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# SCONUL Focus

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*SCONUL Focus* aims to bring together articles, reports and news stories from practitioners in order to generate debate and promote good practice in the national libraries and the university and college sector. As well as the paper copy, the current issue of *SCONUL Focus* is also available electronically via the SCONUL website (<http://www.sconul.ac.uk>). Contributions are welcomed from colleagues in all fields and at all levels: we merely request that the items contributed are concise, informative, practical and (above all!) worth reading.

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## The 3Ss

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This summer Oxford Brookes University held its first Open Day. The library was keen to take an active role in this marketing initiative and yours truly (as convenor of the library's marketing group) soon had a list of jobs to do before the day itself on 17 June.

One task was to produce some attractive promotional material highlighting key facts and figures about the library. Our most recent marketing campaign had used a cake theme based around the motto *Finding information is a piece of cake*. This was soon adapted to come up with a flyer called *Recipe for success*, with my best photo of a Battenberg and ten top facts about the library that might sell it to students and (probably more importantly) to their parents. Another thing we needed was a tour script for the day. Needless to say, we have an induction tour script but we wanted something a bit more broad brush, with less practical detail (much as I'm sure parents would love to learn about the workings of our short loan collection). Again, we needed pithy, positive messages about the library.

Everything was put together well in advance and volunteers from across the library were found to talk and tour. But of course, the best laid plans of mice and librarians often go awry. Not everyone wanted to go on a library tour. Some prospective students (possibly shy) wanted to roam around unchaperoned. Some parents (possibly librarians) wanted to assess the library by themselves.

So how could we make sure we got at least some of our carefully crafted messages across? Obviously, everyone could still be handed the Batten-

berg flyer. But what about the thrilling 20 minute script?

Our pragmatic approach was to ask visitors what subject area they were interested in. As we led them to the most relevant stock area we would have between 30 seconds and a couple of minutes to deliver an abbreviated version of the tour, what those American management textbooks sometimes refer to as 'the elevator pitch'.

We broke the script down into three key messages. The library is essentially about stock, support and space:

- the library is a store of information (half a million books, thousands of journals, e-resources, etc)
- the library is a source of support (help with issues, enquiry services, the network of subject librarians, colleagues offering study skills support, etc)
- the library is a secure and friendly working environment (offering hundreds of computers, silent study, quiet study and group study facilities).

Although I am not a huge fan of management textbooks I think it is important that we can say –clearly and concisely– what we stand for. And librarians are not always good at this. These three points simply and positively state what libraries have to offer.

All 3Ss feature in this issue of *SCONUL Focus*.

Stock, I suppose, is the obvious one to most of our customers. Yet with the growth in e-resources made available via the internet, it is often forgotten that these are actually paid for and delivered by the library. In this issue, Sal Crow and Emily Wade from UWE show how library and faculty

staff can work together to promote e-resources and hence the library itself.

Support is one of our key selling points. HMV has been badly hit by cheaper online music retailers. Their response on the High Street has been to provide much better, more proactive customer service. This is a key strength we have over Google, etc. But we can't rely on what once worked. We need to review and revise the customer support we offer. Like HMV we need to be more proactive. Colleagues at MMU have accordingly changed their student welcome programme, as highlighted in their inspiring article *Got the knowledge?*

But increasingly important is space. As mentioned in last issue's editorial, librarians sometimes have to fight for new buildings in a world where everything seems virtual. Why should we be the beneficiaries of expensive campus building projects? We need to constantly remind purse-holding stakeholders that libraries still have an essential physical role. More importantly, though, we need to make good use of our space so that our customers will become our champions and (more effectively) do the shouting for us. This is what has happened with the Learning grid at Warwick. See Rachel Edwards' article for what the library has tried to achieve and check out the powerful testimonials from their customers on the Learning grid's web site (<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/study/grid/visitors/users/quotes>) for the results.

But this is just a taster. I'll leave you to read the rest of *SCONUL Focus* and enjoy news of the library world's 3Ss to the full.

Antony Brewerton  
*SCONUL Focus* Editorial Board

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# The Learning Grid at the University of Warwick: a library innovation to support learning in higher education

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Colleagues often ask, 'what is The Learning Grid?' and 'why is it different?' The following article aims to highlight the unique elements of this library facility and also to present some of the key areas of development that continue to evolve since its opening in September 2004.

The Learning Grid was designed and is managed by the University Library. This meant that the University Librarian had direct input into the design and concept for the space that measures approximately 1350m<sup>2</sup>. Because the space was identified as an opportunity to provide students at Warwick with a unique learning experience, the need to work in collaboration with other support services was essential in exploring the aims and objectives of this facility, as well as its design. Architects from MacCormack, Jamieson, Prichard (MJP), London, were integral to the development process, ensuring that draft designs reflected the evolving concepts for the purpose of the space and activities that would take place within it.

The Learning Grid is a technology-rich, flexible and informal learning environment. It is open 24x7, and is closed only on Christmas Day, so students are able to access its services and facilities virtually at any time. The Learning Grid has a capacity for approximately 300 people and its range of resources aims to support a diversity of learning preferences. It has the ability to blend together the traditional and technological; and

more significantly, provides users with the ability to work collaboratively, to be able to engage with discussion, debate and the pragmatic development of study, transferable and professional skills.

The facility supports various elements of the institutional mission, including:

- to equip our graduates with the necessary education and skills to make a significant contribution to the economy and society as a whole
- to recruit students with outstanding potential and to provide the best support and facilities to foster teaching, learning and research of the highest quality.

The Learning Grid is located in University House which is offset slightly from Central Campus and the main library but is co-located with other university support services. Careers, Academic Support Services, Counselling, Welfare, Advice and Guidance are all physically interconnected and the working relationships established at conception for the project continue to feed into the way the service develops.



As the actual physical space was originally open plan offices, it was essential for the Grid to enhance its aesthetics with key architectural features. These included a feature staircase, maximising the use of natural and artificial light and the installation of curvy screens to informally break up the space whilst integrating the use of colour. Complemented by the addition of dramatic pieces of art, the Learning Grid has a professional look and feel. Unlike other learning facilities, paper notices are not permitted, but rather essential user information is communicated through alternative means, essentially plasma screens. As well as 24x7 access to a range of learning technologies: plasma stations, SMART boards, Cleverboards, document visualisers, video edit suites, PCs, wireless networks and practice presentation facilities. The Learning Grid also hosts a 10,000 core text reference only collection. The range of collaborative and individual work areas as well as

mobile screens, whiteboards and OHPs allow the environment to be incredibly flexible, allowing students to manipulate their environment to suit their learning activities.



In contrast to the University of Warwick's main library, students are able to have hot and cold drinks as well as cold food in the Learning Grid. Together with the ability to use a mobile phone and an environment specifically designed to support collaborative working, the Learning Grid has demonstrated itself to be a valuable university library resource. Raw entrance data indicates a 35% usage in comparison to the main library, which is ten times its size. During the vacation periods, entrances to the Learning Grid actually exceed that to the central facility.



The Learning Grid allows students to be creative, to experiment with new and different study methods, to apply a range of resources to support their learning experiences and to seek constructive advice and guidance on a range of related

issues. The role of the student adviser is a key element to the positive experiences students have within the space. As current students and recent graduates of the university, the student advisers are professionally trained to facilitate the learning of their peers. The student adviser is the first point of contact for Grid users and is equipped with best practice principles in the delivery of advice and guidance, adult learning theory and tutoring skills. Because The Learning Grid has no fixed traditional help desk, Advisers wear blue T-shirts and it is their responsibility to be visible on both floors of the Grid, to be stopped at any time and to be able to respond to a range of queries. At a basic level these relate to facilitating the use of Grid resources and IT software packages, helping people how to navigate the library's resources and referring users to the right level of support provision within the university. That may be to the Learning Grid's drop-in provision, where experts are available in the space to offer specialist, bite-size, context-driven advice and guidance, or more broadly to a course that might be running by a particular support service in the coming weeks. Naturally therefore, the role of the adviser includes an element of diagnosis to make sure the user has a best-fit solution to their query as quickly as possible.



All student advisers are selected for their commitment and enthusiasm to support the learning of their peers. Their feedback and creativity feeds directly into the development of the service and their ability to work as a team becomes evident through the delivery of a consistent practice model and an exemplary level of customer service. The development of inclusive practice is at the core of the Grid's service model. The ability to be able to support diversity effectively within an international environment is critical to an enhanced student experience. This is emphasised further through recognising that skills sets no longer sit in isolation and that learning must be viewed more holistically. In doing so –and as has been demonstrated through experiences at the Learning Grid– some of the barriers to students

seeking advice about a range of issues in one spot can greatly enhance a person's advancement with their learning. This provision is highly innovative and contributes greatly to the effectiveness of the Learning Grid as a learning environment.

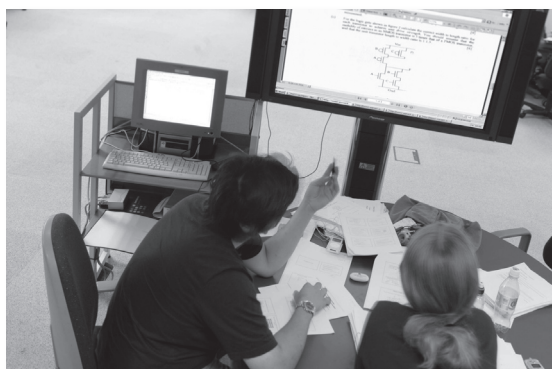


The service model to support the space contributes directly to the way users are encouraged to manage the space themselves and is constantly evolving to better meet the needs of the Warwick community. A culture of reciprocal user respect for differing learning styles and an emphasis on the requirement to share resources has created a profound sense of student ownership for the space. The lack of an authoritarian staff presence means that staff support can blend in and out of the space successfully throughout the 24x7 period, and that the space continues to hold its integrity whilst 'unstaffed'.

During the Learning Grid's two years of operation, evaluation data has been gathered using a variety of methods. From activities that have been conducted, three key themes have emerged that highlight the importance of having a resource such as the Learning Grid. The first reinforces the importance of comfort elements: the ability to work within a high quality environment that has a professional finish; being able to access a book whilst enjoying a coffee; the relative importance of air conditioning; access to a water cooler and being able to manipulate the environment. The second theme emphasises the elements of value and ownership. Students who benefit from the Learning Grid feel that they have been invested in, that the design and configuration of the environment allows the first year undergraduate to feel as important to the institution as the leading academic. In addition to this, the way the space is managed allows students to feel like the space is theirs to apply to their learning in a way that suits them. By instilling this sense of ownership, not only does it encourage students to look after the space and respect it but is also reflected in their attitude to learning; the concept of ownership is extended to the development of themselves

as independent adult learners. Finally and most exciting, is the assertion that having a resource like the Learning Grid available actually improves motivation to study. Evidence suggests that this is achieved in a variety of ways depending on the individual, but is complemented by comments relating to improved scholarly success through having access to the Grid, its resources and the opportunities it offers students to be creative and exploratory with their learning techniques.

As a complementary, holistic and flexible library service for Warwick, the Learning Grid is well placed to support developments within the sector. Research-led learning, student-centred learning, problem-based learning, personal development planning and collaboration are all themes that are supported by this facility and its service model. Through becoming embedded as a library service and as a complementary broader support service, the Learning Grid is beginning to explore with individual academics the potential of integrating the use of the space directly into particular modules. Working in collaboration with the university's e-learning team, Centre for Academic Practice and the library's Academic Support Service, opportunities to support curriculum innovation are providing valuable insights of the benefits of drawing together library services and alternative teaching methods. This has led to a substantial impact on the student learning experience and allowed a new and emerging relationship between libraries and the curricula to develop.



The Learning Grid is beginning to represent a paradigm shift in relation to the development of library services. Rather than focusing on a resource that is managed, future developments are beginning to take into consideration a student-centred approach that enables students to navigate the rapidly changing and wide range of resources available to them. Through working in partnership with other support services it is also allowing the library to place itself at the centre of the learner experience, in a position to facilitate the development of information literacy

and employability skills in a way that supports the pedagogy and expectations of the twenty-first century learner. This has been reflected in recent developments at the University of Warwick, which supported the opening of the BioMed Grid, a Learning Grid satellite facility specifically for medical and biological science students at Gibbet Hill campus. In addition, the introduction of the Learning Grid is providing a cornerstone for other campus and service developments.



Since The Learning Grid has opened, it has attracted a lot of interest from a number of other national and international institutions. Developments at the University of Warwick have begun to significantly shape the thinking of other university

library departments that are beginning to pursue the development of similar facilities.

The responsive nature of the Learning Grid is allowing staff and students at the University of Warwick to continually develop their thinking about learning, service provision and the way courses can be delivered. This coming academic year, we look forward to the introduction of new technologies and new ideas; continued evaluation to allow us to shape future developments and better meet the learning needs of the individuals within our academic community. The possibilities that a resource like the Learning Grid is able to offer us are boundless, the question right now is 'where will it end?'





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# The Learning Gateway: opening the doors to a new generation of learners at St Martin's College, Carlisle campus



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## INTRODUCTION

The college's academic strategy aims to support tutors and learners to develop more independent learning approaches, including flexible forms of learning and teaching via a blended learning model. This strategy recognises that formal teaching space may not necessarily be the best way to attract, retain and support student achievement, or to support a variety of learning styles.

In response to this challenge, the Learning Gateway (LG) at the Carlisle campus was conceived, designed and built as a catalyst for change, to further support the college's flexible and distributed learning aspirations. The college is currently working towards achieving taught degree awarding powers, university title and the formation of a new University for Cumbria, from 1 August 2007. The Learning Gateway is managed by Learning and Information Services (LIS), a converged service offering library, IT, media and learning technology services to the college. LIS has had a major role in conceiving and developing the space and this article explains how this was achieved.

## ABOUT THE LEARNING GATEWAY (LG)

As we know, a number of institutions are re-examining their learning spaces to meet the challenges of the modern student experience,

not least because estates strategies are merging more fundamentally with learning and teaching approaches. However, the Learning Gateway tries to demonstrate how learner needs can be built into the design from the outset to form a flexible and innovative learning environment, working in partnership with other design professionals. The central aim was to provide complete flexibility within the space, so that it could be adapted to a variety of learning styles (including the integration of collaborative forms of learning) and build in future requirements. The impressive building was officially opened on 23 June 2006 by Sir Martin Harris, Director of the Office for Fair Access. It cost £2.9 million to build and £800,000 to fit out. It was funded by the HEFCE under PCR3 and PCR4 programmes.



The LG is very different from other physical spaces. It is neither a library nor a computer centre, yet has features of both; it combines a physical 'classroom' space with ICT in such a way that we believe suggests and supports learning approaches that are completely student centred, but without imposing how the space should be used. Learning is a complex process. We don't pretend to have all the answers, but we think that the LG offers an exciting opportunity to draw together a completely new community of learners with diverse support needs in an area that combines physical and virtual spaces in a holistic way, with student support facilities.

## ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT

The college appointed a local architect, Architects Plus, to design the Learning Gateway.<sup>1</sup> The brief was fairly open ended, and at that time there were no good practice models that fitted our situation, however the following is an excerpt from the brief:

'The Learning Gateway concept is based on the



key assumption that the relationship between the physical setting and the students' learning experience is vital and that the latter can be enhanced if the former is designed right from the start'.

## LEARNING FIRST

In order to suggest (not enforce) the way that the space might be used, and influence a variety of approaches to student learning, a set of pedagogical principles was drafted based on the project team's shared concepts of collaborative learning and our interrogation of the literature on this contested subject. The project team included LIS staff, staff from the college's centre for the development of learning and teaching, academic staff and students. The following is an excerpt from the principles we devised, that in turn informed the furnishings and the fit-out; the space should:

- encourage students to learn by 'conversation not isolation' (comfortable seating, grouping

of furniture, access to the wireless network, laptop loan service)

- be attractive and welcoming to motivate learners (colours, visual impact, design, functionality, supportive staff, web presence)
- promote social groupings to facilitate discussion and shared experiences (circular seating pods, portable video conferencing, easy access to interactive technology)
- help to create a culture of collaboration by reaching out to potential learners and partners and remote organisations (asynchronous video conferencing and streaming)
- give learners and tutors control over their own learning environment to promote deep learning and independent learning (accessible and adaptable space; student-led and tutor-led, bookable and open spaces).

## VISION IN ACTION



The visual impact of the space was crucial. The colour scheme was planned to delineate the various areas where different learning activities may take place, without restricting what students and staff may wish to do. The key message is that the Learning Gateway has been designed to be adaptable and provide learners with space to experiment. As shown above, the environment is entirely wireless to accommodate any time/anywhere learning experiences. There are no fixed PCs in any of the rooms or spaces; this was a bold decision, and has had some practical obstacles to overcome (for example, battery life, storage and security).

Flexible facilities in the Learning Gateway include:

- wireless network with 90 laptops for loan anywhere in the Gateway
- ICT enabled lecture theatre using advanced real time video conferencing and interactive polling

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.architectsplus.co.uk/>

- adaptable seating via furniture designed to foster collaborative working
- rooms for group work – known as flexi-rooms (a new term for how the space was devised)
- individual and group seating areas
- scanning, printing, portable video conferencing facilities, resource areas;
- social learning space – comfortable seats and informal groupings
- refreshment (vending) and bar seating
- touchdown space for short stay.



Working in partnership with suppliers (details upon application) the furnishings were chosen. The modular seating system was considered to be an ideal way to combine seating groupings, surfaces and layouts giving maximum flexibility. Enabled by state of the art ICT facilities, the new spaces integrate IT, social seating, formal study and private study space. This configuration was carefully planned to be scalable to all floors, and to be easy to use; in fact the idea is that students and tutors will be encouraged to take ownership of the space and re-arrange furnishings to suit the learning context and there are no 'rules' about noise, or food and drink (apart from no alcohol allowed).

#### **POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING**

As the LG building is designed using learner-centric concepts where flexibility is key, it should be possible to adapt the space to future requirements. In terms of the new university, the Learning Gateway is an important symbol and mechanism for connecting the geographically dispersed client groups using its the state of the art video conferencing facilities. In order to make these plans a reality the engagement of academic and support staff, students and stakeholders from all institutions involved has been essential.

A new support team has been created to assist students and staff to access and use the facilities

on offer in the Learning Gateway. The job role of learning facilitator has been devised to combine the various professional perspectives that we think tutors and learners will require to make full use of the environment. The result is a hybrid role - library and information support, IT user support and learning technology. The college's central academic support unit has also based its office in the Learning Gateway to integrate academic staff needs into the environment.

#### **PROMOTING THE USE OF THE LEARNING GATEWAY**

Several mini-projects have been established, for example a range of guides and leaflets have been created and a web site set up: <http://www.ucsm.ac.uk/library/learninggateway/index.php>. Training and learning materials are being created for students, visitors and staff.

#### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Capturing the student experience of this new environment is essential and affords unique opportunities to explore the impact on learners. An evaluation plan is being constructed to ensure that a multi-faceted approach is taken. This will include:

- analysis of booking information to see how the LG space is being used by students and tutors (before and after)
- Quantitative statistics (for example, laptop loans, headcounts, etc) to establish take-up and use
- staff questionnaires on their experiences
- observational analysis
- exit surveys
- small scale research projects (for example, how students engage within a wireless environment, perceptions of e-learning, cross site involvement via virtual 'doorways')
- Trend analysis, documenting innovation (by students and staff).

Our architect has the final word:

'The Learning Gateway is a bold statement that looks forward to new ways of learning but does not dictate rigidly how it is to be used. It is now up to students and staff to make the building their own and only then will the physical setting enhance their learning experience as the original brief required.'

You are welcome to visit our project and to discuss with us whether this flexible space has relevance to your own libraries and learning spaces. The

Learning Gateway, Carlisle was the venue for a NoWAL Conference on Learning Space Design on 8 September 2006, hosted by SOLSTICE, the CETL at Edge Hill University and St Martin's, demonstrating the interest in this space. So if we can entice you north – we look forward to welcoming you.

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## Middlesex University: the impressive rejuvenation of Hendon campus



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[www.bprarchitects.com](http://www.bprarchitects.com)

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Libraries have evolved dramatically over the last decade and, with the continual advancements in technology, they have the potential to become information hubs with a massive scope. This has made them even more central to any university or college campus as well as a key driver behind a student's decision to study at a particular university. Middlesex University recognised an opportunity to improve its facilities and enable independent and flexible working and embarked on the development of the Sheppard Library (named in honour of the university's chancellor) as the first scheme of its £50 million rejuvenation programme for its Hendon campus. It called upon BPR Architects to help it realise its vision for a landmark building which provided a state-of-the-art learning resources centre.



### THE BRIEF

With a budget of £14 million, the design of the Sheppard Library had to respond to three key principles: functionality, integration and flexibility, while drawing users in and encouraging them to serve themselves. It was designed with the impor-

tance of attracting students in mind. The objective was to create autonomous learning facilities for 1600 students over 8000m2, integrating the latest information technology in a variety of study settings, with an internal environment flexible enough to absorb future shifts in educational practices and inspire collaborative working. The design and function of the library is founded on a specification written by William Marsterson, Head of Learning Resources and University Librarian, and is a blueprint for autonomous learning in the modern world.



#### FUNCTIONALITY

The sheer volume of functions fulfilled by the Sheppard Library redefines it as a concept. It is not only a place to read or source books, but it also provides a place for students at all levels to study with a wide range of support on hand, from academic staff, technicians and information professionals.

The Sheppard Library comprises a drop-in computer centre; rooms for IT workshops; video-conferencing; open access storage for 150,000 volumes and compact storage for 10,000 volumes in the basement; and electronic access to a wide range of e-journals, e-books, the university's virtual learning environment (OASIS) and the internet.

There are dedicated areas for language learning and study skills support, post-graduates and researchers, and study rooms for each academic group. The Sheppard Library is the central point of the university for recording off-air video programmes and receiving foreign language satellite stations. There is also a café for students and a

language testing centre accessible to the public. Given the number of services provided by the library, ease of navigation was of critical importance. Design techniques were used to define certain areas, signalling their function, along with clear signage. These combine to ensure that way finding is simple, intuitive and logical. The design fulfils another important function. The use of certain colours and materials creates a comfortable working environment which helps to inspire students and encourage learning. Different designs also create different moods which promotes specific behaviour. This helps to mark the transition between silent study areas and areas where interaction and conversation are advocated.

#### INTEGRATION

While there are different areas for different types of study, an integrated feel for the entire library was important and this was delivered through the use of glazing rather than blockwork, allowing users to see across different wings and floors. Visibility helps avoid any feeling of isolation, emphasises the support available and allows individuals to feel part of the university student body at all times. Middlesex University also wanted to exploit the opportunity to integrate the library not only with the rest of the campus but also with the local community. Within the campus, it creates a locally unifying building and integrates with the main entrance and another key teaching facility to provide a nucleus. For the wider community beyond, a strong architectural landmark is provided. The library commands a prominent position at the top of Greyhound Hill looking west across the valley, involving the community and highlighting its presence as a key educational establishment.



## **FLEXIBILITY**

The principle of flexibility, which was a major requirement, has been solved through the architecture. The building is designed to be re-configured internally on a flexible footprint, to accommodate future change of use as well as demand on the building management system and environmental infrastructure.

Rooms may be added or removed without major structural alteration or disturbance of services.

## **SPACE OPTIMISATION**

Optimising the space was a key consideration in the design and function of the Sheppard Library. The university wanted to maximise its use anticipating the growth of the campus over the years to come and the increase in use as a result of the enhanced services that it would offer. As the Sheppard Library forms part of the university's network of learning resources, there was no need to provide for stock acquisition and processing. This reduced the space needed for staff and allowed the maximum possible space to be dedicated to students. Another element which enabled space optimisation and a easy flow of students was the use of an electronic system for checking items in or out. The Sheppard Library was chosen as a pioneer site by the library system supplier, Dynix, to pilot the Swiss Bibliotheca RFID security system. Issuing and discharging books is, therefore, very rapid enabling a massive growth in business without the need for significant additional staff.

## **COLLABORATION**

Consultation was at the heart of the design process for the Sheppard Library. The design was developed through discussing the needs of students and staff and how they would use the library as well as understanding the level of future-proofing required.

Among the whole team, a collaborative and partnering ethos was embraced to deliver the project in the timescale available. Response to this challenge was universal, from Learning Resources staff, the wider university, and among the design, construction and installation teams.

## **ENVIRONMENTALLY KIND**

Not only does the Sheppard Library redefine the concept of a library, it also defines sustainability through the incorporation of innovative meth-

ods of minimising energy consumption, with a targeted improvement of 30% on current best building practice. The learning resources centre is architecturally designed to be environmentally responsive. The form of the building, the materials used and the services strategy have all been developed to create an integrated environmental building management system. The library makes the best use of local conditions, harnessing natural resources for heating, cooling and ventilation, utilising thermal mass for night time cooling and maximising natural day lighting. The choice of materials for the building and methods of construction were influenced by environmental considerations, site constraints and a tight programme. Where possible materials were chosen to be pre-finished or left in their natural state to give a palette of textures that reflect the building's construction and minimise future maintenance.

## **A SUCCESS AND A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE**

The Sheppard Library is a centre for learning – self-directed as well as supported. Since it opened in 2004, it has already attracted an enormous number of students and provided them with a good working environment including silent study areas, library services and networked access to electronic media. Student feedback is excellent.

Middlesex University, through the creation of this facility which is the largest and most ambitious building it has undertaken to date, has positioned itself as a pioneer of student-centred learning in higher education, which delivers an important competitive edge in what is now a global business.



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# Poor design equals poor health questionnaire: the final results



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There have been some monumental designs for libraries over the years, some of which have been successes and some which have been disasters. These have been widely reported but very little research has been done on the interior working space of libraries. This was a subject that I have discussed with many library staff, often in different countries. Having had these discussions I decided to do some private research on the subject of library front line staff and their general health at work.

So in November 2005 I helped design the 'Poor design equals poor health' questionnaire which was launched in *Associates: the electronic library support staff journal* (<http://associates.ucr.edu>) to try to obtain first hand knowledge from front line library staff about the effects of the buildings they worked in. Anecdotal evidence supported the idea of poor design leading to poor health but little modern research had been done. The survey was also reported in the *CILIP Gazette* and on the JISC mail list 'lis-link'.

Replies were received from Canada, USA, Ireland, Scotland and England, from college/university, public and special libraries. The heading of special libraries includes government libraries as well as school libraries. The survey looked at basic functionality of issue/circulation desks and overall building suitability for the purpose, and the responses to complaints made by staff to working conditions.

The results showed that 69% of issue desk staff had to stretch across a desk with 40% saying

that this caused regular muscle pain. The most common areas for this pain were 38% shoulder, and 35% back, with a further 12% registering wrist pain. One of the possible causes for this is the basic design of the desk: 77% work on a flat surface, with only 23% working with a raised workstation. A common complaint was that the raised shelf added to the lifting stress levels. This was particularly noted in academic libraries, which often have a constant flow of library users. The use of handheld as opposed to fixed position barcode scanners did raise the problem of RSI (repetitive strain injuries), with 11% of library staff reporting that they considered it contributed to RSI problems in their wrists. While this may not seem a large percentage the added worry is that 39% reported that they received no regular training in manual handling, and those that did often had ergonomic reports either rejected by their employers or put on future development plans. With a large concentration of IT in libraries these days a large number of staff reported a worrying amount of wrist problems and 'trigger finger' medical problems with the constant use of a computer mouse. This can best be defined in medical terms as stenosing tenosynovitis, which is a 'snapping' of any of the digits of the hand when opened or closed. Typically, trigger finger is noted when either the ring, middle, or index finger attempts to flex closed while gripping. Instead of a smooth, continual closure, the digit stutters, then snaps closed. The closure is frequently associated with pain at the base of the digit on the palm of the hand. Trigger finger can also in some cases affect the thumb.

The survey asked how they dealt with IT-related health problems: 33% used some form of regular medication, 25% had physiotherapy, 25% used special exercises, and 17% had to use a surgical splint. Some staff were allowed to alter shift patterns, so that they did not spend all day working on front services, and this helped apart from the continued use of IT equipment, and heavy lifting in connection with shelving. But it does appear that some staff are employed specifically to work on issue/circulation desks who then have little option to work elsewhere.

A large 75% of respondents reported that they worked in air-conditioned buildings, with 67% then saying that there were regular on-going problems with their buildings. Of these, 9% had then reached the stage for drastic changes following the confirmation of sick building syndrome. One of the most common complaints, apart from lack of temperature control, was the dryness of air inside buildings: 38% said that they had personal

problems with the dry air affecting their use of contact lenses, and the high occurrence of headaches.

Previously the amount of light in buildings had not been considered an important factor, as many buildings had natural light and additional electric lighting. Many buildings now require electric light as the main source of lighting and very little or even no natural light is available in some areas. In recent times this lighting problem has been recognised. Lux levels can now be measured, modern light tubes can give off 'natural' light, and this improves the working conditions. These newer light tubes are often more expensive and may have implications for building maintenance costs, which are beyond the control of library managers. The survey concluded that in only 7% of buildings were regular reports of lux levels made available to library staff and action taken, while 51% of staff said they received no reports and 42% said they did not know if any light readings were ever taken.

One positive step, generally welcomed, was that all libraries were reported to be no smoking zones, even those based in combined units with other services in the institution, or with public services. An added complication lies in the many reported problems of smokers gathering outside the main entrances, making entering and exiting the building unpleasant. In some cases air conditioning units sucked up this smoke, which was circulated within the building, defeating the object of having a smoke free environment. .

