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Making the case: partnering with academics to embed information literacy competencies in a law module

McGlamery, Susan (2018) Making the case: partnering with academics to embed information literacy competencies in a law module. In: LILAC Conference 2018, 4-6 April 2018, Liverpool.

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Making the Case:

Embedding Information Literacy in a Law Module



Susan McGlamery
Academic Support Librarian
University of West London

University of West London, School of Law and Criminology

UWL: modern university, career focus

- Providing opportunities for non-traditional students to succeed

<https://www.uwl.ac.uk/about-us/how-university-works/student-profile>



UWL (2018)

SLC:

- Over 60%: BAME, female, older (over 21), in work and/or caring responsibilities
- Wide range of prior academic experiences

Information Literacy @UWL

A brief history of embedding IL in SCL coursework

- UWL Library KPI: “Campus based students provided with information literacy embedded in to their curriculum at levels 3, 4 and 7”

SLC IL embedded sessions:

1. general sessions, not tied to an assessment
 - Research methodology, specific sources, referencing
 - Practical Law, Literature Bingo, Body in the Library
2. Targeted sessions, relevant to an assessment



Andreykuzmin (no date)

Targeted instruction: methods

Locating primary & secondary sources relevant to a specific topic

1. Lecture + demo (classroom)
 - L4: Criminal Law, ELS
 - L5: Equity, EU Law, Serial Killers
2. Problem-based instruction (PC room)
 - L4: CAL
 - L6: Community Legal Advice
 - L7: Practical Legal Research (LPC)



Getty Images (2017)

Personalised Learning: L3, 1st semester

- 80+ students: LLB, Criminology, Sociology
- Learning outcomes:
 - To demonstrate an understanding of different styles and means of communication within academic and formal contexts
 - To demonstrate common study skills within a subject specific context
 - To identify academic sources appropriate to the given task



CappiT (2017)

IL components of PL module

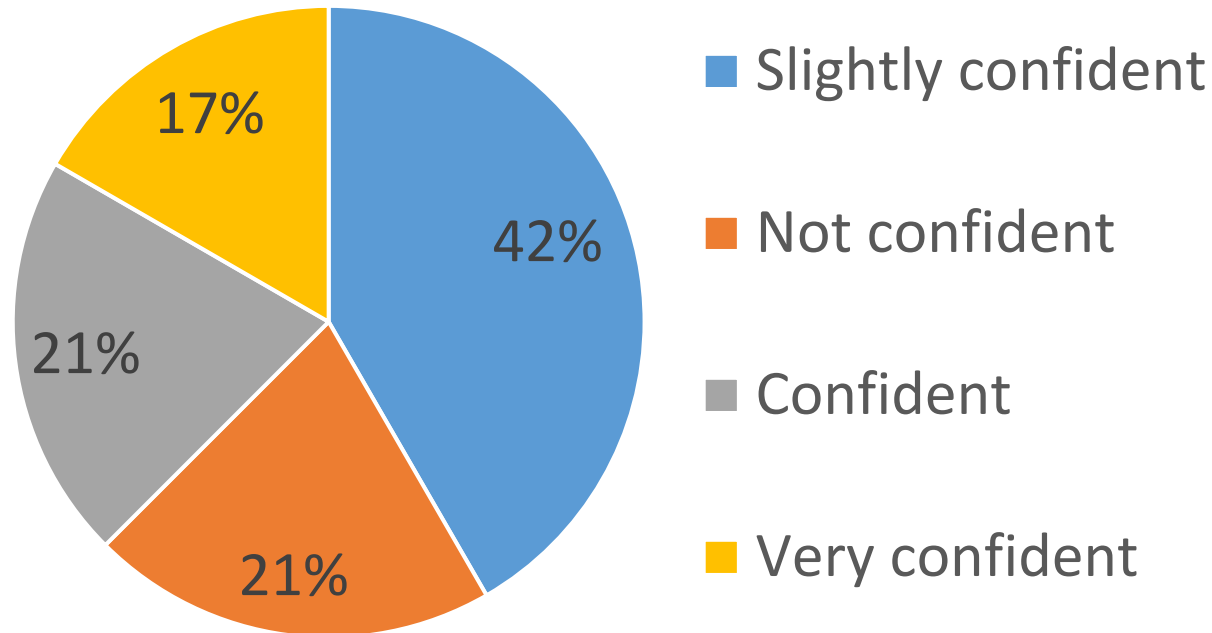
- 3 sessions
 - Introduction to searching (assessed, 10%)
 - Using databases (assessed, 10%)
 - Referencing (assessed, 10%)
- Delivery:
 - Lecture: instruction, demo online resources (2 hours)
 - Seminar: Students complete exercises online in PC room (1 hour)



