



## Collaboration Development Officer's Report, Oct 2019

**Dr Gaz J Johnson, October 2019**

This document is a general overview of activities and matters of general reporting on the Collaboration, related to the Development Officer's activities. It covers the period 1.Mar 2019-e.Oct 2019.

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### Governance

Following its election in March 2019, the Officers and Members of the Steering Group have been offered particular support by the Development Officer. The new Steering Group has met formally twice with a telcon in May and a face-to-face meeting in August. Along with the Officer, the latter meeting was also attended by SIG chairs, and focussed on reviewing groups' activities, alongside contributing to the development of the strategic plan. Informal briefings with individual members of the Steering Group and SIG chairs have continued throughout this period, as required. Notably, particular support has been given to the group-leads of the Marketing and Communications, and Metadata new SIGs in configuring their new groups' terms of reference, following their Board approval in March 2019.

A Collaboration tangible benefits briefing has been initiated, but as of this report, remains under development. The Chair and Officer are in the process of revising the strategic plan, following the August discussions and post-meeting contributor input.

### Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

A number of SIG Committee meetings were attended during this period, notably the inaugural meeting of the Marketing and Metadata groups (9<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> August '19, respectively). Additionally, supporting the Conference Group and its chair through meeting attendance, coordination, advice and practical event delivery, has continued as a significant ongoing administrative support contribution.

Alongside this, SIG ongoing related activities have included liaison with chairs and officers, maintaining the online events list, providing governance advice, promoting events, maintaining membership lists and overseeing discussion groups. Resolving questions related to event financial support has also been a regular topic of enquiry, with a revised request form consequently being developed. Demands on the Officer's time continues to, regrettably, prohibit attendance at all SIG events or meetings.

Following requests at March's Board, a feasibility study for establishing a Deputies & Senior Staff Group was conducted. Following the report's recommendations and Steering Group's approval, an initial exploratory meeting has been convened for 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019, to be hosted by the Collaboration Chair.

### Website, Marketing and Communications<sup>1</sup>

The Website has continued to grow in content, especially relating to SIG meetings and activities. Notable additions during this period have been sections for the new SIGs, and a microsite for the 2019 Conference. The site has remained stable and functional, with no technical issues noted. There has been a notable uptick in website usage over this period in contrast to the previous 6 months, peaking in the week ahead of the 2019 conference.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://merciancollaboration.org.uk>

