

# ALISS Quarterly

*Association of Librarians and Information professionals in the Social Sciences*

**Special issue: eBooks and the changing nature of publishing.**

## **eBooks**

The UK Scholarly Communications Licence; Whither government publishing? Getting The UK Government's Message across in the 21st Century;  
Negotiating a fair eTextbook deal.

## **Disability**

Disability- Higher Education, Libraries, Teaching and Learning.  
Bibliography; Sensus Access, National Autistic Society Library.

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## Editorial

Welcome to the latest edition of ALISS Quarterly. It has been published by ALISS (Association of Librarians and Information Professionals in the Social Sciences).

This issue contains information relating to a recent ALISS event.

### **ALISS Xmas Special: EBooks: the changing nature of use and publishing**

which was held on 8th December 2016 at Senate House, London. It highlighted recent changes in publishing and their implications and future challenges for information professionals. The three speakers focused on different aspects of this rapidly changing field including: the current state of ebook accessibility, licensing and access to content of electronic texts and possible future developments in government publishing.

- Dr Torsten Reimer, Head of Research Services at The British Library discussed the UK Scholarly Communications Licence - which builds on a model established by Harvard in 2008 and is being taken forward by a group of UK research organisations, coordinated by Chris Banks (Imperial College London) and Torsten Reimer (British Library). It offers a solution that allows authors to make their work open access without interfering with the established publishing process.
- Jennie Grimshaw, Service and Content Lead Government and Official Information at The British Library covered developments in Parliamentary publishing and the planned evolution of GOV.UK, and use of social media as well as the roles of TSO, Proquest and Dandy Booksellers.
- Ben Watson, University of Kent, provided a background to the eBook accessibility audit which launched in August 2016 (a joint project of UK Higher Education Institution (HEI) disability and library services) and supports a mainstreaming approach by seeking to introduce a benchmark for accessibility in eBook platforms. The talk told the story of disability and library professionals coming together to crowdsource a solution to a universal problem and showcased the audit outputs as a way to measure basic accessibility functionality and guide platform improvement across the sector.

The full papers can be accessed from the ALISS website at <https://alissnet.org.uk/aliss-xmas-special-ebooks-the-changing-nature-of-use-and-publishing/>

Further details on the Ebook audit can be found in an earlier article by Ben Watson published in ALISS Quarterly October 2016.

The first two papers are explored in more detail in the first section of this issue, which focuses upon ebooks. This section also contains an interesting article on negotiations from the University of Plymouth which describes the challenges and opportunities of a direct negotiation eTextbook service model that provides Undergraduates with the core readings.

Finally the issue concludes with our disability bibliography of recent articles and reports

which is now being posted monthly on the ALISS website, <http://librarychampionsfordisabilityaccess.blogspot.co.uk>, as well as advice on our favourite disability apps and a summary of the specialist services offered by one of our members the National Autistic Society. The latter include free access to current awareness services designed for professionals.

We hope you enjoy the issue.

Keep up to date with our website at <http://www.alissnet.org.uk> and Twitter channel [http://twitter.com/aliss\\_info](http://twitter.com/aliss_info) and by subscribing to our free electronic mailing list LIS\_SOCIAL SCIENCE at <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/LIS-SOCIALSCIENCE.html> or consulting our website at: <http://www.alissnet.org.uk>

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## The UK Scholarly Communications Licence – supporting academics with open access

Dr Torsten Reimer, Head of Research Services, *The British Library*.

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Open access started as a grassroots movement by researchers who felt the way scholarly information was made available needed to be improved<sup>1</sup>. Since then the open access movement has grown significantly in influence, especially with researcher funders and governments getting behind it. The Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies (ROARMAP) currently lists almost 900 open access policies globally<sup>2</sup>. The UK has some of the strongest open access mandates, from the Wellcome Trust, the Research Councils and, overall the most effective one, the Funding Councils. To an extent these mandates have shifted the UK discussion from the benefits of open access to the most effective strategies for compliance. In this context researchers find themselves between the policies of funders and research organisations on the one hand and those of thousands of scholarly journals on the other - creating a policy stack that can be difficult for authors to navigate<sup>3</sup>. Even where researchers are aware of the policies they may still not be able to follow the requirements as journals do not always allow open access (or at least not necessarily in the way defined by a funder).

The main problems are journal embargo policies. Journals often allow academics to make a copy of their peer-reviewed work available in a digital repository. However, the embargo periods required can be longer than the funders allow. Even when they comply, embargoes still restrict access to the latest scholarly findings. This slows down scholarly communication and progress - and may, in fields such as medical research, eventually cost lives. The National Institute of Public Health in Mexico, for example, in 2014 was only able to afford access to 139 scholarly journals, leaving its 300 researchers unable to access key publications<sup>4</sup>, and even well-funded UK research organisations cannot afford access to all relevant journals. Administering embargos is also costly for universities; when I worked at Imperial College London we found that roughly 75% of library staff time related to manuscript deposit was dedicated to checking and implementing journal embargo policies.

The reason publishers can enforce embargos is that they require authors to sign away (most of) their rights when a paper is accepted for publication. Academics feel compelled to sign copyright transfer agreements because they fear their work may otherwise not be published, or at least not in their journal of choice. Unless the publisher grants them the respective rights back authors may not even be allowed to reuse their scholarly outputs in their own teaching.

<sup>1</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subversive\\_Proposal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subversive_Proposal) (accessed 05/01/2017) for one of the early cross-disciplinary proposals for self-archiving of scholarly manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> <http://roarmap.eprints.org/>, accessed 04/01/2017

<sup>3</sup> See Banks, C., (2016). Focusing upstream: supporting scholarly communication by academics. *Insights*. 29(1), pp.37-44. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.292>, accessed 08/01/2017, for more details

<sup>4</sup> McKiernan, E. (2014), *Being open as an early career researcher*. Presentation at the SPARC 2014 Open Access Meeting. Figshare: <https://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.954994.v1>, accessed 08/01/2017

To address these issues, a group of research organisations in the UK is working to implement a solution that ensures authors can make their work open access, meet funder requirements and always retain the right to reuse their own outputs - but without having to change the publishing process as it currently exists. The initiative is called the UK Scholarly Communications Licence (UK-SCL) and was started by Chris Banks and Torsten Reimer at Imperial College London. At the heart of the UK-SCL is a licence agreement between a research organisation and their staff: authors grant the organisation a non-exclusive licence to make the manuscript of a scholarly article publicly available under a Creative Commons licence that allows non-commercial re-use (CC BY NC). This arrangement pre-dates any contract authors might sign with a publisher, which allows the host organisation to license the rights back to the author after they signed the copyright transfer agreement. This process ensures that academics can retain rights and do not have to negotiate with the publisher. To be legally binding, publishers must be notified - but this is something research institutions working with sector bodies will undertake jointly, so that authors have no additional work.

