

Research & Scholarship Journey at UCS

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- UCS - part of Bridgwater & Taunton College
- 1000 HE students at UCS; 20,000 FE students at BTC
- Wide range of courses, including degree apprenticeships
- Partnerships with The Open University, Oxford Brookes University, University of Plymouth, University of West of England, and Pearson

Research & Scholarship Initiatives

Research, Scholarship & Ethics Committee

Annual research fund bidding round

Annual Research and Scholarship Publication

Staff Research Repository

Annual Research & Scholarship Conference

Advance HE Fellowships supported (FHEA etc.)



Research & Scholarship Publication

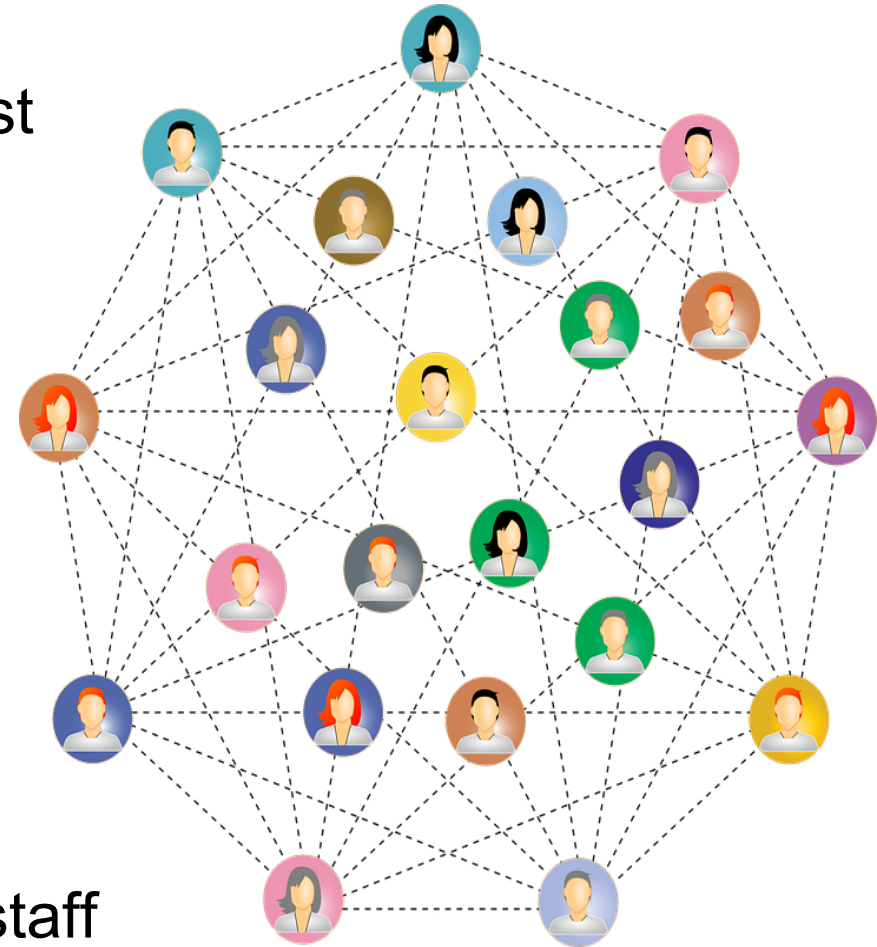
- A showcase of scholarship and best practice articles
- Reflective pieces are also published
- Some research projects engage students as partners in research
- Published on the UCS website and within the internal repository
- A route to publishing externally

<https://www.somerset.ac.uk/about/research-and-scholarly-activity/>



UCS Conferences

- UCS Research & Scholarship Conference in August
- HE Conference in February
- External and internal speakers
- Expanding to involve more external stakeholders
- Opportunity to network and exchange ideas
- Motivate engagement in research for early career staff



Internal Bidding Rounds

- Annual funding available for the last 10 years
- RSE Committee can advise on project ideas
- Projects are welcomed on TLA development; innovative teaching methods; new curriculum development; digital innovation; action research; climate change-related projects / sustainability; writing for external publications, etc.
- Application forms and guidance available via the internal research repository



Application Process

Launch via email to all staff; HE Community of Practice Teams site; internal repository

Applicants have access to:

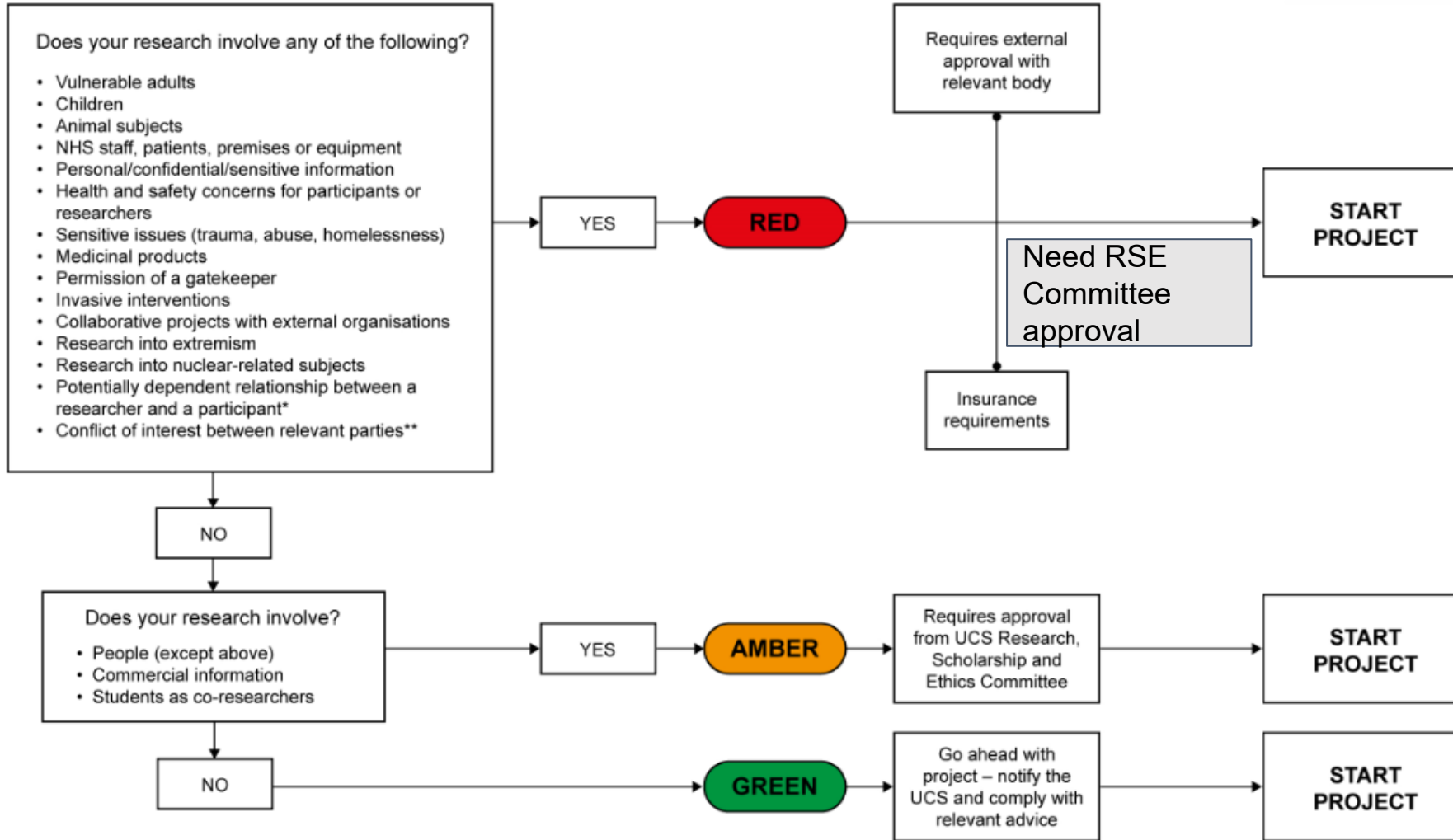
- ✓ Application form
- ✓ Ethical clearance form
- ✓ Bidding round terms and conditions
- ✓ Guidance on administering project budget
- ✓ Project claim form



Application forms are reviewed by the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee.

Research Involving Human and Animal Subjects

Ethical Scrutiny Diagram



*Where relationships may be characterised by inequalities of power or status, the ethical impact on all parties needs to be carefully considered.

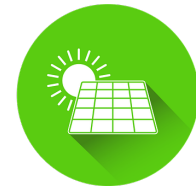
**Members of the research team have financial interest in receiving personal compensation from, or hold a position in an industry sponsoring this study or otherwise have a potential conflict of interest regarding the conduct of this study.

