value in terms of group members sharing their thoughts and, probably limited, experiences.

It was suggested this would be a good event for the tail-end of the year, especially if by then there was some level of access to the physical collections possible. Karen suggested that Birmingham University may be able to help contribute to the organisation of this event, given their own experience, collections and interest. Ed suggested Warwick may also be able to contribute, potentially, in the planning.

**ACTION: All to consider if they could contribute to helping shape the Special Collections eForum for later in the year**

Will noted that the proposed sessions provided a good structure to the year for the group, with three agreed, and manageable, events and one other that could also come to fruition (Special Collections) or, if necessary, be pushed into 2022.

5) AOB

a. RDA/BL Application profiles

Ed asked about RDA and the British Library on the creation of Application Profiles, as most people are looking to take a lead from them on this question. Will stated that these were to be added to the toolkit, and that creating a regional Application Profile would be going too far. However, awareness of what others are doing in this respect would be useful, and would likely come out in discussions at the

RIMMF/RDA event. It was noted the old version of the toolkit would be turned off, but with a year's notice. As this had yet to be announced it was expected that access would continue for at least the next couple of years.

There was some general discussion around the perceived complexity of the 'new' version of RDA. Thinking aloud Richard asked if RDA had reached a point where it needed a more detailed discussion around its application and implementation. Particularly as the practical implementation of RDA in a MARC environment is difficult to explain, or 'sell', to non-specialists in a meaningful way. It was suggested this might be one of the issues to come back to at the RDA/RIMMF event, as there may have been some developments within the Toolkit/UK RDA community, that may help with training in, and the promotion of, RDA.

#### b. Decolonising Subject Indexes

Sally noted they were considering this at Derby, and how this question is going to be addressed remains a 'hot topic'. Approaching this in a standardised way was preferred but this has yet to emerge. She asked how this was being addressed nationally, and what, if anything, the Collaboration/MMG could do about it? Will shared his experience, noting he'd hoped to have contributed to the Decolonisation event, but in the end wasn't involved. The consensus was that this issue should be addressed at a higher level, with a national/international standard (e.g. Library of Congress) rather than working on a bespoke regional solution. Subject Librarians at various universities have overlapping interests in this area and any discussion on this should involve all interested parties. That said, term standardisation, and the definition of acceptable terms still seems to be unclear, which is, understandably, restricting the adoption of any schema. Often new 'decolonised' terms are contested, almost as soon as they are introduced, reducing their longer-term adoption.

It was suggested that the MMG could be more effective by trying to spark a wider conversation on this question by talking to the British Library and other regional Collaborations. All agreed that a national list of problematic and replacement headings would be helpful for consistency, at least at a UK level, but finding agreement on such a list would be challenging. Guidance from a diversity group would be useful, as group members did not perceive themselves as experts in the appropriate terminology. Will agreed he'd raise this with the CILIP Metadata and Discovery Group as a starting point.

**ACTION: All to continue local discussions about decolonising and subject indexes and feedback to the group**

**ACTION: Will and Richard to consider approaching colleagues across the UK to initiate conversations about decolonising subject indexes**