The advantage of this model is that the publishing process can continue as it is, authors can sign the usual agreement and publishers do not need to take any additional action. Academics will be able to re-use their own material and make it available in an institutional repository or on other platforms such as arXiv. Institutions will make the manuscript available when the article is published, thereby ensuring that authors meet funder requirements and that scholarly results can be shared widely. This is particularly important as research shows that articles that are made open access early have higher citation rates, which increases the impact of the work<sup>5</sup>.

The Scholarly Communications Licence has been adapted to the UK legal and policy context from a model that has been in use at Harvard, and later other institutions, since 2008<sup>6</sup>. This is particularly important as it gives authors confidence that the approach works well for the academic community. As Harvard's Peter Suber, who provided valuable advice to the UK-SCL development, explained not a single article has been rejected due to the policy developed at Harvard, and now operated at other universities including MIT, University of California, Princeton and Kaust<sup>7</sup>.

The Harvard open access policy includes a waiver option that allows an author to opt out of the policy on a per article basis. A small number of journal publishers require authors to request such a waiver, but the vast majority of articles is not affected. Building on the Harvard model, the UK-SCL restricts the application of such a waiver for up to two years,

5 A recent study gives a conservative estimate of 19% higher citation rates: Ottaviani, J. (2016). *The Post-Embargo Open Access Citation Advantage: It Exists (Probably), It's Modest (Usually), and the Rich Get Richer (of Course)*. PLOS ONE, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0159614>, accessed 08/01/2017. An internal analysis of articles published by Imperial College authors in 2011 shows about twice the amount of citations for articles deposited in the College repository compared to those not known to be open access. See slide 16 of Reimer, T. (2016). Imperial College London - journey to open scholarship. Slideshare: <http://www.slideshare.net/TorstenReimer/imperial-college-london-journey-to-open-scholarship> accessed 08/01/2017.

6 See <https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/policies/> (accessed 05/01/2017) for the Harvard open access policy, and for more detail: Good practices for university open-access policies, version 1.5, 01/01/2017, <http://bit.ly/goodoa> (accessed 05/01/2017).

7 For a list of institutions see: [http://cyber.harvard.edu/hoap/Additional\\_resources#Policies\\_of\\_the\\_kind\\_recommended\\_in\\_the\\_guide](http://cyber.harvard.edu/hoap/Additional_resources#Policies_of_the_kind_recommended_in_the_guide) (accessed 05/01/2017).

to ensure that outputs remain eligible for the Research Excellence Framework, the main research evaluation exercise in the UK<sup>8</sup>. The open access policy for the next REF limits the maximum embargo period for scholarly articles to 12 or 24 months, depending on the subject area<sup>9</sup>. Other funders set even shorter maximum embargo periods - the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is now requiring outputs to be made available immediately without embargo<sup>10</sup>. Considering this stack of policies that apply to research, the UK-SCL is currently the only solution that ensures that authors can continue to publish in the journal of their choice without risking non-compliance with funders that require open access deposits.

The UK-SCL discussions that originated at Imperial College London now include some 70 UK organisations and EU partners. A subset of the research organisations involved is currently preparing to introduce the model in 2017, and a website with further information is being prepared<sup>11</sup>. The initiative is supported by sector bodies such as Research Libraries UK and will be endorsed by funding organisations. Once implemented, it will help authors to make their work open access without additional costs or compliance risks, and ensure they can reuse their own work without undue restrictions.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ref.ac.uk/> (accessed 05/01/2017).

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2014/201407/> (accessed 05/01/2017).

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/How-We-Work/General-Information/Open-Access-Policy> (accessed 05/01/2017).

<sup>11</sup> <http://ukscl.ac.uk/> (accessed 05/01/2017).

# Whither government publishing? Getting The UK Government's Message across in the 21st Century

J.M. Grimshaw, *Government and Official Information*, British Library.

## I. The Dawn of Government Web Publishing

The transition from print to electronic dissemination of UK government information began in the mid 1990s, with the publication of *Government.direct: a prospectus for the electronic delivery of government services* (Cm 3438) in 1996<sup>1</sup>. This consultation paper argued that the electronic delivery of government information and services would:

- Make such information accessible free of charge, 24/7, from anywhere in the world
- Eliminate costs of printing and distribution of hard copy
- Enable government to disseminate information more quickly
- Improve UK competitiveness and promote open government.

This initiative was embraced enthusiastically by government departments and agencies, and led to an explosion in web publishing and a rapid proliferation of government websites. The Standing Committee on Official Publications (SCOOP) estimated in 2008 that between 400 and 500 new official publications were being published through websites every week. The consultancy Education for Change<sup>2</sup> calculated that, apart from ministerial departments, about 100,000 e-publications could be available from government advisory and tribunal bodies.

The presence of government publications on the web at that time was transitory due to:

- Websites disappearing following changes to the machinery of government.
- Website redesign and upgrade, when non-current publications were removed
- A focus among government webmasters on provision of accurate up-to-date information

This led in turn to a growing problem with broken links as information was removed and documents deleted. Research by the National Archives and the House of Commons Library showed that departments were increasingly citing URLs in answers to Parliamentary Questions, which formed part of the Official Report (including links to nongovernmental websites), but 60 percent of links in Hansard to UK government websites, for the period 1997 to 2006, were broken<sup>3</sup>.

## 2. The Advent of GOV.UK

A review of web UK government web publishing in 2010 led by Digital Champion Martha Lane Fox<sup>4</sup> called for a rationalisation and paring down of the sprawling web estate. It

<sup>1</sup> Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. *Government.Direct: a prospectus for the electronic delivery of government services*. TSO, 1996. Cm 3438

<sup>2</sup> Education for Change. *Maintaining Access to Government Information Collaboratively (MAGIC): a feasibility study*. 2008 [unpublished report to the British Library]

<sup>3</sup> The National Archives. *Web continuity matters: an overview and update for government organizations*. 2008

<sup>4</sup> Fox, Martha Lane. *Directgov 2010 and beyond: revolution not evolution*. 2010 [URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/directgov-2010-and-beyond-revolution-not-evolution-a-report-by-martha-lane-fox> Consulted Jan. 3rd 2017]

recommended that all central government online services and information should reside on a single site and that each department should present its information in a standard structure to improve navigation. These recommendations were accepted by Cabinet Office Minister Francis Maude and led to the creation of GOV.UK, launched on January 31st 2012, as the single point of access to UK government information and services.

### 3. Parliamentary Publishing

Transition of UK Parliamentary publications from print to web only dissemination proceeded in stages from 2010 to March 2016. Responsibility for publication of Parliamentary papers and proceedings is divided between The National Archives (TNA) and the Commons and Lords. A new model for the production of Command papers and other papers published by departments and agencies external to Parliament was introduced by The National Archives in February 2014. The new model is predicated on these papers' official versions being published on GOV.UK, with Government retaining the official publisher role. In addition to the web PDF, the papers' print PDFs are also available to download. It follows that there is no official print publisher. Anyone, including commercial suppliers, is able to utilise the print PDF to produce and sell print copies or load the web PDF into their own subscription based e-resources, such as Dandy Booksellers' *Public Information Online*, TSO's *Official Publications Online*, and Proquest's *UK Parliamentary Papers*.

