MEETING THE CPD NEEDS OF THE E-LIBRARIAN

Lynda Ayiku*, Anthea Sutton*, Alison Turner+, Andrew Booth* and Alan O’Rourke*

*School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield
+National Library for Health

Correspondence:
Lynda Ayiku,
Information Officer,
School of Health and Related Research,
University of Sheffield,
Regent Court, 30 Regent Street,
SHEFFIELD, UK, S1 4DA
L.Ayiku@sheffield.ac.uk

Abstract

Purpose: To demonstrate the potential usefulness of the Facilitated Online Learning Interactive Opportunity (FOLIO) Programme’s low technology approach to e-learning in delivering continuing professional development to librarians in the health community.

Setting/Participants/Resources: Healthcare librarians supporting staff working within the UK National Health Service

Methodology: Discussion list mediated communication supplemented by icebreaker exercises, group and buddy interactions, case studies, briefings, guided reading, interactive powerpoint presentations, quizzes and voting, competitions, guest telephone lectures, self-reflection, practical exercises and course summaries.

Results: Evaluation is both formative, during the FOLIO Programme as a whole, and summative, after each of the 12 modules. The FOLIO Programme appears to meet requirements for a social, cognitive and teaching presence within delivery of an e-learning course. Initial results have been promising and the Course Team have taken the opportunity to modify the Programme in the light of feedback.

Discussion/Conclusion: Issues relating to the technology, assessment, buddy system, and applicability materials are explored together with practical responses devised by the team to meet such challenges. The FOLIO Programme provides a potential model for delivery of continuing professional development to meet the particular needs of the health library community.

Introduction

The Facilitated Online Learning Interactive Opportunity (FOLIO) Programme was conceived in August 2002 by Andrew Booth, Director of Information Resources, School of Health and Related Research (ScHARR), University of Sheffield and Alison Turner, Library Partnerships Co-ordinator for the National electronic Library for Health (NeLH). Its overall aim was to provide a flexible alternative mechanism for delivering continuing professional development (CPD) for the NeLH Librarian Development Programme (NeLH LDP). Following a successful pilot (January-May 2003) the NeLH commissioned a team at ScHARR to deliver a two-year programme (April 2004-March 2006) of 12 courses for health librarians who support staff within the UK National Health Service.
The FOLIO Programme employs a low-technology method of delivery with each course primarily provided through 30 daily email messages, administered through an electronic discussion list. Around this basic course skeleton the course team constructs a rich and varied programme of events including icebreaker exercises, group and buddy interactions, case studies, briefings, guided reading, interactive powerpoint presentations, quizzes and voting, competitions, guest telephone lectures, self-reflection, practical exercises and course summaries. Typically 40 to 50 participants share in each course, supported by a small course team and guest tutor. Assessment, recognized by a certificate of completion rather than by formal accreditation, is conducted via a portfolio submitted at the conclusion of each course.

**Why online workplace learning?**

The UK National Health Service (NHS) is undergoing a far-reaching modernisation programme. The NHS information strategy, *Information for Health*¹, urged a radical improvement in the quality and use of information as a way of improving patient care. A National electronic Library for Health (NeLH) was established to provide easy access to high quality knowledge and information for a wide target audience. It offers new ways for health librarians to promote their services, supporting health professionals to navigate an increasingly ‘complex maze’ of information resources.² The emerging discipline of health informatics is also shaping the role of the health librarian as it responds to improvements in the quality of information within health care.³ ⁴

**NeLH Librarian Development Programme**

New opportunities require appropriate skills. The NHS workforce development strategy, describes libraries that “offer access to a wide range of electronic and print learning and knowledge resources, complementing those available via the National electronic library for Health”.⁵ The NeLH LDP was created to provide a national framework to support librarians moving into new roles within the context of CPD.

Early in the programme it was recognised that librarians experience significant problems in pursuing CPD. New approaches are required if librarians are to be supported effectively in developing requisite skills. Most health library units in the UK operate with a staff of four or less with many working on a part-time basis.⁶ Anecdotal evidence suggests that librarians, particularly those in smaller units, find it difficult to attend professional development events. Budgetary constraints cause barriers for many library staff; even events which are low cost or free of charge make demands for travel and subsistence costs. Additionally, difficulties in arranging appropriate staff cover often prevent librarians from leaving the workplace for extended periods without compromising service availability.

