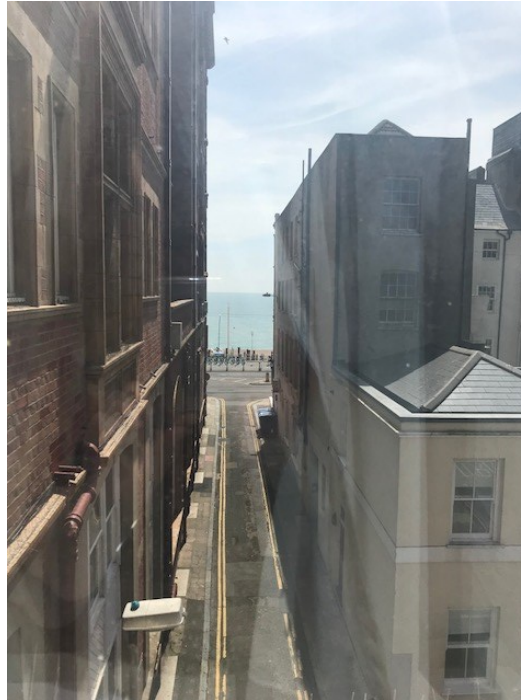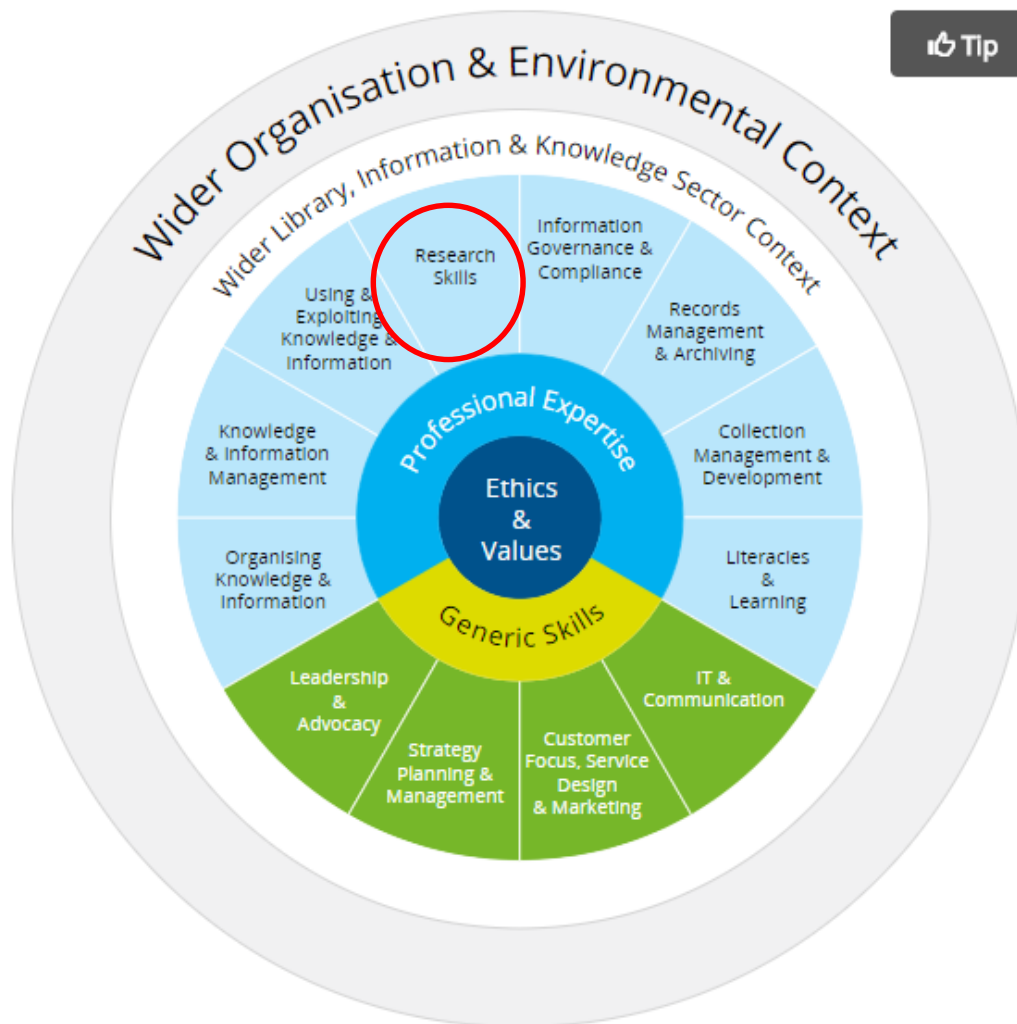# What is research evidence?

