

## Information literacy

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### **Introduction**

This chapter presents an overview of activities in the profession relating to information literacy (IL) between 2011 and 2015. It considers the work of practitioners and researchers in an attempt to build on efforts to strengthen the links between these areas. This reflects the focus of the activities in Britain of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) Information Literacy Group (ILG), which was a leader in the profession during this period through their regular activities, their web presence,<sup>1</sup> their annual conference, Librarians' Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC),<sup>2</sup> and their peer-reviewed *Journal of information literacy (JiL)*.<sup>3</sup> The wider context within which this work sits was, of course, ever-changing, and developments in Scotland and Wales in particular led the way in terms of policy. Engagement by CILIP also contributed to a general increase in the level of understanding and awareness of the issues around what we will call here information literacy. The government, large corporations (particularly banks) and NGOs and charities also got in on the act. This widening of the net meant that the nomenclature was still under discussion (interested readers should refer to earlier editions of this publication for background) and tensions continually arose between 'digital' and 'information', and 'skills/capabilities', 'literacy' and their relationship with 'inclusion/exclusion'. The impact of austerity measures on public library provision was profound, and prompted wider recognition of the value and impact of libraries in social and community contexts, which had significant relevance in terms of IL. Somewhat controversial developments in the USA through the American College and Research Libraries (ACRL) development and adoption of their Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education<sup>4</sup> also started to have impact in some circles in Britain.

This ever-changing context tested the current awareness efforts of all but the most dedicated of practitioners and researchers. Sharing information amongst colleagues through conferences, email listservs and formal and informal training sessions and collaborations was widespread. There were numerous 'Teachmeets' and online resources available for practitioners to draw inspiration from, and, as the technology became more reliable, free webinars seemed to be on the increase. Practitioners reported on their activities widely. Although this had always been the case, the depth of analysis of these work-based case studies seemed to be increasingly rigorous, as the health

information practitioners' 'evidence-based practice' approach gradually gained traction owing to its wide recognition across the profession as demonstrating good practice. The reporting of activities, interestingly, provided opportunities for practitioners not only to share their ideas with like-minded others, but also to reflect on their approaches. This reflection, which mirrored the approach taken during the reinvigorated CILIP Chartership process, helped focus on the skills required of these practitioners in the successful development, delivery and evaluation of their interventions, whether this was in copyright, health, researcher development or (particularly of interest during this period) transition between educational levels or into employment and beyond. Awareness of users seemed to be changing, to consider them more as (lifelong) learners, rather than as users, patrons or customers. It could be argued that this apparent paradigm shift started to create problems in recognizing the identity of the professionals involved in this shift. Were they librarians or teachers? Or both?

In terms of research, again, the efforts of *JiL* should not go unmentioned. The journal not only provided a platform for the dissemination of research but also offered a supportive environment for developing the writing skills of the participants. This recognized the important fact that many university library practitioners in the UK, sadly unlike their counterparts in the USA, were not considered faculty and it was not a requirement that they publish academic work as part of their duties. So despite many of them being qualified at Masters' level (which required writing a dissertation) they could often only put the research skills developed during their studies (and in the workplace) into practice through directly supporting users or, as researchers themselves, in their spare time. LILAC was an important step for practitioners in dissemination, although this was often where reporting stopped, making the proceedings an important resource for those wishing to explore a comprehensive practitioner-focused evidence base. Other than *JiL*, of course, international academic publications were the natural sources for IL research literature and the unfortunately timed (for academic staff) annual European Conference on Information Literacy (ECIL) provided a wider view. Library schools were the main source of academic research here, with Sheffield, Northumbria, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of the West of England being key contributors. Developments in library and information studies (LIS) curricula, with IL modules starting to be more widely offered (Northumbria, Sheffield, UCL, UWE) contributed to the research area as more dissertations and funded research projects were the outcome.

This chapter will explore some of these issues more deeply, considering how the context, practice, and research of information literacy developed in British librarianship and information during this period.

### **Policy**

The global internet phenomenon had an enormous impact on the availability of information through continually enhanced software and hardware. This caused significant impact on our daily lives and during this period was recognized as

an important policy issue, not least in terms of developing society and the economy.