When the contract with TSO as official publisher expired in March 2016, official versions of almost all papers produced within Parliament such as most Commons select committee reports, Lords papers and bills and the Official Report (Hansard) were published online only on the Parliament website. Commons bills and the remaining select committee reports transitioned to e-only publication in December 2016. However, as with papers produced outside of Parliament, enterprising private firms are free to produce print copies for sale and/or sell e-versions through their subscription databases.

Three full text fee-based databases currently offer different eclectic collections of current and historic official materials, built around a core of Parliamentary publications:

- *Public Information Online* from Dandy Booksellers offers current papers, bills and debates from the UK Parliament, Scottish Parliament, and Northern Ireland Assembly, plus the Civil Service Yearbook (current and historic), key non-parliamentary papers, and a digitised backrun the House of Lords papers from 1901-2005. This can be bought separately as an add-on.
- *Official Publications Online* from TSO offers Lords and Commons papers, bills and debates in PDF, plus the official gazettes and legislation (Acts and Statutory Instruments).
- *UK Parliamentary Papers* from Proquest has Commons papers, debates and some journals and legislation from 1688 onwards and 19th century Lords papers. The historic collection is based on a digitisation project led by the University of Southampton.

### 4. Web Continuity Project

The Web Continuity Project at The National Archives arose from a request by Jack Straw, as leader of the House of Commons in 2007, that government departments ensured

continued access to online documents to eliminate the proliferation of broken links. Among the objectives of the project are to ensure that:

- All links work in perpetuity
- No cited information is lost through deletion
- Information is preserved long-term, even if the Web is no longer the dominant publishing medium it is today

These objectives are delivered through the regular crawling and harvesting of the UK Government web estate at least 2-3 times a year, with the archived sites being made freely available through the UK Government Web Archive at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/>. Other outputs include:

- Guidance on creation and use of XML Sitemaps to assist with crawling
- A website component that redirects users to the Web archive if a link is no longer active on a live site but is in the archive
- Guidance to government webmasters on best practice for website design and maintenance for archiving purposes

## 5. Continuing Evolution

In the meantime the presentation of Government information and publications on the web continues to evolve, principally through the demise of PDF and websites becoming more dynamic and interactive.

### 5.1 The rise of ODF

The UK government has selected ODF to gradually replace PDF as the standard for editable office documents to be used across government. ODF was selected as the standard for government because it:

- allows citizens, businesses and other organisations to share and edit documents with government - and vice versa
- allows people working in government to share and edit documents with each other
- is compatible with a wide range of software
- is a reliable long-term solution for storing and accessing information

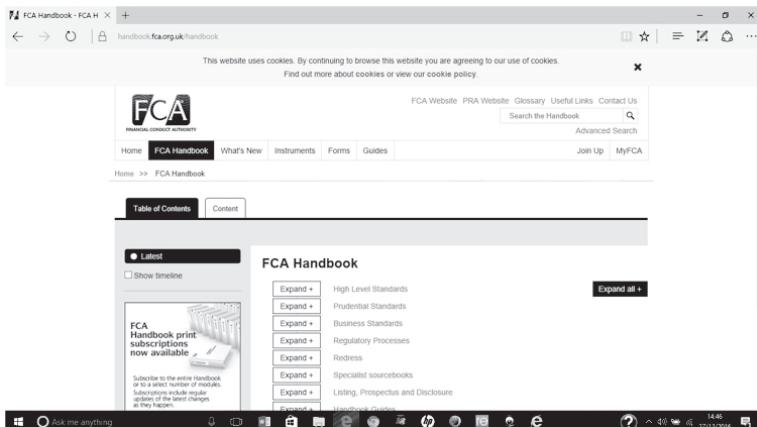
### 5.2 The demise of PDF

PDFs are also gradually being replaced by sets of linked html pages, which are more flexible and easier to update, especially for guidance. Here the concept of the bounded document is being replaced by that of a convenient and user-friendly vehicle for conveying information in bite-sized chunks, with links to related material.

### 5.3 Replacement of loose-leafs

Some documents which in the past would have been presented as loose-leafs have become websites. A good example of this is the *Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) Handbook* website at <https://www.handbook.fca.org.uk/handbook/>, which offers a consolidation of legal instruments, rules and guides for financial firms, presented in a user-friendly way and constantly updated. Users can:

- Use an intuitive table of contents to navigate content at different levels
- Use timeline options to view the Handbook in the past, present and future
- Use quick and advanced search facilities to find content based on given criteriae
- Navigate content via internal links
- Reach related content outside the Handbook through external links



## 5.4 Dynamic databases

Other documents such as the UK official gazette at <https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>, have become to all intents and purposes searchable databases. On the gazettes website, you can search through honours and awards, company profiles, insolvency notices, and wills by keyword (including name) and date. Thus a search for “Grimshaw”, qualified by a date range finds the announcement of my Uncle Frank’s Military Medal on October 30th 1917. You can also browse all issues back to 1665 if you insist.

## 5.5 Related documents

Sets of related official documents are now regularly presented together on the web on a single landing page. Thus the Cervical Screening Programme 2015-16 landing page on NHS Digital presents a summary and key facts in html, a report and data quality statement in PDF, data tables in Excel and CSV, and forms. Clearly, researchers need to see all these documents together, but linking them is complex and too time consuming if one relies on traditional cataloguing at the individual item level. The answer may be to link to the landing page for the Cervical Screening Programme overall on the live site from within the catalogue, at risk of the link breaking at some point, or to link to successive archived versions of the site.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the NHS Digital website. The search results for 'Cervical screening programme' are shown. The results include a summary, a report, data quality statements in PDF, Excel, and CSV, and forms. The results are paginated with 10 items per page. The interface includes a navigation bar with links for 'Find data', 'Collecting data', 'Systems', 'Services', 'Support and guidance', 'News and events', 'About us', and 'For the public'. There are also sections for 'Feedback', 'Publications calendar', and 'Contact us'.

## 5.6 Disaggregated Documents

Finally, government publishers are routinely presenting documents “in bits” instead of amalgamating the information into a single bounded report. The most notable example of this is the practice of Commons Select Committees who present written evidence submitted to them as separate documents in a range of formats on inquiry web pages. For example, the Education Committee has started using a new written evidence E-portal, which has changed the process of submitting and publishing evidence by the Committee. Written evidence connected to an inquiry no longer appears in the reports list and can instead be found on specific inquiry pages, under the heading written evidence. Here commercial publishers such as Dandy Booksellers have a valuable role to play. Dandy assembles scattered written evidence into a single PDF, which it offers both for sale in print and on *Public Information Online*.

## 5.7 GOV.UK and Parliament

The Government Digital Service (GDS) has recognised a problem with GOV.UK in the shape of citizens being confused by the simultaneous appearance of different versions of guidance and not being able to identify the most up to date. This arose from a policy of not removing documents even when superseded. To remedy this, the GDS is working towards publishing guidance at one location, but using a time line to show how it has developed. As with some legal databases, citizens will be able to see what was in force on a given date.

