

Ready to Research?

An off-the-shelf solution enabling research students to assess their information literacy



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How well do students assess their own IL skills?

- Would student self-assessment be more realistic if they used an objective tool designed to measure these skills?
- Would it help them to identify their IL training needs?

Why choose RRSA?

- “Off the shelf” solution
- Designed by librarians & organizational psychologist
- Provides individualised feedback & recommendations for training based upon a student’s results

Participation *at Swansea*

- In October 2008, new entry research postgraduates (PhD level) were invited to take the RRSA. **67** (50%) out of a possible **134** took part
- Sessions were arranged to take place in one of the Library's PC suites, allowing students a choice of dates and times
- Postgraduate Training Officer encouraged students to take part

Participation *at Cardiff*

- Postgraduate training officer promotes the test in the Getting Started conference for new PhD students with option to do test immediately after conference
- Subject librarians promote test before or during IL sessions, and one-to-one
- Available via Research Students Skills Development Programme website
- 94 students have taken part since April 2010

Try it out!

Beware pop-up blockers!

- Go to <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/rssdp>
- Near the bottom of the left hand navigation, click on **Online Information Literacy Skills Assessment**
- Click on the link to the Information Literacy online test
- Type in your details and enrolment key then click on Create. An email will be sent to you with further instructions.

Evaluating results *at Swansea*

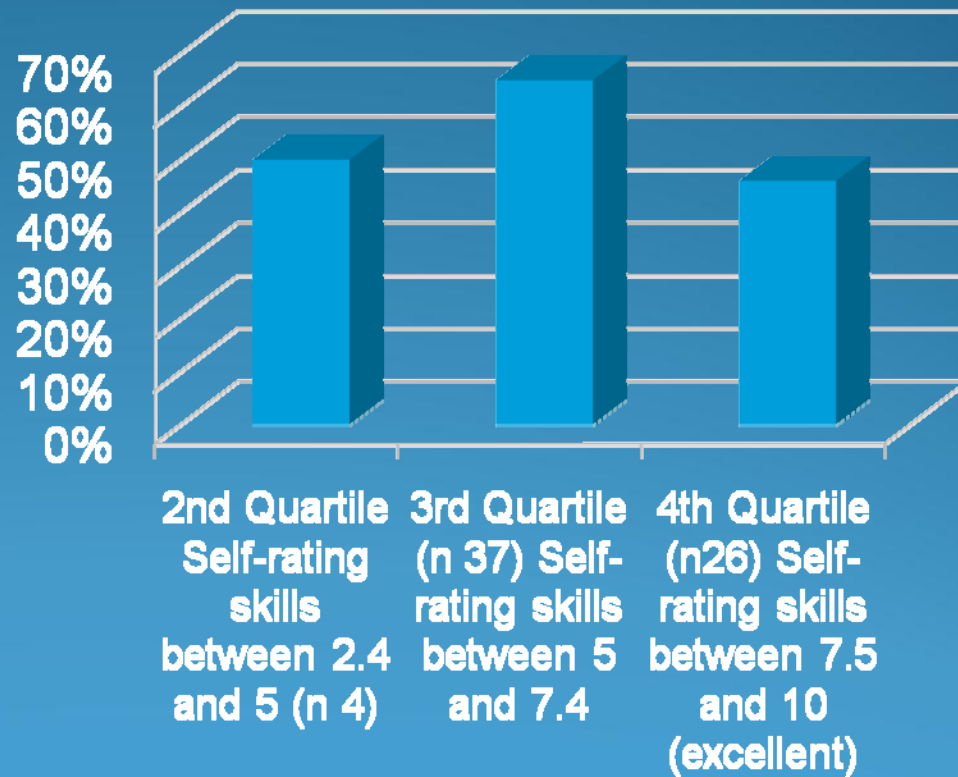
Analysis showed that many students will either over-estimate or under-estimate their IL skills.

In student feedback, 80% of respondents said they thought RRSA had helped them to make a realistic assessment of their IL training needs.

Evaluating Information

Students were asked to evaluate information from both websites and articles. There was a tendency to either overestimate or underestimate their skills.