As a precursor, 2009's *Digital Britain* report had started to make significant inroads into the recognition of information skills as drivers of the economy, particularly around the period of global downturn.<sup>5</sup> As part of a response to this, government had recognized the need for intervention and support, including a need for development of (digital) media literacy. This literacy built on digital inclusion ('opportunity') and digital life skills ('capability') to enable digital media literacy ('engagement'), particularly supporting the need for a development of skills provision. Although this skills focus was on ICT and developing the technology, rather than on its use, it was hoped that enhancing 'Digital Life Skills' and a programme of digital education, starting with early years and running through the education system and into the workplace, would help to address these issues: 'digital life skills are essential for all citizens'. Interestingly, using technology to create was also of primary concern. This, and the later Digital Inclusion Strategy,<sup>6</sup> led by Martha Lane Fox, focused particularly on the social and economic issues relating to uneven access to online materials. The emphasis at policy and strategic level on digital inclusion and digital capabilities thus became more apparent.

From 2011 we saw the publication of a selection of key documents relating to what were increasingly becoming known as digital skills. IFLA's somewhat sidelined Moscow Declaration on Media and Information Literacy,<sup>7</sup> and the related recommendations, made an attempt to incorporate the wider knowledge, attitudes and skills. There was a particular focus on the importance of lifelong learning and this was linked to sustainable development and, particularly, employability and entrepreneurship. Their message to widen the competencies beyond technology to include 'learning, critical thinking and interpretive skills' demonstrates an urge in the profession to expand IL beyond its core of school and university settings. In the UK the spotlight came on to the public libraries' offer, prompted particularly by the impact of austerity measures which led to library closures and the widespread adoption of volunteers in libraries as a cost-saving approach. The Arts Council England (ACE) 'Envisioning the library of the future' project, which started in 2012, explored the role of public libraries. It suggested that the use of digital technology, particularly, to find information, needed support from libraries, and that the skills of staff providing this support needed further attention and development.<sup>8</sup> The need for skills development was supported by the Carnegie Trust, who identified the potential of public libraries to contribute to information and digital literacies of users through the provision of access to technology.<sup>9</sup> This was built on by the Society of Chief Librarians' (SCL) Universal Offers, introduced in 2013, where two of the key areas of service were related to IL: the Universal Information Offer, focusing on user skills, and the Universal Digital Offer focusing on access provision and support.<sup>10</sup> Notably, both of these offers mention the importance of development of staff IL skills, and the Digital Offer was identified as central to the support and delivery of all

of the other offers. The offers became increasingly important as the government 'digital by default' strategy took hold, government services being driven towards online delivery.<sup>11</sup> The strategy had particular impact on digitally excluded citizens who were being directed to public libraries to facilitate their online access to welfare benefits and job applications, which led to an increase in demand for support in public libraries. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport *Independent library report for England*<sup>12</sup> suggested that this increase in demand, which had also been partly fuelled since 2007 by the Tinder Foundation's annual Get Online campaign,<sup>13</sup> would contribute to the increase in the need for public library services. Enabling access, and supporting information use was also recognized by the government's Digital Inclusion Strategy, which identified digital capability as being a key driver in developing society and the economy, as did the Information Economy Strategy.<sup>14</sup> The impact of the 2015 'Basic digital skills framework'<sup>15</sup> (managing information, communicating, transacting, problem-solving, creating), derived from collaborative work by the Tinder Foundation and Go On UK, remained to be seen. Its explicit mention of 'digital government services' demonstrated a strong link to the digital by default strategy, and the emphasis on 'digital' over 'information' supported the widening view that technology was the driver for much of these discussions. This might mean that in future, when 'digital' became normalized, efforts such as these would cease. A focus in the discourse on 'information', however, would more appropriately recognize the wider issues around lifelong learning. This technological determinism possibly meant that the perceived problem was considered to be solvable when it was more likely to be a permanent issue.

The focus on England during this period needs to be set in a wider context of the other home nations. The influential National Information Literacy Framework (Scotland)<sup>16</sup> had previously succeeded in influencing Scottish government policy relating to IL, particularly in terms of the development of the school curriculum and linking this to the university sector. The community of practice which grew out of the development of the framework aimed to build on previous work by drawing together a wide range of bodies and advocates for the wider adoption of IL within education and skills contexts.<sup>17</sup> Although the discourse at national level was similarly around the impact of technology, the importance of IL in Scotland and digital participation were more clearly identified as being interlinked, IL even being considered as a basis on which to build digital skills: 'information literacy is a pre-requisite for digital engagement'.<sup>18</sup> The report acknowledged the importance of the Framework, but recommended building a digital skills resource to recognize the additional issues brought to the classroom and beyond by information which is being mediated by technology. Again, the Scottish government recognized the need for digital skills in terms of contributing to social and economic development, with initiatives to develop frontline library staff skills and, more widely, through the Skills Investment Plan<sup>19</sup> which identified information and digital literacies as key requirements.

