THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Get Started at the University of Warwick Library

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After the Library's restructure, two years ago, central library orientations became the responsibility of the newly formed Enquiry Support Team, managed by Katharine Widdows. In the first year (2009-10) they adapted existing 'familiarisation sessions' into "Check It Out" sessions, consisting of a short tour of the Library's key service areas and some basic information about other library services. The sessions were intended to compliment the subject specific inductions delivered in departments by the Academic Support Librarians (ASLs). Time pressures meant that this ran on a very small scale and was not widely publicised. Only 76 students attended.

In the second year (2010-11), with more time to prepare, Check It Out was vastly improved. Consultation was sought across other teams within the Library to ensure content was appropriate and current. The sessions were split into two parts; the tour of key service areas followed by a presentation including a catalogue demo and introduction to the role of the ASLs. All staff were invited to take part and could volunteer either to deliver tours, deliver presentations, or both. This allowed staff who were less confident giving more formal presentations to get involved. It also provided the opportunity for back room staff that don't usually interact with students to take part.

Taking inspiration from a talk by Aston University at an EMAlink event and with the support of Warwick Library's Marketing Advisory Group an extensive Check It Out marketing campaign was created. This campaign was submitted to CILIP's Publicity and Public Relations Group Marketing Excellence Award and won a bronze award[1]. A range of channels was used to get information about the sessions out to students. This included promotional tickets sent out to all new students in their University welcome packs. As a result we saw a 717% increase in attendance.

Student feedback in 2010-11 was 96% positive. As in 2009-10, this was collected and evaluated as the sessions ran so that changes could be made as we went along to improve later sessions. This required a lot of work communicating the changes with over 25 members of staff who had volunteered to run sessions. One of the key areas that came up in the feedback was the cross-over between Check It Out content and that being delivered by the ASLs in their subject inductions. For the type of basic, practical information covered in the sessions students really appreciated the hands-on style of the tours.

The huge increase in attendance set ideas forming about how the sessions could be developed for future years. The positive student feedback meant that although there were minor changes to be made to content and delivery the focus for development was on the staff side in how the sessions were organised.

In October 2010 the core Enquiry Support Team consisted of Katharine and one Library Adviser, Natalie Hodgkiss. Katharine and Natalie co-ordinated this large and complex programme with support from 5 part time temps to help run their core enquiry service during its busiest period. Although they had sought input from other teams within the Library to develop content and deliver sessions, this was largely informal. The majority of the administration and infrastructure work

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[1] Widdows, K. (2001) Check It Out: University of Warwick Library launches the hottest session on campus. Available at:
http://warwick.academia.edu/KatharineWiddows/Papers/1206124/Check_It_Out_University_of_Warwick_Library_launches_the_hottest_session_on_campus

around the programme was dealt with by just two people. When Check it Out was finished Katharine began a review of how it had worked and recognised a potential increase in attendance year on year and the need for closer working with the ASLs. There was also a request from senior management to create a website to support new students all year round. Given the increase in scope of the project it soon became clear that orientation had become too big for one small team to manage. It needed a committee made up of representatives from all teams across the Library.

At the same time Emma Cragg, the Academic Support Librarian for Business, was conducting a review of subject inductions delivered by the ASLs in departments. The key points of crossover between the two reviews were that induction should be a library-wide activity with input from all teams and that work was required to avoid duplication of content between the central programme and the departmental sessions. We decided to join forces and create a committee with representatives from all divisions of the Library, making Emma the chair in order to support co-ordination of content across both generic and subject specific induction activity. The committee would allow a fully joined up approach to induction, with orientation sessions providing a basic, practical introduction to the Library the ASLs would be freed up to deliver more subject based material in their departmental sessions. Once this was proposed it was immediately supported by senior management and the Induction Planning Group (IPG) formed in June 2011. The remit of the group was to oversee the development and implementation of the central orientation programme.

The first stage in development of the programme was the creation of a set of supporting web pages[2]. This had been identified as a goal for the previous year, but there was not sufficient staffing resource within the Enquiry Support Team to complete it. The increased resource of the IPG made it possible this year and it became a central component of induction provision. The University's Web Publishing Service was commissioned to design and build the pages. At the same time as the web development the programme's brand was redeveloped. With induction materials available online all year round we were looking for something that was not tied to the face-to-face sessions, like Check It Out had been. And so Get Started was born. This formed from the idea that Library inductions should provide signposts to more information about the service. The image of a signpost was common throughout all materials produced along with three categories to group content under; "how do I?", "where can I?" and "who do I ask?".

For the creation of the initial web content we had a deadline of mid-August when all new students would receive Welcome Packs from the University including information about Get Started. The structure of the website was already set out so it was easy to identify what content needed to be created. Under the three themes there were a set of core questions that we wanted the web content to answer. For the "how do I?" theme short videos were created, the rest were text based. Creation of this content was divided up among members of the IPG based on areas of expertise, e.g. Customer Services staff created the how do I manage My Library Account video.

The addition of online content allowed us to think more creatively about what we wanted to offer from the face-to-face sessions. Feedback from last year's Check It Out highlighted a problem of duplication between content on the central induction sessions and those being run in departments by the ASLs. In response to this we decided to cut the presentation element, allowing us to make orientation of the Library a purely practical experience.

There were some key elements of the presentation that needed to be kept in the face-to-face sessions, e.g. searching the catalogue. To incorporate this it was decided that the session would

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[2] http://go.warwick.ac.uk/lib-getstarted

take the format of a tour, stopping at eight themed stations across the Library's first two floors. One station was set up to display video content that had been created for the website, this covered a demonstration of how to search the catalogue and manage your My Library Account.

All students who attended the sessions were given a Library bag in exchange for a completed feedback form. The feedback this year was 95% positive. Students were asked which aspect of the sessions they found most useful; the highest responses for this were the demonstrations of the self-issue and return machines, the Library Catalogue video and the provision of a general orientation of the Library.

We are currently gathering feedback from staff. From our perspective moving the responsibility for the inductions to the Induction Planning Group took the pressure off the Enquiry Support Team and allowed them to dedicate more staff time to the Enquiry Service from the start of term. Having input from staff in all teams of the Library at the planning stage gave those involved a greater sense of ownership over the programme than had been possible when staff from outside of the Enquiry Support Team had solely been involved in delivery. The additional resource of the IPG also means that the programme can continually be developed and improved. The IPG will continue to meet throughout the year to plan for induction 2012 and beyond.