

From black and white to colour; engaging and educating the screen addicts of 2010

Either parallel or plenary

This session will explore the depth of student engagement with resources online and how to manage and deal with the information-complacent student. Research has highlighted some of the challenges we face in teaching students essential and fundamental legal research skills. Confidence in using IT and technology often masks a naïve belief in the power of the search engine, combined with difficulties recognising quality resources. Brabazon (2008) suggests that this has led to greater surface learning as opposed to students engaging on a deeper level; and Nicholas Carr (2010), who in his latest work looks at the effect of the internet on the brain, concurs, by stating that students can become shallow rather than deep thinkers.

The premise behind this has been to create a skills resource to engage, excite and educate students and to bring to life the *Legal Skills* module, often seen as a rather dull support module subject in comparison with the thrills of modules on contract and crime. An alliance between librarian and academic set about looking at the core skills needed by law students across the undergraduate, postgraduate and professional programmes, and embarked on making them fun and interesting. In a world where the visual is king, we needed to give the method of dissemination as much weight as the content itself. It was also important to find partners in the student cohort; our prior dealings demonstrated that students count the 'experience' of their peers on a par with that of their educators. We can lecture them until we're blue in the face, but a quick '*When I was a student I did this...*' story from a current student or alumni can really connect and hammer home a message.

This session will look at the process involved in the project, some insights into experiences of students learning legal skills, how key skills were selected for our resource, and a close look at the technologies used in taking Learnmore to the next stage.

Biography

Emily Allbon, Law Librarian, City University London

Emily has been Law Librarian at City University for almost 11 years and is a chartered librarian and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She is currently pursuing an MA in Academic Practice. Emily was named 'Best Legal Information Professional in an Academic Environment' at the BIALL/Lexis Awards for Excellence in 2005 and was runner-up for the SLA Europe Information Professional Award 2011. In 2003 Emily created 'Lawbore', a student portal for law students which she consistently develops and updates. Lawbore now incorporates many forms of technology designed to aid student learning and engagement (gateway, wiki, blog, twitter, video and talking slide shows), and is an integral part of student life at The City Law School. Lawbore was recommended in The Times in January 2009.