The Welsh Information Literacy Project was established in 2009. Aiming to develop ‘an information literate nation’,<sup>20</sup> the multi-sector project was funded from the start by Welsh government department CyMAL and this relationship was reflected by the recognition of IL in the CyMAL ‘Libraries inspire’ strategy for 2012–16, which recommended the development of an information literacy strategy for Wales.<sup>21</sup> Again, IL was considered a factor in digital inclusion and this technology driver was adopted by the project as an opportunity for advocacy quite successfully. Using the widely known (in higher education) and recently revised SCONUL Seven Pillars of Information Literacy<sup>22</sup> as a model and the recent Scottish initiatives as inspiration, the schools and skills development curricula were targeted, alongside government policy and strategic initiatives. This led to adoption of IL in the Welsh Public Library Standards<sup>23</sup> and recognition in the independent report commissioned by the government on digital skills in the classroom,<sup>24</sup> the framework being embedded into the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)<sup>25</sup> and IL supported by the skills development awards body Agored Cymru.<sup>26</sup> Although funding for this project ceased in 2015, the networks developed by the project continued to advocate for widespread national adoption of information literacy.

In terms of the educational context, the not-for-profit digital services agency Jisc was very active in exploring the opportunities for staff, student and researcher development afforded by digital technologies. Their ‘Developing digital literacies’ programme,<sup>27</sup> which ran from 2011 to 2013, involved practitioners and strategists from twelve universities and colleges and ten professional associations to develop and draw together guidance and insights into developing institutional digital literacies. This project was informed by a pyramid model of digital literacy development,<sup>28</sup> and drew together various literacies to develop a spoke and wheel ‘seven elements model’ with digital literacies at the hub and IL being one of the seven spokes. The outputs of the project provided detailed case studies on strategic change and good practice and provide a valuable resource, particularly for higher education institutions. The seven elements model was in continuous development during this period, and subsequent work led to a revised six elements digital capability model.<sup>29</sup> In this model, IL sat in the same element as data literacy and media literacy, and was linked with other literacies centred on ICT proficiency at the hub, all set in the context of digital identity and wellbeing. Importantly, the model was adopted by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in their Digital Literacy theme for institutional review for 2015–2016.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the technologically centred view of information and digital literacies became a quality issue across the university sector. This had important ramifications for the profession. While IL had become almost the property and responsibility of library services, the discourse generated by Jisc around collaborative partnerships and inter-service conversations reflected a new reality: the wider institution being responsible for developing and supporting information and digital literacies and the stakeholders, which included library but also e-learning, administra-

tion, faculty and policy-makers all had a part to play. With QAA encouraging the consideration of digital capabilities within institutions, IL was situated on the agendas of the leaders of these institutions, albeit through a technological lens. Indeed, one of the outcomes of the highly influential Finch report on open access<sup>31</sup> was that it raised issues around the digital context for researchers in higher education. With libraries across the sector developing online repositories for researcher outputs to meet open access requirements of the Research Excellence Framework (REF),<sup>32</sup> the information and digital literacies of researchers were under the spotlight from the highest level.

The response by CILIP to these significant developments in the raising of awareness of information and digital literacies was supportive. The IFLA Alexandria Proclamation on Information Literacy<sup>33</sup> was endorsed by CILIP in 2012.<sup>34</sup> Stating that ‘as a key public good of the profession, information literacy is a top CILIP priority’,<sup>35</sup> the Institute’s Information Literacy Project focused on digital inclusion and lifelong learning. A members’ survey suggested a widespread awareness of IL amongst practitioners, with their skills development being raised as an issue.<sup>36</sup> Information literacy was included in the Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB)<sup>37</sup> and the Code of Professional Practice identified the responsibility to ‘Promote the necessary skills and knowledge amongst users to become effective independent learners and researchers’.<sup>38</sup> Various workshops and events led to the publication of briefing papers on digital inclusion and e-safety,<sup>39</sup> a literature review on workplace information literacy<sup>40</sup> and numerous guest blogs were published. An increasing awareness of IL in the profession was also recognized by inclusion of the topic as a strand in the CILIP Conference. The CILIP Information Literacy subgroup, one of many special interest groups in the Institute, was made a full Group (ILG) in 2012. The extensive and influential activities of ILG, including their annual conference and peer-reviewed *Journal of information literacy* will be discussed below.