#### **POOR DESIGN EQUALS POOR HEALTH?**

##### **Survey responses**

	<b>Coll/Univ</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Special</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Canada</b>	0	1	0	1	1%
<b>England</b>	34	5	3	42	56%
<b>Ireland</b>	1	0	0	1	1%
<b>Scotland</b>	4	0	0	4	5%
<b>United States of America</b>	16	8	3	27	36%
<b>Total</b>	55	14	6	75	



Section 1- issue desk/circulation desk/access services desk

	Coll/Univ	Public	Special	Totals	Percentage
<b>Q2. Do you have to stretch across your working area to collect books from patrons?</b>					
YES	44	6	2	52	69%
NO	17	2	4	23	31%
<b>Q3. If YES, does this cause you any muscle ache or pain?</b>					
YES	23	4	0	27	40%
NO	31	5	4	40	60%
<b>Q4. Can you please describe the location of any muscle aches or pain? (e.g., shoulder, back wrist, etc.)</b>					
Shoulder	16	4	0	20	38%
Back	14	4	0	18	35%
Wrist	5	1	0	6	12%
Hand	3	0	0	3	6%
Arms	5	0	0	5	10%
<b>Q5. Does your issue/circulation desk have a raised work surface to put books on for Issue or Return or is it a flat desk?</b>					
Raised work station	14	1	2	17	23%
Flat desk	45	8	4	57	77%
<b>Q6. Do you use a hand held bar code scanner?</b>					
Hand held	41	5	3	49	66%
Fixed position	19	4	2	25	34%
<b>Q7. Does using the bar code scanner cause you any (RSI) repetitive strain problems?</b>					
YES	6	1	1	8	11%
NO	51	8	4	63	89%
<b>If YES how do you cope with these problems? Do you use painkiller medication, exercise or wear a splint. Please explain</b>					
Medication	2	1	1	4	33%
Physiotherapy	2	0	1	3	25%
Exercise	3	0	0	3	25%
Wear a Splint	1	1	0	2	17%
<b>Q10. Does your library have any health and safety measures in place to deal with problems that might arise from repetitive use of equipment, such as training in manual handling or height adjustable chairs, etc.?</b>					
YES	40	2	2	44	61%
NO	18	7	3	28	39%

Q12. Do you sit down to issue/return books or stand up?					
Stand	37	4	3	44	59%
Sit	23	5	3	31	41%
Q13. Have you a choice of position?					
YES	33	4	3	40	56%
NO	24	5	3	32	44%
Q14. Do you have to use a computer mouse for most of your computer work?					
YES	53	8	5	66	89%
NO	6	1	1	8	11%
Q15. Do you have the option to use a keyboard instead?					
YES	38	5	4	47	71%
NO	13	4	2	19	29%

## Section 2- work environment

	Coll/Univ	Public	Special	Totals	Percentage
Q17. Do you work in an air conditioned building?					
YES	46	8	4	58	75%
NO	16	1	2	19	25%
Q18. Are there any reported problems with the air-conditioned building where you work?					
YES	32	8	2	42	67%
NO	17	1	3	21	33%
Q20. Has your building ever been classed as having 'sick building syndrome'?					
YES	5	1	1	7	9%
NO	14	5	3	22	29%
DON'T KNOW	42	3	2	47	62%
Q22. Some eye conditions are made worse by dry air in air conditioned areas, such as public buildings and shopping malls, e.g. contact lens problems. Does this happen in your building?					
YES	25	4	1	30	38%
NO	12	2	3	17	22%
DON'T KNOW	27	3	2	32	41%

<b>Q24. The intensity of lighting can affect both library staff and patrons; they are often referred to as lux levels. Are there any regular measurements taken of lighting levels?</b>					
YES	3	2	0	5	7%
NO	29	5	3	37	51%
DON'T KNOW	27	2	1	30	42%
<b>Q26. Is smoking allowed in any part of your building?</b>					
YES	0	1	0	1	1%
NO	61	7	6	74	99%
<b>Q27. If YES is this restricted to certain areas?</b>					
YES	0	1	0	1	20%
NO	2	1	1	4	80%

The results from the survey clearly show that there are some basic questions which need to be asked before installing a new issue/circulation desk.

Firstly – how busy is the area likely to be, on a regular basis, what transactions take place there and how many people will work in the area. Then if an academic library or public library is busy, staff are likely to stand for long periods, rather than sit. Therefore having a raised shelf in front of them and the user, will explain the high number of complaints the survey received about raised desks as opposed to flat ones because of the extra lifting and stretching required. Equally if the issue desk is used as part of an enquiry desk with a slower flow of people a lower desk is clearly desirable. See question 1 below for sizes of various desks.

**Q1. How large is your working area from front to back? (i.e., its width).**

This varies hugely, and the sizes given relate to the actual issue desk only. Basic issue desks, which are flat, range from 735mm to 910 mm high, with an added 350mm for desks with shelves. Width ranges from 660mm to 760mm. Length can be from one metre for single use to six metres for multiple issue points.

**Q9. If using the bar code scanner does NOT cause you any (RSI) repetitive strain problems, have you taken any preventative measures to avoid these problems?**

Regular exercise whilst working, use handheld scanner as opposed to fixed position where possible.

**Q11. If your library has any health and safety measures in place to deal with problems that might arise from repetitive use of equipment, such as training in manual handling or height adjustable chairs, etc., please give examples.**

Manual handling training of some sort is given to new staff in 61% of libraries, height adjustable chairs also used at issued desk. Ergonomic surveys carried out but not always accepted by library managers in some organisations.

**Q16. If using a computer mouse or a keyboard causes muscle strain problems, please give details.**

Moving from barcode scanner to computer mouse requires waist movement as two machines are on different heights. 40% of replies complained about the height of their working desks. No wrist supports were offered to staff in most libraries. While due to lack of space lots of libraries had no spare room for having a computer mouse on the left hand side as opposed to right hand side. With 89% of replies saying they had to use a mouse there was a corresponding large number of carpal tunnel and 'trigger finger' medical problems described.

**Q19. If there are problems with the air-conditioned building where you work, please describe:**

Most common concerns are, in order of number of responses, lack of temperature control, poor ventilation/circulation, lack of maintenance, dust and mould from vents, too much recycled air not enough fresh air. Ceiling vents cause draughts where people have to stand for long periods. Lack of maintenance often causes systems to make continuous noise. Very poor humidity control

**Q21. If your library has been classed as having 'sick building syndrome' what action if any, was taken to correct this problem?**

Complete replacement of air conditioning system, and replacement of air vents, extra cleaning of whole system

**Q23. What action, if any, has been taken to improve the air quality made worse by dry air in air conditioned areas:**

Some increase in the amount of fresh air in system and change in humidity control

**Q25. If the intensity of lighting (lux level) affects both library staff and patrons, how often are measurements taken and what happens to the results?**

No real record of when measurements taken, only occasional responses when asked for record of light levels.

**Q28. If smoking is allowed in your building, please describe the restricted areas:**

No smoking allowed in building. However big problem with people standing outside front entrances smoking. No action taken to solve this problem as it's described as being outside the building therefore not the library's responsibility.

**Q29. Please add any additional comments:**

23% of replies stated they worked with raised shelf issue desks which caused them additional lifting and muscle problems. The use of old / or inappropriate furniture was highlighted by many who complained of lack of room for equipment and staff in small areas. While a significant number of libraries still use book return drops, and these books are collected in book baskets which require people to lean into them to retrieve books, causing back pain and other related muscle strains. Poor ventilation and lighting have already been highlighted but remain as top complaints in people's minds.

Air conditioning is clearly a major cause of concern. While there are those few, only 33%, who have no problems with their systems, this does leave a massive 67% who do have problems. There is a clear 'hit list' of common complaints with lack of temperature control as the most contentious issue. This ranges from buildings being very hot and stuffy, with regular temperatures of 30 degrees Celsius, to other extremes where people complain of freezing cold temperatures in some parts of a building and very hot in other parts of the same building.

The second really big problem is that of air circulation, in some cases the systems are designed to work in big open plan buildings, but the introduction of book stacks disrupts the air flow. Humidity is a similar story with wildly varying extremes, in some cases causing build up of mould, and people having dry eyes. This in turn effects the wearing of contact lenses.

Thirdly the vents themselves are invariably not cleaned very often, and can blow a steady stream of dust and other debris over library staff and stock. This can over time block the vents. A health hazard rarely dealt with, which many library staff felt was often ignored.

The assistance of Wendee Eyler, Editor of *Associates: the electronic library support staff journal* is gratefully acknowledged in the production of this survey and its results and Lydia Collins (California State University), Stanislaus for her help with the initial survey design work.

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# Human resourcing in academic libraries: the 'lady librarian', the call for flexible staff and the need to be counted

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Librarians have, for many a long year, worried about their image. In contrast to the positive image of other professions, we perceive our own to be unsatisfactory: at best the librarian is a harmless and well meaning sort; at worst a controlling individual in flight from the challenges of the real world. In fact, the reality is more complex: the earliest image is not that bad, with the librarian portrayed as monk or member of the clergy, fulfilling the role of guard, literally holding the keys to that collection.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, through time, this perception has evolved: during the period of the first world war, the primary role for libraries shifted from education to recreation, with the role of librarian shifting from keeper to assister of access. And at this point the profession had become strongly dominated by women.

Simultaneously, literature started to portray librarians in terms of stereotypes, with female professionals portrayed as 'the timid, plain-looking middle-aged female' and as 'drab spinsters peering over the rim of their glasses ready to 'shush' a library patron for the offence of talking too

loud'.<sup>2</sup> By contrast, men in the profession – rather than being viewed as professional or as businessmen – were ascribed passive feminine traits and were viewed through images of the 'bibliophile, a pale undernourished man who lived only for his books', or as 'intellectual eunuchs who care for books'. Apparently 'a librarian's evenings should, by choice, be spent in reading'!<sup>3</sup>

By the 1960s librarians, male and female, were seen as non-professionals, prim, and proper, glaring at anyone who made too much noise in the library. They stacked shelves or issue and stamped books. Perhaps because of this negative image of the profession, the expression and concept of 'information science' arose in the 1960s, as an attempt to dissociate from the word 'librarian'. The 1990s saw an increase in students attending library schools and librarianship developed a more professional image, with a preference for the label 'information professional' or 'knowledge manager'.<sup>4</sup> The Information Age has helped make the image of the profession more positive, emphasising its role in both making information and communication technology (ICT) accessible and in teaching users how to use electronic sources of information. The stereotypical image of the spinster librarian is being replaced by an image of efficient information professionals.

Why should we think about such issues of perception and standing? Firstly, because we know that lack of esteem for the profession has bad consequences: it results in lower pay for library post-holders, less resourcing for libraries as institutions, and an undervaluing of the role of information services in society at large. However, a secondary effect may be on the profession's own perception of itself, whereby we unconsciously begin to perceive ourselves as others see us and thus manage staff in libraries in ways that are less than ideal. So the question is, do we as a profession manage our libraries according to stereotypes of the librarian that, in all other contexts, we would reject?

Recent research findings relating to gender and flexible employment patterns in UK academic libraries throw some light on this second concern.<sup>5</sup> This research (whose methodology is summarised in appendix A) shows that initial impressions appear to uphold the belief that nowadays librarians are indeed 'lady librarians': because the majority of librarians are female. However, look deeper and the truth is more likely to be that the majority of clerical staff are female, and, in particular there are more female than male staff working part-time in job-share partnerships (appendix

B). However, the majority of people at the top are, by a small margin, male: for example the majority of directors of library services are male.

And while the majority of senior managers (e.g. heads of divisions or middle managers) are female, such female managers are mainly to be found in one particular area, the university sector. Does this evidence about staff management patterns in libraries show that library managers run their libraries in accordance with received images that the profession itself does not recognise? Is this evidence of the profession managing according to stereotype, rather than on the grounds of objective merit?

Antony Brewerton wrote in the context of college, national and university libraries, 'Why is it that (invariably) our staffing does not reflect – or come anywhere near reflecting – the social and ethnic diversity of our customer base?'.<sup>6</sup> This raises a further question, 'how can a diverse workforce be attracted to apply for a job?' This is an enormously complex question which cannot be answered in full here.

But we can say that, however the workforce is made up, human resources are considered to be the most valued asset and 'people hold the key to more productive and efficient organisations. The way in which people are managed and developed at work has major effects upon quality, customer service, organisational flexibility and costs'.<sup>7</sup> Strategic human resource management is about making the most of those resources or assets. The call is for more flexible staff.

Flexibility means using staff with no preconceptions or stereotypes about how they should be deployed. This is a financial issue, as much as an issue of equality and fairness: the Follet Report concluded that value for money should be obtained with regard to library resources, given that spending on staff accounts for over half the total spend in libraries.<sup>8</sup> This strategic move towards more open deployment of staff can be mutually beneficial; employers can use staff flexibly for operational reasons, and employees who embrace the new technologies raising their competence will be up-skilled.<sup>9</sup> However, creative thinking skills are required if organisations are to be flexible, adaptable and agile in the context of frequent and on-going changes in the business environment.<sup>10</sup>

Functional flexibility comes through less rigid job descriptions and a broader range of duties, and

through less restrictive and more diverse activities at work.<sup>7</sup> Adaptive organisations need adaptive employees who can be flexible about the what, how, when and why of performing work in order that activity can be managerially directed towards the achievement of organisational objectives.<sup>11</sup>

With these broader considerations in mind, other parts of this recent research also examined non-gender-related aspects of flexibility amongst staff deployment in UK libraries.<sup>5</sup> This is a point on which there is a broad consensus of opinion: beyond gender-based issues, we would all agree that, when a gap appears in service provision, if staff in general are able to turn their hand to anything, staffing arrangements have to be such that the movement of staff to provide cover is possible. Tasks have then to be either prioritised or re-allocated thus rebalancing the existing workload of colleagues. Similarly, the ability to integrate staff into other work area requires perhaps dormant skills to be kept up-to-date, so as to be able to respond as and when required.

If staff specialise narrowly in one area of work, when gaps appear, there is no adequate way of temporarily filling the gap and maintaining service provision. The advantage of flexible deployment would appear to benefit both employee and employer: staff acquire a wider range of abilities, and more variety in their work. The employer gets a workforce with higher morale, which in turn can help to reduce staff turnover.

This primary research showed that, in some specific areas of flexible working, libraries are doing well, e.g. they are offering extended opening hours into the evenings and over the weekends, and are providing a staffed service during these times. As a result, staff are being deployed in more than one capacity, rather than in one specific role (see appendix C, tables 5 and 6).

However, in spite of the need for flexibility in structures to assist with the flexible deployment of human resources, these investigations show that, by and large, libraries have not extensively adopted this 'best practice'. The majority of libraries surveyed still favour traditional structures which can inhibit the 'rapid response' of human resources as and when required – they are hierarchical not flat structures, whose own estimate of their flexible staff deployment is quite honest: they are either 'slightly' or 'fairly' flexible in this regard, but no better than that. (See appendix C, tables 7 and 8 – of course, for a fuller exploration

of these issues and the complete dataset, please see the original research.<sup>5</sup>)

So, to sum up, in order to address these issues effectively in the future, we should be able, on a year by year basis, to answer the question 'How well are we all doing on gender and flexibility?' Thus, it would be useful for practitioners in similar areas across the profession to be able to compare staffing levels, degrees of flexibility and staffing profiles on a regular and consistent basis. To this end, the Follet Report recommended, in strategic planning, the use of a generic set of performance indicators for libraries, the ability to benchmark, that is, the need to be counted and to be able to compare one institution against another. SCONUL, the Society of College, National and University libraries, promotes excellence in library services in higher education and national libraries across the UK and Ireland. Their aim is to promote the sharing and development of good practice, to influence policy makers and encourage debate and to raise the profile of higher education and national libraries. Their annual statistical work has long been part of their approach to measuring quality of service, and their data provide firm information for strategic planners.<sup>12</sup> They provide performance indicators within the higher education sector and 'many library directors in UK universities and colleges of higher education regularly use the statistics to compare their service with the provision of service in other institutions'.

It would not take much adjustment to amend the current paperwork to cover issues of flexible staff deployment. The SCONUL annual statistical return, could be adjusted to include a section covering (a) staffing numbers (b) a breakdown by demographics e.g. age, gender, background, and these variables by staffing categories, i.e. manual, clerical or professional, and (c) an indication of how staff work within the library, the extent of flexible deployment.

In conclusion, it should be acknowledged that this paper has only explored some of the issues covered in the recent research referred to in this brief paper. The three areas skimmed over here, gender, flexibility and comparability are each huge and diverse. There are no easy answers, and so long as libraries continue to employ staff, these issues will remain. However, certain tools (such as benchmarking statistics) are available to us, which can help us analyse and change the situation in our libraries with regard to staff deployment. Looking

to the future, we should use these tools to best effect, as has been outlined above.

**Appendix A:** research methodology (of A. D. B. McLean’s MSc thesis)

*Research aim*

The aim of the research was to evaluate human resource deployment in the library services in universities and colleges of higher education across the UK and Ireland, in terms of gender balance, approaches to human resource management (HRM) and flexibility in human resource planning (HRP).

*Participating respondents*

The population comprised college, national and university libraries across the UK and Ireland, with the sample or subset being the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) member institutions.

The number of participants in the sample was determined by combining two lists: the 166 institutions which were contacted to participate in the SCONUL statistical return with the list of SCONUL member institutions on the SCONUL web site which identified a further 16 institutions. This resulted in 182 libraries.

*Methodology*

Given the scattered geographical locations of participants, data collection was by self completion, postal questionnaires which was deemed to be the most cost effective and time efficient means of data collection. A total of 182 self administered postal questionnaires were issued, with 70 returned, resulting in a 38.5% response rate. The likely response for postal questionnaires is variable and 30% is ‘reasonable’. Of these 70, none were totally completed, so all 70 were incomplete responses.

The following table (A. D. B. MacLean’s MSc thesis, Table 5, p68) shows the respondents by library sector

	Number	% of total
University library	44	63
College of higher education library	20	29
National library	4	6
Other	2	3
Total	70	100

The percentage of the total population broadly matches the make-up of SCONUL member insti-

tutions and is therefore representative of the total sample. The response rate was 38.5%, ‘reasonable’ for a postal questionnaire. The data was then analysed using Excel packages.

The limitations of the research include a single method of data collection, the length of the questionnaire and the potentially sensitive issue of the subject of gender balance in the workforce. Despite these limitations the research design supports the research aim and objectives.



**Appendix B:** Research findings on gender:

*Table 1: Gender balance by staff category by all respondents*

Staff category	Majority findings	Response rate	Response rate %	Missing data	Missing data %
Professional	More female than male	40, n=70	57.14	6, n=70	8.57
Clerical	More female than male	40, n=70	57.14	12, n=70	17.14
Manual	More male than female	8, n=70	11.42	55, n=70	78.57
Technical	All male	8, n=70	11.42	47, n=70	67.14

*Table 2: Gender of senior or middle managers, heads of divisions by sector*

	Majority findings	Response rate	Response rate %	Missing data	Missing data %
University	More female than male	12, n=44	27.27	15, n=44	37.5
College	Equal gender balance	3, n=20	15	17, n=20	85
National	More male than female	2, n=4	50	2, n=4	50
Other	Missing data	0	0	2, n=2	100

*Table 3: Gender of most senior staff, directors of library services*

	Response rate	Response rate %
Male	35, n=70	50
Female	33, n=70	47
Missing data	2, n=70	3

*Table 4: Gender balance in part-time job-share work by sector*

	Majority findings	Response rate	Response rate %	Missing data	Missing data %
University	More female than male	21, n=44	47.72	19, n=44	43.18
College	All female	3, n=20	15	17, n=20	85
National	All female	2, n=4	50	2, n=4	50
Other	Missing data	0	0	2, n=2	100

**Appendix C:** Other research findings on flexibility and use of staff:

*Table 5: Number of libraries open after 17.00, Monday to Friday*

	Response rate	Response rate %
Yes	70, n=70	100
No	0, n=70	0

Table 6: Number of libraries open over the weekend

	Response rate	Response rate %
Yes	64	91.5
No	5	7
Missing data	1	1.5

Table 7: Library structure by sector

	Response rate	Response rate %	Missing data	Missing data %
University: hierarchical	31, n=44	70.45	0	0
Flatter	13, n=44	29.54	0	0
College: hierarchical	3, n=20	15	0	0
Flatter	17, n=20	5	0	0
National: hierarchical	2, n=4	50	0	0
Flatter	2, n=4	50	0	0
Other: hierarchical	1, n=2	50	0	0
Flatter	1, n=2	50	0	0

Table 8: The extent of flexible deployment of staff by size of staff complement

	finding	Response rate	Response rate %	Missing data	Missing data %
Small	Fairly	12, n=27	44.44	4, n=27	14.81
Medium	Slightly	14, n=31	45.16	1, n=31	3.22
Large	Fairly	7, n=12	58.12	2, n=12	16.66

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## Taking steps that make you feel dizzy: personal reflections on module 1 of the Future Leaders programme



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The Future Leaders programme [<http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/support/flp/>] is aimed at professionals in academic information services (IS) who aspire to a strategic role and who have proven management experience. The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education runs the programme, with support from SCONUL, UCISA and the British Library. It commenced in March 2006 with 21 participants from library and computing environments. Its focus is to deepen participants' understanding of the IS leadership challenge and to enable them to learn how to lead. Many programmes bill themselves similarly but this one has a number of distinctive characteristics:

- year-long format, consisting of two residential plenary modules and three meetings of

individual learning sets, each consisting of seven members; the final event is a Capstone Day in March 2007 to present, share and review achievements and learning

- focus on learning to lead rather than attempting to teach to lead
- emphasis on self-awareness and ongoing reflection, including a regular supply of stimulating readings and strong encouragement to maintain a reflective journal
- detailed pre-course interaction at an individual level with programme facilitators, including interview, analysis of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator data and presentation of 360° feedback report
- execution of a self-selected project, aligned with institutional priorities, regularly reported and supported at learning sets during the year
- availability of ongoing supports, including VLE forum and resources list, teleconferences and access to programme facilitators and participants
- establishment of a highly supportive network of contacts with similar aspirations and challenges, cemented by sharing of experiences and the atmosphere of openness, honesty and trust created from the beginning by facilitators and participants alike.

Module 1, described in the previous issue of *SCONUL Focus*, concentrated on self-awareness, particularly personal leadership style and its impact on others.<sup>1</sup> From the outset there was a very strong personal element and an atmosphere far more conducive to self-disclosure than is typical or had been anticipated. We learned a lot about each other and about ourselves in a relatively short space of time. A recurrent theme throughout the four days was the importance of raising the quality of thinking and conversation, particularly by practising a technique called 'action inquiry' which involves heightened awareness and deep listening in the course of action (e.g. meetings). This technique, along with many other experiences, features in our personal reflections on Module 1 which follow.

*You miss too much if you stop to think ...*  
*Dilys Young*

For many of us, I guess we had reached a plateau in our careers and needed re-energising and challenging to consider our potential and motivation to take the next step on the career ladder and become service leaders rather than service managers. Module 1 certainly provided much food for

thought in this respect, not only challenging our assumptions about ourselves and others, our personal management style and our ability and potential to become future leaders, but also enabling us to take time away from the pressures of everyday work to reflect on what we would need both personally and professionally to achieve this.

A number of theoretical frameworks and leadership models were presented in the first module and these were interspersed with short, practical exercises, discussions and group work to consider our own orientation towards leadership and to raise our quality of thinking. The most interesting technique, as far as I was concerned, was the concept of 'action inquiry' whereby leaders are required to act within the moment, using a range of perspectives to judge situations and apply appropriate skills to reach solutions. This is a very different way of relating to people and situations for many of us who currently use techniques around action, reflection, review and re-action. Also tapping into the emotional side of our management style preferences and using this to relate more effectively to the feelings and emotions of colleagues whilst dealing with a difficult situation was a challenge which few of us had experienced previously. A technique from the first module which I found particularly thought-provoking is the concept of 'difficult conversations' whereby we need to analyse the 'feelings' and 'identity' side of interactions as well as understanding the 'what happened' element of a situation. This is a powerful way of getting to the heart of a difficult situation and really understanding what the other person is experiencing at a deeper level rather than concentrating on the version of events that we believe happened.

Another thing that struck me as particularly useful was the understanding that the vast majority of information and IT workers within our sector are by nature introverted and we had great fun discovering what it felt like to be an introvert for those few of us whose profiles were more extraverted, and vice versa. The concept of 'inner voices' was also interesting as it helped explain the dialogue which often goes on in our heads as we wrestle to resolve a difficult situation. Interesting too, how we all have some sort of 'gremlin' casting self-doubt, doom and gloom over our reasoning at times! Overall, Module 1 was, for me, all about how my own motivations, personality traits and management style preferences impact on my relationships, not only with colleagues, but with the wider world. Whilst the module focused very much on 'self' it was more about awareness-rais-

ing than about modifying styles and preferences. After all, if we understand ourselves better we are more likely to be able to empathise with others, achieve greater harmony and develop skills that enhance and make our interactions in everyday work, life and play more effective. So, although you might not be able to teach an old dog new tricks, the Future Leaders programme has helped me recognise that there are a lot of tricks I am not utilising as fully or effectively as I could and that doing so might help me keep more balls in the air as I juggle the many and varied challenges of being a service manager within the modern information services environment.

### *Leaving the comfort zone*

*Annie Kilner*

A key part of Module 1 was the four day residential programme which brought the whole group together in Birmingham for the first time. Most of us had at least attempted the essential reading beforehand, but this in no way prepared us for what proved to be an intense and quite extraordinary week of self discovery and awakened sensitivity. We were immediately thrust into a process not unlike speed-dating: we moved around the group exchanging information about ourselves, our aspirations, our self doubts and gathered our first impressions. It was a highly effective ice-breaker and created bonds within the group that grew and expanded rapidly over the next few days.

Some of the most revealing group exercises were those that explored self perception and, more fascinating still, the perceptions of others in regard to ourselves. Self-analysis games involving placing oneself within the group in terms of position, power and influence were at once fun, challenging and, in truth, a little scary for some of us. These deceptively playful activities revealed some hitherto unconscious attitudes and vulnerabilities that were sometimes uncomfortable to face. In fact, leaving the 'comfort zone' was a key theme and it generated a quality of thought and depth of discussion which was both stimulating and illuminating. In particular, psychologically, it prised open some 'closed doors' for many of us. This allowed the group to develop into a confidential forum in which even some of the more introverted among us felt able to explore our emotional responses and sound our normally unvoiced ideas. Indeed, the spirit of trust and mutual support was one of the most valuable aspects of the week and has been continued through into the learning sets.

By the end of the residential we had gleaned some important insights into what good leadership might look like. Although there was a great deal of consensus on this, we were encouraged to look behind the typical leadership types (for example, messiah, dictator, liberator, ambassador) and pose some questions about how these models operated (on faith, charisma, coercion or goodwill perhaps). The focus inevitably came back to ourselves and our personal vision and style. This gave us a glimpse of how our own leadership models worked on conscious and unconscious levels. Once again, it was the latter, with its rich vein of insight into our motivations and insecurities, that was especially thought-provoking and disturbing. Following on from this, it was intriguing to see individual leadership styles or 'signatures' emerge during that few days. What we learned from each other was just as valuable as the gems of wisdom picked up from our very talented and incisive facilitators John Mulligan and Susan Chadwick. Even the very few hours of 'play' we had were put to good use. Some very fruitful lines of discussion were continued in the more informal setting of the bar later in the day! There was the odd rebellion but even these were learning processes which served to strengthen the group as an entity.

Module 1 was a spring board. It gave us a chance to take a long look at ourselves and reflect on what we needed to do as individuals to nurture and develop our leadership signatures. It also provided the impetus to practice some interesting techniques and ideas back in the workplace. The really wonderful thing, though, is that it has opened doors in all of us – if we step outside and take to the road the journey could be very exciting.

### *Meeting myself*

*John Cox*

The four days of Module 1 were the most exhausting I can recall for any course, but also by some distance the most influential. The appetite for change can be somewhat diminished after more than ten years in managerial roles and on reaching the mid-forties. My style had become almost too well established and needed to be challenged. This certainly happened during Module 1 when, thanks to very skilful facilitation and the honesty of my fellow learners, everything was up for grabs. I became much more aware of the impact that my leadership style has and can have on others. The Myers-Briggs type indicator (MBTI) revealed me as having ISTJ (introverted, sensing, thinking and judging) preferences. This type has

been summarised as 'life's natural organisers' and has its share of strengths, but also a number of blind spots.<sup>2</sup> In my case, I discovered that I need to behave 'out of type' more frequently in order to be more of a leader and particularly to influence a wider range of people positively.

My 360° feedback supported this view. Reading a 25-page feedback report about oneself is an amazing experience. This document explored many dimensions as viewed by my managers, peers and immediate reports. After a short period of denial ('this can't be me!'), I found it hugely insightful. The real discovery for me was that I too had grown frustrated with the limitations of my style and wanted to experiment with different approaches, bringing a more creative and less intense 'me' to the workplace. The experience has been liberating and, instead of addressing projects or short-term transactions simply as things to be done, I am aspiring to greater effectiveness than efficiency and am learning to look for developmental opportunities for myself and others. Action inquiry, although I am an unskilled practitioner compared with one of our facilitators, John Mulligan, has stimulated a more questioning approach, with a greater and healthier emphasis on understanding than rushing to judgement. This makes work a more stimulating place for me at least, but I hope also for others in my teams.

A key emphasis for me throughout Module 1 was the people dimension. I realised the importance not only of listening and assimilating group dynamics but also of having a definite personal presence as a leader. Confident interaction with others is vital in terms of influencing people and events. Establishing a wider range of relationships and building rapport emerged as very significant themes for me, both at and outside work. It was once said of the (unusually academic) ex-England cricket captain Mike Brearley that he had 'a degree in people' due to his success at getting the best out of individuals in his team. Module 1 made me sit up and take notice of this facility and look beyond the obvious in others. A greater investment of time in people than Gantt charts has sometimes made my days a bit more chaotic, but I've learned to live with an untidy desk!

A further powerful tool I learned to use was the reflective journal. I had always tended to reflect on situations heretofore but only in my head. There is a marked difference in the quality of reflection when thoughts are transmitted to paper. Keeping a journal has helped me greatly to make sense of recent or upcoming situations, giving me

more insights than previously. It also keeps me on track in terms of trying to continue practising some of the new techniques I learned on Module 1 and evaluating progress with these. Above all, it makes me confront myself and my vulnerabilities as a person and a leader honestly and constructively. There is no hiding place on paper and I've found that it's a great place to continue meeting myself!

## CONCLUSION

So, does the course deliver what it sets out to? For each of us Module 1 was a learning journey during which we were able to focus primarily on ourselves and the impact our traits and personal leadership styles have on others. It provided us with new understanding about our existing skills and knowledge whilst at the same time reframing these in the light of new self-awareness. It provided a 'safe' environment for testing out new techniques and taking risks in going beyond our usual, comfortable patterns of behaviour. It allowed us time and space to explore our beliefs and assumptions about management and leadership. It was fast moving, emotional, personal and illuminating and allowed us to engage with new colleagues in a spirit of trust and confidentiality. The facilitators were excellent, the food was very good (and lots of it), the bar was open long hours, the company was congenial, the rooms were comfortable and we also had lots of fun. Would we do it again? Certainly. Would we recommend others to do it? Without doubt, as long as you're prepared to be challenged, energised, refreshed and exhausted! Will it make a difference to us? We all intend it to. Perhaps our own leaders and our work colleagues are best placed to judge the long-term impact of this never-to-be-forgotten programme.

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# Evolution: the Oxford trainee scheme



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Oxford Library Graduate Trainee Scheme operates under the SCONUL Code of Practice, providing the necessary experience required by graduates applying for UK postgraduate courses in library and information studies. There is a common misconception that all trainees work in the Bodleian Library. In fact there are currently 18 trainees; just three of whom work in the Bodleian Library. Other trainees work in central research libraries and departmental/faculty libraries (part of Oxford University Library Services: Oxford University's integrated library service) or in independent college libraries and the Oxford Union Library. The year is aimed at graduates with good IT skills and ability to work flexibly as part of a team; communicating effectively with readers and colleagues. A few posts require additional specialist skills such as languages.