Shortage of time is a key issue for most professionals and health librarians have less flexibility than most. Most library staff organise their day around the service and are used to interruptions and having to reprioritise work according to enquiries and requests made by customers. Learning in the twenty first century has to be flexible to cope with new ways of working and must enable librarians to tailor approaches to their busy lives.

From the perspective of the commissioner, the FOLIO approach to learning has the potential to impact on more learners than face-to-face approaches. Those who can attend face to face events are limited not only due to logistics such as venue and location but because work-based learning is increasingly delivered in small group participative sessions. The FOLIO approach, whilst self-directed, creates small learning communities that address shared concerns and draw on pan-regional experiences. Technological solutions such as teleconferencing and chatrooms offer further potential for real-time discussions. As librarians
What are the needs of the e-librarian?

By placing centre stage the development of a modern information infrastructure that includes evidence-based practice and information sharing, modernisation of the UK NHS requires that all NHS staff possess core information skills. It also requires that library and information providers move “beyond the library walls to take services to health professionals” in response to more diverse user needs. As the need for information and knowledge services has grown, NHS librarian roles have evolved to include knowledge management, providing training in information and evidence-seeking skills, involvement in clinical decision making and implementation of policies.

The NeLH LDP has prioritised health informatics expertise, information communication technology (ICT) skills, knowledge management, managerial skills, learning and teaching skills, evidence based librarianship, epidemiological skills and processes of clinical decision making. A UK wide Training Needs Analysis, commissioned by the NeLH LDP, provides a detailed snapshot of librarians’ training needs. The survey confirms a trend towards the ‘e-librarian’ by revealing a high demand for specialist information retrieval and ICT skills training, suggesting an ongoing desire amongst NHS library staff to update their technical skills continually. Other noteworthy training needs include strategic planning, financial planning, evidence-based decision making and knowledge of NHS programmes and policies.

A further training needs analysis, again sponsored by the NeLH LDP, and conducted in 2003 by Terence Lacey and Andrew Booth at the University of Sheffield (http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/folio/cpd.pdf), classified the developing needs of the NHS e-librarian within the COMPLIANT framework (Table 1). Again it reveals a predominance of Technical Skills (36.5% of available courses) followed by Management Skills (17.6%), Professional Skills (16.8%) and Contextual Knowledge (12.7%).

Table 1 COMPLIANT framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge – generic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextual knowledge: Knowledge of wider developments within the information world or of more general developments likely to carry an information dimension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills – generic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial skills: Generic skills required for the management of organisations, staff, facilities or tangible resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional skills: Generic and transferable information skills which characterise, by either their nature or extent, the unique contribution of an information worker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Teaching skills: Skills involving the transmission of knowledge whether in a group or one-to-one setting, either conducted face-to-face or virtually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills: Skills involving communication with a commissioner, customer, user or staff member of information services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge – specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHS Context: Knowledge of health organisations, processes, and structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills – specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical skills: Skills involving access to, interpretation of, and subsequent use of health information.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also in 2003, the NeLH LDP in association with the School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield embarked on a pilot programme, Facilitated Online
Learning Interactive Opportunity (FOLIO). Initial courses covered three areas of known demand: Project Management, Evaluating Your Service and Evidence Based Librarianship. These topics were chosen to cover the extended role of the e-librarian, a conventional librarian role and wider professional issues respectively. 188 different NHS librarians graduated from one or more courses and the third course extended beyond the UK to allow a further 83 overseas librarians to graduate. The underlying philosophy of the FOLIO programme is captured by the NHS lifelong learning framework which states that, “lifelong learning is primarily about growth and opportunity, about making sure that staff are supported to acquire new skills and realise their potential to help change things for the better”.

As the requirements for lifelong learning continue to develop and to shape the CPD needs of the e-librarian there is a need to keep abreast of new and emerging developments.

**How is the programme administered and delivered?**

**Recruitment**

FOLIO courses are promoted through several channels to reach the widest possible audience for recruitment. Prior to a FOLIO course, emails advertising the course are posted to such Jiscmail distribution lists as LIS-MEDICAL and HLG-MEMBERS. If a specific discussion list is relevant to a particular course topic, then this too is targeted. Emails include aims and objectives for each course and links to the FOLIO web pages for further information, enabling potential participants to make an informed decision on whether to ‘sign up’.

