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Unlocking the library: Escape room as library induction

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Library inductions are a necessary part of engaging students with library services and teaching the key information literacy skills that are critical to succeeding at university. Library tours in the first week of term are a common industry standard for first-year inductions. While this introduces students to the library, anecdotal evidence and research suggest that tours alone are not the most effective learning experience.

This paper concerns the development of an escape-room-style game as an alternative to the traditional library induction. Gamification is an increasingly popular method of creating experiences that are more engaging for students, motivating them to tackle their own learning in a relaxed environment to ease library anxiety. The practical element of the game, where students learn information skills through action, allows for a greater retention of knowledge.

This talk will cover my experience in developing an escape-room game, intended to renew student engagement in the library. It will present how to tailor make puzzles to suit students’ needs and the practicalities of making them playable. It will also involve a small-scale demonstration of the game for attendants to try themselves.