## Practice

Following on from the previous section’s ‘top down’ review, this section explores IL in Britain during this period from the practitioner level. It discusses the issues around development, delivery and evaluation of IL interventions in various sectors and considers the changes and emphases of approaches.

While the CILIP definition of IL, ‘Information literacy is knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner’,<sup>41</sup> was widely used, as it was considered easily communicated and understood, a more detailed model, developed by the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL), was deeply embedded into practice, particularly in university settings. The Seven Pillars of Information Literacy had originally been developed by practitioners in 1999. A revised model was published in 2011, which recognized developments in thinking and practice in higher education, particularly around pedagogy.

Including user attributes and behaviours in the new model was considered to be a positive development in terms of communicating the value beyond library staff, particularly to faculty.<sup>42</sup> This version of the model also included a 'research lens' which reflected the increasing discourses around researcher information practices, open access and the REF mentioned earlier. Other lenses were also developed in order to reflect the widening awareness of IL, including Open Content, Digital Literacy and Graduate Employability<sup>43</sup> and healthcare.<sup>44</sup> These were designed to accommodate the differences in information practices according to context and suggested that the 'pillars' were not entirely set in stone. By highlighting the flexibility of the model in this way, it increased the likelihood that the pillars would continue to be used as a framework (as in the Welsh Information Literacy Project discussed above), and be accessible to library staff, users and, importantly, other stakeholders. This acceptance of the inevitable reality of IL going 'beyond the library' reflected the wider discussions at government and employer level which had been taking place, and a burgeoning research interest in workplace information literacy.

Subsequent to the development of the Pillars, American College and Research Libraries (ACRL) performed an extensive revision of their Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, which had been widely used since their adoption in 2000.<sup>45</sup> The newly adopted Framework also recognized the importance of taking a pedagogical approach, treating users as learners. Although discussion of the Framework is outside the scope of this chapter, readers should take note of the efforts made by its American proponents to present and discuss this with their international colleagues, and it was likely that it would impact in some way on British practice over the next five years.

Another UK development in IL models was Secker and Coonan's ten-stranded New Curriculum for Information Literacy (ANCIL).<sup>46</sup> Here, the undergraduate user as learner was central to the development of the model, which recognizes the lifelong learning need for IL by considering transition points in the undergraduate journey. The inclusion of reflection as a learning approach demonstrated the pedagogical nature of this model, again showing how the need to communicate with wider stakeholders such as teaching staff had become recognized as an essential element of disseminating IL beyond the library.

As these practitioner-developed models shifted from a skills-based process training approach towards a more constructivist pedagogy teaching and learning approach, supported by increasingly sophisticated technology, this highlighted the growing recognition within the profession that upskilling staff was as important as developing user/learners.<sup>47</sup> Although an increasing number of Masters' courses in librarianship had started to offer IL as discrete modules, including Sheffield, UCL and UWE,<sup>48</sup> most qualified librarians did not have a teaching qualification, and did not study IL at library school. This meant that demand grew for on-the-job skills development and support from

professional and other associations. The CILIP ILG had a large part to play here, particularly by supporting and disseminating good practice through their increasingly popular annual LILAC conference and the peer-reviewed *Journal of information literacy*. The group also funded small practitioner research projects and sponsored events relating to staff development, particularly teaching. Their website was an accessible resource for practitioners wishing to develop their skills and knowledge in IL, some of which was sector-specific.

It is enlightening to consider the themes around practice in the LILAC Conference during this period. These reflected developments in interests and link closely with the preceding discussion. It is clear from them that learning how to teach was of primary concern to participants active in this community. The sharing ethos of the profession facilitated widespread and generous sharing of practice, nationally and internationally not only through LILAC but also, practically, through adoption of social media, Web 2.0 and open educational resources (OER),<sup>49</sup> and through locally-based initiatives, such as Teachmeets,<sup>50</sup> organized by special interest groups such as the Academic and Research Libraries Group and many others.<sup>51</sup> Informed by reflection, librarians from across the sectors, and with wide range in experiences, made efforts to work with their peers and colleagues in a supportive atmosphere to reinforce their approaches and explore new and creative teaching and learning ideas such as games.<sup>52</sup> At LILAC, in particular, this experience-sharing gradually adopted a more evidence-based analytic approach, partly encouraged by the efforts of LILAC and ILG to develop these case studies into more rigorously presented research projects, suitable for publication in *JiL*. Through these efforts, the subsequent research base grew to provide a stronger evidence base, thus contributing to the objective of developing credibility in the academic research community. The influence of health librarianship here cannot be ignored. The centrality of evidence-based practice in the National Health Service led to very good practice examples of research from the health libraries sector, such as the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) 'Finding, using and managing information' competences, which started to inspire IL work in the wider profession.<sup>53</sup>