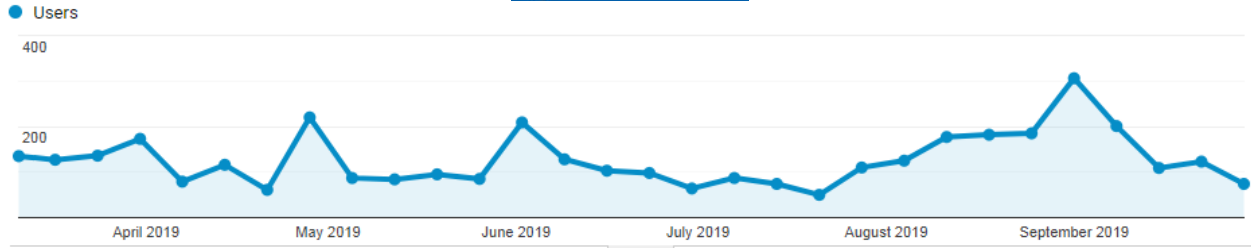


Figure 1: Most recent 6 months weekly web users

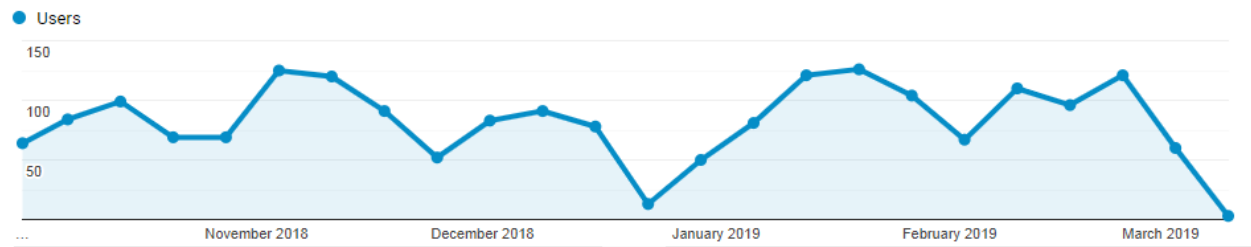


Figure 2: Previous 6 months weekly web users

Geographically, the UK remains the primary source of website traffic as would be expected given the Collaboration’s remit. England represents 97.1% of all access locations within the UK. However, a continued increase in US-based access is noted.

Rank	Top Geographic Accesses	Previous Report Period
1	UK (64.5%)	UK (65.8%)
2	USA (23.1%)	USA (19.0%)
3	South Korea (3.2%)	South Korea (3.5%)
4	Netherlands (1.5%)	Philippines (2.1%)
5	Argentina (1.4%)	Italy (1.5%)

### Marketing & Promotion

Populating the news section with fresh content remains challenging, and largely unrepresentative of the breadth of activity under the Collaboration’s aegis. Event organisers continue to be encouraged to submit post-event reports, with limited success.

Table 1: Last 18 months of Website News Items

Mercian Section	News Items (Mar-Oct 18)	News Items (Oct 18-Mar 19)	News Items (Mar-Oct 19)
General Collaboration News	1	0	2
Conference Group	3	0	3
Copyright Group	0	0	0
Marketing & Communications Group	N/a	N/a	0
Mercian Disability Forum	1	0	0
Mercian Metadata Group	N/a	N/a	0
RDM Support Group	1	0	1
Mercian Staff Development Group	2	4	2



Our Twitter presence ([@MercianCollab](https://twitter.com/MercianCollab)) has grown to 200 followers (175 at last reporting), with continued engagement from delegates to Collaboration events but also in response to original tweets. Engagement around the conference #tag ([#mercian19](https://twitter.com/hashtag/mercian19)) was at a healthy level too, enhancing the event and the Collaboration's online visibility. Content continues to be promoted through this channel as time allows, with scheduled tweets often deployed to maintain a flow of information.

The member exclusive discussion list ([mercian-collaboration@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:mercian-collaboration@jiscmail.ac.uk)), has risen very slightly in members (134 now, 130 at last reporting), with traffic on the list largely remaining limited to announcements and news from the Officer. However, a few other announcements have been contributed by list members. Various email lists have also been set up for the new SIGs.

### Training and Development

The Officer attended the Northern Collaboration Conference (6<sup>th</sup> Sept '19) at the University of Hull. This experience will contribute to the forthcoming Collaboration conference review.

### External Relations

Regular contact with our comparator organisations continues on matters of shared interest, and a face-to-face meeting is planned for March 2020. The annual meeting with NoWAL and Northern Collaboration officers is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> Nov '19, at University of Salford. Outcomes from these meetings and communications continue to be cascaded to Chair and Steering Group as appropriate. Some interaction with CILIP and MUAL, with respect to requests from Steering Group, has also occurred over this period. An approach from a Dutch library consortium is the process of being followed up, for a tentative 2020 engagement.

### Workload

The Officer's workload continues to increase in keeping with the growth in the Collaboration's activities. Over this reporting period 55% of working days<sup>i</sup> involved travel to attend meetings or events, mostly within the region. This is slightly up from the last report. Working hours are on now on average 111% of salaried time<sup>ii</sup>. Demands for the Officer's attendance were highest during the June-Sept period, making vacation planning tricky, and it would be advantageous to minimise calls on their time during this period.

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<sup>i</sup> 12 out of 22 working days, not including vacation

<sup>ii</sup> Including out of hours necessary travel time