Ethical Clearance Diagram

Examples of Past Projects

Sustainability / Environmental Projects:

- Exploring waste-to-energy options within the College's campuses
- Measuring environmental sustainability and energy efficiency performance in College buildings
- An exploration into the cost of using environmentally sustainable energy
- A pilot study into environmental awareness and perceptions of FE and HE Agriculture students studying at the College's farm
- Energy retrofit options for achieving net-zero energy buildings



Examples of Past Projects

Teaching Learning & Assessment (TLA) - Related Projects:

- Developing a tool for assessing online teaching
- Empirical research into assessment feedback practices
- An investigation into relational pedagogy and its role in the development of HE students' academic resilience
- An investigation into Class Notebook and effective teaching strategies





Support Staff Engagement in Research

Bidding rounds open to all UCS / BTC staff

Learning Resources and Additional Learning Support staff engage in research projects:

- ✓ *The Embedded Librarian Project*
- ✓ *An investigation into how the HEADStart programme supports the Access and Participation Plan (Higher Education Academic Development)*
- ✓ *Creating virtual study skills tutorials using bespoke applications*
- ✓ *Library virtual enquiries project using the READ scale*
- ✓ *Creation of a toolkit of strategies within the Additional Learning Support Department to support widening participation*

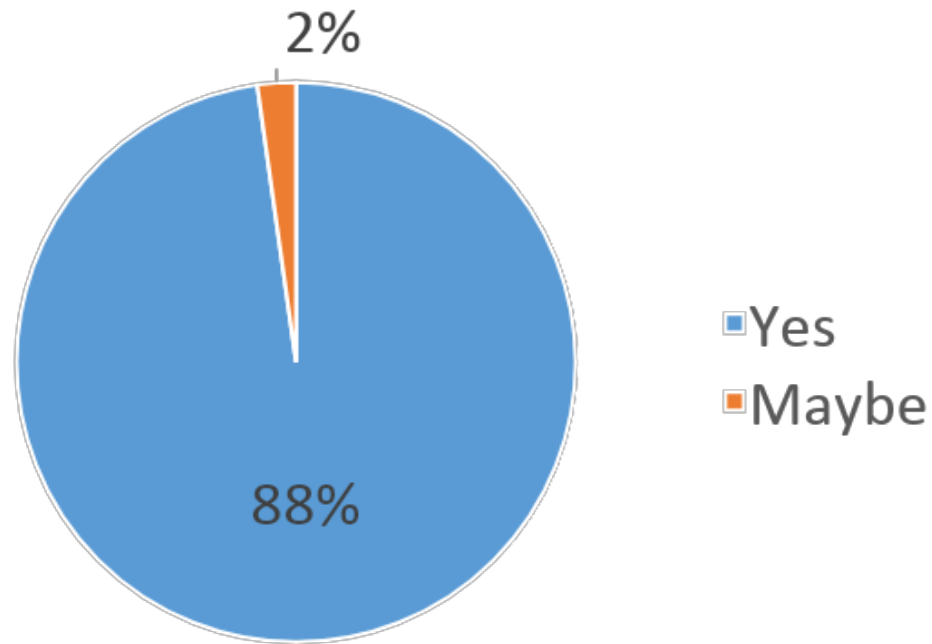
The Embedded Librarian Project

- An action research project
- Aimed at re-engaging students with the library service post-pandemic and those who typically do not engage
- Carrying out a literature review; primary data gathering and implementing librarian interventions.



