



Mercian Staff Development Group (MSDG)

Minutes of the meeting 13th March 2018, Loughborough University

Present: Angela Brady, Ruth Chell, Louise Colver, Matt Cunningham, Andrew Dodds, Kay Jeffries, Jessica Goff, Heather Green, Diana Jobs (Directors Steering Group sponsor), Teresa Jordan, Gaz Johnson (Mercian Collaboration Development Officer), Kirsty Kift (Chair), Annmarie Lee, Heather McBryde-Wilding, Jane Mortimer (Minutes), Christine Porter, Sarah Pittaway, Susan Rodda

1. Apologies

Jo Aitkins, Joe Foley, Kathryn Greaves, Sue Storey, Lesley Thompson, Janet Weaver

2. Welcomes

All reps introduced themselves and new members were welcomed. Diane Jobs is the Steering Group sponsor.

3. Minutes of meeting on 21st September 2017

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

The following matters arising were recorded as complete:

- a) Those interested in the buddy scheme have been matched and additional promotion undertaken. (See item 7 for further discussion of the scheme).
- b) MSDG sponsor confirmed.
- c) Programme flyer produced.
- d) GJ advised session write-ups are starting to come through. Those hosting events are reminded to continue to send text and photos to GJ for uploading to the website – drafts are fine.
- e) Evaluation survey devised and Coventry trialled the use of Padlet for their event.
- f) The Copyright Group terms of reference have been approved and the first meeting taken place.

The question of the geographical boundaries of the Mercian region had not been raised at the last Mercian Collaboration meeting. DJ and GJ advised that the boundaries are fluid and dictated by membership. KK reiterated the MSDG concern regarding staff travelling across a large region.

The action re the external speakers was outstanding, both Ruth Stubbings and Rob Davies having left. (See items 6 and 8 for further discussion).

It was agreed to discontinue the use of Google Docs and to store MSDG documents on the Mercian Collaboration website instead. The meeting/event planning document needs to be updated and shared with new members. GJ will check on what else needs updating or moving across to the website. **Action: GK/KK**

4. Update from Mercian Officer (Gaz Johnson) and conference update

Mercian's first annual report is now available (to be formally received at the Directors committee 19th March). It is on the website too for all to see, and is a brief summary of the direction, activities and outcomes from the Mercian Collaboration's work in the last year. The 2018 report may need to be more detailed, based on the new working arrangements with SCONUL, but these have yet to be confirmed in detail.



The website continues to develop, and there are now more reports appearing on it, which are much appreciated (by the membership and MCDO). Hopefully, these will continue to grow in number.

A new discussion list mercian-collaboration@jiscmail.ac.uk launched last week, and is open to all staff at Mercian member institutions. It is intended to partly serve as a channel for the MCDO to distribute regular updates (events, news etc) and will be especially of value for those not following the Twitter account. However, it may in time also generate discussions, questions etc between member staff. All encouraged to promote to colleagues.

The Mercian Disability Forum and RDM SIGs (Special Interest Groups) are both planning events, on inclusion, and GDPR & RDM respectively. The Copyright Group held a GDPR and Copyright event in Leicester in early February which was highly successful (40 delegates). As always, these are updated in the [Events Calendar](#) to avoid clashes with other events, as soon as any prospective dates emerge.

This year's conference is set for University of Birmingham on 11th Sept 2018, and a call for papers is expected soon - on the theme of 'New To You'. Sponsors are being approached, with one already coming forward. The hope is that at least some of the costs can be offset. SIGs will be encouraged to have a presence, and directors will be strongly encouraged to attend - partly because sponsors are keen to see them but also because it benefits staff to see their commitment. AB suggested we should also consider reaching out to students and GJ will take back to the conference planning group. **Action: GJ**

The MCDO met with his counterparts from other regional collaborations in February, and fed information back to the Steering Group. This is especially useful with regard to those officers in fellow SCONUL regional groups - as shared experiences help us work with the 'mother' organisation better.