These training posts are integral to the smooth running of each library. So rest assured that if you are interested in becoming a trainee you will be kept busy! Each trainee has a professional supervisor who works alongside them. Individual project work has been actively encouraged for all trainees for the first time this year, so projects such as creating library guides and websites and cataloguing rare collections have been undertaken alongside daily work. There is also a group project maintaining the Oxford Website for Library Trainees (OWL). This website was created in 1997 to provide information for current and prospective library trainees as well as to give the website team some web authoring and project management experience. This year, in addition to updating the content, the trainees have completely overhauled the site's structure and design, and added more helpful navigation menus, a search function and support for a folksonomy. A recent project showcase celebrated the work achieved in these projects.

A varied programme of training events – talks, workshops, library visits and ECDL training – is provided each week during term. Specific sessions change each year. It is an excellent grounding for a library career – a great start for anyone's CV.



**Mei Yau Kan**  
*Current Trainee  
History Faculty Library*

A graduate trainee essentially plays the role of a library assistant with the added bonuses of training and project management experience. At the History Faculty Library, I aid in all the mundane day-to-day tasks, such as shelving, staffing the issue desk, book fetching, fixing photocopiers and data-entry. Fortunately I also get to devote time to special projects; this year, for example, I've made presentations for and helped to organise an e-resources user education event and developed analyses of various library statistics. I've also had the opportunity to shadow other librarians, like the history subject consultant at Oxford. I also contribute to our trainee website and am responsible for the design and technical aspects of the site. A trainee's year can be busy and challenging but at times it's the exact opposite.



**Lisa Sutliff**  
*Current Trainee  
Nuffield College Library*

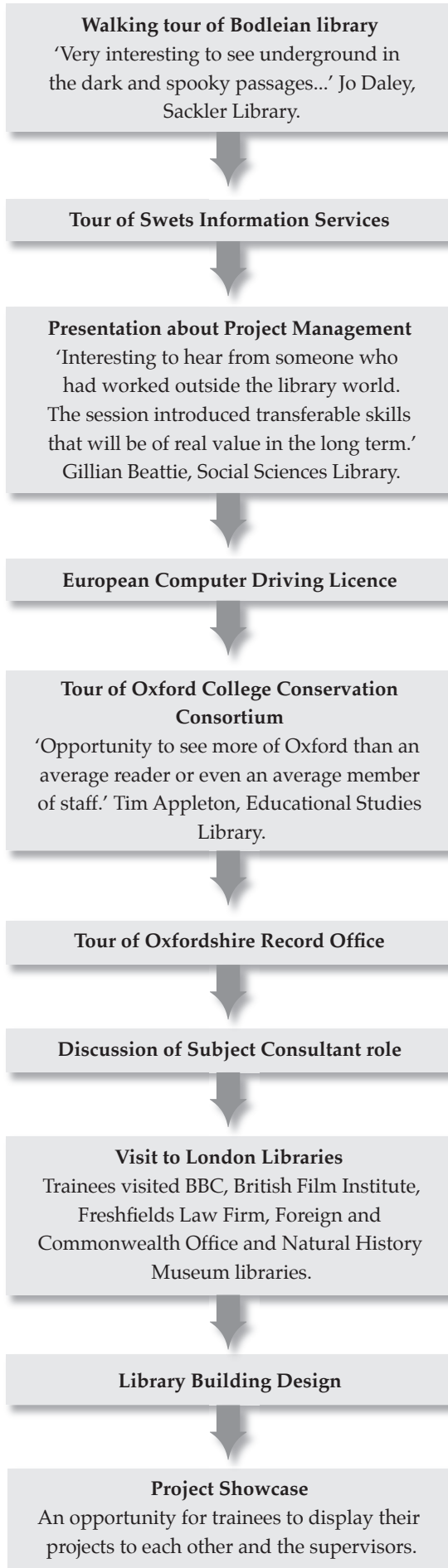
Nuffield is a close knit, friendly community and I am treated as an equal member of the team. I have my own responsibilities: mainly ordering, receiving and processing new books and management of inter-library loans. I manage my own workload whilst receiving support and training where necessary. I also have an equal share of desk duties and checking in of new journals. I've been able to choose my own projects, including the completion of two reader surveys and the management of a large collection recently donated to the library. Since I have an interest in film, the librarian has allowed me to participate in a project at the English faculty library where a new film collection is being developed. I find my work interesting and challenging, varied and busy. I couldn't have asked for a better introduction to the profession!



**Ed Ball**  
*Current Trainee  
Bodleian Library*

I am one of three trainees working at the Bodleian Library and am currently in the last of the four main departments that we each get to work in during the year. The four are: technical services, reader services, special collections and the Radcliffe science library. Each one is an experience with challenges, new people and plenty of new things to learn. Day-to-day work has included everything from accessioning, stamping, and bar-coding to holdings editing, issue desk work and answering enquiries. I have attended management meetings and been introduced to all the library departments, both large and small: imaging, inter-library loans, e-resources, accounts and many more! My year at the Bodleian has been interesting and enjoyable and confirmed that a career in information science is the right choice for me.

**TRAINING PROGRAMME 2005-06**  
**HIGHLIGHTS**



*2005-2006 Oxford Graduate Trainees.*



*The rooftops of Oxford!*



*Verity Orme (Bodleian Trainee) and Ruth Harris staffing the OULS stand at the Freshers Fair.*



*Supervisors and trainees at the Project Showcase.*





*Whilst working in Special Collections, Bodleian trainees staff the enquiry desk in the Duke Humfrey's Library for their evening duty.*



*Trainees touring the Oxford College Conservation Consortium.*



*The English Faculty Library hosts one trainee.*



*Two trainees work in the Social Sciences Library.*



Judy Reading  
Trainee Supervisor  
Librarian, User Education Co-Ordinator  
Educational Studies Library

This is the first year we have had a graduate trainee and it has been a complete success. One of the few disadvantages of taking a graduate trainee rather than a permanent junior member of staff is the amount of training necessary for any new member of staff but our trainee has been very quick to pick things up. The post is a mixed one – half working in the library and helping to deliver all the services you would expect from an academic library. The other half is providing support for the user education co-ordinator.

Graduate trainees give the best value for money. Having a fresh, intelligent and interested mind thinking about the library service we offer can only be for the good of the system – and I hope that the experience we are able to offer here will stand our trainees in good stead for a future career where they are likely to be particularly successful.



Jane Eagan  
Trainee Host  
Head Conservator  
Oxford College Conservation Consortium

Oxford Conservation Consortium was founded in 1990 and is currently active in ten college library and archive collections. As one of the worst causes of deterioration is poor handling and storage, we offer a session in preservation awareness to trainees. The session starts with a discussion of the causes of deterioration, demonstrates safe handling methods, and explores the variety of housing materials to protect fragile material. We offer a visit to the conservation studio to see preventable damage to objects and the types of repair that are carried out. Trainees also visit the Chantry Library, the library of the Institute of Conservation. It is always a lively session with a great deal of information sharing and the chance to look at books and documents and meet conservators is always popular.



Mat Andrews  
Trainee Supervisor  
Reader Services Librarian  
Bodleian Library

As the supervisor of the three Bodleian trainees, I undertake the planning and coordination of their year, and give advice and support to them throughout it. The work in their six placements is organised by separate placement supervisors, although I do take them away to conduct tours of the central Bodleian, or to go on additional training or visits. At the end of each placement, I meet each of the trainees, to discuss that placement, how the traineeship is going and their plans for the future. We tend to be in regular contact as questions or problems arise. Placement supervisors give me feedback about the trainees, which helps when I write references for library school and jobs. Helping the trainees find out whether librarianship might be for them is a privilege, and often one of the most enjoyable parts of my job.

Four departmental/faculty libraries took on trainees for the first time this year. One of these posts, in the Educational Studies Department, is a new departure with half the post providing a user education support role for the whole of OULS. More of these posts may develop in the future to support other Oxford-wide functions.

An increase in trainee numbers is a great advantage for the trainees in creating a ready made social network to enjoy Oxford after work. However it has also increased the workload of OULS Staff Development Department responsible for both trainee recruitment and the trainee programme itself. The trainee scheme is a key responsibility of Gill Powell in the new role of deputy head of staff development. We have streamlined recruitment this year by establishing subject interview panels and email submission of applications. OULS Personnel will take over trainee recruitment next year. Lucy Walden, OULS HR Manager has recently surveyed all trainee supervisors and is working with them to produce an even more streamlined recruitment strategy which ensures that we attract and appoint the very best candidates. Changes include improved application procedures, clear selection criteria and the use of a criteria specific questionnaire to accompany CVs. 'We are also considering changing our interview dates – traditionally early March - to later in the academic calendar next year'

Funding for postgraduate study has become an increasing concern of trainees, particularly those wishing to go on to full time library studies. AHRC funding is available but is highly competitive. Sackler and Taylorian Institution libraries now offer the possibility for some trainees to stay on at the end of the trainee year whilst undertaking part time study. There are a number of other libraries in the Oxford system where contracts allow for part time study. It is certainly not easy but it makes postgraduate study a possibility for some who would not otherwise be able to fund further studies.

Inevitably, with a large group of trainees, there will be a few each year who decide not to pursue a career in libraries. This year we have included individual mentor sessions to help this group, and for others who need help deciding which library course to take.

So to conclude, the Oxford trainee scheme has evolved over a number of years into a large concern. We offer the largest UK academic library traineeship but we never assume we are the best – we are constantly looking for ways to improve the trainee experience for all involved: trainees, host libraries and the wider profession. Each new trainee intake provides a fresh perspective on what we are doing, challenging our thinking, which is particularly useful at this time when Oxford libraries are undergoing an unprecedented period of change. It really is an interesting time to be a trainee in Oxford!

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Kate Williams  
Former Trainee  
Bodleian Library

My trainee year in the Bodleian Library has proven to be a great stepping stone for a library career. There is a very supportive community of trainees in Oxford, which made the year fun socially, as well as professionally. After finishing as a trainee, I stayed in Oxford, having got a full time supervisory role in the Radcliffe Science Library with one day off a week to do my library qualification part time. My job involves lots of staff and user training and I have helped to co-ordinate a couple of major projects within the library. I am now on my MSc dissertation, looking at information skills training in health libraries. I will be starting my first professional post at the Social Science Library as reader services librarian (maternity cover) in October. It will involve managing all front line services and taking a leading role in the library's user education programme. I am very much looking forward to the challenge!



Jo Wood  
Former Trainee  
Oxford Union Society

I was the trainee at the Oxford Union from 2003-4. I was then offered a library assistant post at the National Maritime Museum Library. They part-funded my distance learning qualification and I wouldn't have been able to do it without their financial help which was a big factor in leaving Oxford and going into a library assistant post, rather than doing a full-time Masters. I did my postgraduate diploma in information and library studies with the University of Wales, Aberystwyth and was promoted to senior library assistant at the museum. At the moment, I'm deferring the dissertation and have up to three years to do it if I want to. I liked working in an academic library but [at the time] I wanted to do something a bit different to the normal public/academic library career path. I will be starting a new, qualified post at Barnardos as a library and information officer soon.

Paul Johnson  
Former Trainee  
Bodleian Library

As a graduate trainee, I got the opportunity to work in several sections of the Bodleian Library. The weekly graduate trainee meetings also gave me the chance to be a part of a large group of people all in the same situation. Having completed my MA at UCL, I became a liaison librarian at Reading University Library. Here I have a split role: I am the classics and philosophy subject librarian, and I work in circulation services. In the former role I am the principal channel of communication between the library and departments of classics and philosophy, and I deliver information skills sessions. In the latter I work on the main information desk and have particular responsibility for self-service functions and registrations. I have recently submitted my chartership application.

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# A week in the life

## 'Enviably beads' at outreach centres

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Kim McGowan is the Edge Hill University Faculty of Education Outreach support coordinator. Her role is to ensure that students based at off-campus sites have equitable access to the Learning Services and Student Services support they need.

### MONDAY

So keen to be in early to prepare for the first visit of a group of Shrewsbury students and trainee teachers that I inevitably find myself caught up in the A59 novelty vehicle convoy headed up by the steam-powered farm machine from Tess of the d'Urbervilles. At a junction the steam engine is ably replaced by a half timbered car whose driver slows almost to a halt each time a vehicle comes along in the other direction. 'They've got their own side' I call in an enabling manner but clearly haven't tapped into her preferred learning style.

Still arrive in time to whizz through emails before I prepare for our visitors. There are several password and off-campus access queries and an awful lot of spam (how do they know about my little problem?).

A colleague from the off-campus team joins me to greet the Shrewsbury visitors with coffee and then we jog them on a whistle stop tour taking in Careers and the finance team in Student Services and an opportunity to speed browse and borrow from the relevant areas of the Learning Resource Centre (the dean of faculty is meeting them at 12.30). I have to leave to drive to deliver an induction at Bury but my colleague joins the students again for lunch and it transpires that their time in the LRC is the high point of their day.

Arrive at Bury with time to meet a new associate tutor and to be briefly interviewed by a very encouraging external off-campus consultant who is reviewing Faculty of Education off-site provision. I appreciate this because I have first hand grasp of the 'non-traditional' student experience and know I can reflect many of their views and

needs. Also just time to briefly discuss some registration and access issues the April start foundation students are experiencing with the Bury based support tutor.

There are three new groups of April 2006 start foundation level students. They all work full-time, usually as classroom assistants, and are studying part-time for a degree in supporting teaching and learning. The admissions regulations for 2005 dictate that they must obtain new medical and criminal record bureaux clearance before they can complete registration. Clearance processes are inevitably lengthy and I've been liaising with my colleagues in admissions and academic registry for weeks to ensure that at least a percentage of the students have their registration number (and *ergo* access to LRC resources) before this induction visit.

A good proportion of the students are registered and I arrive with a list of numbers and library cards for those who are. Sadly, what I did not anticipate is that they would not have received their registration letters so none of them have passwords. The application to set student passwords is web-based and I can deal with the situation but it is time-consuming and the start of the session is disagreeably disrupted.

Consignments of Student Services, Learning Services and Students' Union information material are lined up to be collected or distributed. I deliver information including how to apply for financial support and who to go to for advice, counselling or inclusion and dyslexia support. I demonstrate how to access university WebMail, WebCT (the virtual learning environment), how to register for postal loans and how to access the library catalogue and electronic resources. The session is very intensive and I'm acutely sorry for the unregistered students who can't go home and practise. I emphasise over and over again that the information in the handouts is comprehensive and I'm only an email away if they want me to reinforce the processes once they're registered. But I just know how overwhelmed some of them are feeling. I answer several specific registration, funding and access queries (there is quite a lot of confusion between WebMail and WebCT) and before I leave I update the noticeboard (already liberally lathered with my photo and contact details).

### TUESDAY

Meeting with colleagues from inclusive provision and financial support teams regarding facilitated

workshops for a collaborative provision conference in a few weeks time. Whilst I'm in the area I pop into the external relations and marketing offices for material (especially novelty pens, balloons and mini gonks) for a sixth form conference I'm presenting at soon. The Edge Hill logo has just changed so I can't use quite a bit of the branded stuff but AimHigher provide some perfect 18-year old-friendly gear.

Before anything else I set passwords for all the foundation students I'm inducting at Wirral this afternoon. It is a risk because I could be changing the password of someone who doesn't attend the session but on reflection the advantages outweigh the risks: I don't want a repeat of yesterday's disruption.

Today I decide to visit academic registry, the LRC and the IT team to follow up the Bury students' queries and issues with relevant colleagues. It's more diplomatic than email and, because it reduces the risk of ambiguity, probably saves time in the end. Then, off to the Wirral with a companion from the LRC off-campus team. It's grand to have company; she's an expert on Vista (virtual student access) and the postal loan service and it's important for the students to see the lovely face that goes with the name and the voice on the phone.

The induction is wonderful. As well as my off-campus team companion, a colleague from the Whiston outreach centre is shadowing the session in preparation for September inductions. Off-campus students vary enormously but many lack confidence in their IT skills; having roving helpers makes such a difference to their experience. Two students are very upset about the delay in their registration; they think it might mean they don't have a place. My partner is able to reassure them and telephone Admissions for an update whilst I continue with the induction. It's becoming apparent that delays are often due to applicants not realising how crucial supporting documentation such as exam certificates are to the registration process in higher education.

Setting the passwords in advance was the right decision. Before we leave we take photographs for library cards. It isn't actually necessary for an off-campus student to have a card unless they want to visit a campus or use the UK Libraries Plus scheme, but I see it as part and parcel of belonging to the university. All of them chose to mill alphabetically for a photo. It's an opportunity to link with and get to know the trainees individually. I take

the pictures in alphabetical order but I also write little identification notes next to their name in the register so that I can match the photo to the name and number back at base – 'enviable beads', 'pink striped shirt', 'earnest expression', 'man'.

Spend a few minutes updating the notice board and catch up with the co-ordinating tutor based at the site. The drive back to Edge Hill gives my colleague and me an opportunity to discuss support issues. Once I've downloaded the photos she will produce the library cards and post them out to the students with their Vista packs – brilliant solution!

#### **WEDNESDAY**

My emails are bringing out my grumpy old woman characteristics. Some queries contain acronyms I'm not even acquainted with. And I'm sure some of those enquiries come from people with made up names. I answer anyway.

Attend a 2006 student fees and funding update; creaky it's a bit complicated.

Off to deliver an information skills refresher near Manchester this afternoon. The students are anxious about having to use WebCT in their next and final year and my charming friend from the WebCT team is joining me so he can demonstrate the application and reassure them it won't involve rocket science. Actually I suppose it might. In any case, he's a big hit.

The group has two dominant and sometimes hostile members who assure me that they're all information retrieval experts. Bearing their assurances in mind I've prepared a worked example of a focused British Education Index search using the Thesaurus facility. It's soon clear that I might be looking at an instance of unconscious incompetence. They might mean they're good at retrieving information from Google. The most productive part of my session is when I start from where the learners are. I go around from one student to the next during the break responding to individual queries, side stepping the peer pressure of the ruling characters. We all learn a myriad of new things (including me and the imprudent agitators).

#### **THURSDAY**

Spend the early part of the day following up a plethora of issues arising from yesterday and earlier in the week. Email all the April start foundation students in their WebCT course because a

new password prompt box is triggering a spate of concerned correspondence.

I visit the Hutton Lancashire Constabulary Training Centre in the afternoon to deliver a box of books to add to the small onsite collection, and deliver an information workshop to a cohort studying for a foundation degree in education and training. Most are serving police officers. The fact that the group are predominantly male and are already delivering training to others themselves means that the dynamics of this session are quite different from those earlier in the week. The students are amazed at the miracle of getting quality, peer reviewed papers electronically. An informal, creative and productive gathering – gorgeous and great fun.

#### FRIDAY

Today I pay the price for a week of self indulgent gadding. Time to sort stuff and catch up with colleagues, sort posters to promote off-campus study skills support, collect more Vista leaflets, complete a half finished resources audit report, prepare for two imminent audits of additional outreach centres, book rooms on and off-campus for September inductions, take some photographs and start to put together the PowerPoint presentation for the sixth form conference, send out maps in anticipation of an outreach meeting to be held at the new Wirral site, introduce myself to the new Students' Union president, check up on the progress of the unregistered stragglers, arrange meetings with tutors and administration colleagues, think about the most effective way delivering crucial information to off-site students who receive all their tuition online; just the usual chores that generally spawn a dozen or so auxiliary jobs.

When I'm travelling a lot I like to listen to unabridged audio books from the Harris library. I drive home in peace, unimpeded by steam threshing machines or Morris Travellers, listening to *Never let me go* by Kazuo Ishiguro. Bliss. My preferred style is to learn by doing. This week has taught me that, like children's parties, there's no such thing as too much ground work or preparation for off-campus inductions, that I should trust my instincts where student information skills are concerned and shouldn't be swayed by the domineering and vocal minority, and I that even a grumpy old Greenham veteran can learn to love a police officer.

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## Got the knowledge? Focusing on the student: Manchester Metropolitan University's (MMU) library welcome campaign



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#### BACKGROUND

During summer 2005, the induction working group at MMU Library undertook a major overhaul of its induction strategy. The all-new MMU Library 'Welcome' campaign became a staged process, aiming to avoid student information overload by providing bite-sized chunks of information when required. The main goal of this

campaign was to introduce the library's key services whilst promoting our approachability and willingness to support students. The campaign comprised a series of events:

- pre-enrolment welcome flyer distributed to all new students
- a library stall at MMUnion freshers' fair
- a welcome induction session using the 'Cephalonian Method' (question card approach)<sup>1</sup> and a new streamlined handout
- four awareness weeks delivered at intervals during the autumn term.

This article documents the transformation of the library's induction process, the practical issues involved, perceived improvements, feedback received and considerations for future enhancements.

#### THE OLD APPROACH

Prior to the launch of the Library Welcome Campaign MMU had adopted a traditional and simple approach to induction. We delivered a single, forty-five minute PowerPoint presentation providing a general introduction to the library, and gave students a bulky folder of handouts and a free pen. From this one brief session, students were expected to have all the introductory knowledge they needed to use and feel welcome in our libraries. Student evaluation of these sessions indicated that, although they appreciated receiving the information, there were key areas for improvement:

- 1 they wanted more interaction
- 2 they felt they had too much paperwork to take away
- 3 there was too much information to digest all at once.

The introduction of the new Library Welcome Campaign focused on these specific issues.

#### BRANDING AND PUBLICITY

get the knowledge

For the launch of the new campaign we felt it was important to have consistent and clear branding. Although MMU Library had already successfully branded its InfoSkills training<sup>2</sup>, it was felt that the Library Welcome Campaign needed its own clear identity. In collaboration with an outside graphic design company<sup>3</sup>, the library created the

'get the knowledge' tagline and some associated multi-coloured graphics to use throughout the campaign.

We chose this design because we felt it looked impressive visually and that the bright colours would stand out and be something our students would remember and recognise in the future. This design was used in a wealth of campaign materials which can be seen throughout the rest of this article.

For example, the freshers' fair bookmark incorporated the 'Get the knowledge' tagline and also used the following lines:

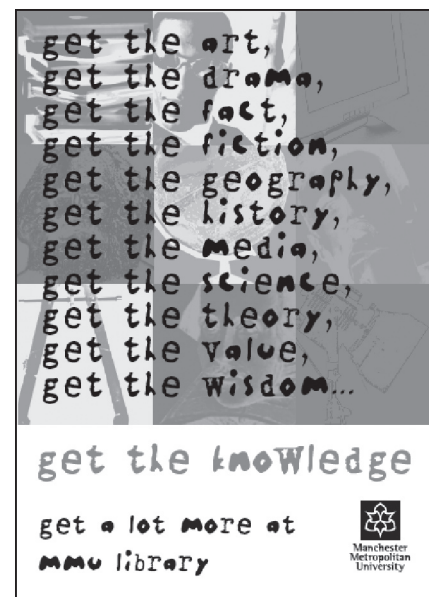
*'get the information : come along to your Library Welcome session'*

The e-mail awareness week followed the same format saying:

*'get the message : it's the way that tutors, the library and other people in the University communicate with you'*

The message was also reinforced by the use of branding on non-printed campaign materials including PowerPoint presentations and screen-savers.

#### PRE-ENROLMENT FLYER



We started our campaign by getting involved with pre-course publicity. Other services such as the Students' Union and Learning Support were getting in touch with students prior to enrolment and we felt that we should be doing this too. We wanted to make students aware of the library before they even set foot on campus and let them know that it is a welcoming and friendly place. A

pre-course leaflet was designed, which informed students of several things they could do before they even came to university, such as becoming familiar with the library website and looking at online reading lists. The flyer also told them that library staff would be at freshers' fair and that they would receive a library induction, making it clear where they could get more information and where they could meet us face-to-face.

The pre-course leaflet was distributed in various ways to new students. This was determined through negotiation with each faculty. Methods included postal despatch alongside faculty joining instructions, being collected in person during student enrolment, and placement within freshers' packs. Including the flyer with other materials meant students were more likely to read it, especially as our colourful promotional flyer stood out from the rest.

#### FRESHERS' FAIR



The next stage of our Campaign was attendance at freshers' fair. This is the largest event that our Students' Union holds, with some 15,000 students passing through the Fair over two days. The fair gave library staff the opportunity to have informal, face-to-face contact with students away from the library building, and to create a positive, less-traditional impression of the library. The main aim of the stall was to present the friendly face of the library and to encourage students to make better use of our services. The library's presence seemed to impress many students. Our stall was one of the few that didn't make students pay or sign up for anything, which may have helped.

The main handouts for the fair were colourful campaign bookmarks. The bookmarks featured

six famous Manchester people that students would recognise and be drawn to, as well as providing brief information about the library and the library website address. Stickers were also given away for students to wear, and they were successful in the same way as they had been in Oxford Brookes' campaign: '... they provided a good ice-breaker ('I see you haven't got a library sticker', followed by pasting one on somebody, is a good way of starting a dialogue); they allowed us to see to whom we had already spoken; and they made the 'bright young things' a walking billboard for the library'<sup>4</sup>.

Giveaways were seen as a crucial part of the day; without these the library would not have been able to compete with other stalls. They consisted of MMU library pens, sweets and fortune cookies. The latter were our most popular giveaway. The fortune cookies contained funny sayings about libraries and a select few had a prize-winning message inside. Prizes included vouchers for Manchester shops and cinemas and also some toys and games. The cookies drew a lot of students to the stall as they were curious as to what was contained in the silver foil packets.

Library staff believed our presence at freshers' fair was a huge success:

'I felt we broke down a lot of pre-conceived ideas students may have had about the library and its librarians!'

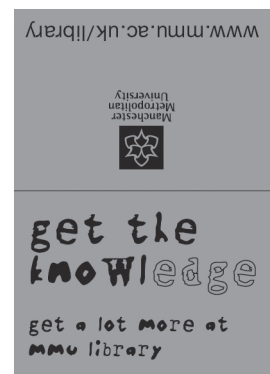
'There was a tangible sense of genuine rapport between library staff and customers.'

'The reaction in general to the stall seemed really positive and people who wouldn't normally show any interest in the library at least came over to have a look, which can only be a success.'

#### LIBRARY WELCOME SESSIONS

For the new Library Welcome Sessions, or induction sessions, our handouts were completely overhauled with the introduction of the new InfoCard. This included key information about the library and was presented in a handy wallet-size.

This concept came from the University of Bath where staff won an award for their introductory



pack at CILIP's Publicity and Public Relations Awards in the year it was launched<sup>5</sup>. Our InfoCard has proved a great success and students have continued to use the wallets throughout the year to house their ID cards alongside the library InfoCard. The wallets have been deemed far preferable to the bulky, overwhelming induction folder previously disseminated at induction sessions. The eye-catching design of the InfoCard is quite busy and so, for inclusiveness, plain text versions of the card were made available online via the library website.

For our actual induction presentations we employed the 'Cephalonian method'<sup>1</sup>, or 'question card approach' which made the sessions more interesting and enjoyable for both our students and also for the library staff presenting the sessions. This method of induction maintains students' interest, and engages them in the session as a means of helping them to remember important information and to have fun.

#### **AWARENESS WEEKS**

As well as delivering an induction presentation to all new students, we also held four awareness weeks at each of our seven library sites throughout the first term. These events served as an additional means of informing new users about key library services and resources. New students typically attend numerous induction presentations in their first week at MMU, taking in large amounts of information prior to the start of their courses, which makes it difficult for them to fully understand and remember what they have been taught. Awareness weeks were designed to address this problem, by delivering bite-sized chunks of information throughout the first term and presenting it to students at the time and in the place they most needed it.

We ran four weekly campaigns that each focused on promoting one specific library service: email; PINs and renewals; catalogue and reading lists; and electronic resources. The campaigns were staggered during the first term (autumn 2006) and were held at times when we felt that the service being promoted was going to be particularly useful and relevant for students.

#### *Awareness week 1: e-mail*

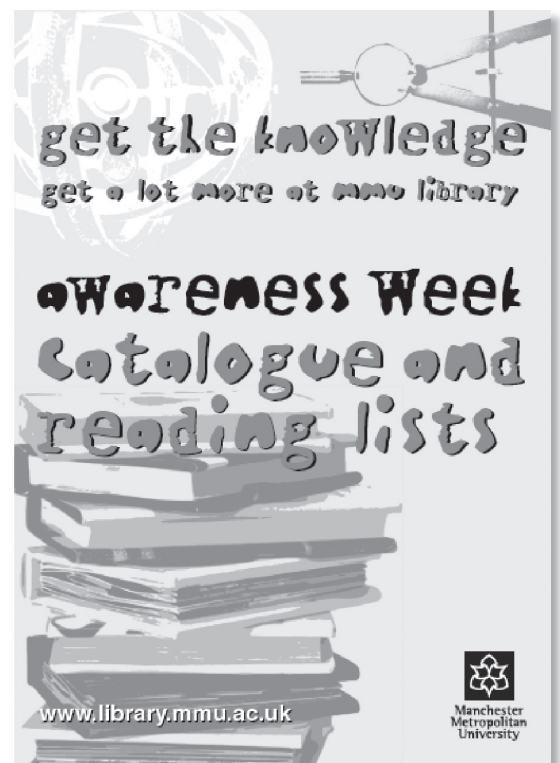
E-mail awareness week was held during week three. It focused on encouraging students early in their course to check their MMU student e-mail account on a regular basis. This would ensure that

they received important communication from the library throughout the academic year. Promotion took place primarily at the issue counter of each site where staff inserted bookmarks into materials as students took them out on loan. The bookmarks provided the web address of the student e-mail service and basic information on how and why students should access their MMU e-mail account.

#### *Awareness week 2: PIN/renewals*

The PIN/renewals awareness week held in week five informed students of the need to obtain their library PIN – a personal identification number which enables them to renew books online and by telephone. The fifth week of term was thought to be the best time to promote off-site renewals as this is when many students would need to renew library materials for the first time. Promotion of this week took place at the enquiry desks and issue counters of each site library where students were given their PIN if they did not already have one. PINs were written on a wallet-sized card which could be kept in their InfoCard wallet.

#### *Awareness week 3: Catalogue/reading lists*



In the eighth week of term the catalogue/reading lists awareness week was held to provide students with information about using the library catalogue and finding their reading lists online. This awareness week was timed just before reading week in order to ensure students were made aware that they could search the library for books



to use off-campus. In the week prior to this promotion, 6000 postcards were mailed to first year students. These postcards provided additional information about accessing the catalogue and online reading lists. Postcards were also distributed to sites for staff to give to students at enquiry desks and issue counters.

#### *Awareness week 4: e-resources*

The final awareness week, held in the eleventh week of term, targeted the promotion of electronic resources and aimed to prepare students for the Christmas vacation by ensuring they were aware of the wealth of library material online. An A5 flyer promoting the 'Electronic Library' section of the library website accompanied the campaign. The flyer was displayed at sites and given to students at service points, where staff alerted them to the fact that the library offers full-text access to thousands of e-journals and e-books.

Each awareness campaign was a themed week for the Library, where tailored posters and screensavers (displayed on all networked PCs) advertised the campaign. All library staff were encouraged to wear stickers and hand out the promotional materials at service points, thus involving everyone in providing students with the selected information.

Previously at MMU only subject librarians were responsible for delivering induction presentations. However, in awareness weeks, as the primary focus of our campaigns was at issue points, the involvement of support staff, who receive many queries from students and have regular face to face contact with them, was considered essential. The involvement of all staff in the promotions was one of the key elements to the success of the awareness weeks, especially as the level of enthusiasm from staff was high, particularly for the first two campaigns which centred around very practical services.