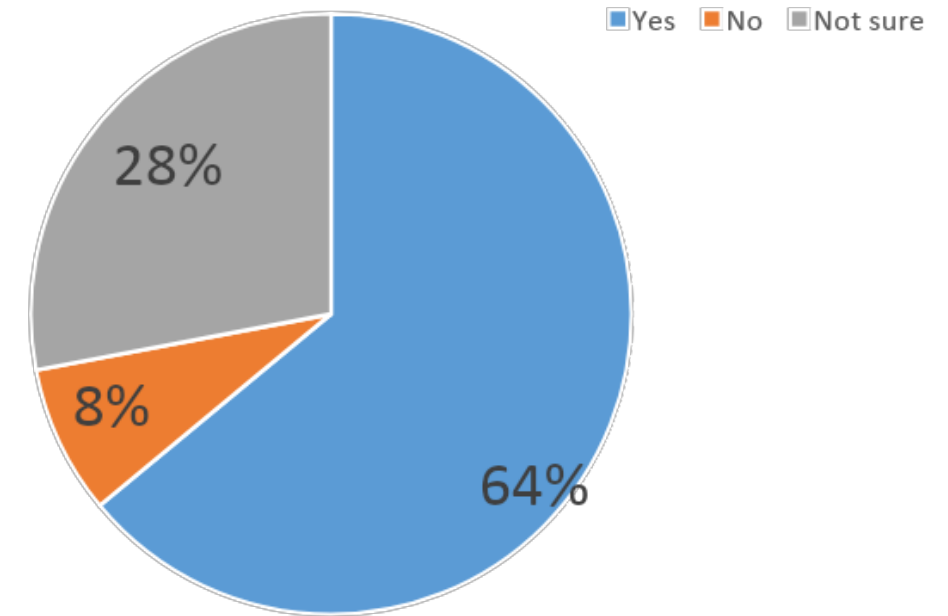
Measuring Impact

Do you think librarian support helped improve students' grade outcomes?



Feedback from HE course leaders

Has librarian support helped you improve your grade outcomes?



Feedback from HE students

The Embedded Librarian Project

CoLRIC Innovative Practice Award 2022 - CIPA

CoLRIC - Council for Learning Resources in Colleges

The Award is presented in celebration of highly innovative and enthusiastic contributions to team working including:

- ✓ A demonstrable impact on the teaching and learning experience; primarily through assessments, surveys and feedback
- ✓ Active engagement with academic staff, curriculum colleagues and students.



Feedback from CoLRIC



The collaboration and dialogue with teaching staff to create an engaging bespoke service for students



The effective utilisation of digital curriculum platforms to contextualise learning resources



The use of social media communication techniques to engage with the student community



The introduction of complementary 'pop in' classroom visits at specific and relevant times of the academic year



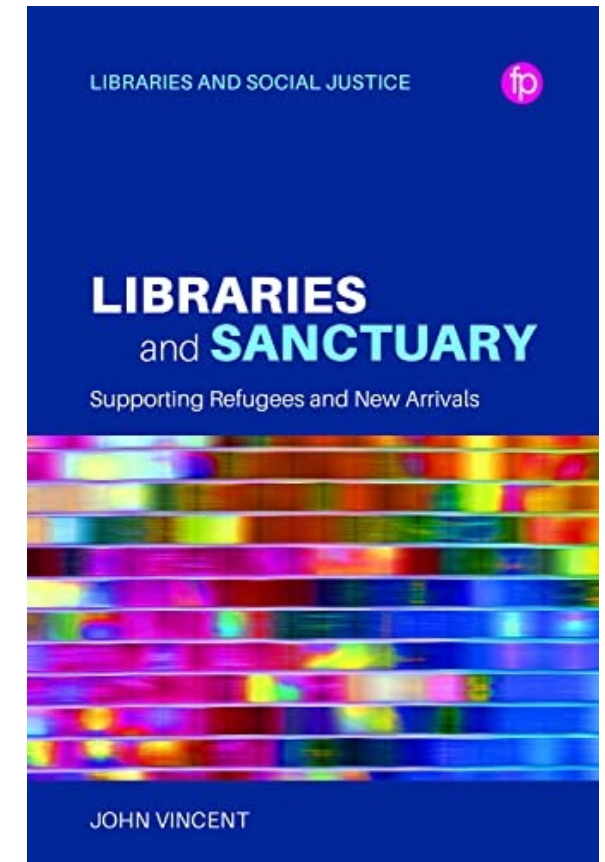
Sensitivity to the needs of a diverse student community



Overwhelmingly positive feedback that evidences a major impact on student learning

Learning Resources Publications

- An article on the Embedded Librarian project published in CoLRIC's *Impact* publication, January 2023 issue.
- A case study on the Conversation Café, our language Café for ESOL students in the LRC, published in *Libraries and Sanctuary: Supporting Refugees and New Arrivals*.



Contact

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Please visit:

www.somerset.ac.uk

www.btc.ac.uk

References

CoLRIC (2022) *Announcing the Winner of the CoLRiC Innovative Practice Award 2022*. Available at:

<https://www.colric.org.uk/news/announcing-the-winner-of-the-colric-innovative-practice-award-2022> (Accessed: 31 October 2022).

Peters, J. (2023) 'The Embedded Librarian or Taking the Library to the Classroom (TLC)', *Impact*, (1), pp. 11-15.

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Any Questions?