The full report to directors is available at:

<https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Officer%20Update%20Report%20-%20Mar%202018.pdf>

5. Election of Officers

No nominations had been received prior to the meeting. The item was deferred to later in the meeting to allow time for consideration, at which point those below were elected unopposed.

Chair: Matt Cunningham
Vice Chair: Ruth Chell
Admin Officer: Jane Mortimer
Evaluation Officer: Sarah Pittaway

6. Update on current programme and admin

Sessions have been delivered as per the programme, with the exception of the learning exchanges on measuring impact and negotiating and influencing skills, which will not go ahead this year. MC offered to approach the presenter of an event on negotiating held at Loughborough, to run similar for the programme next year. **Action: MC**

There are issues around funding and payment for external speakers. GJ will raise at the next Mercian Collaboration meeting. **Action: GJ**

KJ asked reps to promote the forthcoming All the Same but Different visit to Derby as not many takers to date. **Action: All**

BCU offered a visit to their new study space in July 2018, which was accepted.

RC provided an update on event evaluation and will re-circulate her report. **Action: RC.** Some limited evaluation had been done using an online survey to capture immediate post-event reactions. This method did not bring any particular benefits administratively and requires attendance information to be extracted from Eventbrite. It was agreed to

- Use a printed form for the on the day evaluation. The ratings on the venue and refreshments will be removed from the template. **Action RC**
- Follow-up with an online survey at the end of each year. The mid-year survey will be dropped.

The feedback received on this year's programme is positive. Attendance levels vary according to topic. Further consideration to be given to how we draw in those who indicate in their evaluations they are willing to be involved in the delivery of future events.

It was noted the current version of Eventbrite does not allow entry of job titles. RC will look into costs of the paid-for version. **Action: RC**

7. Buddy scheme update

JM advised there are currently 4 matched pairs in the buddy scheme, all of whom will reach the end of the recommended six months for participation in April/May. A short survey will be devised, asking how the scheme has worked and what could be improved, and sent to the participants. **Action: JM**

It was agreed to promote the scheme at the September conference, at the start of each academic year and around April/May. AB suggested institutions should include in their inductions for new staff.

It was proposed the scheme be extended to include peer-to-peer buddying. Reps to gauge interest in their respective institutions and report back at the next meeting. **Action: All**

8. 2018 - 2018 programme

Ideas for the coming year were shared and a draft programme pulled together.

Learning exchanges

Topic	Description	Target audience	Proposed venue (partners)	Month - provisional
Managing student behaviour	Managing the challenges of behaviour in 24hr environments and an increasing range of library managed study spaces	Front line staff	Worcester (Aston, BCU, Coventry, Warwick)	Nov 2018
Digital literacy	Definitions and what skills and training needed to support. Possibly to include student input	Subject librarians	Coventry (Warwick, Worcester)	Dec 2018/Jan 2019
Access to resources	For acquisitions/collections staff to include ILL, PDA, EBA etc.	Backroom staff	DMU (Derby, Warwick)	Feb 2019
What do year 3 students need to	Follow on from years 1 and 2	Librarians	Aston (DMU)	March 2019

know?				
(Changing) role of the Library Assistant	Looking at the bigger picture to help understanding of trends across the sector and how roles jobs fit in	Library assistants	Birmingham (Northampton)	April 2019
Measuring impact	Including KPIs – especially learning gain	Managers	tbc	April 2019
Learner journey	Looking at learner journey research that has taken place at Worcester and Derby		Derby (Worcester)	May 2019
Negotiating/ influencing skills		MSDG	Leicester (tbc)	tbc

The sessions on negotiating skills and measuring impact, carried forward from this year's programme, would use external speakers. KK will follow-up re the speakers and consider venues based on their locations. **Action: KK**

All The Same But Different

- BCU – July 2018
- Wolverhampton – Nov/Dec 2018
- NTU – Feb/March 2019
- Northampton – May 2019

KK to approach Lincoln with regard hosting an All the Same but Different visit. **Action: KK**

Reps not in attendance are asked to review the draft programme and consider possible input. **Action: reps**

9. Venues for forthcoming meetings

June 2018 – DMU or Warwick

September 2018 – DMU or Warwick

March 2019 – Worcester

June 2019 - Northampton

10. AOB

None.