A number of statistics were gathered to measure the impact of the four campaigns. Renewals during the month of the PINs/ renewals week showed a 9% increase in remote renewals compared to the same period the previous year. For the third campaign we looked at the number of hits on the library website (which is where students are instructed to go to access the catalogue and online reading lists), and the number of hits in November rose by over 200,000 hits from the same time the previous year. Similarly, hits for e-books on NetLibrary (which was promoted during our e-resources campaign) increased

threefold in November/December from the previous year. The number of logins and searches run on several databases also rose during this time. Finally, although student use of the university's email system could not be measured by the library, the fact that thousands of email bookmarks were given to students makes it likely that this campaign also made an impact. While several factors may have led to the growing use of the library's electronic resources and services, it nevertheless remains clear that awareness weeks have helped new students understand how to use the library more effectively.

Staff feedback on the campaigns showed that, overall, they enjoyed promoting awareness weeks and believed them to be a success. As the weeks were primarily promoted at the issue counters of each site, staff felt that those campaigns directly related to borrowing books (such as PIN/ renewals) were easier to promote than non-book related campaigns (such as e-resources). Staff did mention that enthusiasm for the campaigns began to decline after the second awareness week, making it more difficult to effectively promote the latter two campaigns. Other factors that prevented staff from promoting the weeks effectively were queues and busy sessions at the counter, difficulty in knowing how to raise the relevant topics in conversation with students, and finding ways to get some users really interested in the messages being promoted.

#### **REFLECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

Some alterations will be made to the Library Welcome Campaign to enhance it for the next academic year. To combat library staff's awareness week fatigue, the number of weeks will be reduced from four to three, by combining the latter two weeks. We hope that by promoting fewer campaigns and spreading them further apart from one another, staff will be more likely to remain enthusiastic for each and every event.

We also hope to incorporate more promotional activities outside the library to reach those new students who are still not setting foot inside our buildings in their first term. We plan to join events organised in faculties by Student Services and student support officers, and also to send emails to all first year students as part of the promotions during each campaign week.

Finally, we are currently looking at revamping our online induction so that it reflects the fun and lively approach of the welcome campaign and

provides induction information in small chunks. We hope to pilot the use of podcast tours for September 2006.

#### CONCLUSION

An overhaul of the old-style library induction campaign at MMU was long overdue. It had seemed increasingly inadequate for serving the needs of today's changing student body and displayed an over-reliance on one sole induction presentation. The new phased programme certainly offers increased contact with the students and greatly extends their period of introduction to our services and resources. They have more opportunities to 'get the knowledge' and hopefully feel most welcome in the library. We must continue to 'break out' beyond the confines of the library to reach new students, and offer as many induction opportunities and methods as possible to help engage with a burgeoning student body which increasingly includes a range of different backgrounds, responsibilities and experiences.

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## Ask the audience: e-voting at the University of Leeds



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#### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

E-voting was introduced at Leeds University Library in 2005 in an effort to explore innovative methods of teaching information literacy, and, with the advent of student fees, to try and improve the student experience. It is generally recognised (for example by Race and Brown) that students have different learning styles, and that the average attention-span of an adult is anywhere between 6 and 20 minutes<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore recommended that there be a change in activity or speaker every 10 minutes, and e-voting seemed a suitable way of introducing this. The anonymity offered was also a factor, as previous experience has shown that trying to involve students in activities where they may answer incorrectly in public does not work. The software also allowed librarians to look at the votes placed and to learn something about the students' knowledge, helping their planning of future training sessions. The library had seen e-voting software and equipment used elsewhere in the university (by the staff departmental development unit) and could see applications for their own teaching. Money was therefore made available by the library and the equipment and software was installed in the largest training room in the library. This is extremely useful as, although the equipment is portable, it is not easy to set up and the wireless transmitters can be awkward. It is preferable to have it installed permanently in a specific location, and

with help from the library systems team not far away.

## CASE STUDIES

First as part of Leeds University Library's information literacy programme, two sessions on tips for finding information for essays are delivered. The second session is intended to build on the content of the first, although students can attend just one out of the two. E-voting was employed for the first time in these sessions to check students' understanding of the content.

E-voting icebreakers were used at the start of both sessions to familiarise those attending with the handsets and it was felt that such elements were really important, but can be difficult to write. It is also advisable not to make the questions too easy: a few wrong answers are good for provoking discussion and revisiting areas that students have not understood. The spacing of questions also needs to be planned. For example, a couple of questions at the beginning and then a series of five towards the end is too many all at once. It is probably better to have a break between questions for slides or other activities.

Points to be remembered when planning an e-voting session are that setting-up the equipment is fairly time-consuming, and it is recommended that 30 minutes set-up time is allowed at the beginning of a session and 15 minutes at the end. Actually writing the questions in the personal response system (PRS) software, rather than in PowerPoint (with a PRS plug-in) is easier for the user, and flipping between PowerPoint and PRS during the session poses no problems and helps to break-up the slides.

Secondly, another case study involved Design students at the end of their second year and the session was intended to make them think about the dissertation they would have to write, in particular, the literature review. The group was made up of mainly twenty-year old students and numbered around a hundred. Given the size of group, and previous experiences of talking to them (which have been quite information-intensive), e-voting seemed the perfect way of checking prior knowledge and breaking up the amount of information for the students in an interactive way. The module leader usually speaks for 40 minutes about what is required, and then the librarian talks about searching for journal articles, search techniques and Harvard referencing. The room is usually very warm and the amount and complex-

ity of information is usually quite large. It is also hard to check how much students have understood from the session. Therefore e-voting was used by the librarian to re-engage the students in the session, to give an indication of prior knowledge and make the students realise that –despite their perception that they already know everything they need to about the library– there are resources and techniques they can use and that there is someone who can help them.

## ASK THE AUDIENCE: QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

The questions asked in the two case studies described above helped librarians to find out what students have learned from a session, or how much they already knew. Questions asked in the case studies above yielded some surprising results and it is possible to gather this data from the PRS system.

In the case of the Design students, the following questions were asked, with some assumptions of prior knowledge, as they were late in their second year. However, after the question had been asked, the material was covered and correct answers given.

- What colour is an elephant?
- Athens is
  - a) a database for searching journal articles. 21% of the vote
  - b) a way of getting into electronic resources. 74% of the vote (correct answer)
  - c) another name for my computer login. 5% of the vote
  - d) a way of accessing the VLE.
- A friend told me that I should read an article published in the November 2003 issue of *Internet guide* – 'The validity of internet questionnaires' by Jennifer Platt. To check that the library has this in stock, I would search in the catalogue for:
  - a) *Internet guide*. 9% of the vote (correct answer)
  - b) Jennifer Platt. 52% of the vote
  - c) 'The validity of internet questionnaires'. 24% of the vote
  - d) Answers 1, 2, 3 are correct. 15% of the vote
- Here are some statements about *Web of science*. Which is true?
  - a) It contains links to the full text of all articles. 39% of the vote
  - b) It only covers science and textiles. 2% of the vote
  - c) It is a way of searching for useful web sites. 16% of the vote

- d) It is a way of searching for references to journal articles in all disciplines. 43% of the vote (correct answer)
- When using databases, certain statements help you get good results more quickly. Which of the following statements is true?
  - a) Using the Boolean operator AND helps you to widen your search. 33% of the vote
  - b) Using the Boolean operator OR helps you to get more focused search results. 25% of the vote
  - c) Using a truncation character (e.g. \*) helps you find alternative word endings. 38% of the vote (correct answer)
  - d) The most useful Boolean operator is OR. 4% of the vote
- Which of the following is correct? When writing a reference for a journal article in your bibliography, using the Harvard system, you:
  - a) Italicise the title of the article. 37% of the vote
  - b) Italicise the title of the journal. 25% of the vote (correct answer)
  - c) Only list the page number(s) which you have referred to in your essay. 13% of the vote
  - d) List your references at the end in the order in which they appear in the essay. 25% of the vote

The results above may be considered surprising, given that these students have been in an academic environment for two years, but similar studies show that the same mistakes are also made by other students at the same level<sup>2</sup>. The responses to the later questions were a particularly good way of making students realise how much they needed the help of a library expert.

#### Future possibilities

A question bank of potential e-voting questions (e.g. on plagiarism), would be very useful and would help encourage colleagues to use the system. These questions need to be carefully thought out as -unless the questions/use of the voting system is made more challenging for students who have already experienced the method- there is a danger that the novelty will wear off and that students may become bored.

Another idea would be to set students an assignment on a specific topic, for example, comparing results from five websites relating to the topic with five results found using Web of Science. Other students could then vote on which presentation was the best stylistically, conceptually and

in terms of accuracy. This would obviously need the agreement of the course tutor, but it could be a way of easing the marking pressure on lecturers. New technologies always bring new possibilities (as well as some of the problems outlined above) and blue sky thinking is required by those brave enough and willing enough to explore these ideas and test them out. Sharing good practice on wikis and websites such as the information literacy website (<http://www.informationliteracy.org.uk/>) will surely increase confidence that such methods do work and increase the potential for new and innovative ideas.

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# Information literacy, the link between second and tertiary education: project origins and current developments

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The research project – Information literacy, the link between second and tertiary education – originated out of a substantial programme of research at Glasgow Caledonian University, some of it inspired by the LIRG/SCONUL Value and Impact Programme<sup>1</sup>. This showed, inter alia, that there is no systematic information literacy training in Scottish schools and that first years students arrive at university without any skills set which librarians can recognise and build on. Questionnaire-based research with current students and alumni also showed that higher education is not an information literacy training ‘terminus’ but a training opportunity for job seeking and a lifetime of work. It began in October 2004 and is still continuing. Full details can be found at the project website <http://www.learningservices.gcal.ac.uk/ils/index.html>.

The project was initially envisaged as an innovative one year (Scottish) national pilot to develop an information literacy framework with second-

ary and tertiary partners which, at the end of the project, could be rolled out to other participants. It aimed to produce secondary school leavers with a skill set which further and higher education can recognise and develop or which can be applied to the world of work directly. It was early recognised that cross sectoral partnerships would be essential to the project’s success and partners have been recruited from all relevant library sectors and contacts and working relationships have been established with relevant NGOs. These include learndirect scotland, Learning and Teaching Scotland and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. The first two are additionally project funders. Scotland is an appropriate ‘laboratory’ in which research and development work can be carried out. The organisation of primary and secondary education is standardised and there is a high progression rate to higher education. The educational system is one of the least socially divisive in the world and because Scotland is a small country with its own education system, identifying and working with key players is relatively simple. The project, however, is careful to avoid parochialism and has UK and indeed worldwide contacts. Progress has been reported both in information and educational journals and conference presentations have been given both here in the UK and abroad.

An initial desk research exercise confirmed the project hypothesis that, despite excellent information literacy training initiatives taking place in secondary schools, activity was patchy and uncoordinated. There was however enough good practice on which to plan a framework. To extend the picture focus groups and interviews were held with school pupils, school librarians, university students and subject librarians all enriching the evidence of a lack of planning and co-ordination.

Circumstances and experience have modified the work of the programme. The initial major project aim was the development of an information literacy framework linking the secondary and the tertiary sectors. The project is heavily dependent on external funding and initially funding came from those with an interest in the post education sector. This led to writing an information literacy learning principles paper<sup>2</sup> (best practice guide) for learndirect scotland’s as part of their new learning principle toolkit<sup>3</sup> and subsequently presenting a masterclass for learndirect scotland’s branded learning centres, and to undertaking an interview based pilot study on information literacy in the workplace for Learning and Teaching Scotland<sup>4</sup>.

Since the project began three new issues have strongly emerged, information literacy in the workplace, the role of information literacy in CPD and policy formulation for information literacy development at (Scottish) national level. The work preliminary to the project emphasised the importance of information literacy in finding work, informing decision making in the workplace and facilitating skill development to improve promotion. This led to the work undertaken for Learning and Teaching Scotland mentioned above. Discussions have also been held with the Scottish Centre for Work Based Learning which has shown that information literacy has a role in work based learning and offers a further research opportunity. It is intended that there will be further research on the workplace information literacy agenda when time permits. The role of information literacy in CPD is also emerging as more importance comes to be attached to learning in the workplace both formal and informal as training budgets decline. Should information literacy be a component for all CPD programmes as more and more information and learning programmes are sourced / available online?

The third strand, advocacy, was a slightly unexpected but in retrospect, inevitable development. The contacts made with relevant NGOs and tentative contacts with the Scottish Executive Education Department showed an enormous need for awareness raising. There was little awareness about what information literacy actually is and most individual NGOs believed either that the issue was being dealt with elsewhere or did not understand what it meant or what could be done about it. The Scottish Parliament's petition system provided an opportunity to address this issue strategically rather than approach individual agencies piecemeal. The Scottish Parliament has a Petitions Committee and any Scottish citizen has the right to present a petition on any subject within the Parliament's responsibilities. This can be done either on paper or electronically via the Parliament's website. The latter option was chosen because it gives the opportunity for interested parties in other countries to sign. The petition text as agreed with helpful Scottish Parliament civil servants was:

'Petition by Dr John Crawford calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Executive to ensure that the national school curriculum recognises the importance of information literacy as a key lifelong learning skill.'

The petition attracted over 700 signatures both from the UK and worldwide and was presented to the Petitions Committee on 21 December 2005. After listening to the evidence the Committee decided to seek the views of relevant NGOs: the Scottish Executive, the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) and Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) plus the relevant trade unions in the teaching profession and the overarching university body (Universities Scotland). Some responses have been favourable but it is clear that the need to identify information literacy as a separate issue in the curriculum is not universally recognised. The responses can be accessed via the project website<sup>5</sup>. The exercise has been worthwhile, because, at the prompting of the Petitions Committee, all relevant agencies have laid out their views on the subject. The most favourable come from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and given the influence this body exerts they may be targeted for specific advocacy. A slightly unexpected benefit of the exercise is that our work has come to the attention of Ofcom Scotland. We are now on their mailing list and have attended two of their seminars with the result that we have been learning about medial literacy which sounds suspiciously similar to information literacy.

At the time of writing Eduserv has just awarded us funding to progress the framework so attention is now concentrating on this area. The aim is to develop a national overarching framework of notional levels of information literacy skills and competencies which all sectors of education can recognise and develop or which can be applied to the world of work. Following discussions with SCQF (Scottish Credit Qualification Framework) development officer and two of SCQF partner representatives (SQA and the higher education sector) the information literacy framework will be developed with project partners from the different learning and teaching sectors using SCQF aims, structure and key features. The framework will:

- define information literacy learning in terms of statements of skills, knowledge and understanding
- support a continuing learning process through identifying a learning pathway within the context of SCQF as part of an educational guidance or personal development planning process
- map the existing learning (and models used e.g. the SCONUL model and models used in schools) that is taking place allocating a notional level to learning outcomes utilising

- relevant reference points such as the SCQF generic level descriptors with the intention of providing a general shared understanding of each level which can then be linked to academic, vocational or professional practice
- enable the notional levelling process and outcomes to become transparent and clearly understood by other learning providers, receiving organisations and or employers to meet the needs of the lifelong learner more effectively
- incorporate and highlight CILIP's information literacy skills and competences definition and SQA's Information Handling Skills Intermediate 11 qualification.

On its completion the next step will be seek funding to pilot it with our partners in the secondary and tertiary sectors. The role of information in the workplace and in training will also receive further attention.

Perhaps overall the two greatest benefits of the project have been to develop specialised expertise and the opportunity to work with a wide range of enthusiastic and highly professional partners.

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- 4 Christine Irving, *Information literacy in the workplace*, 2006. URL (consulted July 2006).

<http://www.learningservices.gcal.ac.uk/ils/workplace.html>

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# Review of how libraries are currently supporting the research process



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At the beginning of the year Loughborough University Library reviewed its strategic plan and decided that it was time for it to be updated. Three groups were formed to investigate both external and internal factors that would influence the strategic path of the library and the services it offered. The groups were to explore: library staff roles and skills; learning and teaching support; and research support. Each group comprised representatives from across the library and at all grades.

The Research Support Strategic Planning Group reviewed the literature for current trends; held a focus group with researchers; and sought comments and views from other institutions so that it could benchmark the library's performance. These

views were solicited by sending out an e-mail to the JISCmail [lis-sconul](mailto:lis-sconul) discussion list<sup>1</sup>.

The Research Support Strategic Planning Group was amazed at the interest the request generated. The group would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who responded to the request for information and apologise in advance if any responses are misrepresented.

Of the 38 responses received, 37 outlined what was happening within institutions. The institutions were a mixture of new and old universities and one other organisation. One respondent drew the group's attention to the newly created CURL-SCONUL joint e-Research for Libraries Task Force and the CURL Research Support Task Force<sup>2</sup>. See Appendix B for a list of institutions that responded.

If the group had been aware of the level of interest, more care may have been taken when formulating the questions. As it was, they were designed to quickly discover what services other institutions were offering to support research, rather than as an in depth review. See Appendix A for the questions. Despite the shortcomings of how the questions were worded, the findings were helpful in discovering where Loughborough was positioned and may be of interest to other institutions.

## **WHO LOOKS AFTER THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF RESEARCHERS?**

Overwhelmingly 50% of the respondents saw meeting the requirements of researchers as the responsibility of faculty / subject / academic librarians. In one case there was a specific member of staff responsible for this but in the light of library restructuring this is to be devolved to 'liaison teams'. One institution provided support through the special collections and e-resources staff. In 15 instances there is either an appointed person or a department with overall or significant responsibility for the needs of researchers, but the impression given was that this was a requirement of the post rather than an all-encompassing role. Duties were variously referred to as being strategic, theoretical, liaison-based and referral-driven with one institution using the term 'functional responsibility' to describe the role. Often the role was not simply library-based but part of the research process within the university as a whole.

Notably, three institutions have recently created the posts of 'head of research and special collections', 'research liaison manager' and 'research



support co-ordinator. Whilst another two utilise working groups of librarians specifically to deal with the needs of researchers – one of these is named the research support functional group.

#### **SPECIALIST ADVICE TO RESEARCHERS**

Specialist advice to researchers was offered by all institutions and fell into the category of one-to-one advice sessions and workshops.

One-to-one specialist advice for researchers is offered by 31 institutions. For the majority of respondents this was undertaken by academic / subject librarians. At least five institutions said the advice services were not heavily promoted. Advice could be divided into:

- answering of e-mail queries
- one-to-one appointments
- surgeries within departments
- drop-in sessions in the library.

Not all institutions offer all types of one-to-one advice (e-mail queries and one-to-one appointments seemed to be the most popular), but at least one institution offered them all.

Very few institutions actually recorded take up of advice sessions. Nine institutions felt the services were well used, four moderately, three not well used and four said it varied and was dependent on the academic departments.

One institution stated that one-to-one advice was available 'on demand' due to lack of resources and a desire not to be 'overwhelmed' following staff restructuring.

Courses specifically for PhD students are run by 34 respondents, and, only two institutions did not offer courses to researchers. Courses ranged from induction to in-depth courses. There was an even split between generic and discipline specific courses on offer. One institution offered courses that were open to all and 18 institutions offer courses as part of a centrally organised research programme either through professional development departments, graduate schools or learning and teaching teams. One institution also mentioned the imbalance between the ease of encouraging attendance at these courses from researchers and new academics as opposed to the older 'more mature academic staff' – all of whom are involved in the research process.

Courses on offer covered topics such as:

- information searching skills
- e-resource / searching particular databases
- special collections
- copyright
- plagiarism
- keeping-up-to date
- managing references using bibliographic software
- effective strategies for publishing.

Again not all institutions offer all the courses mentioned above, but at least one institution offered most of them.

Three institutions stated that they were placing learning material for researchers on the university's virtual learning environment. For example, one institution had created a WebCT programme for new arts and humanities graduate students, covering library use, information searching, copyright, plagiarism and more, called the WISE programme.

#### **WEB PAGES AND/OR LEAFLETS AIMED SPECIFICALLY AT RESEARCHERS?**

Approximately a third of respondents did not offer web pages or leaflets aimed at researchers. The other two-thirds produced a mix of online and/or printed materials with many providing access to leaflets/guides via the web pages or a virtual learning environment. One institution wrote of their decision to concentrate on web page information rather than printed guides due to the convenience of keeping material up-to-date online. Three institutions mentioned that they were considering going down the path of researcher specific materials with impending website overhaul being cited as a reason for not having done so to date. One institution was not convinced that researchers needs were different to undergraduates, but did recognise that politically it may be advantageous to offer a prominent research presence on library web pages.

Four institutions produce resources that include relevant material for researchers although they are not the exclusive target. A small number referred to web pages provided by academic librarians, which were either geared towards researchers or included relevant material.

Web pages and printed materials created specifically for researchers focused on such topics as:

- subject/special collections
- databases
- e-journals
- document delivery
- copyright
- citing references
- study skills
- research methods
- research funding
- Research Assessment Exercise support
- current awareness sites
- information resources.

Libraries with web page support specifically for researchers include:

University of Bristol <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/library/info/research/>

De Montfort University <http://www.library.dmu.ac.uk/Users/Researchers/index.php?page=24>

University of Glasgow <http://www.lib.gla.ac.uk/researchskills/>

Kings College London <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/rglogin.html>

Kingston University London [http://www.kingston.ac.uk/library/using\\_the\\_library/research/index.htm](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/library/using_the_library/research/index.htm)

University of Lincoln <http://visit.lincoln.ac.uk/C4/C13/Researchers/> Loughborough University <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/library/research.html>

Manchester Metropolitan University <http://www.library.mmu.ac.uk/info/research.html>

Newcastle University <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/resin/>

Oxford Brookes University <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/library/researchers.html>

University of Reading <http://www.library.rdg.ac.uk/help/research/index.html>

University of Salford <http://www.isd.salford.ac.uk/subjectresources/research/>

University of Sussex <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/informationfor/research.html>

University of Warwick <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/researchers/>

University of West of England <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/library/info/research>

#### **SPACE, SOFTWARE AND SERVICES SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT RESEARCHERS**

Space specifically for researchers was offered by ten institutions. It took the following forms:

- bookable study carrels
- private study rooms
- specific reading rooms
- dedicated graduate IT Suite.

In 20 cases, respondents did not offer space specifically for researchers, stating that either silent areas were available or that researchers make high use of online facilities thus reducing the need for a special dedicated area. Two sites had offered space specifically for researchers, but usage had been very low and had therefore been withdrawn. Three institutions planned to offer space in future building developments.

There was some confusion over terminology in the question regarding software. Respondents were unsure whether the question was referring to software or electronic information sources. In listing resources, two institutions drew a distinction between electronic resources and software purchased for researchers. Researcher-targeted software was purchased by 23 institutions. Not all institutions responding in the affirmative listed their resources. Of those confirming purchase, 16 have Journal Citation Reports (JCR). A small number of institutions mentioned that packages are not always purchased specifically for researchers, but are more likely to be utilised by this section of users. A number of institutions mentioned that the library is not responsible for all software purchases.

Apart from JCR, the most commonly mentioned resource was Endnote (7) followed by data analysis packages (3) and SPSS (2). Other materials mentioned by individual institutions included the following:

- Bioinformatics
- Chemical Data Service
- Community of Science
- Dissertation abstracts
- Early English Books Online
- Index to Theses
- NVivo
- PapersInvited.com
- Reference Manager
- RefWorks
- Research Fortnight Online
- SciFinder Scholar
- ScienceDirect
- Scopus
- Specific electronic journals
- Web of Science
- ZETOC.

Other services offered to researchers included:

- Institutional Repositories as they are important in raising the profile of researchers by

facilitating and supporting electronic dissemination of their work

- SCONUL Research Extra (SRX)
- generous allocation of interlibrary loans (100 per person per year)
- mediated search services
- Researchers Weekly Bulletin – an email and web based current awareness service (web version <http://www.library.mmu.ac.uk/rwb/index.html>)
- electronic enquiry service leading to direct email/phone contact with relevant subject librarian
- postal service for researchers working off campus.

Several respondents stressed that it was very important for the library to develop good links with academic staff, research groups, university research committees, research departments and professional development departments.

In conclusion, university libraries are offering a wide and varied range of services. No two services are alike and each institution is offering services that suit their readers and the resources available. However, several institutions are reviewing the services they offer, are actively seeking the views of researchers and investigating how to market and promote the services they do offer.

#### NOTES

- 1 JISCmail <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/>
- 2 Consortium of research libraries in the British Isles: Task force on research support <http://www.curl.ac.uk/about/GroupsRS.htm>

#### APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS ASKED

- 1 Do you offer workshops to researchers e.g. Finding research information or using bibliographic software? If yes, how often do you run the courses and what are they called?
- 2 Do you offer one to one specialist advice to researchers? If yes, is this a well used service?
- 3 Do you provide web pages and / or leaflets aimed specifically at researchers?
- 4 Do you have a nominated person or team in the library who specifically looks after the needs of researchers?
- 5 Do you purchase software specifically aimed at researchers e.g. JCR?
- 6 Do you offer library space specifically for researchers?

- 7 Anything I have not thought of or additional services you offer that you would like to tell everyone about?

#### APPENDIX B: LIST OF INSTITUTIONS THAT RESPONDED

University of Aberdeen  
University of Bath  
University of Bristol  
University of Buckingham  
University of Central Lancashire  
University of Chester  
CURL  
De Montfort University  
University of East London  
University of Exeter  
University of Glasgow  
Goldsmiths College, University of London  
University of Hertfordshire  
Heythrop College, University of London  
Imperial College London  
Kingston University  
Lancaster University  
University of Lincoln  
London School of Economics  
Loughborough University  
Manchester Metropolitan University  
Middlesex University  
Oxford Brookes University  
Royal College of Art  
University of St Andrews  
St Martin's College  
University of Reading  
University of Salford  
Sheffield Hallam University  
University of Sussex  
University of the Arts, London College of Fashion  
University College for the Creative Arts, Farnham  
Campus  
University College London  
University of the West of England, Bristol  
University of Warwick  
Wellcome Trust  
University of Wolverhampton

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# Researchers, information and libraries: the CONUL national research support survey



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The second CONUL (Consortium of National and University Libraries) Colloquium in February 2005 included a session on the information requirements of Irish researchers. This session identified the need to conduct a survey to deliver data on researchers' habits and needs in using and finding information and their levels of satisfaction with library services and collections. Although individual libraries commonly survey their own user populations, this was the first occasion on which they collaborated to conduct a national Irish survey focusing on researchers. The group effort proved highly productive, not only in terms of the data generated and resultant agenda for local and national collaborative action but also the pooling of ideas and resources in establishing and conducting the survey.

## **SURVEY PROCESS**

Eight of the CONUL member libraries nominated a representative to a working group established to manage the survey. The libraries involved were:

- Dublin City University
- National University of Ireland, Galway
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick.

The group decided at its first meeting on 10 March 2005 to conduct the survey by means of an online

questionnaire to be emailed to researchers at each institution. This decision enabled lots of efficiencies and made it possible to commence the survey within a month of the first meeting of the group. Indeed only one meeting was needed before the survey started, other business being conducted by email. The use of WebSurveyor<sup>1</sup> software to generate a Web-based questionnaire facilitated testing, implementation of changes and circulation of revised drafts. NUI, Galway, held a licence for publishing surveys with this software and therefore coordinated the drafting of the questionnaire. Other sites were able to download free copies for local data analysis after the completion of the survey.

Establishing the questionnaire generated lots of discussion and called for compromise by each institution. Members debated the range and wording of questions at the initial meeting and subsequently by email, guided to some extent also by models used in previous surveys of researchers and particularly by feedback from the pilot phase. Compromise was needed in order to make the survey work at eight institutions. This applied particularly with regard to the choice of disciplines offered; each institution would have had some variations from the standard chosen but agreed to a limited range of eight disciplines. Another area of debate was the categories of researcher to include. Five categories of staff and student emerged, with taught postgraduates excluded on the grounds that the research component of their studies varied and was typically somewhat less than that of the other groups chosen so that their inclusion would have skewed the results. The final questionnaire<sup>2</sup> had six sections and 34 questions, and focused on:

- demographics
- patterns of library use
- use of, and satisfaction with, library collections
- training needs
- satisfaction with library services
- communication with library staff
- future service development.

Each of the eight institutions conducted the survey during a five-week period in April-May, typically collecting responses for two weeks from different start times according to local preferences, taking into account the impact of exam schedules and concomitant responsibilities on researcher time. The working group met again on 18 May to review the conduct of the survey, discuss general findings and examine how to apply WebSurveyor

to local data analysis. At this stage the focus for each institution was to analyse the data as they applied to that institution. Later in the year CONUL commissioned a report analysing the overall national findings and identifying recommendations. This document<sup>2</sup> is accessible on the CONUL website. An attractively designed digest of key data and recommended actions represents the public face of the survey and has greatly facilitated engagement by local researchers and staff from national funding agencies. Collaboration introduced significant economies of scale in producing the digest especially, with design costs shared and lower unit costs as a result of the much higher number of copies printed for use at eight institutions than would have been ordered by any individual member library.

The key deliverables of the survey have been the establishment of a national benchmark per questionnaire topic and the generation of a clear agenda of priorities for local and, in many instances, collaborative action at national level. Each member library has had access to the national data, enabling it to extract its own questionnaire returns separately and to compare these with the national average for that question or with other participant libraries as required. Each library has identified priority actions from its data but the national data and subsequent discussion have shown that there is much common ground between the libraries. There is plenty of scope for continued collaboration and sharing of experience in addressing issues such as institutional repositories and collection development.

#### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

The survey achieved a response rate nationally of 26%, with 3,221 questionnaire submissions from a target population totalling 12,246 researchers across the eight institutions. Rates per institution varied from 18% to 36%. Collective and institutional response rates were satisfactory and well above the 15% minimum considered adequate for online surveys, generating a good degree of confidence in the survey findings. The excellent range of sponsored prizes attracted by each institution and highlighted in pre-survey publicity undoubtedly helped.

Sampling was not used and a key dependency was the quality and coverage of local email lists. Variations emerged in terms of comprehensiveness, accuracy and granularity. One consequence of note was over- or under-representation of certain groups at some institutions. For exam-

ple, over-representation of research-only staff, the group with highest expectations, may have resulted in lower ratings at an institution. The LibQUAL+ methodology<sup>3</sup> counteracts this by presenting data in the context of minimum and maximum desired service levels. Any future survey of this nature needs to consider LibQUAL seriously, although the greater flexibility of Web-Surveyor in terms of coverage and the simpler layout of its questionnaires proved advantageous in this survey.

Another demographic point to note is that the STM disciplines (science, engineering, health science and computer science) dominated the survey, accounting for 65% of the response. Nevertheless 614 arts/humanities researchers responded, representing 19% of survey participants, the second highest in the survey. WebSurveyor provides for filtering of responses per discipline and this enabled identification of significant differences between the main subject areas. A further question sought to quantify the extent of multidisciplinary research within the survey population. A figure of 44% emerged, the most common combinations being science – health science and arts/humanities – social science. Overall, arts/humanities researchers proved least likely to identify their research as multidisciplinary, the opposite being true for social science, in this survey at least.