At the same time, the House of Commons Ways and Means Committee is exploring the possibility of permitting papers to be laid in non-traditional formats, such as a Command paper presented as a video or a Committee report presented as a hybrid of text, sound, video and data in a wrapper.

## 6 Responding to the Challenges

In the short term information professionals can successfully guide their researchers from a combination of professional knowledge, Google and creating links from within the catalogue to information on live websites. However, the challenge for the national libraries of ensuring long term preservation of and access to government information is much more severe. We believe that the way forward is through web archiving, and linking to archived websites at the level of the individual document, the landing page and the website from within our catalogues. However this approach has to contend with:

- The limitations of web archiving technology - we cannot archive searchable databases and struggle with sites where documents are created "on the fly" unless the crawler can access the site map. The more dynamic a site, the more difficult it is to archive

- The crawler being unable to get documents which are held off site or “in the cloud”
- The irresistible urge of government web masters to redesign their sites, so that crawls have to be constantly monitored and adjusted to ensure that content is gathered
- The constraints of the Electronic Legal Deposit (ELD) Regulations of April 2013, which limit access to archived websites to on-site users at one of the six legal deposit libraries. It may be possible to circumvent this restriction for UK government materials by agreeing that the Open Government Licence trumps the ELD regulations, but this is still under discussion.

In this ferment, government documents librarians live in interesting times and answers to the many challenges we face have yet to emerge. To keep up to date with new developments, you can follow these useful blogs:

- Inside GOV.UK at <https://insidegovuk.blog.gov.uk/> – what GDS is doing
- Second Reading at <https://secondreading.uk/> - House of Commons Library blog, offering brief posts on current issues
- OfficialPapersUK at <https://officialpapersuk.wordpress.com/> - “a place for librarians and information professionals to share information and keep up to date in the world of parliamentary and government publishing”

## Being Direct- Negotiating a fair eTextbook deal

*Tifaine Dickinson, eTextbook Coordinator, Plymouth University.*

Plymouth University run a direct negotiation eTextbook service model which provides a majority of First Year Undergraduates with the core reading for free on the Vital Source platform.

Our key motivation behind the scheme is to alleviate the hidden costs of university for students, they receive free titles which may have cost them in the region of £30-£150. The eTextbook scheme initially emerged as an academic led model in 2011 and has now become a library led service since I took up my post as eTextbook services coordinator in January 2015.

A direct negotiation model has worked well for us in terms of running a financially sustainable service and carefully controlling the spend of an already limited budget. This has been our one constant in an ever evolving eTextbook market, and has allowed us to create an integrated workflow that is aligned with both library processes and our university financial year.

The direct negotiation model is a multi-layered process that begins with our Academic staff title consultation. We do not dictate titles choices but instead work with both academics and our Academic Engagement team to formulate selection parameters that will deliver a worthy core eTextbook choice. The whole driver for my negotiations begins with our advocacy of the academics titles selection, the best possible outcome being to deliver the students the first choice title, at a sustainable cost in epub format.

During our first full year as an eTextbook service we negotiated deals with 16 publishers for over 250 titles which covers a cohort of approximately 4000 students. In real terms that represents a lot of complex information being communicated between up to 50 different people.

Clearly this is a lot of work so why do we deal directly with publishers rather than employ a 'middle man'?

Crucially, it gives us budgetary awareness and control. The institution is leading the publisher conversation, and setting the terms of discount and delivery. We feel that this robust approach to our negotiations gives us access to levels of discount that we would not otherwise enjoy at institutional level.

Initially this represented a multitude of deals that were each as unique as the publisher themselves. We've had great success in being able to homogenise these deal into a workable structure.

The crossover into digital books has led to a 'Gordian Knot' for the eTextbook librarian; being charged for books regardless of usage. If only 63% of module participants access a title, we are still expected by the publishers to pay for the remaining lost 37%.

It really doesn't feel very fair; as a modern consumer we expect to receive value for money for our investment. At Plymouth when we initially proposed the pure usage

model last year, marginally lower discounts were anticipated but we would only be billed on what we used. We had a range of responses from publishers, some were fully engaged in whatever we thought it took to make our model work and other mistrusted our shift in business plan.

Usage deals are also a good exercise for publishers as they have to take the usage statistics as seriously as we do, and work with us to strategize the most successful means of embedding a text.

We do engage with certain type of firm sale deals but only in subject areas where we know that our usage data is excellent and often exceeds 100% due to a greater than anticipated intake.

Obtaining a fair price can be a frustrating journey for the library sector. I was recently asked to identify what kind of business strategies the publishing community was engaging in based on my experiences. Although we do work with some excellent and engaged publishers they are still a minority number.

- Bundles and subscriptions
- Firm sale only deals
- PDF formats
- Reticence to convert titles that sell well in print
- Developing and selling integral adaptive technology through their own platforms
- No clear pricing structure

Quite quickly we can see of profile of an inflexible industry combined with the added frustrations of poor communication, missed deadlines.

Why is all the power with the publisher when we control budgets?

This maybe an oversimplification of the argument but our relationship with publishers is often one-sided power balance. Publishers are unused to librarians leading the conversation.

Negotiating needs to be part of part of our skills set in the library sector. If we don't reboot the traditional 'quiet' librarian image then we will also remain stuck with our problematic relationship with publishers.

We want some very simple things:

- A fair price
- Billing that reflects fair usage
- Access in perpetuity
- ePub formats
- A transparent working relationship
- Clear contracts
- An explanation of digital list price.

We cannot afford to be afraid of leading robust conversations, strategizing and coordinating our approach to publisher discussions and also maintaining good relationships

with other institutions who use similar resources. We are very good at sharing good practice as a profession, we have the collective power to change the culture of our relationships with publishers and their perception of us as professionals.

Being direct isn't about being loud or being ruthless, it's about presenting information, using the knowledge that you have to achieve the price, access or format for instance that works for your institution. Being direct can often mean thinking creatively, using several different approaches and forging valuable relationships with suppliers which once established are essential to achieving a cost efficient service.

'You don't ask, you don't get'

It may not look out of place on a car bumper sticker but it's a universal truth.

eTextbook services face many challenges as we go forward but one of our primary concerns is a fair price for good content which supports a sustainable library service. Negotiation should be a skill that is prioritised for those entering the profession. Acquisitions librarians in 2017 need to be as much as a corporate player as the publishing reps with which you are dealing.

If we want to achieve a level playing field as Information Professionals of 21st Century we must acquire skills that dispel the myth of the traditional librarian. We have a unique window of opportunity to really contribute to moulding a new service and that will require robust, creative and straight talking information professionals.

## Sensus Access at the University of Kent

Ben Watson University of Kent

The efficient and timely provision of information in accessible formats<sup>1</sup> for students with print disabilities<sup>2</sup> is critical to an inclusive learning experience. Providing facilities for people to convert documents to accessible formats quickly and self-sufficiently enables them to participate fully in learning, teaching and independent research.