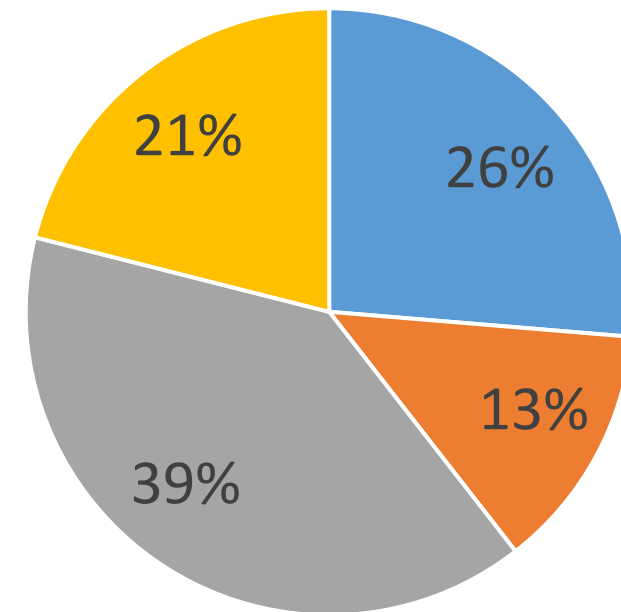
Krol (2017)

Student feedback: informal (Poll Everywhere)

Start of module



End of module



“How confident do you feel in finding information for your academic work?”

Academic Performance: L3, 2nd semester

- Learning outcomes:
 - To construct an argument in an academic context
 - To position yourself within an argument
 - To apply a range of academic skills and techniques to a real case scenario
- Method: study one law case throughout the semester
 - Gain experience in reading a case (structure, language)
 - Learn how to develop an argument, supported by evidence
 - 16 weeks: lecture + seminar
 - 7 Assessments: 1 MCQ + 6 short essays on various issues in the case

ASL collaboration with module leader

- Selecting the case
- Designing the weekly sessions and assessments
- Delivering lectures
- Marking
- Reading:
 - Assigned reading: the case
 - Supplemental reading is discovered through the IL component

Michael Derks,
module leader

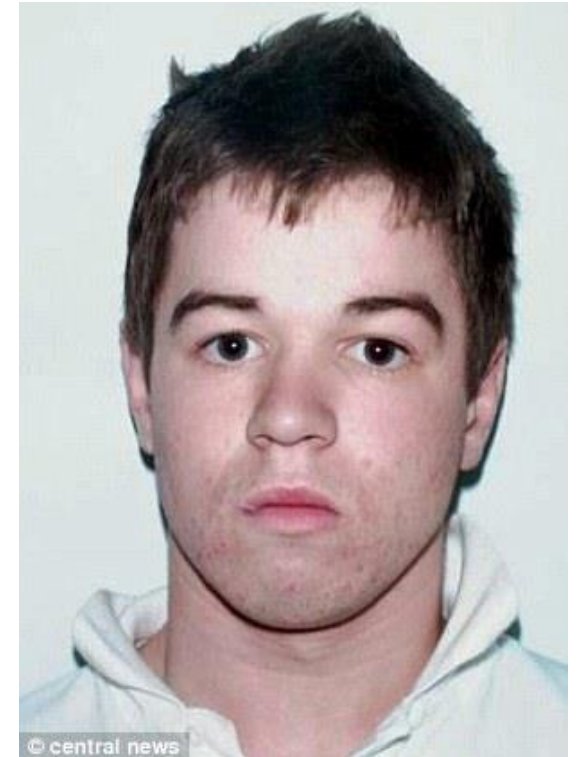


UWL (2017)