In terms of researcher category, there was an even balance between staff (47%) and student (53%) respondents. Within the staff groupings research-only staff represented a significant and, from all evidence, growing proportion, accounting for 28% of the total staff response. The remainder combined teaching and research functions. PhDs dominated the student category, accounting for 75% of its participants. The majority of respondents proved relatively inexperienced, with over 60% engaged in research for no more than four years. This pattern derives in part from the greater percentage of student respondents already noted. A further significant factor, however, is that research-only staff proved clearly less experienced than staff with both research and teaching responsibilities.

#### **KEY FINDINGS**

As noted earlier, the full survey report<sup>2</sup> analyses the data in some detail. This article simply identifies a selection of key findings and implications under certain headings.

### *Staffing support*

- Interaction with the library showed variations by discipline, being lower in science and engineering and higher in arts/humanities, law and social science. Research-only staff tended to be less engaged or familiar with library services. This suggests a need to review the effectiveness and applicability of the subject librarian model across different disciplines and types of researcher.
- The increasingly multidisciplinary nature of research requires libraries to optimise service structures per subject and to maximise team collaboration.
- 70% of respondents indicated that they would value a librarian providing research-specific information services. Half of the libraries in the survey have since established such a post.
- A strongly positive perception of library staff knowledge emerged, providing a good platform for ongoing development of staff skills to meet evolving researcher needs.

### *Information skills*

- Two-thirds of respondents did not see a need for training in the use of information resources. A further question established that the most common reason for not attending the training currently on offer was respondents' view that they did not need it. This mandates an outward-facing review of training coverage and packaging, consulting researchers extensively and targeting specific needs.
- The most popular information skills topics emerged as: access to other libraries; advanced internet searching techniques; managing references and bibliographies. There is therefore an opportunity to give SCONUL Research Extra, Google and End-Note a higher profile in researcher-centred information skills programmes.
- While group sessions were the most popular method of information skills delivery, a third of respondents favoured online tutorials and this figure was noticeably higher in Science and Engineering.

### *Collection development*

- Online journals attracted more frequent use by some margin than their print counterparts and generated higher levels of satisfaction in the survey. This adds impetus to the migration of journal holdings to online format where licensing and access conditions are favourable and there is secure archival coverage.
- Two thirds of respondents perceived that online information reduces the importance of physical collections, but almost 70% of arts/humanities researchers held the opposite view. While the continuing importance of printed resources for arts/humanities researchers needs to be recognised, this discipline also proved the second most frequent user of online information and has enthusiastically welcomed the expanded coverage of IReL (Irish Research e-Library) in their areas.
- Although IReL has greatly expanded the number of journals accessible online, over 1,000 survey participants used the free-text comment box at the end of the questionnaire to specify the need for better journal coverage, including increased online backfile access where possible.

### *Information access*

- Researchers expressed some uncertainty regarding online journal entitlements, prompting efforts to maximise ease of resource discovery through enhancements in catalogue coverage and deployment of linking technologies such as SFX and Serials Solutions.
- Strong satisfaction with library web sites emerged but researchers wanted better access to online information resources and easier navigation. This has increased the importance of maximising the effectiveness of library web sites as portals to well organised and easily navigable collections of online information resources, integrated with specialist portal services like MetaLib.
- The library web site was also seen to have a role in supporting access to printed material through online requesting of closed access stock or article photocopying.

- A third of respondents indicated use of online library services from home but comments pointed to a need for more robust and simplified off-campus access processes.

#### *Service development*

- Over 90% of respondents favoured free online access to their research publications via an institutional repository. This finding has provided valuable support for ongoing library-led local and national open access advocacy and repository development efforts.
- Almost a third of respondents contacted nobody regarding enquiries for information related to their research. Easier access to online information is a likely contributory factor to increased self-service but there is also a need to ensure maximum visibility of, and easy access to, library staff support in person and online.
- Despite a decline in transactions in recent years, three quarters of respondents considered the inter-library loans service important to their research. Their priorities are faster transaction times through increased online requesting and delivery. A quarter of respondents indicated use of alternatives such as contacting authors directly or purchasing via commercial document delivery services.

#### *Funding*

- There was a majority perception that library funding to support research is inadequate. Insufficient journal coverage was cited as the main manifestation, further supporting the nationally funded IReL initiative in addition to efforts to increase local funding.
- Almost 70% of respondents support the view that research grants should assist the purchase of library collections. Turning this sentiment into action presents a challenge but there have been some recent successes in obtaining a share of research grant overheads for library purposes.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The national research support survey has proved an effective collaboration for Irish university libraries. A strong spirit of co-operation enabled the drafting of a questionnaire that met most

needs. It proved possible to complete the survey within three months of the original idea for it and the participation of over 3000 researchers lent confidence to its findings. The survey data have delivered a national average in a range of service areas, facilitating benchmarking by individual libraries. While libraries have used the data for their own action plans, a particular advantage has been the identification of further opportunities to tackle shared issues collaboratively. A clearer picture of researcher habits, preferences and satisfaction levels with services has emerged from the survey and this continues to influence service development. The success of this first venture has prompted a recommendation in the survey digest for a similar survey in 2007.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to acknowledge the insights and inspiration I gained at all stages of the survey process from the members of the CONUL National Research Support Survey Working Group and from my colleagues at National University of Ireland, Galway.

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# Creating a new Social Science Library at Oxford University based on reader consultation

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## A LITTLE HISTORY

The new Social Science Library opened in October 2004 and, together with the adjacent Law Library, forms the hub of library provision for the social sciences in Oxford University Library Services. It was created by bringing together the collections, services and staff from the libraries for economics; politics & international relations; social policy & social work; criminology; and socio-legal studies, in to a new building designed by Sir Norman Foster and Partners. During our first year of opening, social science legal deposit materials from the Bodleian Library were transferred; the International Development Library then moved in the following summer; and expansion continues with the integration of social science materials for Russian and East European studies.

I started my post as Social Science Deputy Librarian in 2000, four years before the new library opened. This provided a good timeframe in which to plan the integration, for example it gave sufficient time to standardise workflows, embed common practice and create a unified staff manual prior to the move. Since its opening, the library has been cited as a notable success within the university, and this article outlines the planning and reader consultation behind its design, and reviews what we should have done differently.

## RESEARCH COLLECTIONS

The new library would need to support the research needs of at least five departments and over twenty research centres; we therefore needed

to collect evidence and consult with faculty to inform our decisions and collection development policies. A series of focus group sessions were held with academics to establish their information needs and working habits. Some profiling on participants in advance of setting up the sessions ensured a representative mix of faculty. Discussion in these focus groups was not 'opinion polling' on how a library and information service should be run, but instead focused on how researchers discover and access information, and the role of different publications and formats within their discipline. These sessions provided some very useful and insightful qualitative information.

Following on from the focus groups, we conducted a web-based survey of information needs and uses to gather quantitative evidence for the collection decisions we would need to make, e.g. what extent of journal backruns should be kept on our open-shelves; to what extent should we collect materials in foreign languages.

Lastly, drilling down from this, the research interests of individuals and research centres were profiled. As well as informing purchasing decisions, stated research interests were translated in to Library of Congress subject headings and these were run against our catalogue to help determine which materials should be pulled from Bodleian closed stacks to our open shelves in support of current, front-line research activities<sup>1</sup>.

## TEACHING COLLECTIONS

Where I wish we had undertaken more reader consultation is with regard to the physical arrangement of the teaching collections. As the new library was replacing the functions provided by both departmental lending libraries and reference-only reading rooms, it was clear that we should adopt a model of providing at least one reference copy of each reading list text, plus multiple lending copies in relation to student numbers (usually one copy for every ten students taking the course, topped up by provision in the college libraries). So far, so good; but we made the decision to have just one book sequence, shelving reference, short loan and normal loan texts together for teaching and research, deciding that the library was not sufficiently big to warrant separate units (175,000 books). This was probably a mistake. Finding texts in high demand now causes real problems for students, and it is clear that they would have preferred a separate reserve room with a core course collection. We



have responded by: numbering all desks and implementing a slip system for items in use; creating a staff-mediated collection of several hundred core textbooks behind the issue desk; prioritising shelving activities; undertaking termly stock-checks; closely monitoring check-out figures and reservation reports etc., but more reader consultation could have avoided this problem.

#### **RECLASSIFICATION**

Each feeder library had its own, local classification scheme, but research and teaching within the social sciences is interdisciplinary and we needed to interfile the different collections in to one integrated sequence. We chose the Library of Congress classification scheme, enabling cost-effective classification according to a globally-recognised scheme favoured by large research and university libraries, with a bias towards the social sciences.

Our main challenge was to ensure that readers could meaningfully browse the reclassified collections by subject, whilst completing the reclassification project within a tight budget and time constraint. Key sections of the local classification schemes were therefore mapped across to the new scheme based on the main departmental teaching and research interests, with the reclassifiers querying items that fell outside this mapping. Parts of the collections particularly vulnerable to being dispersed under the new classification scheme were also identified and ring-fenced for the site-librarians/subject specialists to reclassify. New documentation, e.g. detailed subject-conversion guides that relate old to new classmarks, were created and reclassification parties held for faculty.

#### **GENERAL CONSULTATION**

To inform our planning for new services and the physical space, we looked at the results of library surveys and raised questions at the social science undergraduate and postgraduate joint consultative committees. Feedback was also solicited via our website, which was redesigned, and through poster campaigns, emails, library comments books, leaflets, etc. We also displayed the plans for the new library throughout the different site libraries and invited comments. Unsurprisingly, opening hours was the main concern, and so we open for seven days a week during term and six days a week during vacation. Patterns of use are closely monitored (through the swipe card entrance gate, circulation statistics, and reader counts), and after the first year of opening it was

clear that we needed to adjust and extend our weekend opening hours to be later in the day.

Other factors that came out of the general reader consultation included a concern about queues. The key has been to streamline our workflows, e.g. we don't date-stamp any books; instead students receive an email the day before anything is due back, and, just as importantly, to have flexible staff, e.g. our shelveers carry pagers and are called to the desk when it is busy to help out.

#### **STUDY ENVIRONMENTS**

Study environments were a central consideration of the design for the new library. We have 400 study spaces including: two group discussion rooms; three graduate workrooms; an IT training room; 10 individual study carrels; and a range of open-plan and partitioned seating. To encourage learning and teaching activities to take place in the library, a room booking system for our discussion and IT training rooms was implemented and promoted to faculty. This resulted in 250 bookings in our first year. There are obvious political benefits in having departmental meetings, seminars and tutorials taking place in the library as it brings in academics and researchers who might otherwise not have passed through our doors. To get to the discussion rooms they have to pass our new research book display, our current journal display, our helpful staff, and so on.

The rooms were also booked by students for a range of study groups and revision sessions. Student surveys have shown that a sense of community is particularly important for graduates, and the discussion rooms and graduate workrooms have played an important role in retaining a sense of community in a large, multi-disciplinary space.

#### **GENERAL LAYOUT OF THE LIBRARY**

We tried to design a library with an intuitive layout. Readers often don't have the time or inclination to read leaflets or attend training sessions. The issue desk is at the entrance so anyone entering the library can see where the staff are located. A staff point is available before you swipe into the library for immediate help and to meet and greet with a smile. Reader computers can be seen from the entrance area. Signposting is minimal but effective.

### HELP DESK VERSUS ISSUE DESK

It was clear, looking at reader enquiries and talking with colleagues, that it is a more effective use of staff resources, and easier for the readers, to have just one desk for all transactions and enquiries. The key to making this work is the location of staff offices. Behind the issue desk is the office for the reader services librarian, meaning she is close by for questions and can maintain her awareness of what is going on. Then, around the corner from the issue desk and in the centre of the library, are the offices for the subject consultants. This means that readers can be easily referred on by issue desk staff for research and subject enquiries. In the event that no one is available to provide detailed help on the spot (e.g. during weekends), readers are invited to book a research appointment.

### SHELVING

The speed (and accuracy) of shelving work is a core service for most libraries, and it was imperative that we built a re-shelving area in to the design of the library (not something in the forefront of architects' minds). Our aim was to minimise the number of times each book was handled, and to have just one place to look if a book was not on the shelf. A large block of shelving trolleys, each one of which is dedicated to a particular range of shelfmarks, is therefore located adjacent to the issue desk. Issue desk staff decant returned books on to the appropriate trolley, ready for it to be wheeled away by the shelvers. Despite this we did experience significant shelving back-logs during the first year and received reader complaints. We reacted by implementing a service standard, introducing a chart to record which trolleys were last shelved when, and instigating closer management and the involvement of more staff. The weekly shelving of some 7,000 items is now under control.

### COMPUTING AND REPROGRAPHICS

The library provides 50 computers for readers, all of which are networked to a printer in the photocopy room. Photocopying and printing costs 5p per page and readers pay using the Oxford University common photocopy card. Readers can use our computers for all scholarly purposes: word processing; email; not just 'library' activities. We have a designated no-laptop zone along the south side of the library for quiet study. In the photocopy room we provide staplers, guillotines, hole punchers, etc. and also a free binding machine which is very popular with students. The library

was built without wireless; almost all our desks have ethernet and power points which give a fast network connection. However, reader demand for wireless is increasing, and so wireless is scheduled for the next academic year.

### POST-OPENING CONSULTATION

Towards the end of our first year of opening we held a reader survey to help gauge reaction to the new library and inform planning for the next academic year. We received 655 responses (33% of our core membership) and satisfaction levels were very encouraging. Actions taken in response to this survey included selling stationery from the issue desk and providing a fifth, more advanced photocopier. We have also received some 400 comments in the Library comments book (which I enjoy replying to), and the website received over 70,000 visits in the first year. Reader consultation work continues...

### REFERENCE

- 1 If you are interested in the methodology of this, or in the results, an article was published in *The new review of information and library research*, 2003, written by Mark Janes and Margaret Robb.

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# The use of personal scanners and digital cameras within OULS reading rooms

## Offering a customer focused service for the 21st century

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### INTRODUCTION

During 2005, OULS Reader Services dealt with a steady rise in demand for library users to be able to work with personal scanning devices or digital cameras within reading rooms. At the time, library regulations forbade the use of such devices, insisting that readers used 'library approved' devices which translated as equipment provided by the library for self-use or via a mediated service. However, it seemed timely to revisit the regulations for a number of reasons.

### IT ADVANCES

The development of combined scanners and PDAs and the availability of combined digital camera and mobile phones were already making it increasingly difficult to detect the use of scanning technology within reading rooms. As more everyday electronic devices come with additional scanning/photographic capabilities, it was anticipated that the demand to be able to make use of this functionality would rise.

### EXAMPLES ELSEWHERE

Pressure to approve the use scanning devices and digital cameras intensified following a successful programme allowing the use of digital cameras and phone cameras in the National Archives and research libraries are now re-thinking their regulations with regard to scanning and digital photography in reading rooms.

Below is an e-mail, which is fairly typical of the suggestions being made by library users, asking that OULS should follow the lead taken by the National Archives:

'I'm writing to suggest that the Bodleian make digital cameras available for readers to use in reproducing documents. When doing research in the Public Records Office recently, a friend of mine decided to save money on photocopying by instead taking along a digital camera, with which he photocopied the relevant pages and documents. Not only does this method of reproduction have very low running costs, it is also kinder to the books, since they do not need to be manhandled, or pressed firmly down on the glass of a photocopier machine.'

- Student from Jesus College

### SUPPORTING THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Scanning devices can provide additional support to the research process if they are connected to optical character recognition programmes (OCR). Quotations can be copied straight into bibliographic software, such as Endnote, without the need for readers to retype the information. Some scanning devices, such as the Quicktionary II pens, offer users translation functionality in numerous European languages. These devices enable scholars to read books in languages with which they may not be familiar, without the need to constantly look up words and phrases in dictionaries.

### CONSERVATION ISSUES

In the National Archives model, digital cameras are used without flash and are therefore kinder to books than photocopiers. It requires a camera of at least 4-5 megapixels to produce a result of sufficient definition to be read on screen. These higher end models have settings that produce good results in naturally lit interiors. Books and documents are copied face-up, which reduces the strain on spines and bindings.

The new generation of hand held scanners do not make contact with the page being scanned and therefore do not raise conservation issues. Some scanners, however, make physical contact with the book through a small guide wheel, which helps to position the scanner as it is moved across the book. If functioning correctly, the guide wheel applies an equivalent pressure to a person running their finger under the line of text they are reading. As long as use of such devices is confined to modern materials considered robust enough to be photocopied, it is unlikely that they would cause a deterioration in condition above and beyond normal wear and tear.

#### **THE OULS RESPONSE**

Evidence above suggested that a fresh look at our regulations regarding this issue was required, with a view to refining policy accordingly. Therefore a working party, chaired by the Head of OULS Reader Services, was established to investigate the issues and make recommendations to the senior management group. The working party brought together those with a range of interests and knowledge, for example – copyright, conservation and reading room supervision.

The working party recommendations strived to maintain a balance between the need to move forward on allowing the use of personal scanning devices or digital cameras on one hand, against other internal considerations on the other. As the Bodleian Library is a legal deposit library, it was imperative that we did not allow the use of any equipment that might have the potential to damage collections, however minimal. The impact on front-line reading room staff was debated, in particular the potential time which would be expended in ‘policing’ the activity to ensure that hand-held devices were used appropriately in terms of the type of equipment used, the type of material scanned and that legal requirements related to copyright and commercial use were upheld. Consideration was given as to whether readers should be expected to register the use of personal equipment within the reading rooms they used, and a register maintained. However the complex structure of OULS, with 34 different libraries, and many readers using a number of these, rendered such a bureaucratic approach impracticable.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following were the main recommendations to emerge from the Working Party investigations:

- All hand-held scanners and digital cameras could be used with the exception of flat bed scanners (it was not easy to reach a consensus on the flat bed scanners issue, but caution won the day regarding opinions on the likelihood that such equipment might damage stock)
- The use of flash photography would be forbidden at all times
- Material published pre-1900 would not be allowed to be scanned personally nor photographed digitally (this falls in line with OULS policy which states that pre-1900 material cannot be used on self-service photocopiers)
- Digital photography and scanning would not be used in libraries or reading rooms dedicated to special collections or rare manuscripts
- Guidance on copyright and making digital copies would be displayed prominently in reading rooms where the service was permitted and on the OULS website
- Individual OULS libraries could determine whether they wanted to set up specific scanning areas or allow scanning anywhere in their reading rooms. Decisions would be based on local need, the layout of the library and the potential for material to be consulted within that reading room which fell outside the regulations on what could or could not be scanned.

The senior management group approved the recommendations presented by the working party. It was decided that we would launch the use of personal scanners and digital cameras as a pilot scheme for six months from 1 October 2005.

#### **EVALUATION**

At the end of the six month period, it was decided that the pilot scheme had been a success. There was no evidence of a huge rise in the use of hand held scanners and digital cameras. However a number of readers, previously frustrated by the former regulations, appreciated this facility. Apart from the occasional transgressor, eagerly spotted by reading room staff, readers have abided by the regulations and there is no evidence that any material has been adversely affected. Nor is there evidence to suggest any significant impact on lost revenue from photocopying and imaging services.

The knowledge of the existence of the pilot scheme generated interest from the Bodleian Map Library, originally excluded as a special collec-

tions library. A subsequent investigation, with advice from a senior manager from our conservation and collections care department, has resulted in readers in the Bodleian Map Library being allowed to use digital cameras, but not hand-held scanners.

Other issues have surfaced during the duration of the pilot project. For example the 1900 cut-off date, whilst fine for monographs, appears somewhat arbitrary for newspaper runs – an issue we are currently investigating.

In conclusion, the use of personal scanners and digital cameras in accordance with the guidelines and regulations described above, is now permitted as a mainstream activity. Thus portable scanning devices and digital cameras are allowed as approved devices under OULS regulation 9 (Readers must use only library-approved facilities to photocopy, photograph, or scan material in the library).

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## Copyright, digital resources and IPR at Brunel University



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### INTRODUCTION

Like most educational institutions, recent changes to copyright law and licensing schemes, and the increased use of e-learning environments and e-resources, have thrown copyright to the forefront of strategic planning at Brunel University. Copyright management is by no means new to Brunel, but it has rapidly evolved from a role which the university was previously able to adequately manage, by sharing the responsibilities for licence administration and copyright advice within the existing staff infrastructure. However, it became increasingly apparent that it was no longer adequate when faced with an increasingly intricate licensing and legislative framework.

In order to meet the challenges of this new era, Brunel created a brand new post – Copyright and Digital Resources Officer. To Brunel's credit, there was a great amount of support for the post, not just from the library, but at senior management level and from all the key support departments – Computing and Media Services, the Learning and Teaching Development Unit, and the e-Learning team. This is a key element in making any university-wide role a success, as it promises commitment and co-operation.

The post was created in the library, reporting directly to the director of library services. The rationale for positioning it in this way rather than in the registry alongside records management or the e-Learning team, as the core of the role is providing copyright support for teaching and learning. This has been justified as I have found that most queries come from academics, directly,

or via their subject liaison librarians. The library naturally occupies a central and often neutral position within any university and is often the first port of call for any question – library or non-library related.

Over the past eighteen months I have attended several conferences and events – all copyright related of course – and met fellow colleagues, who like myself, have copyright responsibilities in their respective institutions. Most, but not all, are information professionals, and interestingly, none of those I have asked are legally qualified! Some currently combine records management and/or freedom of information roles with copyright, some are library-based, while others are based within academic schools – there seems to be no consensus.

Anecdotal evidence from casual conversations with my new acquaintances, suggests that many have often become accidentally responsible for copyright either because there was no one else looking after it, or inadvertently acquired the responsibility when they happened to display some knowledge about a copyright related topic. I have no such excuse, as it was a deliberate decision on my part to specialise in copyright issues, after I successfully applied for Brunel's copyright and digital resources officer post when it was advertised late in 2004. It was the second time the post had been advertised, which implies a reluctance on the part of information professionals to take their careers forward in this direction. I missed the first two cries for help from Brunel simply because I was busy balancing a full time job and study for a library qualification at London Metropolitan University and had therefore missed a few issues of Library + Information Update, where professional posts are often advertised.

I receive many requests for information for a copy of my job description, and details on what my role involves exactly – which implies that many universities have also recognised a greater need for specialist staff to manage copyright and intellectual property rights issues as their sole responsibility.

#### **SO WHAT DOES A COPYRIGHT AND DIGITAL RESOURCES OFFICER DO?**

The most obvious place to begin is perhaps with the job title. Although it is a bit of a mouthful, it was important to distinguish the role from that of the electronic resources librarian who is responsible for negotiating electronic journals

and database licensing agreements. 'Copyright' is self explanatory – in its simplest term I provide a copyright consultancy service to Brunel staff and students. 'Digital resources' was included to make it clear that a major part of my role was to support the e-Learning team, whose support was instrumental in getting the bid for the post approved.

I took over the administration of the university's copyright licences from the university's records manager, who historically was the licence coordinator with the CLA. Queries were fielded in the past by library staff or even academics with some knowledge of the issues. The core users of the copyright consultancy service are the library, the Schools and the e-Learning team. However, I also provide support to non-academic departments, from Brunel International who provide support to international students to Computing and Media Services. I can't exactly describe a typical day – I am often found running all over campus visiting staff in other buildings, attending meetings, providing training. However I can describe my typical activities – when I'm not running around the campus, I advise on permitted uses of copyright material under the law or licences, undertake copyright clearance, staff development training on all issues copyright, and disseminating information via guides, posters, library web pages, and articles in university newsletters.

#### **FIRST STEPS**

As the post was completely new to Brunel, I had to carve a role for myself, based on an assessment of Brunel's needs, gained from talking to all the key stakeholders in Schools and support departments. This had both positive and negative aspects – on the one hand I had the complete freedom to shape the role and develop my aims and objectives, while on the other there was no opportunity to coast on the expertise of those who had gone before. However, I found that the director of library services who already had an excellent grasp of the issues had formulated initial targets to help me along.

When I arrived in January 2005, it all seemed quiet at first. However, this 'honeymoon period' lasted about three months after which queries steadily trickled in, as staff and students became aware of the service I provided. However the quiet period was vital as I was able to familiarise myself with Brunel policies and procedures, as part of my induction into Brunel culture. Crucially, I was also able to use that time to develop a copyright strategy, clear aims and objectives, procedures

and documentation for recordkeeping, copyright clearance, and to expand upon the library's copyright web pages. Helpfully these had been set up by the library which hired a consultant to create basic guidance which could then be expanded on.

With the advent of the Copyright Licensing Agency's trial higher education scanning licence, one of my first duties was to investigate the scope and cost and potential usefulness of the licence for Brunel. Based on my recommendations, we opted to sign up for the trial period and were able to secure the additional funding. The next step was to devise an action plan for its implementation including devising step by step procedures for academic staff, and publicising the benefits of the licence to academics and communicating the procedures. I needed to establish a contact within each School, facilitated by the e-Learning team to collate records, and forward to me.

#### **ISSUES IMPACTING COPYRIGHT STRATEGY**

As in any institution, this is no simple task. This was further complicated by the fact that Brunel had undergone a major period of structural change shortly before my arrival, where disciplines were simultaneously regrouped and shifted from a departmental to a school-based structure, to which staff were still adjusting. In addition, there was an imminent upgrade planned for WebCT, the virtual learning environment. In fact, the term upgrade is not really accurate - the differences are so great as to warrant retraining for all e-learning developers. It was effectively a change of software, jumping from WebCT Campus Edition, to WebCT Vista 4, skipping several versions in between.

The new platform promised to be very exciting, allowing greater control over access, tracking and reporting, and facilitated content sharing which provided an ideal environment for managing copyright materials under the CLA scanning licence.

The e-Learning team effectively adopted me as an honorary member of the team and included me in training when they were learning how to use the new system from the start so that I would have a holistic view of the capabilities of the system. This has effectively informed my procedures on managing copyright materials and the training I provide to e-learning developers.

Understandably, with all these changes afoot, uniformity of policies and practice between

and within Schools was absent. However, the requirements for comprehensive recordkeeping and data reporting under the scanning licence required uniformity in terms of implementing it and understanding of how it operated. I set about creating procedures that would meet the university's obligations under the licence, while being workable for Schools, without dictating how they should manage it internally. The model developed was a combination of a centralised and devolved approach - which at first seems paradoxical, but in reality, allowed Schools to manage the scanning process, leaving authorisation of scanning and record keeping to me. In practice, academics or School administrators would first contact me to authorise their reading lists for scanning. I would then record the data, leaving very little for Schools to do other than arranging for the scanning to take place within their existing resources.

#### **ISSUES WITH IMPLEMENTING THE LICENCE**

The arrival of the scanning licence later than forecast (in September 2005) was too late to catch preparations for the new academic year. In a post-mortem analysis of the first year of the operating the licence, we found that take up has been very low, for three main reasons.

Firstly, publicity of the licence was kept fairly low profile - we did not wish to promise more than we could deliver and we were aware that as Schools would largely have to undertake scanning themselves it was best to secure pilot subjects, focused on those Schools with the greatest WebCT presence. Also the terms and conditions were confirmed too late to catch course preparation for the new academic year, which takes place fairly early in the summer.

Secondly, there were no centralised scanning facilities in place to ease some of the workload for Schools. All the Schools had scanning equipment, as I found in a survey of photocopier and scanning equipment in the summer of 2005, but this equipment was for desktop use and not suitable for bulk scanning. In some instances, I found that staff were unaware of the facilities available within their Schools. Others simply did not have the time, as they were already juggling teaching, research and administrative duties or lacked training to use it. Many scanned materials often require editing with photo editing software like Adobe Photoshop to remove shadows or pen markings and shrink files sizes, and software like Adobe Acrobat Professional to add the copyright cover sheet in PDF format. These packages are

typically not available within existing budgets as networked software on standard PC builds, and require individual licences paid for by departments.

In some Schools, administrators were able to take on responsibility for scanning – but in others, academic staff had to take this on themselves. The new electronic document supply service for digital copies under the CLA licence being piloted by the British Library, and the similar service offered by HERON with additional copyright clearance service are two options we are considering for the future.

The third element influencing the low take-up at Brunel is the licence repertoire. It certainly offers more than we had before: however, many academics are disappointed when they discover that the licence still does not offer a comprehensive alternative to providing printed course packs or a complete e-version of what they produce in print – it only covers UK published materials, and does not cover any materials in digital format. Therefore, academics are faced with providing only a portion of their readings in their e-modules, and some in printed course packs.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ROLE**

On analysing my queries log, after the first nine months, I became aware that 12% of queries were on intellectual property rights related issues. Many centred on users seeking clarification of Brunel's intellectual property rights policy. After further investigation, and a paper to the university's information strategy group, it was agreed that the university's policy needed tightening up, and an intellectual property working group was established, with members drawn from senior management, academic schools, including legal expertise, and myself as the library and e-Learning representative. The group's remit is ultimately to produce a clear and widely disseminated policy. It has begun to examine current IPR policy and practice, and the types of contracts made between the university and its staff and students of all groups – temporary and permanent, academic and non-academic, project-based. The group has proposed to undertake an information audit to determine Brunel's intellectual property assets, with the aim of producing disseminated policy.

Liaising with colleagues at other institutions is also another part of my role. Unfailingly, I have found external colleagues at other institutions to be extremely helpful and keen to share knowl-

edge, experiences and documentation, and have found the JISCmail lists, in particular LIS-COPYSEEK, to be invaluable as a source of information, advice and debate. I have tried to reciprocate by sharing our experiences at Brunel, and have given talks on our implementation of the scanning licence at workshops run by CPD25 and Middlesex University.

#### **DO TRY THIS AT HOME, BUT REMEMBER...**

Set up recordkeeping procedures from the outset – there is no manual for doing this, but a good working knowledge of spreadsheet and database software packages is the best way to manage this, as it is important to have electronically searchable records. Log all queries received, including dates and names or departments of requesters where possible. This will give you insight into the particular issues at your institution and also give an indication of busy periods and of frequently asked questions which can be very useful fodder for developing user education sessions and writing guidance and support materials for staff and students.

Make friends with the good and the great at the institution – this is crucial for obtaining support for expensive licensing schemes, and perhaps extra support staff!

Be approachable, helpful and flexible – librarians, academics and administrative staff will all appreciate it greatly. When you have to give bad news about the intended use of material, it helps to provide an alternative solution or suggestion whenever possible, or offer a clearance service for very important requests.

But...don't bite off more than you can chew – there is a snowball effect which kicks in very soon after the honeymoon period, once staff realise you are there and they can pass on anything remotely copyright related to you. Clear, support materials and web pages come in handy then – try to automate the more routine procedures early on.

And...I always attach a disclaimer to any advice I give verbally and in writing, ('in my opinion' or 'my interpretation of' are phrases I use constantly) and I always explain the basis for my view, with reference to the relevant statute or licence clause where there is doubt or a greater element of risk so that my inquirers have enough information to make an informed decision themselves.



