

**Notes from UHMLG Summer Conference,
at the Village Hotel, Swansea, 16-17 June 2022**

by Desta Bokre, David Green & William Henderson

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Notes, by session /workshop /activity:

Day 1:

Sybylla Parkhill, Customer Service Info. Specialist, Royal College of Nursing: 'Time to...Wellbeing events for RCN members'.

Sybylla gave an overview of wellbeing activities and events which were and continue to be offered at RCN. They were instigated during the pandemic, some of them online, in order to help staff cope with the strains and stresses of the pandemic, and /or to cope with working life generally. The sessions were roughly an hour long and took place at the end of the working day, as a way to unwind and connect with some friendly faces. Such activities included drawing, baking, poetry, meditation and even how to cut your own hair! The most popular session was 'Gardener's Question Time'

Around 300 members attended the sessions, which are still ongoing and feedback from attendees was positive.

Sybylla then invited conference delegates to participate in a 'Time...' session drawing their interpretations of specific words: objects, and personalities, which increased in difficulty as the session progressed (e.g. from 'a duck' to 'your ideal library' which was quite fun.)

Ramona Naicker, Information Specialist, Northern Care Alliance NHS Group: Train the Trainer: Critically Appraising for Anti-racism.

Ramona's session was to introduce her work in anti-racism assessment of critical appraisal of research, to account for issues such as under-representation of ethnic minorities /BAME, and disproportionate impact of various BAME-affecting health conditions.

From her slides, her motivation for doing so, were heavily influenced by discovery of US reviews/studies, some of which highlighted extreme examples of racism. For example in a 2002 study a US doctor stated that they prescribed less antidepressants to African-American patients purely due to race. She was also influenced by Black Lives Matter. Ramona was clear, however, that racism in research, and not accounting for its undertones /overtone, was a global problem, not just a US one.

She talked about 'external validity' issues, sampling biases, such as listing ethnicities of participants as either 'white' or 'other' in the baseline characteristics, leading to underrepresentation of minoritized ethnic groups reducing the external validity of the study. Of equal concern, was the impact to internal validity, caused by small sample sizes of minoritized ethnic groups

One central theme was that 'race' is a social construct, and that 'genetic ancestry' is the preferred term to express genetic differences and if it is hypothesised that there are genetic differences in the population under investigation, which could cause the outcome of interest then research should include genetic testing in the study

Ramona also explained that racism, not race, causes health disparities and that observed differences (if any) can be attributed to societal influences, rather than biological differences, equating 'race' to sociological factors. She also warned of the effects of confounding bias, as a consequence of institutional racism, and confirmation bias, there being an assumption that race-based differences exist in the first place.

She then went on to introduce her tool aimed at addressing these issues when critically appraising literature. (The tool can be found at <https://www.criticallyappraisingantiracism.org/home>) Consisting of five questions, similar to other critical appraisal tools (e.g. CASP), and a model training session to introduce the tool to researchers. The elements of such a session would include presenting both how and the why of such a tool, a handout of the tool itself, and later interactive session(s) to gauge understanding.

Ruthanne Baxter, Civic Engagement Manager, Uni of Edinburgh: 'Putting Culture in Prescribing on Campus.

Ruthanne highlighted the issue of loneliness and other social issue diagnosis, which are sometimes the underlying cause of apparent physical diagnosis, necessitating a different approach. She described art and other clubs and events, which could be hosted in libraries, or be run as external visits to local or regional points of interest.

Ruthanne explained that at the University of Edinburgh she works in the 'Prescribe Culture' unit that was setup as a result of demand for the UoE Counselling Service increasing by 22 per cent in the 2017/18 academic year. Prescribe Culture is "the University of Edinburgh Museums award-winning, heritage-based, non-clinical health, social care and wellbeing support initiative"

Two programmes were highlighted

- Take 30 Together Virtual – virtual tours of museums and other venues open to all – this has been very well attended.
- Programme 6 – an early intervention program for students with mental health difficulties which is open to referrals only

The conference delegates were encouraged to think of as many points of interest in their local area, which could be the focus of such hosting events /visits. (I managed to come up with seven in the Hampstead /Camden area).

I thought this was an interesting area, that not enough time and thought is given to the 'prescribe/ing culture', to support non-clinical health, social care and well-being, and the role libraries can take in its administration. Ruthanne cited Brewster and Cox's articles, as the place to start.

Day 2:

Mia O'Hara, Library Liaison Manager, King's College London & John Woodcock, Digital Education Librarian, King's College London: 'Developing a Systematic Review Search Strategy using Online and Peer Active Review'.

In this presentation which was also previously delivered to at LILAC 2022 Mia and John recounted their involvement in a project to develop a five-week online course, using initially a 'community of enquiry model' to develop the course.