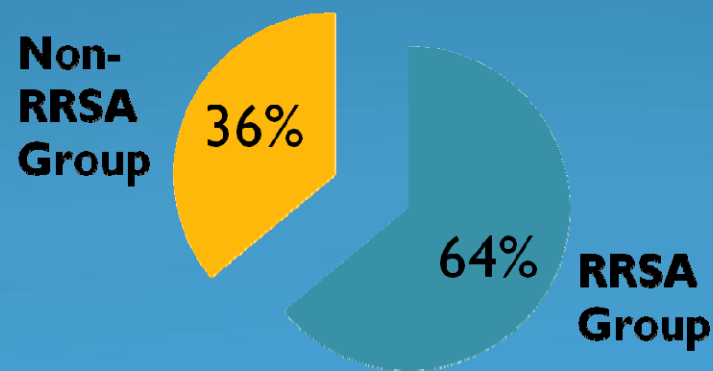
Evaluating Information % in each group who correctly identified the article likely to serve commercial purposes



Impact on Training

Students at Swansea who took part in RRSA were nearly twice as likely to attend Library training sessions as those who hadn't

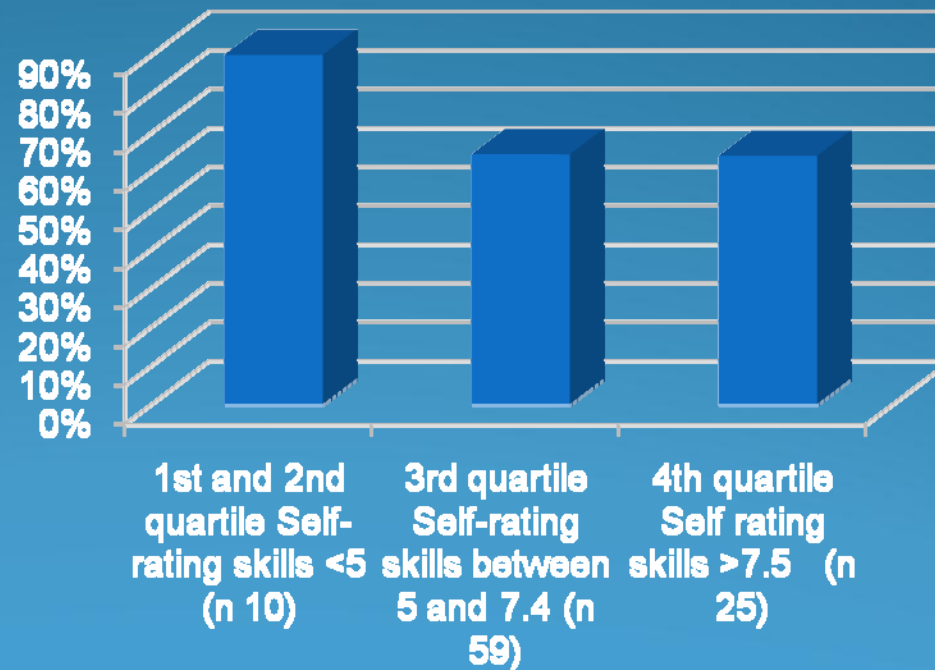
Percentage of Attendances RRSA / Non-RRSA



Results at Cardiff University

No positive correlation between confidence in ability to judge to quality of information and actual ability

% in each group who correctly identified the article likely to serve commercial purposes



Results of Cardiff's pilot

Was feedback appropriate?

Yes, and now I can more clearly understand what sort of skills do I need to improve

Feedback was favourable – improves my confidence!

Would be nice if something similar existed for research methods

Was feedback appropriate?

Appropriate & helpful, though feedback on specific questions and how they are relevant to the general areas may help focus my development areas (i.e. where I went “wrong”)

The feedback was a little over cautious, presuming that an extensive use of web search engines implied a lack of awareness in the danger of placing too much faith in their results

Results of Cardiff's pilot

Overall, was the test worthwhile?

Yes. I will do some courses that this program suggested in the end to improve my skills. It was very useful because you can have a quick and objective answer after completing the test.

Very worthwhile in deciding development activities / courses

Overall, was the test worthwhile?

The test is okay. Could do with or without. It is useful for people who are not sure of their own ability. As I have attended the induction course and a few workshops to begin with, suggestions by the feedback is something I have already thought of doing.

The background is a solid blue color. At the top, there are several decorative elements: a dark blue wavy line, a lighter blue wavy line, and a dotted line in a light blue/cyan color that follows the curves of the other lines.

What did you think of RRSA?

Further information

Lots of information about RRSA on the website:

<http://rrsa.cmich.edu/twiki/bin/view/RRSA/WebHome>

Lana Ivanitskaya & colleagues will be presenting at
LILAC

***Information literacy of health students:
Assessment and interventions***

tomorrow 3.50-4.35pm

London School of Economics