## NEXT STEPS

I will be busy in the autumn term as Brunel has been selected to participate in the CLA Photocopying Survey. And we will continue with our user education programme of providing training on copyright issues in e-learning with the aim of reaching all WebCT developers. Raising awareness of the copyright issues, and of my services are the main objectives of the training.

## SO DO YOU REALLY NEED A COPYRIGHT OFFICER?

Universities such as Sheffield Hallam, Loughborough, Strathclyde, to name only a few, and the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) have long been aware of the need for copyright specialist staff. They have actively raised awareness of copyright issues and tried to prepare higher education institutions for the increasing complexities in copyright licensing for education but many institutions have been slow to take up their recommendations, perhaps partly because creating new posts is challenging at a time where funding within higher education is more difficult to obtain.

In research-led universities, a lot of collaborative research is taking place in conjunction with commercial organisations, and many universities are now seeking to exploit innovation commercially. The issues are only going to become more complex, so, if you haven't already got one, it's probably time to go shopping for a copyright officer.

To anyone considering specialising in copyright, it is often very challenging to unravel the intricacies of the law and licensing in relation to any number of situations that you may be presented with on any given day. Whether you manage to find the answer or not, it is very rewarding. You are constantly learning, and I could not imagine doing anything different.

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# Secure electronic delivery: 'get the world's knowledge with less waiting'

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Napier University Learning Information Services' (NULIS) move from the conventional mode of document delivery to Secure Electronic Delivery (SED) was prompted by a letter in March 2005 from the British Library Document Supply Centre (BLDSC) offering access to the 'world's knowledge' delivered to the desktop within 24 hours. The British Library acknowledged that the number of document supply requests has reduced significantly, due in part to the growth of e-resources available via the 'big deals.' The move to electronic delivery would enable them to make efficiencies and keep costs down for libraries; we couldn't resist.

Fifteen months on and the system has bedded down enough to enable us to reflect on our experience and draw some conclusions on the efficacy of it from both a user and a library perspective. Given the number of requests involved, the consensus was that we should face the challenge head on and process all requests electronically rather than trial the service with a selected user group<sup>1</sup>. However, this approach raised a concern that a particular user group might be disadvantaged and it was difficult, in the abstract, to predict who this would be or where this difficulty would occur. Therefore, in order to protect both the user and the library, we issued SED instructions to students and staff with a caveat: the new method of document delivery was our 'preferred' default option, but if any user experienced difficulty, we could revert to the old system of requesting the BLDSC to print and post articles directly to the user. In practice, if a problem occurs the solution is often a hybrid of both: the member of staff opens the electronic document and if necessary prints it out. One obvious change is that users now incur

the cost of printing and not the library. We have found, as in many other areas of learning information services, user experience and expectation is changing and printing out the document has not hitherto proved to be a problem.

As acknowledged in a recent article, 'ILL staff do not have the expertise to solve IT-related problems' and we did indeed encounter technical difficulties during set up of the new system<sup>2</sup>. We were assured by our IT department that all student PCs were compatible and complied with the British Library request that they have Adobe reader version 6.0 or above. However, we were not aware that in order to activate the Digital Rights Management function automatically and to ensure the seamless loading of the document (after the obligatory test document is run) it is necessary not only to have 6.01, but to have the enhanced version of 6.01 – we now know there is one! As predicted, for the majority of our users it was indeed seamless but since students are not permitted to download software, the group using student PCs without the correct version of Adobe encountered difficulties opening their documents. A programme of re-imaging last summer ensured that all computers complied with Adobe Reader version 7 which has now resolved any technical difficulties in that area. On reflection there is an argument for the BLDSC to deal with institutional IT departments direct when libraries encounter purely technical problems.

Whilst conceding that staff may be challenged by IT related matters, they have on the other hand had to master a new and quite different set of skills from those required to operate the traditional service. If the document fails to open, staff troubleshoot to identify the problem, and then decide whether it can be resolved by the department or referred to another party, and to whom: is the problem at the BLDSC end or is it local to the university? Staff must then take on the role of intermediary between the BLDSC and the institutional IT department whilst all the time offering reassurance to the end user.

Many of our readers are delighted with the speed and efficiency of the service and it is of particular benefit to distance learners. We do nevertheless acknowledge that some readers experience unexpected and inexplicable failures, even after having encountered no previous problems. It is of little comfort to the one user unable to access his or her document that 98% work with no difficulty. It is our view that crucial to the success or failure of SED is an element of human intervention as

standard practice. At worst, staff involvement means identifying problems, talking the user through it and if necessary contacting IT. At best, it involves keeping a wary eye on the process and only intervening if necessary. There is anecdotal evidence that reader confidence in SED can be fragile so, in addition, staff offer reassurance that the system works and ensure that users feel comfortable enough with it to continue. In a large institution with few dedicated staff we acknowledge that it may not be possible to resource this level of support, but we at Napier University feel that our approach helps maintain a high quality of service. In addition, users are reminded of their responsibilities in the process: to always check their university email; to be aware of the 14 day time period; to clear out their folders and files; and not to order a document before going off on holiday. Staff monitor 'out of office' messages and if necessary intervene so in effect we offer a customised service. Taking the long view, there may come a time when SED becomes the norm and we will be able to be more hands-off.

In conclusion we are confident that it was right and timely to accept the BLDSC's challenge but acknowledge that the number of requests we process and being a medium size organisation are contributory to NULIS' successful implementation of SED. Our next challenge is to operate the whole of the document supply service through the Aleph library management system. We recommend any library thinking of implementing SED to go ahead but be prepared for interesting times.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Total of 1166 of which 852 were delivered via SED for the period April 2005 to May 2006 (one member of staff assigned to ILL duties)
- 2 Lobban, Marjory, 'ILL, a dying breed or a brand new? The experience of Edinburgh University' *Interlending & document supply*, 2006, 34, p15-20

# Introducing federated search at LJMU: impact on usage statistics and user perceptions



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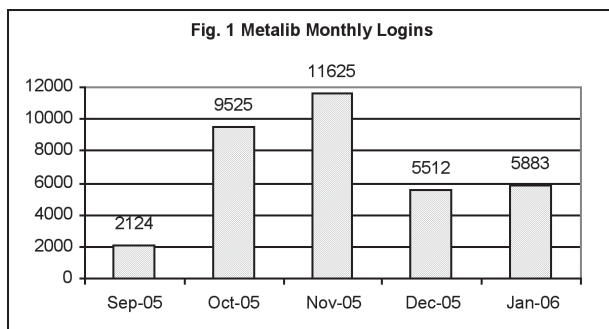
The process of enhancing access to electronic resources at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) began in 2003 when, following the tender process for a new library management system, we purchased a suite of products from Ex Libris. These included MetaLib, the federated search or library portal system and SFX, Ex Libris's link-resolver. The strategic aim, articulated in our strategic plan for 2003-2008, was to provide seamless access to both print and electronic collections and help demonstrate value for money by increasing e-resource usage by 50%. In addition to monitoring the hard evidence from usage statistics, we were also keen to learn more about the awareness, perceptions and preferences of users in terms of access to and their usage of electronic information. It was hoped that the implementation of MetaLib and SFX would increase users' awareness of electronic services. To test this assumption two questionnaires based on models from the E-valued evaluation toolkit<sup>1</sup> were distributed, the first shortly before MetaLib was launched in 2005, and the second in spring 2006, when MetaLib had been available for approximately six months. This paper summarises our statistical findings and the

effect on user perceptions following the implementation of MetaLib and SFX.

## IMPACT OF SFX AND METALIB

SFX and MetaLib have brought about significant changes in the way LJMU users interact with electronic material. SFX was launched in May 2005 and assists users in navigating from the bibliographic records or abstracts of articles, to the full-text, where available. The SFX button  appears next to results in a number of databases, for example, the library catalogue, MetaLib and various online databases. By following the link provided by the button users are directed to the relevant article.

MetaLib was introduced to students in the autumn 2005 user education sessions but as we were not implementing the full system capabilities our promotion was fairly low key. The system offers users a portal to electronic resources relevant to their own area of research and interest. Through MetaLib, users can simultaneously search compatible e-resources via QuickSets<sup>2</sup>. The statistics for the number of searches performed on MetaLib demonstrate its immediate popularity as a search tool (Fig. 1). The total number of logins was high and, encouragingly, the average number of logins per user rose steadily in the months following implementation.



**Table 1 Average logins per user**

Sept 05	Oct 05	Nov 05	Dec 05	Jan 06
3	5	10	14	13

SFX has also had an instant impact on user searching behaviour. SFX simplifies the process of moving from the abstract of an article in databases such as Medline, to the full text of the same article, for example in ScienceDirect. While the usage statistics for SFX itself cannot demonstrate the relevancy of items returned, they still provide an indication of the level of use and the ease with which SFX has become part of the user

searching experience. In its first month (May 2005), SFX linked users to 426 fulltext articles but SFX really only came into its own once MetaLib was launched and during October 2005, the first full month of MetaLib use, users were linked to 21,498 fulltext articles.

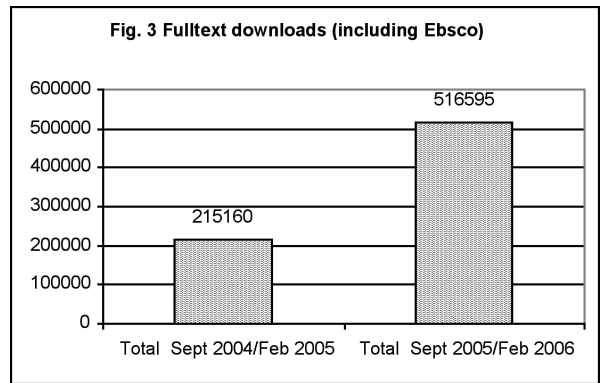
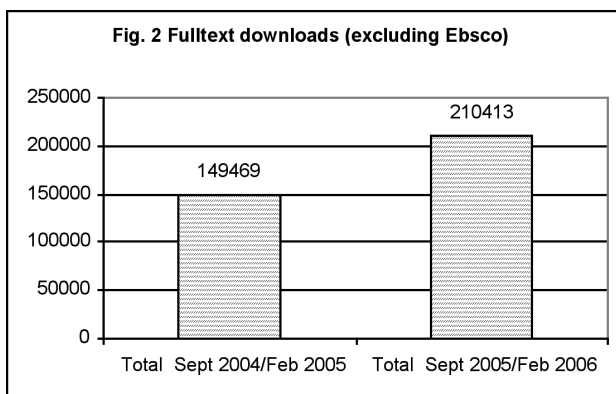
Users quickly started to recognise the green SFX button and navigate from abstracting databases to the full text, as shown by the number of articles obtained from ScienceDirect as a direct result of the use of the SFX button in other resources:

SD linking	Aug-05	Sep-05	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06
Ex-Libris SFX	141	388	945	1105	429	760	1163

**INCREASED USE OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES: THE STATISTICAL EVIDENCE**

To evaluate the impact of MetaLib, a comparison study was carried out on a selection of full-text resources. Statistics from the six-month period from September 2005 (when MetaLib was launched), to February 2006, and the same period from the previous year (September 2004 to February 2005) were examined. To ensure equality in the comparisons, where statistics were not available for some resources or certain months, the corresponding statistics for the preceding or following year have also been omitted.

The download figures for the periods September 2004 – February 2005 and September 2005 – February 2006 show an increase of 40% in fulltext downloads<sup>3</sup>. However, this excludes some of LJMU’s most popular aggregator resources, Academic Search Premier and Business Source Premier (both supplied by Ebsco), which are not included in statistics collated for the SCONUL returns. If the statistics from these resources are included then the fulltext download figures increase by 140%.



The inclusion of a database in a MetaLib Quickset has a significant impact on the usage of individual electronic resources. Generally speaking, the more Quicksets in which a resource appears, the higher the increase in usage over the two periods examined. Below are the figures for the two-fulltext databases appearing in the most Quicksets:

Resource name	No. of Quicksets	Increase in downloads
Academic Search Premier	7	686%
Swets	4	164%

It is interesting to note that not all the statistics collected from individual resources are on the increase and some resources are showing a decline in use. For example, Cambridge University Press full text article downloads declined by 20% over the two periods studied. The resources which are suffering are those which are either not configured to be cross-searchable in MetaLib, or do not currently appear in the pre-defined MetaLib Quicksets. Our findings indicate that cross-searching via MetaLib does lead to increased usage statistics. It may well be in the suppliers’ interests to work towards compatibility with federated search services as the decisions on cancellation or retention of e-resources tend to be based heavily on usage. We also recognised that information professionals need to ensure users are aware of the use of MetaLib beyond the Quickset front screen.

MetaLib has been popular and successful at LJMU and has made users more aware of the full range of information that is available to them. Further

analysis of the statistics will dictate to the way in which MetaLib is taught and promoted, focusing particularly on features not highly visible to the end user.

#### USER PERCEPTIONS OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

During the period October to December 2004 and again from January to March 2006 an identical questionnaire was issued to students and staff at LJMU. We wanted to learn more about the awareness, perceptions and preferences of users, in terms of access to and their usage of electronic information and to observe the impact (if any) of the launch of MetaLib and SFX on the use of e-resources and any changes in user behaviour.

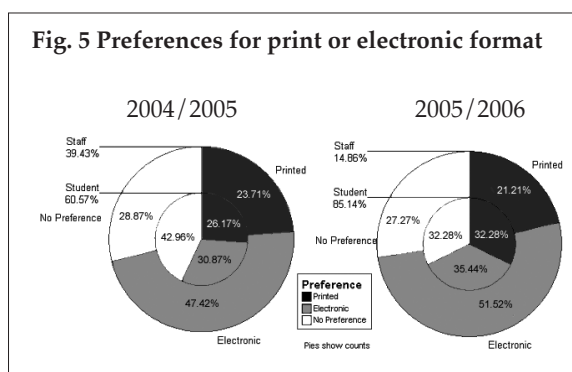
The first questionnaire attracted 246 responses, 39% from staff and 61% from students while the second questionnaire yielded a slightly lower return of 226 responses, 15% from staff and 85% from students<sup>4</sup>. We were interested in how users found out about the availability of e-resources, whether they preferred print or electronic formats and whether their awareness and preferences changed after the implementation of MetaLib and SFX. The first question asked how users found out about electronic resources and provided a list of options. Direct instruction, either by LIS staff or by course tutor, was the most popular choice each time. This has reinforced our impressions that we need to keep academic staff well informed and up-to-date with developments in electronic resources.

'No preference as long as I can get hold of the information' (2004/05)

'I use what is available. Electronic can be easiest in terms of time to access, but not so easy to find something specific' (2005/06)

The preference for electronic resources among staff was high in 2004/2005 (47.2%) and this increased to 51.52% in 2005/2006.

It is worth noting that there was some confusion (particularly in 2004/2005) as to what constituted an electronic resource and what constituted a print resource. Some respondents felt that once something had been printed off it was print (even if its origins were as an electronic document). A few comments in each year indicated that electronic journals are popular and convenient, but that there is some resistance to reading e-books on screen.



**Fig. 4 How users found out about information resources**

2004/05		2005/06	
LIS staff	35%	Tutor	39%
Induction session	20%	LIS staff	21%
LJMU Web site	15%	Induction session	20%
Tutor	14%	LJMU Web site	6%
Posters and leaflets in the LRC	6%	Another student	5%
Poster elsewhere	6%	Posters and leaflets in the LRC	2%
Other	5%	Other staff	2%
Another student	3%	Other	1.5%
Do not know about resources	2%	Do not know about resources	1%
Other staff	1%	Poster elsewhere	0.5%

#### PRINT OR ELECTRONIC: USER PREFERENCES

We asked users whether they had a preference for print or electronic information, or if they had no preference (Fig. 5). The overall preference in both years was for electronic material, but in each questionnaire a significant number of users appeared comfortable using both, e.g.:

## CONCLUSIONS

MetaLib and SFX have greatly increased the usability of electronic resources, and have quickly become an integral element in user search strategies. Within a year of its implementation users cited MetaLib as their third most frequently used resource, just behind Blackboard and E-Journals. Internet users now expect Google-like results from all of their searches and they expect a link to take them to the full text of the article they are interested in. Together, MetaLib and SFX are beginning to provide a more seamless interface to users and as a result are proving very popular. MetaLib clearly meets user expectations of what a search tool should look like and how it should perform. Since its launch at LJMU in 2005 usage figures for MetaLib have continued to surpass expectations and the databases included in MetaLib Quicksets have seen large increases in use. We feel that our original objectives have been fulfilled and that we are likely to see further enhancements to our services when the new version of the MetaLib software is implemented in autumn 2006.

## REFERENCE

- 1 <http://www.evalued.uce.ac.uk/index.htm>
- 2 Quicksets are lists of resources grouped together broadly by school or faculty, created as a result of consultation with the subject information officers.
- 3 Downloads from resources included in the SCONUL annual return.
- 4 Unless otherwise stated analysis given concerns student respondents only.

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# The electronic information desk at Leeds Met



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The electronic information desk is the email enquiry service for the library at Leeds Metropolitan University and has now been in operation for five years. The service was set up following a review and redesign of both the library's provision for supporting students off-campus and of its web pages. The service started as a pilot project in September 2001 and it was decided after one semester to continue it on a permanent basis

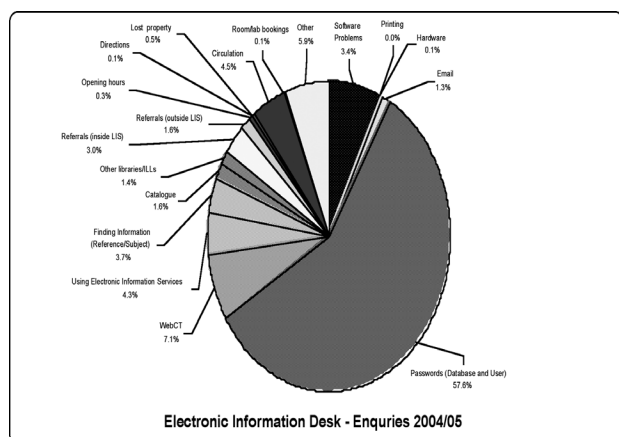
## THE EVOLUTION OF THE SERVICE

Since the launch of the electronic information desk the service has undergone a gradual evolution. Users have always been able to submit enquiries using a web form or a dedicated email address, both accessible via the library's publicly available web pages. Initially the library was concerned about the possibility of not being able to handle the number of enquiries so the service was publicised as restricted to Leeds Met staff and students. Following the pilot phase it was clear that the staffing of the service was sufficient to meet the demand so this restriction was removed. It was also decided at the launch of the service that it would only deal with the types of enquiries that would be answered at the library's information desks with other enquiries, such as those relating to circulation matters, being forwarded to the library counter. The type and range of enquiries dealt with has gradually extended so that now the service will try and deal with any enquiries, only forwarding those where the input of other staff is required. This means that, for example, an emailed book renewal request would be dealt with but an enquiry concerning an invoice for a lost book would be forwarded to the counter services supervisor; or common solutions to a problem accessing

the student email would be suggested, but a continuing problem would be forwarded to the team that look after the student email system. If an answer cannot be given to an enquiry unrelated to library services, the enquirer is referred to a more appropriate person or service area. During the pilot of the service in September 2001 it was publicised that enquiries would receive an answer within two working days. This was soon reduced to a few hours and in 2004/05 the performance of the electronic information desk was incorporated into the library's official service standards. The standards for 2005/06 state that enquiries received between 08.30 and 16.30 Monday to Friday will receive an answer within three hours.

#### TYPES OF ENQUIRIES DEALT WITH

During its first year of operation in 2001/02 the electronic information desk dealt with 188 enquiries. In 2004/05 it answered 3165 enquiries, over half of which were received between October and January. The pie chart below breaks these down by category:



#### NOTES ON PIE CHART CATEGORIES

**Passwords** - user and database: user passwords can be reset and emailed to a secure address

**Software problems** - using office software, problems connecting to and accessing resources online

**WebCT** - using and accessing the university's virtual learning environment

**Circulation** - book renewals, holds, fines and library memberships

**Using electronic information services** - information databases and e-journals

**Finding information** - reference and subject based enquiries

**Referrals (inside LIS)** - referrals made inside Learning and Information Services (this comprises

our sister departments of Learning Technology Services and Computing Services).

#### STAFFING THE ELECTRONIC INFORMATION DESK

The three-hour turn-around time and the range of enquiries dealt with by the electronic information desk mean that the staffing of the service is very important. Although the service can be staffed from any PC, it is based in the Library European and Off-campus Services (LEOS) office. This office is the home for a number of outward facing services such as Offsite, the distance learner support service, and a European Information Centre. It is also the base for the library's telephone enquiry service which takes calls from the information desks between 10.00 and 16.30 and from the reception desk at one of the campus libraries from 10.30 am to 12.30 every weekday during term time. The LEOS office has three qualified library staff and one part-time assistant, but the electronic information desk uses a broad range of staff from across the library including assistants at all levels, IT assistants and other qualified library staff. These staff work hourly shifts between 10.30 and 13.30 every weekday dealing with both email enquiries and telephone calls. Outside of these core hours the LEOS staff deal with both the emails and telephone calls and during vacations have sole responsibility for dealing with email enquiries. This staffing model means that the electronic information desk is continuously staffed throughout the day with staff during core hours dedicated solely to dealing with enquiries.

#### STAFF TRAINING

In July 2004 the pool of staff dealing with enquires to the electronic information desk and telephone enquiry service was widened to include library assistants and the range of enquiries extended to include circulation issues. Training using buddying was put in place. Pairs of staff were on duty together, one person with circulation experience and one with knowledge of passwords and electronic resources. These buddying relationships continued until both parties were happy to work on their own. Training for staff new to the service continues to use this model with a basic induction and the buddying of the person to be trained with an experienced member of staff for a number of hands on sessions. This technique has been very successful as it has allowed experienced staff to pass on their knowledge gradually and in an informal organic way. The staff being trained are not burdened

with a lot of information in a short space of time but are able to slowly build up their confidence and competence and they feel comfortable asking questions and revisiting areas. The LEOS staff are also always on hand to help out with advice and assistance and have a particular expertise regarding issues which arise off-campus.

pilot extending the service until 19.30 in term-time and 18.30 in the vacation, with the staff on evening duty at the information desk answering the enquiries. It is now proposed that both these extensions of the service be monitored against a draft service standard with a view to formally incorporating them into the standards for 2007/08.

#### **MONITORING SERVICE QUALITY**

An important element in making sure the electronic information desk provides a responsive, effective and efficient service is the fact that a response time of three hours for enquiries received between 08.30 and 16.30, Monday to Friday, is published formally as part of the library's service standards. A report is made annually on compliance with this standard and information on whether the standard has been met or not is also publicly available. Adherence to this service standard and the quality and accuracy of responses given by the electronic information desk is maintained in a number of ways. With the service being based in the LEOS office there are always staff available to monitor the progress of enquiries against the service standards and offer advice and assistance as required. Every term there is a more formal service monitoring exercise where for a specific week all enquiries are monitored against the service standards. During the spring term of 2006 the electronic information desk was also included in the library's mystery visiting programme. This involved eleven people from other libraries in Leeds submitting enquiries and commenting on their experience under a number of categories such as speed of answer, tone and professionalism of the reply, accuracy of information given and overall impression of the service. They also graded each category as either commendable, satisfactory or unsatisfactory. This proved a valuable exercise which generated some interesting feedback and nearly all the mystery visitors rated the service as commendable across all the criteria used.

#### **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

As indicated in the brief history of the electronic information desk at the start of this article, the service has undergone a continual evolution over the last five years and during the last eighteen months there have also been more developments. Since February 2005 there has been a pilot project extending the electronic information desk to weekends with weekend information desk and reception staff answering the enquiries. Between April and June 2006 there was also a successful



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# Education resources in an e-learning environment

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E-learning has been a buzz word for several years now and at the University of the West of England the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) UWEonline is becoming more embedded. UWEonline uses BlackBoard as its VLE, modified to suit our university's requirements. Academic staff and students are realising what a valuable teaching and learning aid it can be, both on and off-campus.

It is proving particularly useful in the education faculty, due to teaching practice placements where students are away from the university for prolonged periods of time, and because many courses run at a distance and are studied part-time. Faculty staff are using UWEonline to provide students with module handbooks, PowerPoint presentations, lecture notes and e-resources to enhance student learning.

Since the faculty have begun to embrace this new way of teaching and learning, we felt it was important to show that the library is committed to supporting them in this (ad)venture. We began to explore the options within UWEonline and examine how tutors were utilising different sections and what resources they were linking to. We started what became a three step process of (i) assessing the content of each module, (ii) identifying appropriate resources for each module and (iii) creating the links to the resources.

The first part of this process was to look at the content of each module that already had a presence on UWEonline (we had decided not to add resources to those modules where tutors were not utilising the e-learning environment, but to

concentrate on the modules which were active). Sometimes the title alone was enough to give us a starting point: e.g. *Geography in the primary curriculum*. However, it was not always obvious from the title what the content might be: e.g. *Narratives in childhood* or *Becoming a person*. For these modules a little more research was required and we found it necessary to take a detailed look at the module handbooks and other resources referred to.

The second step in the process was to review the relevance of available resources, which involved assessing the links on the library's education web pages and carrying out a comprehensive catalogue search for all education-related e-journals and e-books. As we worked through each module we gradually built up a 'resources master list' for each subject area. In retrospect, we feel that a more effective, though initially time-consuming system, would be to create a master-list at the start of the project.

The final step was actually to add the links to the modules. As two of us were working on this project we felt it necessary to come up with a style sheet to ensure consistent wordings/phrases for each addition we made. We agreed to make **library** our prefix for each link we added, as we felt it was important in this first year of adding resources to show that these were library-initiated resources, demonstrating that the faculty and library had a joint policy on promoting e-resources. It would help promote our presence to both faculty staff and students, and show the library as a proactive partner in recommending resources and readings.

We also agreed on how we would describe each resource, e.g. explaining a link was to the home page of a particular journal. We wanted the faculty staff and students to see a library style within UWEonline that they could become familiar with and know what to expect from us.

The **web sites** link was chosen as the best area to place our resources, as this was an active link in most modules, or could be made active. It was also an area that was not over-used by tutors, so we felt we could make more of an impact there, as it would be a tab most likely to be investigated by our students.

When students log on to UWEonline an announcements page appears, so for each of our additions we placed an announcement stating that new library resources had been posted to specific modules. We used the date restriction

option to have the announcement disappear after a month, in order to retain a feeling of currency.

As each module has an expiry date it has been necessary to copy all our resources into the modules running for next academic year. This has been time consuming and we are investigating the options available in order to simplify this procedure. One of these options is to create a folder within UWEonline for each subject area. Folders do not have an expiry date and can be used as a central repository for the links and resources for a particular module. They can be shared by named staff who can be given read-only access or read/write permission. We are looking into how we can make best use of these folders and may use them to embed the links to resources and readings to simplify the updating of modules.

We were also able to activate a tracking of usage statistics, which will assist us as we come to assess the usefulness of the project. The tracker is able to see which areas of a module have been used and by whom! Statistics are displayed as a pie chart, showing percentage hits for each area (e.g. our library links would be covered by web sites) and it is also possible to find out how many times each student has used each resource, as all users have individual log-ins. The statistics have not yet been kept for long enough for us to properly gauge the success of this project, but early indications are positive. The web site links where our resources reside are being used regularly.

The education faculty have been very positive in their response to our input on UWEonline. We took the initiative for our presence there, but it was an informed approach based on our close working relationship with the faculty. This approach may not work for other faculties and institutions as each have their own culture and style of working. However we felt confident that our additions to UWEonline would be well received, as we had researched what was already available and only added links that we felt complemented and supported the tutor input.

This project is ongoing, and one we hope to build on over the next year, increasing the number and variety of resources available.

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# The best of the web just got better: introducing Intute



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In July 2006, the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) was relaunched as Intute. Many of you will have used the eight Hubs that made up the RDN<sup>1</sup>, and will have been familiar with their reputation for selecting and evaluating the best of the Web for education and research. These Hubs have now been integrated into Intute; one organisation with one identity, one name, and one point of access. In this article, we would like to give you a summary of how we have developed as a service, and share our vision for the future of Intute.

## WHY CHANGE?

Intute takes the best of the RDN, and brings together all of the Web resources and value added services into one, easily accessible place. We hope that our new cohesive design and interface will make us much more user friendly.

Over the last two years, a great deal has happened behind the scenes to transform the RDN into Intute. We have merged the records from each of the RDN Hubs into one searchable database, we have designed and created a new website, we have improved inter-disciplinary searching and browsing, and we have implemented the best value added services across the whole of Intute.

Our users told us that they valued our subject expertise in the selection of resources that are relevant to students teachers and researchers, and we are continuing to harness the skills of our staff through our four new subject groups; science, engineering and technology (including geography), arts and humanities, social sciences, and health and life sciences. These subject groups have their own individual sub sites within Intute, and their catalogues can be searched independ-

ently. The subject groups will also continue to provide resources and services that are tailored to the needs of their communities; for example Intute: science, engineering and technology will continue the World Guide and Natural Hazards services that were originally conceived by the GEsouce Hub.

### WHAT DOES INTUTE HAVE TO OFFER?

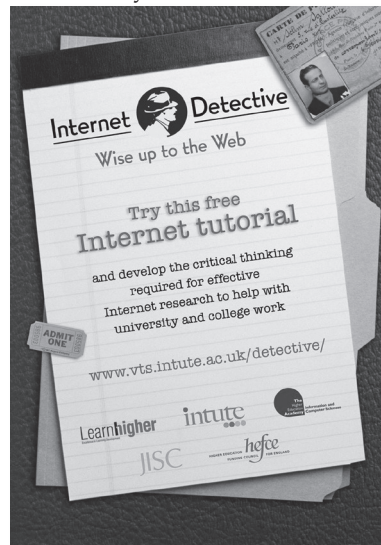
A recent study found that 88% of students surveyed used the web for academic study. This figure will probably not surprise many of us, however the survey also revealed that the students placed a higher value on currency rather than accuracy when choosing their information.<sup>2</sup> Another study found that students had difficulty recognising reliable sources, did not double check their sources, and failed to differentiate between advertising and fact.<sup>3</sup> Within an environment where use of the internet for research is high, yet awareness of the pitfalls of the web is low, we believe that Intute plays a valuable role by offering a safe environment for students to access free internet resources.



It is widely accepted that a high percentage of students rely on search engines for their academic research, and many of us identify with the frustrations around student use of poor quality resources found through these tools. It has been suggested that the dominance of search engines is due to their ease of use and familiarity,<sup>4</sup> and indeed, Griffiths and Brophy identified that students would be likely to 'trade quality of results for effort and time spent searching' when conducting research.<sup>5</sup> We have introduced a new, improved, 'one box' search interface that we hope will give users an easy to use alternative to the search engine for educational research.

The increasing power of search engines, along with the introduction of academic search tools

such as Google Scholar and Windows Academic Live, mean that there is still a need for a service that is concerned with facilitating access to quality resources on the free Web, and maintains a focus on evaluation and collaboration with the academic community.