Academic libraries continued to develop insights into student, staff and researcher IL needs and approaches, motivated by the policy and evaluation developments identified in the previous section, and moves towards embedding (or integrating) IL into the curriculum were particularly recognized as being of importance in the higher education sector,<sup>54</sup> where collaboration with faculty, rather than cooperation, became key. Assessment and evaluation were also considered as IL become focused more on teaching and learning, rather than on training. Linking IL more closely to the curriculum meant that librarians' teaching and negotiation skills were brought to the fore. As the role of the academic librarian was evolving, new issues relating to contested boundaries with other university departments arose, exacerbated by a historical lack of pedagogical instruction in LIS qualifications and the tensions in identity between librarian and teacher.<sup>55</sup>



Online or blended delivery was a particular focus reflecting the increasing adoption of electronic resources and social media in the delivery of teaching and learning, with OERs being considered an affordance of this approach. There was some evidence of developing collaborative approaches in supporting transition into higher education through outreach and blended learning resources—the success of Glasgow Caledonian University’s good practice SMILE and PILOT projects<sup>56</sup> informed the development of their SMIRK resource,<sup>57</sup> which aimed to bridge the gap between school and university, preparing incoming students more effectively for their higher education studies. University of Birmingham’s Masterclass project also provided a very good example of outreach and collaboration in terms of supporting not only school and further education students but also school librarians’ teaching skills.<sup>58</sup>

The main focus for schools and further education was also on transition,<sup>59</sup> particularly into higher education.<sup>60</sup> The introduction of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in 2008 was considered a gift by forward-thinking school librarians, who saw the opportunities of becoming more directly involved in research methods delivery through supporting the school students’ personal study approach required by this new qualification.<sup>61</sup> It also encouraged the development of collaborative links between schools and universities in attempts to transition students more successfully into the university sector. Analysis of the CILIP Schools Survey, which had been completed before the period of review, subsequently identified three characteristics of IL in schools: ‘Sporadic opportunism; Systematic development; Strategic orchestration’, highlighting the essential contributions which can be made by qualified school librarians—provided they are supported by the institutional infrastructure.<sup>62</sup> The Teentech initiative, led by television presenter Maggie Philbin, also provided an opportunity for the ILG to extend and support links between schools, employers and universities through their CILIP-sponsored Research and Information Literacy Award, which, notably, was judged independently of digital skills.<sup>63</sup>

Additionally, the legal sector’s commitment to IL was supported by the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians’ (BIALL) Legal Information Literacy Statement, which was informed by SCONUL’s digital lens on the Seven Pillars.<sup>64</sup> Alongside the RCN competences mentioned earlier this initiative was representative of a developing interest in exploring workplace information literacies, and their link with employability,<sup>65</sup> reflecting the lifelong learning element of IL.

## **Research**

Completed PhD level academic research into information literacy in Britain during this period explored two key areas: young people<sup>66</sup> and nursing students and practitioners.<sup>67</sup> Importantly, the work on young people recognized that these digital natives were not highly developed information literates, despite their deep immersion in the technology, and that there was an unbreakable link

between IL and teaching and learning. Research thus continued to spread its purview from IL's origins in bibliographic instruction and information seeking and retrieval into pedagogy and learning. As the net widened, context was increasingly recognized as central to the IL experience, and socio-cultural as well as educational issues were explored. Smith's discussions of how young people develop political agency were particularly relevant during a period of national elections and referenda, signifying a developing radical and critical approach to IL (see also Whitworth's contribution).<sup>68</sup> This lifelong learning widening of the research net prompted explorations into workplace IL, with three PhDs in this period considering nursing, from students to Forster's work on practitioners. As previously mentioned, the evidence-based approach of the NHS was seen as a driver for adoption of good practice IL in this sector, and the outputs of these researchers provided a detailed picture of the profession and, indeed, an evidence base to build on for future research.