Sensus Access<sup>3</sup> (the institutionally licensed version of the accessible file conversion service, RoboBraille<sup>4</sup>) is already well-used at several prestigious institutions in the United States to enable staff and students to convert documents into a range of alternative formats including Braille, mp3, Daisy, and eBook. The service can be used to adapt documents such as image-only pdf files, scanned images, lecture notes and other educational material into more accessible formats, through its device-neutral, web-based, optical character recognition (OCR) interface.

At the University of Kent we have embedded Sensus Access into our University web pages<sup>5</sup> which has enabled us to 'brand' the service, reassure users that it is legitimate and 'Kent assured' and target support and copyright information to staff and students using the service. The negotiation of a non-restrictive and positive copyright statement was bold and topical as it enabled us to take advantage of copyright law exceptions that clarify the role institutions can play in providing alternative formats on behalf of students with print disabilities. This approach has been found to be beneficial by a number of Schools who have been using the service to provide accessible learning and teaching materials to students with print disabilities.

The integration of Sensus Access into learning and teaching processes delivers a number of collateral benefits for inclusive education. Fluid, retrospective optical character recognition (OCR) enables inaccessible documents to be converted very speedily to audios format that will read aloud documents on a range of portable devices, simultaneously addressing accessibility and learning style preferences.

The cloud-based delivery of the service means that accessible document conversion can be undertaken from any device with a web connection, ensuring that the service is truly accessible to all, anytime and anywhere (e.g. remote sites and off-campus on mobile devices). The fact that images can also be retrospectively converted using OCR has also provided interesting opportunities to render visual formats such as photographs (e.g. bus timetables, noticeboard items) accessible whether they relate to formal study or a student's social or pastoral interactions.

<sup>1</sup> An accessible format is required when a person is unable to read or access a work by reason of their print disability. An example of accessible format creation might be the conversion that takes place when a person with a visual impairment requires access to a text based document as an audio output (mp3).

<sup>2</sup> A print-disabled person is anyone for whom a visual, cognitive or physical disability hinders the ability to read print. This includes all visual impairments, dyslexia, and any physical disabilities that prevent the handling of a physical copy of a print publication (CLA, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.sensusaccess.com>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.robobraille.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.kent.ac.uk/library/accessibility/file-conversion.html>

Since October 2016 the service has facilitated the conversion of around 230 documents in a broad range of accessible formats. This number is in addition to the collaborative Alternative Formats work (of our disability support and library teams) resourcing textbooks from RNIB Bookshare<sup>6</sup>, publishers and in-house scanning of primary materials. The 230 conversions that have taken place via Sensus Access, therefore, reflect individual students and staff members using the service to study independently.

The tables below show the document types being submitted alongside the accessible outputs requested. The principal document type sent for conversion is PDF – not unexpected given a large number of academic journals and reports that favour this format. The major format being converted to is Microsoft Word – for the ability to edit, annotate and refine documents to suit individual reading and technology preferences this format affords:

#### **Accessibility Conversions, Submitted Document Types**

<b>Source format</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Image-type documents	1.7%
PDF documents	95.3%
Microsoft PowerPoint documents	1.7%
Microsoft Word documents	1.2%

#### **Accessibility Conversions, Requested Formats**

<b>Target format</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Microsoft Word	80.8%
RTF	2.9%
Text (including implicit)	1.2%
Tagged PDF	15.1%

Tools such as Sensus Access give agency to students to control the resources they need for study and support staff to produce accessible materials easily from existing resources with minimal effort.

Recently our world languages teams have been investigating the efficacy of Sensus Access for converting documents in other languages, for example, Chinese (Mandarin), into audio to help students with language confidence. A really good use of an assistive technology in providing mainstream support and very much in accordance with the University's drive to support all of our students to be self-sufficient and independent learners.

The feedback below has been provided from a range of users of the service:

6 <https://www.load2learn.org/cms/>

**3rd year law student:** *The most frustrating obstacle of any academic work is the lack of accessible resources readily available. I've spent years dealing with dull, badly contrasted photocopies which I cannot remedy in any way so as to read them effectively.*

*Sensus Access is an incredibly quick and easy tool for converting files into accessible formats. From inaccessible materials come accessible eBooks, pdfs, mp3s or even basic word documents. It's easy to use, takes only a minute to make a request and the turnaround is only about 10 minutes or so at the most. It is simply a lifesaver. I honestly use it with almost any file I have trouble with now.*

**2nd year Drama student:** *Sensus Access has been a very useful tool in academic study for me, providing me with the ability to easily convert text that has come from other sources without the need for specialist software... Additionally, it has given me the option of trialling a number of formats to see which is best suited to my needs and the fact that it's free for use and not tied down to a single machine is of great benefit. The project has worked well in situations when resources have not been available in a timely fashion, requiring no additional support to be converted into a format coherent to screen reading software.*

**1st year Psychology student:** *I have used the trial software for file conversion and found it very useful. As a psychology student, I am required to read lots of journal articles and it is easier to understand some articles when they are in audio form. It has also been helpful when doing set text readings from eBooks.*

**1st year Biosciences student:** *This software is amazing and really helps me with checking my sentences make sense in my lab reports and in my essays as well as understanding texts. It is a very useful tool indeed.*

**Student Support Officer:** *Had we not been able to utilise the Sensus Access conversion tool our staff would have found it very difficult to ensure all of our resources were accessible for students with visual impairments. Staff who may have been concerned at their level of understanding of document types were given a simple process to follow to allow accessibility for screen reading to be an easy step. This, in turn, meant successful engagement on all our modules for those students using the software.*

## **Disability- Higher Education, Libraries, Teaching and Learning. Bibliography**

### **Identity and stigma**

**Clouder, L.; Adefila, A.; Jackson, C.; Opie, J.; Odedra, S. (2016). The discourse of disability in higher education: Insights from a health and social care perspective**  
*International Journal of Educational Research* 79, 10-20

Abstract: This article considers perspectives on student disability in the context of health and social care disciplines in higher education. The first phase of the research, which adopted an appreciative inquiry approach, involved interviews with students and educators from fifteen health and social care professions across the United Kingdom (UK). Findings were used by the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) to redraft guidance for potential applicants. The second phase of the research involved analysis of the discourse underpinning the new guidance, which was compared with responses to its publicly open review. Analysis revealed that despite an affirmative stance adopted by the HCPC, the principle of inclusivity for people with a disability remains far from universally and unconditionally accepted. Inclusivity for people with disabilities is far from unconditionally accepted. While disability is stigmatised disclosure will continue to be problematic. A discourse of ambivalence surrounds students with mental health issues.

URL: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0883035516300891>

**Cunnah, W. (2015). Disabled students: identity, inclusion and work-based placements**

*Disability and Society* 30 (2), 213-226

Abstract: This paper explores the impact of disabled identity on the inclusion of disabled students in higher education and employment contexts. It considers their experiences of inclusion in a university setting and its associated work-based placements and discusses the extent to which students had to negotiate a range of experiences of disabled identity. The paper suggests that many disabled students, especially those with behaviour-related impairment labels, are subject to continued exclusion in university and, more particularly, work settings, and this contributes to an employment disadvantage compared with their peers.