They decided to focus on systematic reviews due to the increasing number of students off-campus (not just due to pandemic but also students outside London/UK).

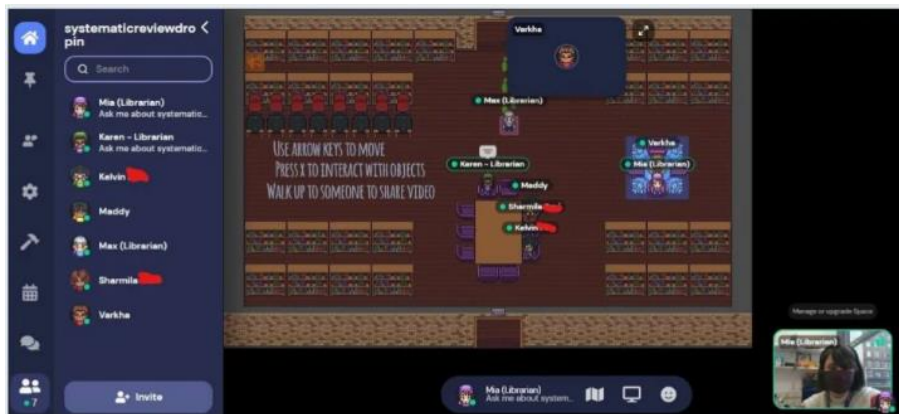
This was later instigated as a Moodle course, with a number of elements, including: recorded video 'introductions' to put a 'face to the name' as well as introduction of concepts, integrating concepts into work, and peer to peer learning.

As well as peer to peer learning there was also peer to peer 'feedback' – encouraging students to post work and have other students provide feedback via Moodle (in addition to instructor's feedback)

Mia and John felt it was important that there was effective communication both, tutor to learners and also learners to learners, and set a drop-in meeting space.

Gather was a tool that KCL were using for the Library staff Christmas Quiz internally, Mia & John also found 'Gather' had previously been used in HE (4 case studies in the literature) The case studies indicated Gather could be an effective tool for 'office hours' support. Gather is a virtual 'space' which looks very much like a video game from the mid-90s and is customisable – they decorated KCL's space with bookshelves and 'seating' areas for group discussion and a second space for 1 to 1 support.

Mia & John had also investigated how other institutions had used Gather. They referred to four case studies of use in Higher Education. They found that were barriers to using Gather, such as fear of the unfamiliar – it is very different to zoom, Teams etc. and accessibility concerns but currently there is no proximity-based video conferencing software available so the decision was taken to go ahead with plans in place to make sure no-one was disadvantaged by the use of the tool.



There was a brief demonstration about how Gather worked in practice for a library drop-in with top tips provided such as having a dedicated greeter.

Mia & John have also developed instructor support, such as an instructor manual, a dedicated Teams space, and presenting their development work in other forums.

Of the actual Moodle course running at KCL, there seemed to be fair take-up of the course, initially (30+ per cohort, rising to 80), but a slight drifting-off in commitment, as the course proceeded (most notably after week 1). The number of passes was counted in single figures per cohort initially but rose to around 20 by the 4th cohort.

Facilitated Discussion session

There followed a discussion 'seminar' in which groups of delegates discussed a number of 'topical' library and information science topics, such as:

'What is your experience of hybrid teaching so far, and does it have a future?'

I think for some groups (perhaps the one I was included in), this was interpreted as a mixture of online and face-to-face teaching, in different sessions, which UCL is embarking on in 2022/23, rather than combined face-2-face and online teaching in specific sessions.

Groups were determined by the UHMLG co-chair, allocating a number to each delegate. This necessitated roving around the conference room to find your group table; some groups were bigger than others, it seemed. After discussion, groups were asked to report back to the conference, their thoughts and experiences, via spokespersons.

The session was also used to ask what topics, delegates thought would be interesting /relevant for future conferences. This was question was also posted on the UHMLG website, after the conference, in the feedback survey.

Ramona Naicker, Information Specialist, Northern Care Alliance NHS Group: 'Developing Questions for Critically Appraising for Anti-Racism'.

In this follow-up session, Ramona asked the conference groups (groups formed in the previous session), to consider her anti-racism critical appraisal tool, and make suggestions as to how it could be improved or adapted. Ramona suggested that her checklist would only be used as supplementary to the established checklists.

Groups looked at the established critical appraisal tools, such as CASP, SIGN and JBI, offering suggestions as to whether to include such things as: tick boxes, scoring systems, segmentation of questions, etc.

Most groups offered suggestions., and Ramona took these away to further develop her checklist.

[Desta Bokre](#), [David Green](#), [Willam Henderson](#): 22 June 2022