A range of methodologies were adopted for research including the more usually adopted (online) surveys, interviews, focus groups and, a particular favourite of practitioners, case studies. At times these tended to be relatively descriptive, although this was gradually addressed by *JiL* and LILAC efforts at developing the research skills of their authors. Library schools' contributions also had an impact here, as interest continued to grow and students' Masters' dissertations explored IL more explicitly and in a more informed way, drawing from curricular developments, led by Sheila Webber and colleagues at the University of Sheffield. There was noticeable influence by seminal work of Australians Christine Bruce and Anne-Marie Lloyd not only in their focus on lifelong learning but also Bruce's use of phenomenography to explore contextual and relational variations in conceptions of IL,<sup>69</sup> and a combination of user information needs and behaviour and education theory started to drive much of this research.<sup>70</sup>

Research Information Networks' HEFCE-funded Research Information and Digital Literacies Coalition (RIDLs) looked at the development of researchers, including data management and data literacy. Collaborative work with SCONUL explored good practice information literacy,<sup>71</sup> introducing an evaluation criteria framework which was developed further during this period.<sup>72</sup> Reflecting the end of the funding, the Coalition became Informall and developed a particular focus on workplace information literacy research, producing a helpful annotated bibliography,<sup>73</sup> developing a toolkit to measure 'value' of IL in workplace contexts<sup>74</sup> and informing the development of the previously mentioned graduate employability lens on the SCONUL Seven Pillars.<sup>75</sup>

British book publications of note during this period explored the wider aspects of IL in policy and workplace and other settings outside the higher education sector and teaching and learning issues in schools and universities in particular.<sup>76</sup> The lessons learned by Crawford and Irving's Scottish IL project alongside international examples led to arguments for more collaborative work and support at government level. The global view is also represented in

Hepworth and Walton's edited work, strongly suggesting that IL is a global issue, reinforcing the Alexandria Proclamation's assertion of information literacy being 'a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion of all nations'.<sup>77</sup> Support in the teaching and learning titles ranged from Blanchett's provision of practical teaching tips and Walsh and Coonan's creative approaches through Dubber's school-centred insights and advice to Walton and Pope's edited collection focusing mainly on higher education.<sup>78</sup>

There is some good evidence in the research field of collaboration (strongly encouraged by funders) and a widening of the landscape to include pedagogy. Throughout the literature there is continuous reflective discussion on the meaning and definition of IL and its relationship with the digital world and learning. However, despite a noticeable move towards pedagogy and Bruce's 'informed learning' approach much of the practitioner research base tended to reflect the librarian's primary interest in information seeking and selection.<sup>79</sup> This duality could offer support to Webber's<sup>80</sup> view of IL as a discipline in itself, inasmuch as it had become seen as much more than a training intervention.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the contextual and relational nature of IL was highlighted during this period, driven in particular by efforts to secure wider recognition of its importance as a lifelong learning rather than a procedural issue. This spread from the library sector heartland to include associated services, quality and curriculum agencies and, ultimately, government policy makers and strategists was simultaneously an opportunity and a challenge. The opportunity to widen the influence of the library and information professional, when grasped and, to be fair, when facilitated by supportive newcomers, allowed the development of influential initiatives. Whether these initiatives were at the grass roots, through the adoption of creative teaching methods and technologies, or at the higher level of government policy, illustrates the ever-changing nature of the context of IL in Britain. Facing the challenges, whether they were financial restrictions, institutional lack of interest or personal motivation and opportunity, was mitigated by an ever-increasing raft of home-grown resources and networks reflecting the contextual nature of IL. Although sustainability would always be a problem to be faced by funded projects and interventions, the groundswell of activities and awareness discussed here provided ample opportunity for those professionals who recognized the continuing shift from IL as a one-shot 'how to use the library' session towards the development of much deeper attributes.

The technological focus demonstrated by the adoption of digital, rather than information, literacy was continually being challenged and discussed, and while in Scotland and in Wales the focus remained on IL, England's adoption of digital proved somewhat of a sticking point in developing effective communications with potential partners outside the library sector. However, from the evidence presented here, the developing emphasis on pedagogy and lifelong learning suggested that in the long term the profession would continue

moving towards IFLA's goal to support 'sustainable development of open, plural, inclusive and participatory knowledge societies, and the civic institutions, organizations, communities and individuals which comprise these societies'.<sup>81</sup>

## Notes

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