



SUPPORTING STUDENTS UNDERTAKING SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS:  
CREATING A CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE  
FOR LIBRARIANS AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS

---

Kathryn Devine – Library Services

---



# WHAT IS A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW?

- A type of literature review which summarises a body of literature to answer a research question
- Some students complete an SR (or a review using some systematic principles) as a module assessment or for their dissertation
- For some it is the first element of their PhD study
- The library also receives enquiries from academic staff undertaking SRs and scoping reviews, and librarians may participate as an advisor or co-author



# SETTING THE SCENE: QUERIES RECEIVED BY LIBRARY SERVICES

- The SR process
- Search strategy
- Tools to manage the search process
- PRISMA
- Data extraction
- Quality assessment

*Frequently, students are unsure about the process, confused around the terminology or just how “systematic” they’re expected to be. They may also be unfamiliar with advanced database searching, and recording and managing the search process*



# HOW ARE LIBRARIANS TRAINED IN THE SR PROCESS?

- Systematic Reviews combine many things that we, as information professionals, do every day:
  - Recommending databases
  - Advanced searching
  - Reference management

*However, there is limited formal training available specifically on SRs ... and it is this that led to the idea of a Community of Practice*



# SR CONVERSATIONS (LANCASTER UNIVERSITY)

- Lancaster University webinar series: *SR Conversations*
- During one of these, we started to chat about training, and how many of us are self-taught, and that we have questions we don't ask because we feel we "should" already know – we're supposed to be the information experts!
- We also wondered who would we actually ask if we were "brave" enough?



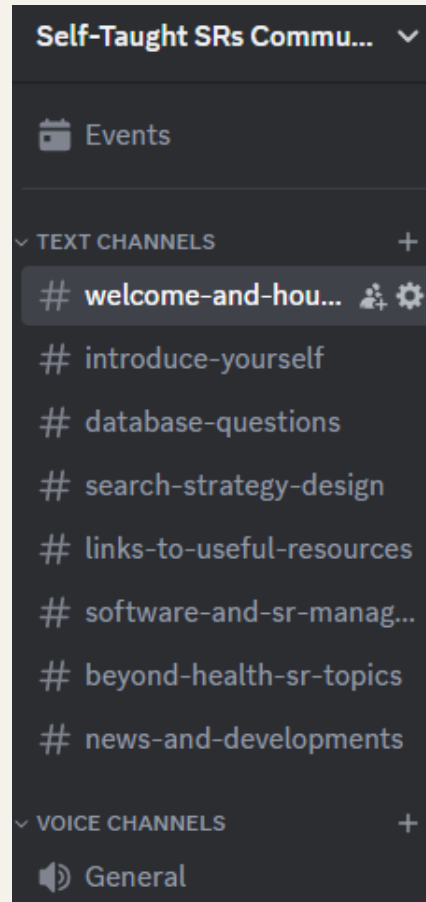
# A WORKING GROUP IS BORN

- Louise Speakman (Lancaster) set up a Teams meeting for those who'd expressed an interest in cross-institutional support
- We discussed:
  - Training
  - Database support
  - Needing someone to “sense check” what we were doing
  - Comparing practice
  - SRs outside the Health field



# THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

- Decided on a 'Community of Practice'
- After testing and trialling various options, Discord was chosen to host the CoP, and it was opened in February 2024. As of June 2024, it has 219 members from across the world
- It is run by:
  - Erin Bloxsidge (Surrey)
  - Kathryn Devine (Worcester)
  - Louise Speakman (Lancaster)
  - Giada Zanella (Aston)