However, we know that it is not enough simply to provide access to quality information sources, because, without investment in information literacy, students will be unlikely to have the skills to exploit them effectively<sup>6</sup>. There is a need for students to improve their information literacy, and we continue to play our part in this by providing free internet tutorials to help people to learn how to get the best from the web for education and research. The popular virtual training suite (VTS) of tutorials remain a core element of Intute, and we are currently updating and redesigning them with a fresh new look and feel.

We have also collaborated with Manchester Metropolitan University in its partnership with the LearnHigher Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to relaunch the *Internet detective* tutorial. Again, many of you will remember the *Internet detective* in its previous incarnation, and the tutorial maintains its original purpose; to provide an interactive platform to give students practical advice on evaluating the quality of websites when selecting them for their academic study.<sup>7</sup> It has been gratifying to receive the testimonials of the many people who tell us that the tutorial has helped them to navigate through the myriad of resources available to them on the Web.

Our database and our training services are the core of what we do, but we also offer a range of additional services for our users<sup>8</sup>. For example, Hot Topics and Limelight take topics of interest to the subject community and provide links to useful

resources from the Intute database. We are also interested in exploring how we can exploit new technologies, for example staff in Intute: Social Sciences have been experimenting with podcasts in Social Science Voices<sup>9</sup>. We have also just introduced our new personalisation service, MyIntute. Currently in beta, MyIntute allows users to save, email and tag selected records, as well as receive email alerts to allow them to keep up to date with resources in their chosen field. This development brings Intute more in line with other online databases already familiar to students.

#### **HOW CAN YOU WORK WITH INTUTE?**

We want to make it as easy as possible for our users to access our database, and we have developed a variety of ways to embed Intute in other websites and services. For example, we have a range of RSS feeds, and Intute can be embedded in federated search tools using Z39.50 targets. Taking this approach further, we are also keen to explore how we can work more closely with the academic library community. Much has been written recently about the complexity and time constraints around writing and maintaining Web guides in academic libraries<sup>10</sup>. With this in mind, we are currently working with the University of Leeds and the University of the Arts London to explore how we can use the MyIntute functionality to create and manage Web guides. These pilots are still in the early stages, but we hope that this approach will offer a way of using Intute catalogue records in the creation of guides that can be tailored to the needs of each university.

#### **WHAT ELSE DOES INTUTE DO?**

We are also pleased to be involved in a number of projects<sup>11</sup>. They are INFORMS, an institutional repositories search service and the Higher Education Academy resource catalogue integration.

Since their inception, INFORMS tutorials have provided information professionals with an effective tool for use in information literacy education. Over fifty institutions have already created interactive information literacy tutorials using the simple INFORMS interface, and we are delighted that Intute will be continuing the work begun by the University of Huddersfield. The INFORMS tutorials will be moving to Intute over the Christmas vacation, and we will be engaging with our user community in order to improve the administration interface, and the accessibility and design of the tutorials.

We are also pleased to be working in partnership with UKOLN and SHERPA on a project to develop a search facility across institutional repositories. Content deposited in institutional repositories is growing, and we want to make this material more accessible to the UK education community.

We have a long history of working with the Higher Education Academy, and we are currently collaborating on a project to integrate the resource collections of the Academy Subject Centres into a single database that will be maintained by Intute. Again, we hope that this will improve access to these resources for the education community.

What does the future hold?

Our belief in the importance of directing our users to the best of the web is as strong today as it was when the RDN was first conceived. This is a period of enormous change and development for Intute, and we look forward to consolidating our achievements to date and building a strong future for our service. We are keen to collaborate with the academic community to build a service that is relevant to the population it serves and the environment in which it operates. Nobody can predict exactly what the future holds, but our focus on collaboration, and the expertise of our staff, will ensure that we are able to recognise and respond to new developments, and achieve our vision to enable the education and research community to unlock knowledge from the internet.

Intute is hosted by MIMAS at The University of Manchester, and is a collaboration between a whole host of partners and contributors. At the heart of the organisation is a consortium of seven universities: the University of Manchester, the University of Birmingham, the University of Bristol, Heriot Watt University, Manchester Metropolitan University, the University of Nottingham and the University of Oxford. Intute is funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), with support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

If you would like any further information about Intute, please visit our website at <http://www.intute.ac.uk>. We are always keen to receive feedback about any of our services. If you have any comments, or would like to find out more about working with us, please contact us by using our feedback form at <http://www.intute.ac.uk/feedback.html>.

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# Creating a new corporate visual identity at the University of Lincoln Library: developing a new visual identity for the new library



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*Photographs by Colin Reiners*

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Corporate visual identity (CVI) is an important part of the identity of any organisation, it plays a significant role in how an organisation presents itself to its stakeholders. The main elements of a CVI are corporate name, logo, colour palette and typeface, basically a corporate rule book that everyone in the organisation uses to achieve a consistent identity<sup>1</sup>. Academic libraries have not traditionally been recognised for creating their own visual identity, but that is beginning to change with some very dynamic new builds requiring their own brand, image and identity.

In 2004 the University of Lincoln renovated a dis-used warehouse to create a new university library. This project enabled the Library and Learning Resources (LLR) department to create a new CVI. The department has its own marketing group whose remit was to look after the marketing and publicity needs of LLR and to work with the estate department to create the corporate identity of the new library. This was to be housed in a converted Victorian goods and grains warehouse.

The Great Central Warehouse was built in 1907 and has been described by the local council as a 'spectacular survivor' from the 1900s.

## COLOUR PALETTE

The building's historical character has been fully retained with the original beams and brickwork left exposed. It was the exposed brickwork that gave LLR our new corporate colour palette, a deep brick red to complement the bricks. The original steel girders gave us our second corporate colour, a deep grey. The final colour in the palette was a soft cream to bring the red and grey together. The colours were an important part of the new image for the library, we were moving from being a learning resource centre back to a university library. We wanted colours that had connotations of tradition, learning and history: think Farrow and Ball<sup>2</sup>.

## TYPEFACE

Choosing the typeface for the new library was interesting as we had to take into account all our stakeholders. The research that we did showed that most university libraries use Helvetica, however we all preferred Gill Sans which is also a sans serif face. We also had to look into the size of the menu boards. There is a simple formula for determining the optimum appropriate height of letters on signage, based on the distance at which the sign is intended to be read.<sup>3</sup>

The formula is: optimum height of letters (mm) = distance (m) / 250

For example, if we wanted our signs to be visible from 5m away, that would give an optimum text height of 20mm.

## THE BUILDING

With the colour palette and typeface decided the next step was to apply this imaginatively and creatively in the building. The architect had expressed the idea of using all the colours on the large stairwell. The stairs, doors and window frames were all painted grey, the walls were cream and the text was dark red, the effect was striking and contemporary. The conversion of the old warehouse is phase one of the new library, the stairwell will connect to a very modern building in the future, so they decided to blend the traditional colours with a modern look.

## SIGNAGE

The LLR marketing group was asked to provide the architects with the design brief for the signs. The brief stated that the signage must be user friendly, consistent and professional. The group identified the three types of signage required:

### 1 Orientation

These signs are to present the physical layout of the building and help users find their way around: usually maps or directories. A directory of services was required at each entrance and on each floor. These menu boards were designed in the corporate colour palette, the colour was reversed to highlight current location and text was kept to a minimum.



### 2 Identification

These signs identify places, functions, services and resources, for example library desk, self issue etc. These were also in the grey and cream, the red was kept to a minimum to be more effective when it was used.



### 3 Directional

These signs guide people to areas or services within the library. They are located in entrances, stairwells and along major pathways within the

floors. They usually use an arrow and make use of other symbols. The dark red was used for these signs.

## SHELVING

The colour palette was also used for the shelving: we alternated the colour of the ends between grey and cream on each floor.

## PUBLICATIONS

Having decided on the colour palette and typeface the marketing group was able to write a list of guidelines for publications. We developed templates that used the new corporate colours and typeface, they were consistent and uniform. We were keen to move away from clip art and in house publications to a more professional corporate look. At last, we had visual consistency, we discarded all the old guides and replaced them with new ones. The new library also had fewer notice boards for the students to clutter so it looked good as well.

## LAUNCH EVENT

The marketing group decided the best way to introduce the academics to the new library was to hold a special staff event. With the support from Ottakars bookstore and advice from our subject librarians, we organised an event and invited representatives from publishers that covered relevant subjects. The representatives were invited to bring new publications and stock items for academics and library staff to view. A few publishers also sent editorial staff to discuss commissioning new books. Database providers were asked to demonstrate their products; a number used this opportunity to provide training sessions to library and academic staff. We asked the suppliers to provide a small amount of sponsorship towards the costs of this event, and most of them were willing to do so. We used the sponsorship that we raised to buy the refreshments for the event, and also to pay for promotional items such as bookmarks.

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE?



It has been almost two years since we opened the new library, but it still looks really good. We have hosted numerous events at the library including one CILIP UC&R (University, College and Research Group) event that took one hour to tour the building as so many questions were asked! We have won two Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) awards (silver and gold), and a gold Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) award. The publications are still consistent although we have to keep our eye on them as some still use the old template! We are now looking forward to the planned phase two due in 2007.

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## Universal Access by Design: a visual approach to accessing book stock



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The Arts Institute at Bournemouth is a specialist further and higher education institution offering a range of courses within arts, design and media, including modelmaking, film, fine art and acting.<sup>1</sup> The Institute's library offers the biggest communal space on campus and is in a light, purpose built building which opened in 1998.

Original works of art are displayed in the library and considerable thought has been given to the layout and to creating an environment that reflects a specialist arts institution. As a result, the library is not just the library – it is often used for filming, photography, installations and drawing at various times throughout the year, so as librarians, we can truly claim to be involved in the life of the students.

We use the Dewey decimal classification system and have always had traditional end of bay panels with a list of numbers and their subject areas, but after a period of moving stock around, we installed end of bay signs which consisted of only the first and last Dewey numbers for that bay – there was no text. This was a temporary measure until we were satisfied we had finished moving stock at which point more detailed signs were going to be produced.

One of our students, Jason Healey, was undertaking the BA (Hons) Graphic Design course and embarking on his third year final major project. Jason decided to base it on the library, looking at the traditional Dewey system and his interaction with it as a student. He also spent time researching how people used supermarkets and airports and how information graphics contributed – or



not – to their experience. He observed people using public and academic libraries and came to the conclusion that the Institute's library could benefit from an improved signage system.

Jason is dyslexic, and this gave him a unique insight into the importance of offering alternative means of identifying areas of book stock. He interviewed members of the library staff to gain a deeper understanding of how the books were arranged. His research informed a final major project that offered a completely new library system.



Part of Jason's proposal was to use colours and symbols as alternatives to numbers to locate areas of the book stock, although numbers would still be required to locate an individual book. The colours and symbols would not only be displayed at the end of each bay but also along the front of each shelf with one or two words that described the sections above. His ideas for replacing Dewey were not practical but we were interested in the idea of supplementing Dewey with colours and symbols to represent subject areas. We knew that more libraries were making use of colour but were not aware of any library using colours and symbols in combination.

Library services score highly in our annual institute-wide student perception survey and we pride ourselves on offering a proactive and responsive service. We have a part-time post within the library whose role is to support students with additional needs in their use of library resources. We subscribe to relevant databases and are developing our remote services, but arts, design and media students still use the traditional library heavily and rely on books and journals to stimulate their creativity and provide inspiration.

We recognised the value of the project for those with dyslexia or visual impairment who find individual numbers difficult to recognise and pick out; in addition, we recognised its value for students whose first language is not English. It provides a way of breaking down barriers for students who come from non-traditional backgrounds and for whom the library is an alien and daunting place. Most importantly it is of benefit for all users, as it provides alternative means of locating areas of book stock. We called the project Universal Access by Design (UABD) to reflect this.<sup>2</sup>

UABD seeks to break down the traditional method of searching for books by using colours and symbols as alternatives to numbers in identifying different subject areas of book stock.

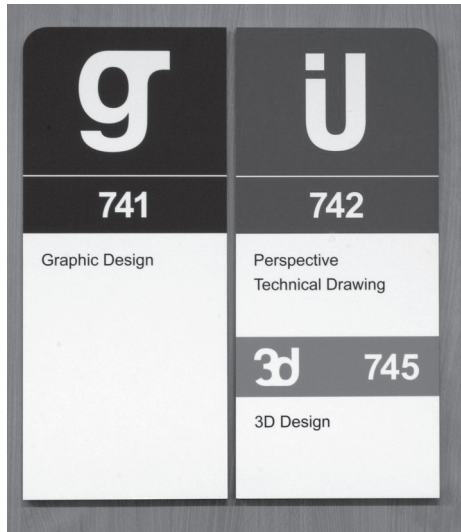
As a specialist library we have already adapted Dewey in order to subdivide subject areas and in some cases this has led to very long numbers. We have begun a programme to simplify these but (as ever) there is a balance to be struck between having numbers that are too long and sections that may be too big but have shorter numbers.

An additional concern is that many students do not browse. Browsing is particularly useful for arts, design and media students where the serendipity effect can make the difference in producing imaginative and creative work, through taking inspiration from books other than those recommended by tutors or placed on booklists.

Students at the institute may collaborate with students on other courses to produce work: for example, a model-making student may make the models for an animation student to use in their animated film. It is therefore part of the ethos of the institute that students should research widely and not limit themselves to their core subject area. There is a risk that students, having identified their core subject area, see that as their comfort zone and are reluctant to look beyond it. Jason's project was a first step in making all areas of the library more user friendly.

A bid for funding to run a small pilot for the colours and symbols based on two subject areas in the library was submitted to the research and staff development committee. The bid was successful and Jason, who by now had graduated and was working as a graphic designer in London, was informed that part of his final major project was going to be implemented at the institute.

A project team was formed that consisted of the disability coordinator, course leader for graphic design, two subject librarians, the business manager and Jason Healey. As institute librarian, I was project leader. A literature search was carried out which showed increasing use of colour in both academic and public libraries but nothing which combined symbols with colours and used them across a whole library.



As Jason had already designed the basic symbols it seemed straightforward to implement the pilot, which we intended to run for the start of the spring term 2005. A source of card and acetate for the front of the shelves was located. The plan was to insert the card and acetate into the recessed shelf edge, with acetate being used on top, to display the symbol and text. The disadvantage was that new acetate strips would need to be produced whenever the stock moved round. We had not yet worked out how we would print the symbol and text on the acetate. Our other concern was the number of colours we would need if the project was extended to the rest of the library.

Certain aspects of the project proved challenging; sourcing the coloured card was difficult and the numbers of colours available was limited. To complicate matters, new shelving we had recently acquired had flat front edges which meant the card and acetate would need to be stuck on it. This was not ideal as it would mean peeling them off each time stock moved round and there was the likelihood of the edges getting caught when books were taken off and returned to the shelves.

We were eventually helped by a company based in our Enterprise Pavilion on campus. The Enterprise Pavilion offers business incubation units for recent graduates within the creative industries. Image XL were able to source magnetic sheets

which they could produce in any colour.<sup>3</sup> This solved both the issue of colours and the wear and tear problem. The strips would have the symbol printed on and could be lifted off the front of the shelves and moved around easily. We decided to have text strips with the same colour as the background strip and in the same material. They too would be magnetic and could be moved around independently. In practice however the magnetic text strips were dislodged too easily so we used sticky tape produced in the same colour which can also be peeled off and moved instead.

The two areas we chose for the pilot were fashion/costume and graphic design, with the pilot eventually running from the end of the spring term into the summer term. Staff and students responded very positively to the appearance of the new panels and coloured shelf strips. Staff commented on how natural it was to look for a particular colour for a section, and how once they got to the shelves the sections were clearly delineated by seeing where one colour finished and the next began.

As it was towards the end of the academic year when the pilot ran, students tended to know their core subject areas but found the new system easier to use when they were looking for specific books outside their own areas. Library staff commented that giving directional enquiries to subject areas was easier using colours.

Both the principal and deputy principal were very enthusiastic about the use of colours and symbols and their visual impact. They asked for the pilot to be extended to the whole library with a completion date of the start of the 2005/06 academic year in September.

One of the hardest jobs was choosing thirteen different colours that were sufficiently dissimilar to be easily recognised. Identifying subject areas was not difficult but we then had to decide what to do about more general areas of stock that did not fall into one of the subject areas. We decided to choose a neutral colour to identify these areas: We were concerned that students did not dismiss the general areas as irrelevant to them because they had no colour or symbol, so they were allocated both.

Two subject librarians went around the library working out what needed to go on the end of bay panels and what was to go on the text strips. We limited the text strips to two per shelf and decided to have the symbol once in the middle of the shelf strip. This was to avoid the strip looking cluttered.

For the same reason we decided not to put Dewey numbers on the shelf strips.

In the design of each symbol, Jason wanted to create a mark that was clearly visible, and bold enough to be seen from any distance within the library while still remaining individual. This meant they were instantly recognisable for each course, no matter where they were used within the library. The use of colour helped to create sections which could be defined purely on a visual level.

We finally completed the roll out of the project in October 2005 – unfortunately just too late to explain the project fully in library inductions. When new students join us for the 2006/07 academic year in September, we will be describing the project at library inductions; our redesigned library handbook includes a key to the colours and symbols and our subject guides also highlight the relevant colours and symbols for specific areas. These will be available electronically next academic year.



The next step is to find a way to show the colour and symbol for individual books on the OPAC. We are currently discussing this with our library management system supplier. The principal is also considering using the symbols throughout the institute to identify different course areas.

Jason's final major project won a 'Best New Blood' award from D&AD, an educational charity that awards the best new young designers emerging each year from design courses round the UK. His award recognised the innovation and creativity of the project.

UABD supports the use of Dewey through offering alternative means of tracking down subject areas in the library. It provides a unique way of accessing books and encourages browsing.

It opens up library resources in a friendly yet innovative way and reflects the ethos of the Arts Institute at Bournemouth, providing an open, accessible environment for all.

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- 1 <http://www.aib.ac.uk>
- 2 [www.uabd.co.uk](http://www.uabd.co.uk)
- 3 <http://www.imagexl.co.uk/>

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# Charter Mark can change your life!

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Customer service is not a new concept for libraries. They have been recognising not only the value but also the need for delivering good service for many years. With student retention high on the agenda of most academic libraries, it becomes a downright necessity. After all, we know that unsatisfied customers tend to go somewhere else where their needs are better fulfilled. Providing a non-customer-focused service can often result in losing students.

The biggest question is where to start. Theories and knowledge are freely available: after all, we work in an environment where information is at our fingertips. Type 'excellent customer service' into Google and it will return a variety of results. Frameworks and guidelines are wide-ranging, but do they apply to us? How can we make something 'fit' when it has been developed mainly with commercial end-users in mind? With the limited resources available, how do we adapt theories to work for us? And how do we get recognition? For Learning Support Services (LSS) at the University of Bolton, and many other academic libraries, Charter Mark has been the answer. In fact, LSS achieved the standard twice, first in 2002 and then again in 2005.

The Charter Mark framework has been developed with public services in mind. Although it does involve much hard work and many staff hours, it is relatively straightforward to employ and, with the buy-in of staff, certainly achievable.

Once the standard has been achieved, one can celebrate this achievement, thus creating a useful bit of PR. However, this is where the danger lies. Why are we working towards achieving Charter Mark? Is it because we will be able to attend a

ceremony where someone important will hand us a certificate? Is it because we can post an item in our internal bulletin about having received the news that all our hard work has been fruitful and that our application was successful? Or is it because we will be able to print a logo on all our publications? Indeed, all these factors are bonuses. However, most of the benefits lie in implementation of the actual framework.

Charter Mark provides a virtual step-by-step guide of how to improve the delivery of excellent customer service, that is, 'to go the extra mile'. Holding the standard twice has taught us a thing or two about doing things that simply make sense. The following 'Top 5' will be helpful to anyone considering applying for the standard. The way LSS looks at it is that they are beneficial anyway – with or without the fancy logo.

### *Audit trail!*

Be able to explain why you did what. All major actions should have documented justification and implementation. Someone asking 'why did you introduce this service' should not be met with a 'well, we thought it would be a good idea'. Doing things for the right reasons saves time, energy and resources. It also means that should something fail you can put it down to experience rather than poor judgement. Most importantly though, you will be more likely to do things that will succeed – simply because there is an appropriate methodology behind it!

### *Standards!*

Charter Mark's first criterion 'Set standards and perform well' gave LSS the push in the right direction. The key to good planning is to know what you should be achieving, what you want to achieve and how you are performing at the moment. Put as much thought into setting these standards as you can afford. If you get them right, the rest will be much easier. Make sure they are demanding enough: if they are too easy to achieve they become meaningless. You also have to review them, not ad-hoc but ideally on an annual basis, and should not be afraid to adapt them if services or circumstances change.

### *Review!*

Make review an integral part of project work. Every new project or implementation has to be

scrutinised, reviewed and redirected if necessary. All departmental resources are precious and even if budgets are closely monitored, staff time often gets wasted. Have you ever sat in a meeting, wondering why you were there? Would your time be of much better use somewhere else? Project leaders have to make sure that all members of the team are contributing and, more importantly, that the project is actually moving forward: they should not be afraid to review staffing if it makes sense. A regularly submitted report, which can be as simple as 'what have we achieved this month, who has done what, what did we want to do but could not' can help focus and flag up any problems. If, for example, after three months nothing has been achieved, project leaders should have the courage to disband the group.

*Don't be afraid to fail!*

Learn from your mistakes. Failures can be instructional. They can show you what not to do. One of the reasons why you set standards is to see how well (or not) you are doing. Should you see at the end of a year that you consistently failed a standard, look into why and see whether it is possible to improve your performance. Make this a part of your annual planning process. This will allow you to redirect resources and tackle a problem area with a more holistic approach. If you cannot improve, change the standard to a level that will still be a challenge, but this time, a more realistic one. Failure is an essential part of assessing what you can and cannot do. The key is not to get too upset about failing. Use it as an opportunity to move forward.

*You think you know your customer – but you don't!*

Do not do something that you are convinced your user wants without asking first. Invite user feedback and be as creative as possible about creating a dialogue. LSS invites formal feedback via leaflets, email and snail mail. In addition, the annual satisfaction survey, the occasional focus group and themed surveys can help gain an understanding about a specific issue.

The most useful feedback about day to day issues, however, is received verbally via staff and in the LSS comments and suggestions books. These invite users to write about any issue – good or bad – that concerns them. The

books are available at Information desks on both sites. In addition make sure all staff are encouraged to pass on feedback. You will even find out things you did not ask for. For example, when LSS carried out a survey about a closure due to unexpected essential building work, we found that the time of year meant that most of the forms returned came from international students who communicated their very individual needs. Some of these students volunteered to help us further and were recently invited to attend our international focus group.

It is also important to bear in mind that you need to have a systematic way of receiving, recording, replying to, dealing with, and evaluating all feedback received thus creating a meaningful audit trail.

LSS always saw the road to Charter Mark as more important than the actual achievement, so even if you are not interested in Charter Mark, be it because you have used a different framework, or you do not have the resources to apply, have a look at their criteria on the website ([www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/chartermark/](http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/chartermark/)) and be inspired!

The LSS Charter Mark Team would like to dedicate this article to the memory of John Morrow of the University of Newcastle. John was an inspiration to us and will be sadly missed, not only by his colleagues at Newcastle, but by those of us who were fortunate to have worked with him over the years.

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# What is the meta-quality of your library?



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## INTRODUCTION

Meta-quality is not a term that has been used before in the literature, so I anticipate that you will have some difficulty answering the question posed in the title of this article. I have coined it to mean the quality of the quality processes in an organisation. However, I am aware that this explanation may not make things any clearer, as it is the concept, rather than just the term, that has so far been absent from discussions of quality. Therefore, the purpose of this article is threefold: to introduce you to the concept of meta-quality; to explain why you may be interested in determining what the meta-quality of your library is; and to describe a framework for assessment that can help you to answer this question.

But first, let me start with an easier question: what is the quality of your library? I would expect that in this era of performance measurement (whether for competitive analysis, funding justification, or as a driver for improvement) you would all feel confident in answering this. However, I also expect the formulation of the answers to vary, depending on how performance measures are viewed by your individual library. You may have answered based on an assessment of your library against the SCONUL average (e.g. spend per full time equivalent student; number of e-journals etc). You may have answered based on the assessment of your users (e.g. your user survey; the National Student Survey; LibQual+). You may have answered based on the assessment of your users compared with others (e.g. from a benchmarking exercise). Whatever the form of your answer, you are confident that it tells you how well you are doing. I assume that you have procedures in place to ensure that the trend in this measurement is upwards – that the quality of your library is improving. What would happen if, suddenly, the

criteria changed? How long would it take before you were achieving the same level of quality, as measured against these new criteria? Would it be a case of starting all over again at the bottom, or merely a small blip in a continuing upward progression?

Let me give you an example. A library at a large research institution consistently achieves very high customer satisfaction scores from all staff at the institution. It particularly delights its customers by the breadth and depth of its printed journal and book collections, and the speed at which a new book requested by a researcher is available for them to borrow (72 hours). Suddenly the director of the institution is replaced. The new director believes that the future is electronic, and issues a command that all printed materials in the library should be disposed of, the building converted into research space, and the library staff moved to an office environment: desk space, some meeting rooms and nothing else. All literature requests are to be satisfied by electronic desktop delivery. How well do you think the library will perform in the next customer satisfaction survey? The literature suggests that a library with high meta-quality would achieve as high a rating as it had enjoyed the previous year.<sup>1</sup>

## WHY META-QUALITY MATTERS TO LIBRARIES

Libraries have a long history of measuring the quality of their services<sup>2,3</sup> This began with the collection of input measures (e.g. number of books added to the collection), moving to output measures (e.g. number of loans), and cost effectiveness (output per input). In the 1990s the emphasis moved towards customer satisfaction.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1990s there was a move towards a Total Quality Management approach, and tools such as benchmarking and the balanced scorecard<sup>5</sup> However, meta-quality is not merely the latest method of measuring service quality. Instead it is concerned with the culture of the library, specifically the quality culture.

In the current climate, it is necessary for libraries to have a quality culture in order to succeed, even to survive.<sup>6</sup> During the print era, where libraries were 'storehouses', quality of services could be assured by the rigorous application of standardised methods and work practices.<sup>7</sup> However, with the move to the electronic era, much library work is undertaken in the form of projects, so such methods are too inflexible to ensure high quality is maintained. While the situation may never be as extreme as the example at the end of

the previous section, libraries now operate in a rapidly changing environment, where external pressures and competition from the internet mean that the argument for continued existence rests on a demonstration of quality.

Libraries today need the same attitude as successful companies: a vision of quality as central to the long-term success of the library; a culture that supports striving for continuous improvement; and strategic systems that are able to convert the desire for improving quality into practice on the ground.<sup>8</sup>

#### **A MODEL FOR MEASURING META-QUALITY**

So, if you accept the argument that a quality culture is necessary for organisational success, as has been demonstrated in other sectors, how can you determine how well you are doing, i.e. the quality of your quality culture – your meta-quality?<sup>9</sup>

As I alluded above, the quality literature does not give a framework for the measurement of the quality culture in an organisation. There is much in the literature about frameworks for measuring the quality of a product, process or service, but no framework for measuring the quality of the quality-process.<sup>10-13</sup> The ISO9000 standard is concerned with product quality, with the focus on the technical system of procedures and work instructions and not the achievement of a quality culture.<sup>14</sup> Even a book entitled *Achieve total quality* gives no indication of how to tell when an organisation has reached this goal!<sup>15</sup>

The literature does contain a single analogous framework for measuring the quality culture. The Software Engineering Institute developed the Capability Maturity Model (CMM) as a method of judging the quality of the software processes of an organisation.<sup>16,17</sup> It is intended to be an evolutionary path to help organisations improve the quality maturity of their software processes from 'ad hoc, chaotic processes to mature, disciplined software processes'.<sup>18</sup> The CMM has five levels with descriptive criteria for the attainment of each level. Organisations at level one are 'low quality'; organisations at level five are 'high quality'. It is appropriate to look to the software industry methods to use in libraries, as both industries are built around project work with a rapidly evolving external environment, and so methods that ensure high quality in the software industry are likely to transfer to a library environment.

Stephen Town and I took the CMM as the reference model to develop a framework for measuring the quality culture of an organisation.<sup>19</sup> This new model (re-titled the Quality Maturity Model) allows the meta-quality of a library service to be measured on a five-step scale. Each point on the scale has a general description of the level of quality in the organisation, with a list of specific attributes relevant to that level. The benefit of the model is that it translates qualitative descriptions into a quantitative score of progress towards the goal of a culture of continuous improvement.

#### **THE QUALITY MATURITY MODEL (QMM)**

We have initially characterised the five levels of the Quality Maturity Model as follows:

##### **Level 1 Initial**

The quality management process is ad hoc, and occasionally even chaotic. Few processes are defined, and success depends on individual effort and heroics:

- quality is achieved in an ad hoc way
- customer satisfaction is reactive and unpredictable
- quality depends on the capabilities of individuals, and varies with their innate skills, knowledge and motivations
- training for quality is ad hoc and reactive to an ability to undertake a specific task adequately.

##### **Level 2 Repeatable**

Basic quality management processes are established. The necessary management processes are in place to repeat earlier quality levels:

- quality policies, and procedures to implement these policies, are established
- effective management processes to allow the organisation to repeat earlier success in customer satisfaction
- such management processes are practised, documented, enforced, trained, measured, and able to improve
- training for quality is provided as a programme of training for specific work tasks, and/or is reactive to events.

##### **Level 3 Defined**

The quality processes are documented and standardised. All work derives from the organisational strategy:

- there is a defined, documented organisational strategy, from which all work processes are derived
- there is an organisation-wide understanding of the activities, roles, and responsibilities of each member of the organisation, and how they fit into the organisational strategy
- training for quality is a cycle of training needs assessment and programme provision.

#### **Level 4 Managed**

Detailed measures of the quality process are collected. The quality process is quantitatively understood and controlled:

- quality measures are part of every documented work process
- these measurements form the basis for evaluating products and processes;
- changes are implemented to improve the quality of services, products and processes
- the organisation sets quantitative goals for quality and customer satisfaction
- training for quality is a cycle of training needs assessment, programme provision, and measurement of the effectiveness of the programme.

#### **Level 5 Optimising**

Continuous quality improvement is enabled by quantitative feedback and from piloting innovative ideas:

- the entire organisation is focussed on continuous improvement in every service, product and process
- all staff are encouraged to continuously improve themselves and their work;
- the organisation is able to identify weaknesses, and the means to strengthen the process, proactively with the goal of preventing problems
- innovations that exploit the best practices are identified and transferred throughout the organisation
- training for quality is focussed on preparing staff for future organisational requirements.

#### **THE MODEL IN PRACTICE**

Three UK academic libraries have been investigated against the Quality Maturity Model. The research employed a qualitative case study approach, and the method used was a combination of documentary analysis and structured interviews.<sup>20</sup> The documentary analysis was undertaken on both strategic and procedural

documents, from the public domain, internal to the institutional, and internal to the library. Interview participants were a sample of staff from each service, reflecting all levels within the library and different periods of employment.