URL: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2014.996282>

**Järkestig Berggren, Ulrika ; Rowan, Diana ; Bergbäck, Ewa ; Blomberg, Barbro (2016)**

**Disabled students' experiences of higher education in Sweden, the Czech Republic, and the United States – a comparative institutional analysis**

*Disability & Society* 31 (3), 339-356

Abstract: Students with disabilities face obstacles in their encounters with higher

education. The aim of this study is to investigate how the institutional context shapes students' experiences of unequal opportunities in higher education. In comparing disabled students' experiences from universities in Sweden, the Czech Republic, and the United States, the study makes visible the kind of experiences that students share and how experiences differ between these countries within the global context of higher education. The study has shown that students' possibilities for equal participation are shaped by the institutional context that is based on medical diagnosis and compensation for an inaccessible education.

URL <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09687599.2016.1174103>

**Hill, Shirley; Roger, Angela (2016)**

**The experience of disabled and non-disabled students on professional practice placements in the United Kingdom**

*Disability & Society 31 (9), 1205-1225*

**Abstract:** There are limited comparisons between the experience of disabled students in higher education and their non-disabled peers, particularly on practice placements. This article presents the results of such a comparison, across six professional disciplines in one UK university. The results revealed that both disabled and non-disabled students reported positive placement experiences and also similar difficulties. Such difficulties were exacerbated for some disabled students, however, including as a consequence of the attitudes of others to disability.

URL: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2016.1236718>

**Vlachou, A. ; Papananou, I.(2015)**

**Disabled students' narratives about their schooling experiences**

*Disability & Society 30 (1) 73-86*

**Abstract:** An ongoing interest in disabled learners' voices has been reflected in a number of studies that explore students' experiences of schooling, as part of the quest to understand how inclusive education can be achieved. These studies, however, have been conducted mainly in industrially developed countries, while very few studies exist from industrially developing countries such as Greece in which disabled people's voices are under-represented not only in political processes but in research as well. The aim of this study was to investigate disabled students' educational experience, their social interactions with peers and teachers, the choice of school and the support they received for responding to curricular demands and complexities. The results of the study confirmed that disabled students can provide invaluable information on matters involving their education, and showed how personal experiences of disability are influenced by the socio-cultural experiences lived in different social arenas, such as that of education

URL: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09687599.2014.982787>

## Policy

### **Autumn Statement brings little joy for disabled people**

#### **Disability Rights UK**

<http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2016/november/autumn-statement-2016-brings-little-joy-disabled-people>

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Report of the Inquiry Concerning the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland carried out by the Committee under article 6 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention

CRPD/C/15/R.2/Rev.1

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=4&DocTypeCategoryID=7](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=4&DocTypeCategoryID=7)

Observations of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the report of the Inquiry carried out by the Committee under article 6 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention-Advance Unedited Version

CRPD/C/17/R.3

[http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=4&DocTypeCategoryID=7](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=4&DocTypeCategoryID=7)

Disabled People Against Cuts response

<http://dpac.uk.net/2016/11/the-united-nations-report-into-the-uk-government-maltreatment-of-disabled-people-has-been-published/>

Work, health and disability: improving lives

Department for Work and Pensions consultation paper

‘We are seeking views on what it will take to transform employment prospects for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. Closes Feb 2017’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/work-health-and-disability-improving-lives>

#### **Teaching and Learning**

Accessible examinations

Article from Jisc accessibility and inclusion November 28, 2016

<https://accessibility.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2016/11/28/accessible-exam/>

## **Assistive technology/ accessibility**

**Chen, C. J. ; Keong, M. W. ; Teh, C. S. ; Chuah, K. M. (2016)**

**Web text reading: what satisfy both dyslexic and normal learners?**

*Journal of Computers in Education 2016 3 (1) 47-58*

Abstract: The study employs an exploratory approach to examine the satisfaction of normal and dyslexic learners toward different web text modes. As an average of 10 %

of the population shows some traits of dyslexia, presenting web text solely based on the guidelines for normal web users will put users with dyslexia at disadvantage. Due to the ubiquitous use of the web for online learning purposes and the availability of tremendous amount of text on the web, this investigation intends to derive appropriate guidelines for presenting web text that could accommodate both groups of learners. This qualitative study uses a multiple case study design and data are mainly collected via observations and guided interviews. The study reveals that existing dyslexia-friendly text guidelines are also appropriate for normal learners and the use of screen reader, an assistive technology that reads text aloud, does not fit every dyslexic and normal learner.

URL: <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40692-015-0046-x>

**DeLancey, Laura; Ostergaard, Kirsten. (2016) Accessibility for Electronic Resources Librarians**

*Serials Librarian, 71 (3/4) 180-185*

**Abstract:** Electronic resources librarians mediate access to a variety of resources and content ranging from electronic journals and databases provided by publishers and vendors to locally produced web pages, documentation, and instructional videos. Providing accessible resources is essential to ensuring equal access and opportunity for students, faculty, and staff in higher education. This article explains accessibility and provides strategies for creating an accessibility initiative at your college or university. Based on the USA

DOI: 10.1080/0361526X.2016.1254134

### **Ebook Audit 2016**

The e-book accessibility audit, which launched in August 2016 and was completed in November 2016 was a joint project between several UK Higher Education Institution (HEI) disability and library services, Jisc and representatives from the book supply industry. The audit supports a mainstreaming approach by seeking to introduce a benchmark for accessibility in e-book platforms by focussing on key areas of practical user experience to measure basic accessibility functionality and guide targeted platform improvement.

The audit itself was a “non-technical” accessibility survey restricted to things that can be quickly and easily checked by a non-specialist with responses crowd-sourced by the UK university library and disability community. The testing was done by 33 universities and 5 suppliers with 44 platforms tested, covering 65 publishers with nearly 280 ebooks tested.

URL : <https://sites.google.com/site/ebookaudit2016/home>

**Martins, Paulo; Rodrigues, Henrique; Rocha, Tania; Francisco, Manuela; Morgado, Leonel (2015)**

**Accessible Options for Deaf People in e-Learning Platforms: Technology Solutions for Sign Language Translation**

*Procedia Computer Science 67 263-272*

**Abstract:** This paper presents a study on potential technology solutions for enhancing

the communication process for deaf people on elearning platforms through translation of Sign Language (SL). Considering SL in its global scope as a spatial-visual language not limited to gestures or hand/forearm movement, but also to other non-dexterity markers such as facial expressions, it is necessary to ascertain whether the existing technology solutions can be effective options for the SL integration on e-learning platforms. Thus, we aim to present a list of potential technology options for the recognition, translation and presentation of SL (and potential problems) through the analysis of assistive technologies, methods and techniques, and ultimately to contribute for the development of the state of the art and ensure digital inclusion of the deaf people in e-learning platforms. The analysis show that some interesting technology solutions are under research and development to be available for digital platforms in general, but yet some critical challenges must be solved and an effective integration of these technologies in e-learning platforms in particular is still missing.