**NeLH FOLIO homepage**

Forthcoming courses are promoted via the NeLH FOLIO homepage (http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/folio) allowing visitors to the site to anticipate the next three courses at any given time. Potential participants submit an ‘expression of interest’ form to the FOLIO administrator and are subsequently contacted and asked to confirm that they wish to register. Each of the eight FOLIO courses run by March 2005 achieved a target figure of between 40-50 participants.

**Presentations at events**

Members of the course team are positively encouraged to promote the FOLIO Programme at CPD events around the UK and thus broaden uptake beyond the established market (Table 2). Presentations are tailored to each event and FOLIO contact details, the homepage URL, and topics and dates for forthcoming courses are always mentioned. Where possible the FOLIO team accompanies descriptions of course methods with an interactive opportunity illustrating innovative features of delivery.
Table 2 Examples of presentations promoting the FOLIO Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Presentation</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Running the courses

Jiscmail

The FOLIO courses are delivered primarily by email, utilizing a Jiscmail distribution list set up for this purpose ([http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/FOLIO.html](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/FOLIO.html)). Jiscmail allows easy distribution of messages to all participants and also maintains an archive of messages. This is invaluable when participants miss messages and wish to catch up with course progress. Links to this archive are provided from FOLIO web pages.

Other Jiscmail features are utilised during FOLIO courses. For example, the facility for online surveys is used for quizzes, voting, and the course evaluation form. Jiscmail also provides a ‘discussion room’ which allows live synchronous ‘chat’. This is used for ‘drop-in’ sessions where participants have queries answered immediately by the course facilitator. Due to partial overlap of courses, an additional Jiscmail list was set up to allow support from before the course begins to well after course completion ([http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/E-FOLIO.html](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/E-FOLIO.html)).

NeLH FOLIO website

A set of web pages are created for each course, linked from the NeLH FOLIO website ([http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/folio](http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/folio)), and containing original course materials written by the FOLIO team (such as briefings, case studies etc.). Links are then provided from email messages, thus ensuring that they are not too lengthy. This also allows for further dissemination of the information, enabling those not formally registered on the course to access the website and thus benefit from shared materials.

At the start of each course, participants are informed how to access FAQs web pages providing general information about each course, such as requirements for successful completion. Where enquiries are not answered by the FAQs page, participants can contact the FOLIO Course Team (folio@sheffield.ac.uk). Course participants are discouraged from using the personal email of the course facilitator to ensure that other members of the FOLIO Course Team access and respond to enquiries should the named facilitator be unavailable. All queries are answered within 48 hours.
**Portfolio submission**

As befits a CPD programme, FOLIO courses are assessed through submission of a portfolio. A template for each course is made available from the course website. Completion of the course requires participants to submit a largely complete portfolio to an accepted standard. Participants are awarded one of three certificates: Distinction, Honours Pass, and Standard Pass. Very rarely a Fail is awarded but more typically participants opt out from submitting a portfolio. Portfolios are assessed by the FOLIO Team with occasional involvement by an external module tutor.

During a six-week course participants record their work in a portfolio template that covers all the course exercises. They are then given a two-week ‘catch-up’ period that allows them to address any gaps or to reflect further on exercises previously completed. Such flexibility is key to FOLIO courses. This catch-up period helps to ease participants’ anxieties should they miss tasks due to working part-time, work commitments, annual leave, sick leave etc. The exercises for the portfolio combine practical and pedagogic tasks to keep the course varied and interesting.

**Practical and pedagogic activities**

Practical exercises focus on the participant’s own experience and how it relates to the topic under consideration. For example, participants are asked to reflect on how the course topic applies to their local circumstances or to develop an action plan for their own library and information service. Some exercises are based on a fictional case study that simulates ‘real-life’ circumstances. Such exercises involve problem-solving that participants can relate to their own roles. Where participants are required to create a piece of work, such as an e-learning resource or an information skills training course programme, they can subsequently adapt and develop these for use within their own organisation. Practical exercises are complemented by more pedagogic activities such as guided reading, ‘chalk and talk’ lectures (delivered using teleconferencing rather than face-to-face) and brief theoretical perspectives.