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My Professional Knowledge and Skills Base

Professional Expertise

4. Research skills

Using research techniques and knowledge of information resources to support organisational, client or personal research projects to provide new findings and data. Includes knowledge of research methods, literature searching, citations, statistics and statistical analysis and report writing.

Rate yourself:

University of **Strathclyde** Science

4.1 Understanding research

Appreciating the nature and value of research, including practitioner research, and research carried out on behalf of clients

0 ▾   0 ▾

4.2 Evaluative research

Evaluations and comparisons of systems and services, including experiments, observations and surveys

0 ▾   0 ▾

4.3 Desk research

Undertaking research, including literature analysis and methods such as content analysis and historical research

0 ▾   0 ▾

4.4 Statistics and statistical analysis

Analysing data, interpreting and presenting results; understanding published statistical analyses

0 ▾   0 ▾

Rate yourself:

4.5 Understanding research contexts

Assessing the needs of a service, organisation or client, and selecting appropriate research methods and ways of presenting results

0 ▾   0 ▾

4.6 Understanding and presenting research reports

Appreciating the ways in which research is reported, including references and supporting information and data, so as to be able to understand research reports and articles, and to present research results professionally

0 ▾   0 ▾

4.7 Research ethics

Appreciating ethics norms of research, and any relevant laws, regulations and guidelines, so as to carry out research in a professional manner

0 ▾   0 ▾

Why should librarians do research?

"A professional field should have an established and growing body of research evidence to *help support decisions and knowledge within the field* [italics added]" (Koufogiannakis & Brettle, 2016, p. 29).

Research evidence is NOT:

- "How we done it good" (Wilson, 2013, p. 113)
- Opinions – "I think that people need/want x" ☺
- Results of committee meeting discussions
- Asking your 11-year-old son

The case for doing research

"No Authorities had ascertained the public's view on library apps, suggesting a lack of forward planning. A simple online questionnaire could be developed to gauge patrons' interest, producing valuable data to inform future policy and implementation. Two-way communication is a key feature of Library 2.0 and 3.0 and should be indigenous to library services" (Kerr & Rasmussen Pennington, 2018, p. 245)

Research evidence is essential to being evidence-based

- "being evidence based means that we consider many forms of evidence in conjunction with one another to form a well informed and considered professional opinion" (Koufogiannakis & Brettle, 2016, p. 27)

- Research evidence is one part of being evidence-based: finding and creating new knowledge that can then be implemented to improve user services, daily work practices, anything else we need to do in our professional settings… (also local evidence and professional knowledge)

Barriers to EBLIP (Booth, 2004; Wilson, 2016)

- **Environment**: rate of change, poor access to evidence base, cultural barriers
- **Evidence**: limitations of evidence base, inappropriate research orientation
- **Workplace**: lack of time, lack of money, lack of infrastructure, lack of support
- **Profession**: leadership, lack of research culture, professional characteristics, communications issues, need for training, failure to implement results

Needs for and characteristics of a practitioner-researcher (Wilson, 2016)

- Lack of existing actionable research, 'remote' and slow academic ILS research
- Chance to increase profile, professionally and organisationally
- "a person engaged in the practice of a skilled profession who also conducts research" (p. 83)
- Focus on users, reflective practice
- Curiosity, interest in growth, belief in ability, to develop, access to mentor, peers, culture

How to collect, analyse, and use research evidence

- Does it exist already? Do a lit review. If not, you will need to create it.
- Write good research questions (Booth, 2006)
- Consider how the questions can best be answered with appropriate methods
- Collect the research data
- Analyse it and answer your questions
- Implement and disseminate it

Types of research data collection

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Usability studies
- Observation: in person or online
- Bibliomining (Nicholson, 2006)
- Existing literature – systematic review
  - But is it any good? (Glynn, 2006)

Types of research data analysis

- Transcription and content analysis
- Statistics (as simple as percentages from a survey)
- Secondary analysis
- Data mining techniques

Next steps
(Wilson, 2013, pp. 115-116)

- Determine the needs of practitioner-researchers so they can be better supported.
- Focus on effective dissemination of research findings so they are accessible and usable by practitioners.
- Urge LIS educators to incorporate more practitioner research into the curriculum to expose students to the wide variety of research and research possibilities that are available to them as practitioners.

Resources to help you from LIRG

Resources to help you from LIRG

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L I R Library and Information Research

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Library and Information Research

CILIP's Library and Information Research Group publishes *Library and Information Research*. It publishes both refereed and non-refereed submissions. Before 2003 the journal was published under the title *Library and Information Research News*.

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- https://vle.cilip.org.uk – for accessing Intro to Research Skills
- https://pksb.cilip.org.uk – for assessing your own skills

EBLIP10 – 17-19 June, 2019 University of Strathclyde iSchool!

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