URL <http://ac.els-cdn.com/S1877050915031166/1-s2.0-S1877050915031166-main.pdf>

### **Dyslexia.**

**Henderson, Paul. (2017)**

**Are there delays in reporting dyslexia in university learners? Experiences of university learning support staff**

*Journal of Further & Higher Education. 41(1) 30-43.*

DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2015.1023563.

**Abstract:** The number of students entering higher education in the UK has increased over the last few years due to the previous Labour Government directives to widen participation to a range of socially disadvantaged and/or under-represented groups. Dyslexic students form the largest single group of minority students currently entering higher education. However, there are ongoing challenges in identifying and supporting dyslexic students as there is no obligation for students to report specific learning needs before or after they enter higher education. In order to cast more light on this ongoing issue, a small-scale educational research study was undertaken in December 2012 to investigate whether there may be delays in the reporting of dyslexia in learners once they commence higher educational study. The day-to-day working experiences of four support staff based at a learning services department in one UK university were explored. Methodology involved adopting a qualitative exploratory design using digitally recorded semi-structured interviews and a snowball sample. Interview data was analysed using thematic analysis. The key findings of the study indicated that dyslexia was more likely to be reported in the second and third year of a student's higher educational journey. Further analysis of the study findings indicated a myriad of reasons for delayed or late reporting of dyslexia. Such reasons included maintaining of a non-disabled student identity, financial and/or time constraints or consciously and strategically deciding when to disclose dyslexia to improve final degree classifications. A number of further recommendations are made to enhance inclusive learning and teaching practices.

## **The National Autistic Society Library**

*Cheryl Mulholland, Autism Information Officer.*

This article is based on presentations given at the National Autistic Society on 10th November, 2016 by Alex Seymour (Autism Information Officer), Anna Rattidge (Autism Helpline Manager) and Cheryl Mulholland (Autism Information Officer).

### **Introduction to Current Services**

The Autism Information Team (AIT) welcomed 7 librarians of the ALISS group to Head Office at City Road, Islington on Thursday 10th November. Alex focused his presentation on specific services run by the AIT which covered enquiries, library visitors, web content and the Autism Services Directory.

### **Enquiries**

The AIT answers questions from staff and volunteers about autism, research evidence, resources or anything else related to their National Autistic Society (NAS) work. We can be asked about what has been published concerning a particular topic, what good information there is about a specific condition, or where they can find experts in a particular field. Enquiries can be made by telephone, fax, email, letter, or in person. An example of a recent enquiry was from a staff member (Project Development Officer) requesting articles on police and the criminal justice system. A search was undertaken on the Library catalogue and a list of abstracts was sent by email to the staff member in PDF format. Staff can order full text of articles we hold for free after filling in an internal photocopy request form. Members of the public can fill in an External photocopy request form at a cost of £3 per article (both up to 10 articles per form).

### **Library visitors**

The Library is open to visitors from 10am-4pm, Mondays to Fridays, for reference. We help people find and access information on autism but they must book an appointment before coming to the library, by emailing [library@nas.org.uk](mailto:library@nas.org.uk), giving a contact telephone number. We welcome visits from people external of the NAS e.g. professionals, parents, students, people with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as well as internal NAS staff and volunteers. Access to the library is free but we do charge for the self-service photocopying facility at 10p per A4 page, 15p per A3 page (cash only). We answer enquiries from visitors asking for searches of abstracts of book chapters and journal articles on autism and topics relating to autism such as diagnosis, education and interventions e.g. recently a professional from Mexico City was sent to the library from a meeting with our Director of the Centre for Autism to research myths of autism to report back to his autism organisation back in Mexico.

### **Content**

The team updates the advice information on the NAS website. Specifically, we manage the 'about autism' part of the NAS website at [www.autism.org.uk/about](http://www.autism.org.uk/about) and advice information in the 'professionals' part of the NAS website.

### **Autism Services Directory**

We provide information on services for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD),

their families and professionals across the UK including schools, adult services, diagnostic and assessment services, support groups, training, events and counsellors. We can search or help people to search or they can search the Autism Services Directory (open to non-staff as well as staff) on our website at [www.autism.org.uk/directory](http://www.autism.org.uk/directory)

## **Library Development and Management**

### **Burnell Library**

In 1962, a group of parents frustrated at the lack of understanding and help available for their children (and themselves) decided to form a charity to help support people affected by autism. Awareness of autism by the general population at that time was minimal-hence children with autism were labelled as 'psychotic' and 'sub-normal'. Initially called "The Society for Psychotic Children" the group opted for the more acceptable title "The Society for Autistic Children". A small informal library was created and the current library staff (Autism Information Team) work on library management, NAS website content and the Autism Services Directory.

### **Purpose**

The AIT is part of the Autism Knowledge and Expertise (AKE) department in the Centre for Autism (CFA). The CFA is not a physical place but a virtual centre of expertise. The AKE Department works to increase support within schools and services by managing information. As a Team we are responsible for information about autism which is easy to read and based on the latest knowledge and evidence. We:

- Answer questions from staff and volunteers about autism
- Help staff to find information and undertake searches to support staff in their work
- Make sure information is based on the latest knowledge and evidence.

### **Content**

The collection consists of books, DVDs, journals, online journals, magazines and NAS publications. We have approximately 1,000 book titles, copies of 16 journal titles and 8 magazines (37 including discontinued ones). Staff have electronic access to the journals and external users can access the collection content at: [www.autism.org.uk/library](http://www.autism.org.uk/library). The library catalogue has links to Titles in Autism (peer-reviewed research articles) and Autism update (magazine articles). Network Autism (for autism professionals details Special interest updates - lists by subject of all material which we have received in the library over the last month. New books are promoted on the NAS staff intranet so that staff and volunteers are aware we have these in stock for borrowing.

### **Management**

In April 2016, when the library relocated at Head Office, we undertook the task of re-classifying the book collection from being shelved alphabetically by author to shelving by subject category. The purpose of this was to increase usability by simplifying the browsing process and create a more user friendly approach.

We catalogue around 700-800 items each year and manage loans, renewals and returns of books on Soutron, our library management system.

Five years ago the book collection was weeded, resulting in some items being sent to the offsite storage facility in Northampton. Team members check publisher websites for new book acquisition suggestions and scour grey literature websites for information that can be added to the catalogue or emailed to targeted recipients or other teams and departments. Examples of teams that we send these on to are:

*Helpline* – We can run reports on the Autism Services Directory for Helpline staff and provide information for staff writing articles e.g. behaviour issues.

*Supporter Care/Supporter Relations* – We are able to provide information for enquiries.

*Welfare Rights Service* - AIT members working on the NAS website content update information and collaborate with people who are the owners of content work when changes/amendments are needed.

*Policy and Campaigns* – The AIT catalogue documents and reports passed on to us.

*Research* - Our library catalogue is maintained by the AIT so that it is available for researchers.

### **Future Projects**

- Producing a survey to find out what colleagues think of the library and information service and what they need.
- Developing a newsletter and/or evidence-based research digests.
- Offering an ebook service.