**Supporting the e-librarian**

Lack of motivation, feelings of isolation and time restraints are common reasons that students give for withdrawing from e-learning courses. To retain students, effective facilitation and student support is essential. The challenge for the FOLIO programme is to create courses that support the educational and social needs of the e-librarian. In doing this FOLIO courses incorporate three components for effective e-learning courses; cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence.

**Cognitive presence**

Cognitive presence allows "serious learning to take place in an environment that supports the development and growth of critical thinking skills". Such ‘critical thinking’ is stimulated by such activities as realistic case scenarios and self-reflective exercises, which enable the e-librarian to apply knowledge learnt during the course to hypothetical or local circumstances. Setting such exercises, with clear relevance to the day-to-day work of course participants, helps to motivate them and to develop their critical thinking skills.

**Social presence**

Social presence relates to providing a supportive environment where students feel “the necessary degree of comfort and safety to express their ideas in a collaborative context”. FOLIO facilitators create a ‘social presence’ by adopting a casual, sometimes humorous, tone in course messages. This establishes mutual trust between participant and facilitator,
‘humanising’ the invisible FOLIO facilitator and creating a closer student-teacher relationship. To further develop this relationship, FOLIO facilitators often illustrate their messages with anecdotes and discussions reflecting their own struggles and successes yet always allied closely to the course topic. This enables the e-librarian to feel confident when asking for help or guidance.

Social presence also requires the creation of an environment within which the e-librarian can comfortably interact with fellow course participants. At the start of each FOLIO course there is an "icebreaker" task which requires that each e-librarian sends a typically lightweight, and often lighthearted, introductory message to fellow participants on the course. For example, a course on establishing information needs might ask participants for their experiences of being surveyed or interviewed. More importantly, participants share brief details about themselves, their work and social interests. This supportive environment builds up confidence for sharing views and opinions during subsequent small group and plenary discussions.

**Teaching presence**

Closely linked to social presence, teaching presence involves the inclusion of activities that encourage interaction during e-learning courses.\(^\text{13}\) Such features include:

- **Student-student interaction**
  To combat potential isolation during e-learning courses, e-librarians are encouraged to engage in discourse with fellow participants to enable social interaction through “buddy” exercises and group discussions. Typically each participant works in a group with one or more course mates. These small groups are set tasks and exercises that require input from each group member and promote collaborative learning. In addition one or more topics for discussion are either considered by all participants or discussed within the buddy groups. Participants communicate with one another via email.

- **Student-facilitator interaction**
  The supportive student-facilitator environment encourages interaction through designated ‘drop-in’ sessions for personalized feedback, through email, telephone or online ‘chat’. Feedback is returned promptly and answers of potential relevance to other course members are made available as additional ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ (FAQs).

- **Interaction of students with FOLIO course materials**
  FOLIO courses supplement traditional tasks and exercises with interactive and informal activities such as quizzes, competitions and telephone conferences to engage and motivate the e-librarian. This variety of course materials maximizes the potential to meet a range of learning style preferences among course participants.

Further to supporting the educational and social needs of the e-librarian, the Course Team provide an ‘enquiries’ service to provide technological support and advice on how to ‘catch-up’ with courses after periods of absence. Such support, within a guaranteed 48 hour time frame, is crucial to reducing the reported loneliness of the long distance learner.

**Evaluation**

FOLIO courses are evaluated using an online form available through the FOLIO/E-FOLIO discussion list. The evaluation assesses student satisfaction with the course across a variety of areas:
Course Satisfaction - whether participants have enjoyed the course, whether they know more about the course topic having completed the course, whether the course has met its stated objectives, and how they plan to use what they have learnt.

Course Materials - how the course materials rate overall (i.e. very good, good, average, poor, no opinion/undecided), those materials that they found most/least useful, and most/least enjoyable and how often they accessed the course website and how useful it was.

Buddy Interaction/Group Discussion - whether participants shared in either form of social interaction, if not they are asked to identify reasons revealing whether barriers are course-related or simply personal.

Facilitation - Participants are asked to rate course facilitation from a choice of options (very good, good, average, poor, no opinion/undecided).

General Comments - Participants make general comments on the course and are asked specifically what they would change about the course, whether they would participate in another course, and whether they would recommend FOLIO courses to their colleagues.