Selecting the case

- Criminal law
- Relatable victims and offenders
- Interesting procedural history

- *R v Hallam (Sam)*
 - Gang murder (maybe) in London
 - Victim, offenders and witnesses are 17- 21 y.o.
 - Miscarriage of justice (3 Court of Appeals cases, campaign, media attention)
 - Key evidence on defendant's mobile phone



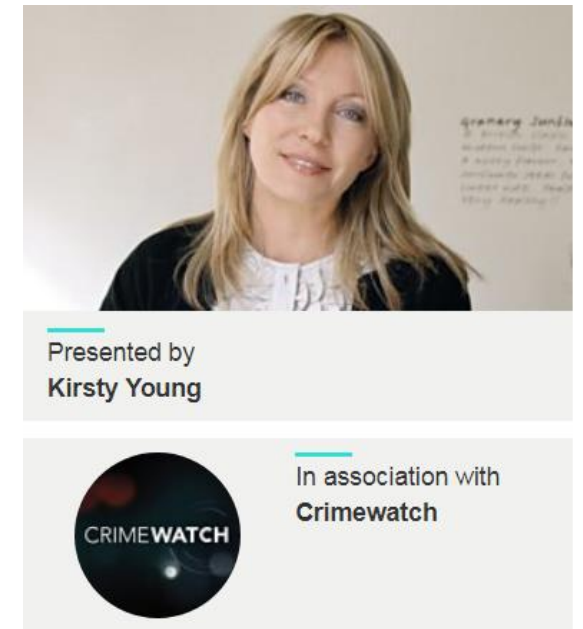
Central News (2004)

Initial Challenges

- Logistics:
 - Class size (80+), lecture room: not conducive to engagement
 - No hands-on, so IL components were primarily discussion and demo
- Case method:
 - Impart a distinctive habit of thinking, understand the legal process (Stolker, 2014, pp. 149-164)
 - Not as relevant to Criminology, Sociology
 - Advantage: expanding case discussion to embrace larger issues
- Role of ASL as co-lecturer
 - time, marking

Example: eyewitness evidence (week 2)

- Issue: Are the eyewitnesses reliable?
- Legal standard: What are the hallmarks of a credible witness?
- IL: use Lexis/Westlaw to discover primary and secondary materials, as well as general textbooks, to find the relevant legal standard (and how it's applied)
- The Case: examining the text of the case, we review the various statements of the two key eyewitnesses
- Engagement: eyewitness game
- Assessment: Summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence of 2 key witnesses in the Case (400 words, 10% of final mark)



Would you be a reliable eyewitness?
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zcc6sg8>

Example: Criminal Case Review Commission (week 8)

- IL: finding information on: what is the CCRC, it's role, the process, statistics on how many cases are handled, and any commentary on the CCRC's work
- The Case: Examining the text of the Case, we review the role of the CCRC and how it impacted on the outcome of the Case.



Strengths

- In-depth reading of the case: students improved in close reading, finding evidence to support their arguments
- Greater familiarity with how to research, including legal dictionary, law commentary
- Single case provided a framework for discussion
- Most students were interested in the case
- Discussion was often lively

Just to let you know, just for information, all A4's have now been marked, and you will be delighted to know that the standard was remarkably high...I think the approach we are adopting is definitely bearing fruit, so many congratulations

all the best, Mike

Weaknesses

- For seminars, arrange for PC room
 - Promote better IL instruction
- More engagement needed
 - Poll software to elicit more opinions, discussion?
- Too closely tied to the 2012 case?
 - Chronology based on events would avoid bias

Trial: Hone, J



Universal Press (no date)

CA 2007:
Latham, LJ



Topfoto (2004)

CA 2012:
Hallett, LJ



UPPA (no date)

Questions?

Susan McGlamery

UWL Library

susan.mcglamery@uwl.ac.uk

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Photo Credits

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