### **The Autism Helpline**

The Autism Helpline department is a small team of advisers and volunteers that speak to parents/family members, carers, professionals and people with autism. We take enquiries by phone, email, letter, text or voicemail and handle approximately 35-40,000 calls per year.

Our department handles enquiries that can be general or specific, offers available options to issues, posts out information packs and provides details of local services. The most common things we get asked about are diagnosis, information about autism spectrum disorders/Asperger syndrome, benefits, support, education, community care, behaviour, counselling, legal issues and employment.

At least 65% of the Helpline callers/email enquirers are signposted to the Autism Services Directory, which is updated and maintained by the Autism Information Team. The Autism Services Directory includes autism services such as diagnosticians, support groups, schools, counsellors, speech and language therapists etc.

We value support from the Library and Autism Information Team for:

- Niche topics such as behavioural challenges, toilet training etc.
- Any other enquiries that we are unsure about

## **Appy New year! Library Champions for Disability Access Forum tips**

Here are some recommendations on ways in which apps can help students with dyslexia and other visual disabilities work and study more effectively.

But first, some good advice is to ensure that any documents produced by the library are accessibility friendly and that students are aware of any ready inbuilt accessibility features of the technology they are using.

The most basic way to check for Word Accessibility is to use the built in features. From Open document, file, go to the tab on the left hand side of the screen. The First option Check for issues has an accessibility option. A window on the right hand side opens listing errors and possible solutions.

Apple products also have many inbuilt features eg VoiceOver which can be activated for text reading of what is on the screen <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/mac/vision/>

Siri, a personal assistant on some products, is integrated with VoiceOver, you can ask it to find a file and hear the answer read out loud. Other features include zoom to increase text size and the ability to alter contrast features. User guides and links to support networks are available via the Apple website <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/mac/vision/>

At the most recent meeting of the Library Champions for Disability Access Forum meeting in December 2016, <http://librarychampionsfordisabilityaccess.blogspot.co.uk/2016/12/view-minutes-and-slides-from-our-most.html> Carol Regulski from Kings College London provided this great summary of tips which she offers KCL staff and students.

### **Features of the PDF**

It should be noted that there are several types of pdf file formats. Image files cannot be read by screen reading software. It is just an image of the text and the words cannot be searched. You can often identify image files as they are often of poor quality with shadows around the sides of the text and visible markings. However, a more systematic way to identify them is from the document properties tab. Go to File, document properties, fonts. If no fonts are listed then the document is an image file. These types of formats can often be converted by an ABBYY FineReader.

Other common problems which often require file conversion are if the text has been scanned under or over an image or if files have been locked by the author. However there are a number of built in features of pdf that may help you cope.

- Changing accessibility features. From the edit menu choose preferences, then accessibility then tick replace document colours and custom colours, this will enable you to select the background and font colours of your choice.
- Printing. Increasing the contrast may aid dyslexic readers. Change the background

by printing onto different coloured paper. You can also print in different formats. Choose file, printer, other printers. Microsoft document writer converts to an xps file. The Microsoft equivalent of pdf which may help and it is also possible to generate another pdf format sometimes this helps increase readability although often tags in the document structure are lost.

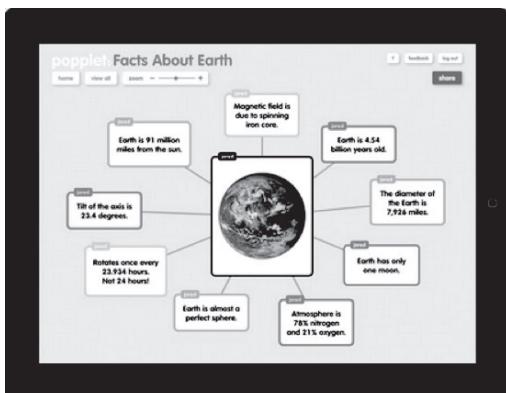
- Increase the font size by using the plus and minus buttons on the tool bar, or zoom option from the view menu. However this may make the text too broad for the screen. To fix this go to the view menu, zoom and reflow.
- Reading out loud. It is possible to make many pdfs audible. From the view menu choose read out load and activate read out loud and then select page or document you can pause deactivate at the end. To change the voice setting choose edit, preferences, reading. You can untick the default voice and choose others. If you untick voice attributes you can choose to change the pitch and speed of delivery.
- Sometimes it helps accessibility to change the format to Word. Save the file as txt by choosing save as other from the file menu. The downside is that this will lose images and formatting so it will appear strange. But if you open in notepad then select the whole text with the control A copy command and drop it into Word it is possible to reformat it. The option given on Adobe to directly save to Word is unfortunately currently a subscription service.

Apps can also help dyslexic students overcome some of the challenges that come with learning in an environment which places the emphasis on non-interactive lectures and timed, written examinations - which they may find hard to do.

### Apps involving visual mapping can be especially helpful

Many dyslexic students are visual learners, so being able to note down ideas in the form of maps or diagrams which can be linked with organisation and the development and linking of ideas.

**Popplet Lite** is particularly recommended.



<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/popplet-lite/id364738549?mt=8>

The free version enables students to quickly draw out ideas arrange them and basic diagrams can be exported as pdf files or shared with others.

## Evernote



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/evernote/id281796108>

This app which is widely used by students and compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad. Requires iOS 7.0 or later. Is also good for developing note taking and memory aids.

Evernote allows you to easily create text, photo, and audio notes, which can be synchronized to any computer to help you remember important things. It will even convert handwritten words to searchable text! There is a premium list feature that enables you to sign up to receive alerts when deadlines are looming.

<https://blog.evernote.com/blog/2013/08/06/how-to-never-miss-a-deadline-with-evernote/>

**Audio Apps** can help take the strain by reading back notes.

### Clarospeak



<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/clarospeak-free/id977258467?mt=8> is a reading and writing app with good quality text-to-speech features.

Speaks back text with highlighting so you can follow the words as they are spoken. Tap the screen to place the cursor point in the text then tap the play icon.

### vBookz PDF Voice Reader



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/vbookz-pdf-voice-reader-us/id497274026>

For many readers who suffer eye strain or concentration issues hearing the words being read aloud can help.

This app is available for both the iPad and iPhone which means you can read your documents on the go. An interactive cursor allows users to follow along, pause reading and repeat.

## Further resources

### University of Michigan Dyslexia help

<http://dyslexiahelp.umich.edu/tools/apps>

Covers learning for all age ranges and academic levels. It has an excellent section on assistive technology and recommended apps. The latter is subdivided into helpful sections such as note taking, reading, organisation.

**British Dyslexia Association**

<https://bdatech.org/what-technology/apps/>

Offers authoritative advice on assistive technology. It also produces regular lists on such topics as how to activate inbuilt features on devices and recommended apps for study.

**Assistive Technology Network**

<https://twitter.com/AssistiveTecNet>

Practitioner led group focused on developing & embedding assistive technology approaches for students in FE/HE. Has links to webinars and advice specifically for those supporting adult learners and students. Also helps keep up to date with any posting from JISC <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/> relating to assistive technology.



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