Evaluation forms are available throughout the course to enable the FOLIO team to gain the views of those who withdraw as well as those who complete the course. Submitted evaluation forms inform the development of future courses. Occasionally specific issues raised by the Curriculum Development Group or by the FOLIO team are included in the online questionnaire or in the Portfolio Submission. Recent examples include the amount of time taken to complete the course, the experience of losing a buddy during the course, and preferences with regard to the timing of guest lectures. Additional feedback received by email or verbally is also taken into consideration and discussed at regular team meetings.

Lessons learnt from FOLIO course to date

Workload

The rapid pace of development and delivery of the FOLIO courses requires the Course Team to learn quickly. Early on, the Team realized the need to moderate expectations regarding content and thus avoid overloading participants with tasks or exercises. Our course philosophy now aims to achieve the main course objectives and yet ensure participants view each FOLIO course as a pleasurable experience – in fact, no different from a face-to-face course. Ironically, advertising FOLIO courses using the analogy of attendance at a one-day face-to-face workshop has proved problematic. Many students commented on the large amount of time required for completion of the course, borne out by evidence from their portfolios. When one group logged how long they spent on each portfolio task this revealed a wide range of responses, leading the team to conclude that the level of activity and interaction is more analogous to a two or three day face-to-face event. After all, face-to-face courses incorporate lengthy periods of ‘down time’ whereas e-learning courses are more sustained. The team now considers carefully the number and complexity of the tasks and provides days with no specific new tasks to legitimize ‘within course catch up’. In the future, the team hopes to indicate how long to spend on each task, tempered by recognition that different learning styles mean that students progress through exercises at different rates.

Assessment

Portfolios are assessed using a criteria-based mark sheet covering completeness, buddy interaction, participation, creativity, use of resources, critical analysis, application and presentation. Originally portfolios were graded at three levels: fail, honours pass or distinction, based on a holistic assessment of each portfolio. While allowing relatively objective and internally consistent decisions, the wide band around award of an ‘honours pass’ required introduction of an additional grade of ‘standard pass’.
One criterion for assessing portfolios is evidence of interaction with fellow participants (process), but portfolios are better at handling outcomes. A high quality exercise may not necessarily reflect extensive interaction between buddies. Although some buddy pairs do include copies of e-mails, to show how they reached a collaborative answer, future portfolio requirements may need to specifically demonstrate collaboration. Some portfolio sections show lower rates of completion, specifically the quiz, which required both online and portfolio submission. Having anonymously submitted answers to the online quiz neither students nor the course team were able to retrieve their answers for the portfolio. Students now type their answers into the portfolio before submitting their JISC on-line form. Some tasks, such as voting, have not proved educationally useful so will be used more judiciously.

**Buddy issues**

Problems of buddy pairs, where one buddy withdraws, leaving an ‘orphan’, are typically addressed by course facilitators acting as surrogate buddies and providing ‘crib’ sheets to complete collaborative tasks, or using ‘buddy groups’ of five to seven students, which can survive the loss of one to two members. As one student remarks:

The buddy relationship is a complex one and...potentially quite demanding. We would have benefited from slightly longer gaps between the early tasks around the stakeholder analysis. At one point we were 2 weeks behind, and it grew more and more difficult to follow the plot.

While some participants see buddies as a valuable feature for social interaction others view them as an unwelcome encumbrance to self-directed learning. This is a reminder, if needed, that e-learning, while new to most, is not necessarily a preferred learning style for many practitioners. Indeed it is unclear whether the primary role of the FOLIO course is to find new ways to reach existing audiences or to extend CPD to traditionally poorly served audiences.

**Applicability**

FOLIO case study material, although current, is not always relevant to students outside the English healthcare system. Currently this only applies for those working in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. However, while briefings and other educational materials remain generic, generalisability may be an issue in extending delivery beyond the UK healthcare system. One Scottish participant expressed it thus:

It would be useful in future to make reference to the fact that in Scotland the NHS is set up differently....A scenario which drew on commonalities [sic] across the United Kingdom would be welcome.