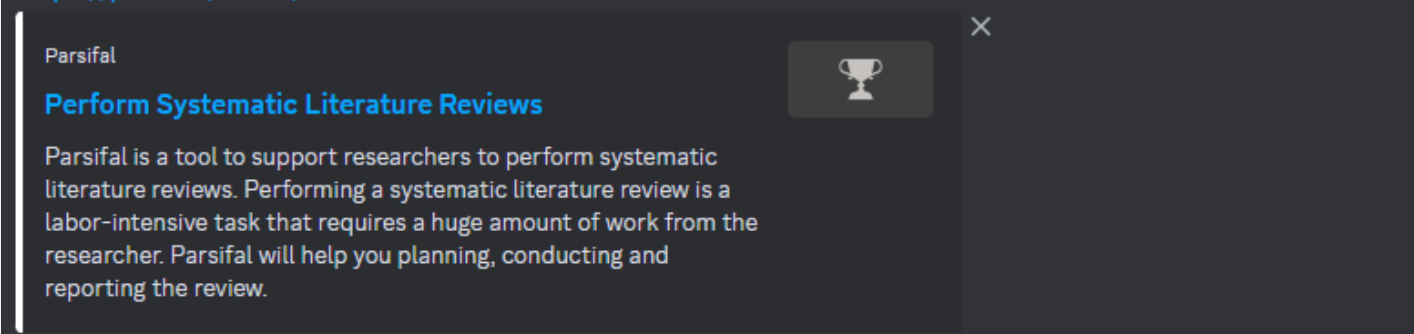


# A FLAVOUR OF DISCUSSIONS

Hi everyone, I was wondering if any of you knows of a filter / technique to only pick up psychological interventions as opposed to pharmacological ones? And what about any study design with a control? I'm not sure if either of these can be achieved by a database, and whether it'd be better to do this during the screening.

Hiya! Just wondering if anyone's come across Parsifal and used it (or known anyone who has) and has an opinion?

<https://parsif.al/about/>



A screenshot of the Parsifal website. The page has a dark background. At the top left, the word "Parsifal" is written in a light blue font. To its right is a small icon of a trophy. Below this, the heading "Perform Systematic Literature Reviews" is displayed in a light blue font. The main body of text describes Parsifal as a tool for researchers to perform systematic literature reviews, noting that this is a labor-intensive task and that Parsifal assists with planning, conducting, and reporting the review. A close button (an 'x' icon) is visible in the top right corner of the screenshot.

Hello all, Does anyone know if there is a limit for how many search lines can be saved in the Search History in EBSCO databases? I have loaded up my four concepts (which are each built up of many search lines) and combined them with AND. The search has worked, but when I try and save it I get an error message (I've tested saving one search line and don't get the error message so I don't think it's a general problem). I'm guessing that the problem is that I'm trying to save a search that's 174 lines long, but I can't find anything in the help, or with a bit of googling, that tells me what the limit is. I think I have to accept that I can't save the whole search together, but I'd like to know what the limit is for future searches and teaching.

There are two free workshops coming up that are for SRs outside of the health sciences: Systematic Review Success: An Introductory Workshop for Librarians & Information Professionals – June 5, from IFLA (<https://events.zoom.us/j/98486282828>), and Evidence Synthesis Institute for Librarians – registration deadline June 12, from University of Minnesota (<https://www.lib.umn.edu/about/evidence-synthesis-institute>).

## Systematic Review Success: An Introductory Workshop

Systematic Review Success: An Introductory Workshop for Librarians & Information Professionals



2





# HOW DOES IT HELP US SUPPORT STUDENTS, RESEARCHERS, AND ACADEMIC STAFF?

- It gives us a forum to improve our skills by interacting with peers from across the world, so we can offer the best advice
- Keeps us up to date with developments in technology to make SRs easier to manage
- Allows us to “sense check” our search strategies with experienced colleagues
- We also welcome researchers/research students to join us, so they can get help directly from a huge pool of information professionals



# WHAT NEXT?

- We have a Padlet for members to give feedback to admins on how to improve and develop the CoP
- This has already led to a new channel being added on SRs “beyond health”
- The team is presenting at the UHMLG conference in July, and recording a podcast for Lancaster University
- Kathryn and Giada are presenting at Mercian in September
- The team is leading an “SR Conversation” next year – *The Community of Practice: One Year On*



# WHY NOT JOIN US?

————— <http://tiny.cc/SRDiscord> —————





**THANK YOU – ANY  
QUESTIONS?**

---

[k.devine@worc.ac.uk](mailto:k.devine@worc.ac.uk)

---