Updates from members – confidential and not for the website

Loughborough: New LMS, Koha, went live on 5th February. System supplier has offered 20 development days to work on the system for Loughborough. Looking for a new institutional repository. The librarians are working on a new partnership model.

Bishop Grosseteste: Recruiting for one new professional post, the role has been slightly modified. We are looking at Tallis Aspire reading lists. Also asking for RFID.

Cranfield: De-coupled from IT department. Library now in new professional services unit which focuses on the student experience and also includes TEL and Careers. Squeeze on class contact time.

Wolverhampton: Divorced from IT. The hoped for major re-build has become a refurbishment of the main building. New LMS (Alma) from September. Implementing reading list software.

Worcester: Awarded CSE with a number of compliance pluses. Going out to tender for LMG, again. The Hive was five in the summer, now developing a strategic plan for the next five years. Student recruitment is down, likely to impact on budget.

Warwick: In second year of reading list project – at around 50% compliance. Lack of study space an issue – various initiatives to maximise. In discussion with institution re extension or new build (Library 2), with a business case being put together. Also an old building to maintain. Departments are being asked to undertake audits to assess efficiency, including the library currently.

NTU: Following Ruth's departure Kate and Jo have taken on the staff development role. They are reviewing the staff development policy and offer. There is a new university appraisal system.

DMU: The library now reports to the PVC Learning and Teaching and not the Chief Operating Officer. Outcome of Voluntary Severance Scheme is expected shortly and a directorate restructure likely to follow. Pressure on space continues and staff will be moving into another building over the summer to increase space in the library for students. (Still) waiting university decision on new build or major refurbishment.

Birmingham: Upgrading LMS. Taken on responsibility for additional learning spaces around campus and looking into how communicate with students what spaces are available. Developing a 'green heart' in the campus. The role of the library and concept of what it does is changing. Focus on transnational education.

Newman: New VC, who has brought in a layer of academic management. Student numbers falling. Freeze on posts, which is challenging for the library. Had hoped for a new LMS, but re-negotiating with Capita instead.

BCU: New VC – focus on student experience, commuter students, REF etc. Recently reaccredited for CSE. Will be getting a new study space but the Perry Barr site will close. The latter campus will become the Commonwealth Games Village. Dealing with impact of high-speed rail on the doorstep.

Derby: Review of service and structures using SCONUL's Mapping the Future of Academic Libraries. Now open until midnight. Soprano rolling out and introducing online payments.



Lots of temporary staff, also taken on 4 interns, looking at social media and ethnography. Undertaken learner journey project.

Aston: Planning to change print supplier and print services. Enhanced use of Springshare products, including for system updates. About to recruit subject librarian for the Medical School. Set up reading groups for pre-sessional students. Also offering sessions around wellbeing and anti-procrastination. Pressure on space resulted in phased evacuation. Project with Leicester on digital literacy.

Northampton: 4 months away from move to new campus. There won't be a library, it will be part of a Teaching Hub. There is concern for second and third years, who will feel new all over again. In induction used student ambassadors for tours not librarians. Major weed has reduced stock by 45%. Carrying out a stock audit prior to move: it has really engaged staff.

Keele: Updating to new self-service. 6 months of using 24 hour chat, low usage to date but positive feedback. Compulsory online GDPR training. Will be getting an additional study space, trade-off is may be required to provide 24/7 access over the summer.

Coventry: No drop-off in student numbers. Issues around space and behaviour. Remodelling of front entrance area to bring in bookshop and café and also upgrading all lighting. Wrestling with new online DPR system – not clear how links to performance related pay. Recruiting more subject librarians.