**Technology**

The Team uses tried and tested technology (a facilitated e-mail list with links to web-pages) with few technical problems. Some technical difficulties were experienced when exploiting the added functionality of JISC lists to provide a quiz and a voting function, with timed release of exercises and answers. Some students had to be mailed Word versions of these documents. Without knowing software configurations it is not possible to explain why some were unable to access these JISC-functions. Course providers should keep their expectations modest when anticipating the technology available to students. For these and related reasons the FOLIO Programme continues to use a low specification approach to deliver materials. Most technical problems are handled by the Course Team but specifying software applications in advance may ensure that students identify appropriately equipped machines to access each course.
Flexibility

FOLIO courses attempt to be flexible to support the e-librarian who is learning alongside their day-to-day work. Participants not only have an automatic two-week catch up period following formal teaching, but when faced with extenuating circumstances (such as work commitments or absence from the course due to illness), can also request a four week extension. Similarly, the course team works creatively with course participants to accommodate planned and unplanned absences.

The FOLIO team has learnt that despite trying to be as accommodating as possible, it must be ever more flexible in acknowledging participants’ preferences and circumstances. This extends beyond course delivery and communication to evaluation. Opportunities for feedback, to identify strengths to build on and weaknesses to resolve, must be as learner-centric as circumstances allow. The FOLIO team hopes to engage ever more vigorously with learners in shaping courses that deliver a common core of content and yet acknowledge the differing needs of its participants.

Discussion

The FOLIO Programme provides a unique testing ground within which to explore the potential of e-learning as a mechanism for delivering CPD to e-librarians in a workplace setting. A major selling point is that the Team can introduce experimental features into a new course almost immediately, responding to feedback from recent courses. Rapid responses to a curriculum group representing commissioners, users and professional associations each semester (i.e. three courses) mean that priorities can be managed almost in ‘real-time’.

At the same time the course team clearly has much to explore within this innovative method of delivery. When planning and designing a course, the team still tends to start from the analogy of a face-to-face workshop rather than exploiting the more revolutionary potential offered by e-learning itself. The team plans to explore moving away from a set eight-week course schedule to the delivery of ‘byte-sized chunks’ that allow flexible, tailored individual learning. This would allow a programme of thirty to forty weekly ‘learning opportunities’ to be offered over a year with librarians choosing a ‘package’ to match their individual training needs. Such truly flexible delivery is already presaged by such features as portfolio-based assessment and individual course ‘building blocks’ such as briefings and guest lectures.

Other trends to be accommodated within the FOLIO Programme include blended learning and action learning. Blended learning, that is mixed delivery of face-to-face and e-learning, was always intended to feature under the current FOLIO programme. Ironically it is not the e-learning component that has been difficult to accommodate within a blended format. FOLIO courses are planned strategically and tailored to specific identified needs. In contrast, face-to-face courses to NHS librarians are currently delivered by many training providers, according to diverse training needs and in a manner that is difficult to co-ordinate. Moving towards completely integrated training provision, facilitated under the aegis of a National Library for Health, offers better prospects for ‘joined-up’ training.

Similarly, current delivery follows a ‘push’ model, with the course team determining the exact content and methods of delivery within topic areas selected by a curriculum group. Group communication and support processes pioneered by the FOLIO Programme offer the prospect of more learner-centric learning. Members of the FOLIO team have already experimented with face-to-face action learning and are keen to extend this to e-learning. Group problem-solving and an interactive agenda determined by participants would make the most of buddy groups and mentors. By bringing together virtual with face-to-face training, learner-driven with course team-led approaches and ‘byte-sized’ with module-based learning FOLIO would truly become a ‘programme’ in the fullest sense.
Conclusion

The title of this paper is in no way intended to sound complacent. The CPD needs of the e-librarian are diffuse, diverse, and continually changing. No CPD programme, regardless of its apparent success, can claim to meet the needs of even one e-librarian let alone the wider e-librarian community. ‘Continuing’ within CPD refers not only to the personal development of the individual and the shifting nature of the environment and technologies but also to the array of different and changing responses required by those who deliver training.

Nevertheless, the model pioneered by the FOLIO Programme bears many of the hallmarks of a response that can aspire to stay close to the demanding requirements of the e-librarian working against a backdrop of health services. By being flexible, responsive and ever-changing, and by delivering training in an anytime, anyplace environment, models such as those used by the FOLIO Programme can at least ‘engage’ the needs of the e-librarian, if not ‘satisfy’ them.

References

8 Fraser, V. Continuing professional development in the NHS – what is to be done? Health Libraries Review 1999, 16 (4), 268-270.