# Day 2 Management of electronic resources

# Unit 2.3: Managing user access

*Exercise 2.3.1.4 Managing user access*

*Issue 4 - How to search for and find the material*

**Work in:** Groups of 4-5

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Please be prepared to report back to the plenary session after discussion**

## Instructions

**In your small group** read through the quotes and suggested questions—these should be used to help start discussion.

Try to develop your ideas into a list of possible strategies that might improve the way people can save electronic information resources. The ‘report back’ form could be used as an aid to focus your ideas, ready to present to the rest of the groups.

## Quotes from librarians and users

"At the beginning of the semester we have orientation anyway around the library, and we have specific lunchtime or during the day courses. We split them into using the catalogue, which is the basic 'How to find stuff in the library', and then we have how to do relevant and useful searches on the Internet."

"I try to show students how to look something up in the catalogue so that next time they can do it themselves, but it takes a lot of my time"

"The person who does the Web page is responsible for putting down the electronic resources information onto the Web site and for persuading, cajoling, coercing the librarians to get their libraries, their departments on to the Web,…I tend to have multiple points of entry into the Web or into the sites which host the journals, previously people might be expected to go into the catalogue, but in actual fact here we have lists of electronic journals, they can search by title, very quickly and easily”

"Our own online catalogue I think is terrible, I think there's too much available, you can go at great length. OK, I speak to you as a non-librarian. I think librarians love it because you can do all sorts of things with it and it’s really powerful, but as your normal user, you don't know all the tricks of the trade. I think you know maybe you really need to have two interfaces, one nice simple keyword search or browse, and then your more sophisticated interface which your librarian will set up the search for you."

## Context

In what ways do library users and staff find electronic resources at the moment?

Is there a need to improve the ways people search for and find information?

What resources are available to help improve searching (e.g. courses, workshops, ‘cheat sheets’, etc)?

What constraints there are on your ability to do this (examples of the sort of constraints that may apply are given in section 3)?

How can you manage these constraints?

Do different groups of people (e.g., library staff, academics, researchers, students, others) have different levels skill in finding for material they need? Give details.

What support, if any, do the different groups need?

What further information could we gather to support our decisions?

What strategies could we use to improve searching skills within our library population?

What would the implications of implementing these strategies be for library staff and management (e.g. more expense/time/training needed)?

## Report back

Summary of problem

Constraints

Resources available or needed

Strategies to improve the situation

Actions (Who should do it? When would it need to be achieved by?)