Only three libraries were studied, the limitations of scope of the research. Two of these libraries were assessed as being at level one on the QMM; one at level five. An indicative selection of the evidence indicating a level one library and a level five library is given below (direct quotations from interviews are shown in quotation marks; direct quotations from documentary analysis are shown in angle brackets):

#### **Level one**

- 'Since the active and energetic chair of the [Quality Services Group (QSG)] left, the group has gone into abeyance.' This indicates that quality is ad hoc, and dependent on the innate qualities of the staff.
- <How far the QSG could go if a particular group was not sufficiently motivated to produce results> was not resolved for the group, and demonstrates the lack of managerial support for quality processes.
- The library has a strategic plan, but the documented work processes are unrelated to it and do not include quality processes.
- The library does not make changes to improve quality, but for PR reasons: <[small changes will] improve the customer's perception of the service and ... demonstrate the library is responsive to feedback>.
- Staff are not encouraged to continuously improve, but asked:
  - o <Can you think of any improvement which could realistically be considered?>
  - o <Separate out things which can and cannot be achieved>.
- Training is ad hoc and responsive:
  - o 'There is much [training] available - if you want it you just need to ask for it.'
  - o 'There is support for staff to develop if they want to'.
  - o 'If you don't want to [improve] and want to stay at the same level, they are quite happy with that'.

#### **Level five**

- Continuing improvement bonuses are available for all staff, related to performance indicators against personal and team targets, which are linked to the strategic aims of the library.



- The library, and all its staff, continually strive to improve:
  - o <The library will seek to compare its performance systematically with that of other similar universities and emulate best practice in the sector>
  - o 'There is lots of freedom to develop your own work area, as long as what you do is within the strategic aims of the library.'
  - o 'We can contribute ideas [for improvement] quite freely.'
  - o <Though communication within the service was commended ... we do still feel there is room for improvement>.
- Training is focused on preparing staff for future challenges:
  - o <The development of our staff is a major investment in the future success of the university>
  - o 'They see [professional development] as a benefit to the whole service. The staff are developing themselves and then give a better service to the user.'

#### FURTHER WORK

The model described above is the initial characterisation of a framework for measuring meta-quality, itself a novel concept. The testing of the model to date is based on investigations of only three academic libraries. As such it should be viewed as a starting point rather than a rigorous final product.

The Quality Maturity Model must be tested and further characterised to determine if a five-step model is the most appropriate, and whether level 1 is the correct starting point and level 5 the ultimate destination. Research is needed to investigate whether the model is able to uniquely and consistently determine the meta-quality of libraries at all QMM levels. Research is also needed to describe the properties of organisations at all QMM levels, and so enable fuller characterisation of the levels. The ultimate aim must be an instrument that permits libraries to self-diagnose their level of maturity, and so be able to monitor their progress towards a high quality culture.

I am currently beginning such research, and would be very pleased to hear any thoughts you may have on the content of this paper.

#### CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to introduce the novel concept of meta-quality to the library sector. I have argued that the concept is an important one,

and have described the initial characterisation of a framework of assessment of meta-quality. I hope that it has been of interest, and has prompted you to think about the quality of your library in a different way.

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## World-wide horizons: a season of world-class film at Leeds Metropolitan University



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Even a cursory glance at the website of Leeds Metropolitan University would reveal the high profile given to internationalisation in our activities. Aim 5 of the corporate plan states the desire 'To develop students' international opportunities and global perspectives, ensuring that an international multi-cultural ethos pervades the university.'

In 2004 the library devoted time to developing its own internationalisation strategy and action plan. One key outcome of that work was agreeing with Maria Kulas, one of our existing Learning Advisers, an additional role of developing and promoting our international work and awareness. After discussions with the university's international office, Maria brought back the idea of holding an international film season and this article describes our experiences in making that happen.

### AIMS OF THE PROJECT

We wanted the event to be a collaboration between various parts of the university, so our first success was getting the involvement of both the International Faculty and the School of Film, Television and Performing Arts on the project group.

The group developed a set of aims for the event, chief amongst these

- to raise awareness of the library's diverse and international collections of world film
- to encourage a debate on the global and cultural perspectives raised in the films
- to encourage social contact between domestic and international students and staff

#### THE EVENT

Our initial concern was to set a theme for the event, allowing a programme of films to be selected. We wanted the films to represent Leeds Met's international student population and obtained a list identifying the top ten home countries for our students. In addition films should have been nominated for an award at a major film festival or award ceremony. The Film School representative on the group was then tasked to identify ten films to show in the season.

We wanted to encourage collaboration between home and international students. Each film would be preceded by an introductory talk of around ten minutes prepared by a film student in collaboration with an international student, who originated from the relevant country, acting as a 'cultural informant'. After the showing a member of staff along with the presenting students would facilitate a debate about the film. Film school staff agreed to ask students on the MA Screenwriting course to take part in the event. Identifying international students was more difficult as our first idea of sending an email to all international students was not possible. It was left to our partner in the international office to attempt the difficult task of finding students from the appropriate countries who might be willing to get involved.

As we had no idea how popular the showings might be, we wanted a booking or ticket system in place. We used the Leeds Met student/staff portal to achieve this. We limited booking to the next couple of films so people couldn't book well in advance and then forget.

#### PUBLICITY

We tried a multi pronged approach to publicity including,

- flyers and posters distributed to all faculties for display
- articles in the staff newsletter and student newspaper
- weekly emails to the classified ads section on the staff email system
- information on the student/staff portal
- displays in the library

#### PROBLEMS WE FORESAW

Technical problems with the films. Volunteers from library staff watched each DVD at home to ensure there were no problems with the disc and to note any difficulties such as complications with subtitles.

Copyright/licensing issues. We had a number of discussions with the university solicitor to ensure she was happy with the event.

Using a university building away from the library. The Electric Press Building is a newly refurbished part of Leeds Met on the city's Millennium Square. Access control to the building allows film school students and staff 24 hour access. For our event we would need university security to be on duty to ensure the audience could get in.

**World-Wide Horizons**

The Library  
The School of Film, Television & Performing Arts  
The Leslie Silver International Faculty  
present a season of world-class films at Leeds Met.

Every Wednesday  
25 January 2006 to 29 March 2006  
6pm to 9pm

Electric Press, Civic Quarter

Ten films from around the world including:  
China 'The road home'  
Germany 'Goodbye Lenin'  
India 'Maya'

This event is open to all Leeds Met staff and students only. **ADMISSION FREE.**  
Places are limited so you will be required to bring your student/staff card and booking confirmation.

For more details and to obtain your individual booking confirmation,  
visit the Staff and Student Portal - [www.leedsmet.ac.uk/lis/lss/portal](http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/lis/lss/portal)

### **PROBLEMS WE DIDN'T FORESEE!**

For the first few weeks of the season there seemed to be a different challenge every week with the building or the technology.

- Decorators disappearing with the only key that could disable the access control. It turned up just before the audience.
- Builders arriving to start construction work in our screening room half an hour before that night's film. They were eventually persuaded to come back on a different evening.
- A short way into the first film we realised that only the first line of the sub-titles was visible. A frantic phone call to the audio-visual support team in the library gave us an answer only a few moments after a resourceful film student had already sorted it out for us. It's all down to ratios if you must know!
- About half an hour into the longest film in the season, the projector went off. Happily, again by the time we'd called for help it had presumably cooled down sufficiently for normal service to be resumed.

### **HOW WAS IT FOR THE AUDIENCE?**

After the season had finished we emailed as many people as possible with a questionnaire to gauge views on the venue, the choice of films, the pre and post screening chats etc. We got an excellent response rate and some very detailed and on the whole favourable opinions. Every respondent encouraged us to repeat the experience next year so we've already started the planning process. There were a number of criticisms around our choice of films. It was clear we hadn't got the message across that a key criterion in choosing the films was to reflect our international student population. Also although we felt we'd used every possible avenue to promote the event, the audience felt we needed to do more.

### **WHAT DIDN'T WORK FOR US?**

We'd optimistically assumed that the library's extensive collection would already hold many of the films identified for the season. When this didn't prove to be the case we had to ask our bibliographical services unit to perform a miracle or two.

The automated booking system did work. However setting it up was very time consuming and a lot of favours had to be asked of the technical team. The technology did cause complications for some people who may have been discouraged from attending. In the final few weeks we amended the online publicity to emphasise people could turn up on a first come first seated basis.

The decision to run the season over ten weeks was not arrived at with any great debate. Although the audience evaluation suggested the length of the event was about right, in reality attendances reduced significantly in the last two weeks. The size of the screening room meant that an audience of around 30 – 40 felt comfortable and enabled a good debate and towards the end we were not achieving that.

It proved quite difficult to recruit enough film students willing to take on the work of researching and presenting the film introductions. On a number of occasions the film school academic on our planning group had to take on this role.

It was only possible for a couple of the films to find an international student to take on the cultural informant role.

### **WHAT WE WILL DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT YEAR**

The event will take place again in the spring term, but with a slightly shorter run of eight weeks. We've started the planning much earlier and will use the summer to decide on next year's theme and identify and where necessary purchase the films.

We want to involve interested staff from a range of faculties and aim to get a different person to sign up to be guest presenter for each film and also lead the debate afterwards. This will spread the load from the organising group but also provide another means of promoting the event. Opportunities such as the international students welcome week, in September, will be used to highlight the film season and identify students who might enjoy the cultural informant role. The guest presenter will then be responsible for getting input from interested students which could go into a handout for each film, encouraging people to participate who might not feel comfortable talking in front of an audience. The handout will also give us a vehicle for promoting messages such as the theme of the event, highlighting why we've picked the films that have been included.

We hope that by next spring the venue will have a learning support officer on duty each evening. This will take the responsibility for technical problems away from the organising group.

With the confidence of old timers we will advertise admission on a first come first served basis to Leeds Met card holders. The portal can then be used purely for promotional purposes.

Date	Film Title	Director	
25 January	The road home	Yimou, Zhang	China
1 February	Farewell China	Law, Clara	Hong Kong
8 February	A touch of spice	Boulmetis, Tassos	Greece
15 February	3 Iron	Kim, Ki-Duk	South Korea
22 February	Fireworks	Kitano, Takeshi	Japan
1 March	Goodbye Lenin	Becker, Wolfgang	Germany
8 March	Pathfinder	Gaup, Nils	Norway
15 March	Maya	Singh, Digvijay	India
22 March	Tears of the black tiger	Sasanatieng, Wisit	Thailand
29 March	Kirikou and the Sorceress	Ocelot, Michael	Africa

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# Increasing awareness and access to special collections and archives at the University of Liverpool



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In Liverpool, '2008' is shorthand for several different things: for the city it means European Capital of Culture year; for the university it means the Research Assessment Exercise; and for the University of Liverpool Library it will be the year in which work on a large-scale extension to one of the two main libraries is scheduled to be completed.

The extension and refurbishment plans include new ground floor accommodation for the library's Special Collections and Archives division. Partly financed through a generous grant from the Wolfson foundation, the refurbishment provides dedicated spaces for a reception, reading room, staff area, teaching room and display. In planning the accommodation we have worked to create a space that will allow increased interaction between staff and users both formally and informally, thereby enabling us to better meet the needs of our increasingly diverse range of users.

We have expanded our user base in the past decade by concentrating on cataloguing as much printed and archival material as possible. Through the creation of web guides, catalogues, indexes, and archival finding aids we have established a strong online profile for our collections. This has not only led to a three-fold increase in enquiries and a similar increase in visitors to our reading room, but it has also provided users with new opportunities to learn and teach from the materials and use them in ways that have

not been possible until now. Our present users include seasoned scholars who know which resources they are seeking, groups of students who need to work together with staff to learn from the materials, and the general public seeking information on a variety of subjects – primarily genealogical – who need help using materials previously unknown to them.

The focus on cataloguing has enabled us to present the treasures, and more importantly for researchers, to unlock the obscure items held in the collections which include manuscripts, medieval to modern, incunabula, early and finely printed books, and archives. The manuscript and printed collections cover a variety of subjects, encompassing literature, politics, divinity, law, medicine, veterinary practice, history, travel, astrology, science, and mathematics. Chief among the archival collections are the university's own archives and those relating to social, economic, and political history, including the gypsy collections, the Rathbone papers, the Cunard archive, and the Josephine Butler collection. Other unique resources are the science fiction collections including the SF Foundation collection, the John Wyndham archive and the papers of Olaf Stapledon.

All the cataloguing projects we have undertaken have been supported by awards from variety of external funding bodies including the Sainsbury Foundation, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Wellcome Trust. Special collections and archives also benefited between 1995 and 1997 from the HEFCE-Non-Formula Funding initiative and from 1999 to 2005 we received a significant share of the funding allocated to the library by the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) Access Funding Scheme.

The HEFCE-funded projects to catalogue our gypsy collections, the Rathbone papers and the SF Foundation collection, not only provided a template for all subsequent cataloguing projects, but prompted an investigation of the methods available for searching across descriptions of printed materials catalogued using MARC and archival finding aids catalogued using Encoded Archival Description (EAD). The Cheshire information retrieval system developed at the University of California, Berkeley, was identified as suitable for use in this way and a number of the applications were trialled initially in Special Collections and Archives. The Cheshire system is now used as the basis for a range of national services, including the Archives Hub, the Information Environment

Service Registry, the Resource Discovery Network, the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue, and the National Text Mining Centre. More recent projects involve use of the software to map collection strengths in libraries and to automatically filter web resources according to skill and reading levels for different subject areas.

Our two largest projects to date are the creation of the Science Fiction Hub, a three year project funded by the AHRC, and the retro-conversion of the lists for the university archives for which RSLP Access Funding was used. The Science Fiction Hub is a subject portal for science fiction studies based on the collections held at the University of Liverpool Library (<http://www.sfhub.ac.uk/>). It brings together information about science fiction authors and subjects in books, journals, and archives. The SF Hub includes indexes of the contents of periodicals and amateur publications (records for 13,975 articles) and web guides, incorporating collection descriptions and finding aids for science fiction archives held in Special Collections and Archives. The SF Hub also links to the catalogue of the SF Foundation collection, created by a project funded under the HEFCE-Non-Formula Funding initiative. In addition to online web guides, links to resources, and a research directory the SF Hub includes a cross-searching facility based on the Cheshire system, which allows users to search for information contained in books, archives, and journals simultaneously. This is a powerful tool for researchers seeking links between an author's published and unpublished material.

Between 2000 and 2005 we worked on a project to create online finding aids for the university archives. This involved the conversion of paper lists numbering some three thousand pages. The contents of the lists were re-keyed and marked up using EAD. The files were then edited to reflect the organisational structure of the university and to conform to the International Standard for Archival Description, ISAD(G). Using the Cheshire system, the finding aids created by this process are hosted on our website (<http://archives.liv.ac.uk>) and are also searchable through the Archives Hub (<http://www.archiveshub.ac.uk>). Having the full finding aids accessible in this way has enabled users to plan research visits more effectively and target research questions more precisely. In addition the finding aids are all available as printed copies in our reading room. Their clear and uniform style has received favourable comment from our users, many of whom have

grappled for years with battered typescripts and printed lists in an ever increasing state of decay.

In addition to the various cataloguing projects we have also re-designed our website to include collection descriptions, a collection highlight feature, and links to various access tools. Our focus on the development of our online profile has prompted more enquiries from a much broader range of users. For example, the gypsy collections generate an equal number of academic and general genealogical enquiries. This prompted us to develop a series of gypsy name packs for those researching family histories. The packs include copies of materials which we hold for each family name, suggestions for further reading, and information about other collections and relevant societies that may be of help to those seeking to begin work on a family history. The series has been particularly successful, at least in part because we invite the user community to suggest family names as the subjects for future packs.

The availability through our web site of more information about the collections has led to an increase in the number of requests to view the rare and unusual items we hold. As a result we are giving a greater number of talks and 'hands on' sessions for undergraduates, postgraduates and local community groups who are, without exception, excited and inspired by the opportunity to examine the original materials. Certainly, as events are planned for Liverpool's Capital of Culture year in 2008 the materials given to the university by local collectors more than a century ago are being used to present exhibitions and publications celebrating the city, its people and their achievements. Indeed, as part of the celebrations we are set to acquire the archives of the Liverpool poets, Roger McGough, Brian Patten, and Adrian Henri and we hope that by 2008 the library will have a physical space that reflects the confidence and vision of the institution and donors who believe that the collections can be the focus of dynamic intellectual and cultural activity within and beyond the university for at least another hundred years.

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# Thinking the unthinkable: disaster planning for the M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries

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While the idea of a disaster befalling individual library services is, at best, unnerving, today's best practice in higher education libraries demands that we plan for the unthinkable. In the last fifteen years, disaster planning in libraries has developed from an add-on and, perhaps, a specialism to a core strategic and operational responsibility. In the United Kingdom, with hindsight, one of the milestone events towards this was the fire at Norwich Central Library on 1 August 1994. The entire building was destroyed in what the BBC described as '...the worst British library fire in living memory'<sup>1</sup>. Other notable disasters of recent times in United Kingdom universities include the flood in the Fawcett Library on 11 August 1994<sup>1</sup>, the flood at the University of Sussex Library's Lewes Store on 11 October 2000<sup>2</sup> and the fire at City University on 21 May 2001<sup>3</sup>. Terrorism has also affected library services and collections, significantly in the World Trade Center towers on 11 September 2001, when three librarians and an artist were among the many dead. The Center housed at least 21 libraries, mainly for legal and financial services, the Broadway Theatre Archive and the Helen Keller International Foundation, containing many first editions, photographs and autograph letters<sup>4</sup>. And, very recently, extraordinary natural forces have also devastated library services, especially the Asian tsunami on 26 December 2004<sup>5</sup> and Hurricane Katrina in August 2005<sup>6</sup>. In addition to greater awareness in the library sector generally of the need for disaster

planning on sound principles, significant institutional drivers for academic libraries, have been risk management, risk registers and organisational resilience in general. The Higher Education Funding Council's *Guide to risk management in higher education* being notable in this regard<sup>7</sup>. Colleagues will be familiar with risk assessment exercises and risk registers as part of the increasing institutional priority accorded to business and service continuity planning. In sum, disaster planning is at the forefront of contemporary library strategy and practice.

The M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries recognised at any early stage the importance of consortial disaster planning for the mutual benefit of members and has a long track record of provision and innovation. The consortium now has 55 member institutions and as a requirement of membership they are signatories to the mutual support agreement. The agreement is key to the consortium's strategic aim to provide mutual support for members and has been in force since 1 February 1999. In the event of a disaster, the agreement is invoked by the director of the affected library, whereupon consortium members have agreed to endeavour to allow staff and students to have access to study space for up to one month after the disaster occurred, providing physical access and services in line with the arrangements in place and normally offered under the SCONUL Research Extra and UK Libraries Plus programmes, and, for the small number of members ineligible to use these schemes, the M25 Consortium Access and Borrowing Scheme. This enables staff in the affected library to focus on dealing with the disaster and the orderly resumption of services. Where additional support in specialist subject areas is required, the resource discovery service InforM25 may be used to identify host libraries to provide these services. Once again, a request for specific support is made by the director of the affected library. Liability arrangements for the affected and host libraries operate in a similar fashion to the UK Libraries Plus Programme<sup>8</sup>. Operational responsibility for monitoring the continued effectiveness and responsiveness of the mutual support agreement rests with the consortium's Disaster Management Group (DMG), formed in 1997. The M25 DMG's remit is to promote awareness and best practice in disaster control management including disasters affecting IT-based services; to assist in the dissemination of information on disaster control management in conjunction with CPD25 (the staff development and training organisation working with Consortium members); and to undertake



co-operative initiatives, including investigating purchasing opportunities<sup>9</sup>. This remit is expressed via the provision of generic advice, training and sharing of good practice.

Perhaps the best known product of the M25 Consortium's work in disaster planning is the disaster control plan template. Initially created in 1997, it has been revised and enhanced to reflect changes and initiatives in good disaster planning practice and to incorporate new areas. It is freely available for consultation at <http://www.m25lib.ac.uk/m25dcp/>. Prefaced by an introduction and complemented by an extensive bibliography, the template is divided into five key sections: fostering a disaster management culture within the library service; prevention; preparedness; reaction; and recovery. The template offers generic advice and prompts for the compilation of a local disaster control plan, including lists of practical equipment, training and communication within the library and the institution. Most recently, new content has been added on special collections and IT considerations, and further content on archives and e-resources is being prepared. However, in response to demand from consortium members, business and service continuity has been the priority work for the DMG and new content for the template in this area will be launched shortly. This content focuses on timely and effective reinstatement of library services in the aftermath of a disaster and, once again taking a step-by-step approach, enables compilation of a local response plan. DMG members very much welcome feedback on this new content and look forward to receiving comments to continue to shape the Disaster Control Plan template.

The DMG keeps in regular contact with nominated disaster control plan representatives in various ways. There is a closed jiscmail list to encourage dissemination of good practice within the consortium and seeking advice on queries. There is an annual exchange of experience for representatives, to provide an update on the work of the DMG and a forum for discussion on 'hot topics'. The event in 2005 focused on promotion of the provisions of the consortium's mutual support agreement through a series of escalating scenarios, facilitated by Mary Auckland (a consultant and former university librarian). These guided participants through the impact of imaginary fires and floods, with key decisions points, and every now and again, even more unexpected issues to deal with. Participants are encouraged to cascade this scenario-based training approach in their institutions. This year's event, to be held on 30 Novem-

ber 2006 and once again facilitated by Mary Auckland, will offer scenarios related to business and service continuity planning in the aftermath of a library disaster. Amongst key learning objectives, the scenarios will draw the distinction between disaster recovery in the immediate aftermath and planned re-introduction of a partial and full range of services in line with the provisions of a business continuity plan. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to discuss recent and emergent issues, such as institutional responses to a potential avian influenza pandemic.

The DMG surveys consortium members regularly to gauge awareness of disaster planning and preparedness. The most recent survey was completed during the spring of 2006, and is an important means of staying in touch with members' needs. The headlines results from this year's survey were that there was an improving state of planning and preparedness, better coverage of IT in library disaster plans, better overall awareness of consortium services and a need for support in business continuity planning. Amongst requests for training in the coming academic session, were the most popular disaster scenarios, business continuity planning, IT and e-resources, special collections, principles of disaster planning and insurance. It is planned to run several training events in the academic year 2006-2007 with CPD25. The results of the survey overall confirm the continuing priority and relevance of the DMG agenda to consortium members.

In addition to the strategic objective of mutual support, the M25 Consortium seeks to work in collaboration with other regional and national partners. With regard to disaster planning, the Chair represents the M25 Consortium on the regional emergency planning group, convened by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and on the advisory panel for the project Safeguarding Heritage at Risk, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council<sup>10</sup>. This project recently conducted a survey of current disaster preparedness across the archives, libraries and museums sectors. Through this participation in a cross-domain, national project, consortium members will benefit from access to the latest research in modern disaster management practice.

During the academic session 2006-2007, the DMG will continue to respond to consortium members' needs by providing generic advice and training in all aspects of disaster planning, and, increasingly, best practice in business and service continuity planning. Full details of the DMG's work is avail-

able from the consortium's website at <http://www.m25lib.ac.uk/> and enquiries are welcomed.

## REFERENCES

- 1 The flood, its aftermath and outcomes are documented in a case study in Christine Wise, 'Flood prevention and recovery', in Graham Matthews and John Feather (eds), *Disaster management for libraries and archives*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.
- 2 For a photograph of the impact of the flood, see the *University of Sussex Library annual report 2000-2001* at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/aboutus/annualreport-2000-01.pdf>.
- 3 The report on the fire, entitled *Project Phoenix – a case study of City University's recovery from fire*, is available from [http://www.city.ac.uk/marcoms\\_media/PDF/phoenix.pdf](http://www.city.ac.uk/marcoms_media/PDF/phoenix.pdf).
- 4 Full details are available in the report *Cataclysm and challenge: impact of September 11, 2001, on our nation's cultural heritage*, by Heritage Preservation on behalf of the Heritage Emergency National Task Force. <http://www.heritagepreservation.org/PDFS/Cataclysm.pdf>.
- 5 See the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals' summary pages at [http://www.cilip.org.uk/cgi-bin/MsmGo.exe?grab\\_id=677&page\\_id=3868416&query=tsunami&hiword=TSUNAMIS+tsunami+ for further information](http://www.cilip.org.uk/cgi-bin/MsmGo.exe?grab_id=677&page_id=3868416&query=tsunami&hiword=TSUNAMIS+tsunami+for+for+for+further+information).
- 6 See the American Library Association Libraries and Hurricane Katrina web pages at <http://www.ala.org/ala/cro/katrina/katrina.htm> for updates.
- 7 For this document and other HEFCE guidance, see [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05\\_11/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_11/).
- 8 Full details of the history, development and provisions of the mutual support agreement are available from <http://www.m25lib.ac.uk/content/view/424/204/>.
- 9 Full details of the activities of the consortium'sDMG, including minutes of recent meetings, are available from <http://www.m25lib.ac.uk/content/section/11/66/>.

10 The project will conclude in September 2006. Full details are available from <http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/BSN/58823.htm>.

## SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the resources cited above, here is a select bibliography.

### Printed resources

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Nancy Gwinn and Johanna Wellheiser (eds), *Preparing for the worst, planning for the best: protecting our cultural heritage from disaster*, München: Saur, 2005

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Miriam B. Kahn, *Disaster response and planning for libraries*, 2nd edition, Chicago: American Library Association, 2003

Graham Matthews and Paul Eden, *Disaster management in British libraries: project report with guidelines for library managers*, Library and Information Research Report, no 109, London: British Library, 1996

The National Archives, *Standard for record repositories*, Kew: National Archives, 2004

Don Reville, (ed), *Working papers on disaster management*, London: SCONUL, 1995

### Web-based resources

American Library Association *Disaster response guidelines and standards* <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=disaste>.

John McIlwaine (compiler), 'First, do no harm': *a register of standards, codes of practice, guidelines, recommendations and similar works relating to preservation and conservation in libraries and archives*.

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s19/pubs/first-do-no-harm.pdf>

M25 Consortium *Disaster control plan template*.  
<http://www.m25lib.ac.uk/m25dcp/>

National Preservation Office. <http://www.bl.uk/services/npo/npo.html>.

Regional Emergencies & Disaster Support (REDS) Service, East Midlands Museum Service. <http://www.emms.org.uk/reds.htm>.

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## Inspire with a slight twist in Wolverhampton



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### BACKGROUND

To date, much of the emphasis of Inspire<sup>1</sup> has been to increase access to different types of libraries -including access to academic libraries- to learners that are not necessarily registered students. At the University of Wolverhampton we have been committed to this and have made visitor PCs available with links to appropriately licensed electronic resources, worked with other Inspire members for managed referral, and been heavily involved in the series of Inspire demonstration projects that took place in the West Midlands during 2004<sup>2</sup>.

However we have been also very eager to find new ways of collaborating with other libraries to improve our own students' learning experience and develop them as life long learners for when they leave the University. Therefore when colleagues at Wolverhampton libraries and information services suggested looking at sharing borrower data across our two Talis library management systems, to enable our staff and students to access materials at their libraries using their university ID card, it seemed too good an opportunity to miss.

### THE LEGAL STUFF

Before exploring the technicalities of sharing data across the two systems it was important to explore whether it was legally possible. Transferring personal data from a university system to system that exists outside its immediate control was obviously going to be sensitive. However our University Secretary was very supportive of the idea and keen to help. After undertaking some research and consultation he advised it would be feasible provided that:

- (a) All students and staff were made aware of the collaborative agreement in a robust fashion and were given the opportunity to opt out of the scheme at any time. This was best done in person rather than relying on mass or passive methods of communication.
- (b) Wolverhampton libraries and information services provided a written undertaking that confirmed adequate care of the data that would be provided, including the timely disposal of data and that they would not share it with any other third party.

Making all staff and students aware of the scheme was a challenge in itself. We used a number of means to ensure we had achieved this. Letters were written to every member of university staff explaining the scheme and how to opt out. To ensure it was received it was stapled to a pay slip. A statement was also included as part of the newly revamped Learning Centres Charter that each new student or staff member receives when they are issued an ID card. This was followed up by posters, web notices and emails to all individuals affected promoting the scheme to ensure everyone knew about it and advising how to opt out if they wished to do so.

#### **THE TECHNICAL STAFF: EXTRACTING DATA**

Talis was commissioned by Wolverhampton libraries and information services to make sufficient adaptations to our two systems so that it was possible to export and import the borrower data including names, addresses, expiry date and email addresses. This work involved writing a new batch script to extract borrower information from the University system as well as supporting Wolverhampton libraries and information services to adapt their system so it could cope with the different barcode validation.

The specified batch script had to be capable of converting the various university borrower types to types recognisable by Wolverhampton libraries and information services. Talis achieved this by offering a parameter file with the new perl script where we could specify what parts of the borrower record to extract and how the borrower types could be re-mapped. The extract borrower script was also written with flexibility in mind. This means we can change our minds regarding the actual components exported. Wolverhampton libraries and information services set up new borrower types with appropriate policies so usage by university staff and students of their libraries

could be easily tracked through Business Objects queries as the scheme progressed.

#### **THE TECHNICAL STUFF: SHARING DATA**

Early on in discussing the technicalities it quickly became obvious we would require a mutually accessible place from where the university could place the data and the public library service collect it. It would be too costly both financially and politically to try to develop a physical link between our two organisations' networks. Resorting to delivering via tape or similar media was also considered undesirable. However we struck on the idea of using the secure space on a Talis server, that being both Talis customers we had access to, primarily for downloading new upgrades and software. After a little persuasion Talis amended the server's directory permissions so that the university could place data into Wolverhampton libraries and information services part of the service for them to download from later. IT staff who manage Talis upgrades at Wolverhampton city council then had to receive instruction on how to download this data and upload it using the standard borrower import scripts that are familiar to most Talis academic customers but less used by local authorities.

#### **EXCLUDING BORROWERS FROM THE SCHEME**

To allow staff and students to opt out of the scheme the university agreed to use the analysis code field in each Talis borrower record to include the acronym "NOEX" to stop the extract borrower script taking data from them for export. We also ensured we had a point of contact with Wolverhampton libraries and information services so they could be contacted in the event of a borrower changing their minds about participation in the scheme after the extract had been undertaken.

To date the university has received few complaints regarding the fact that staff and students were expected to opt out rather than opt in to the scheme. However these were quickly addressed when we demonstrated the robust systems we had in place to ensure data was being carefully handled and their details would not be shared once they had opted out. Interestingly some academic staff were happy for their work addresses to be shared but not their home ones.

#### **EMBEDDING OF THE SERVICE**

Following a thorough testing, work on the local authority Talis system and training of library staff,

nine months on we were ready to implement the scheme for real. Unfortunately for the university this was the time our students were completing end of year exams and returning home. In light of this it was decided to start with staff records. A few volunteers acted as mystery visitors to Wolverhampton central library to borrow books off the latest 'Richard and Judy's book club' list to try out the service.

Then in autumn 2005 we exported student data for the first time and subsequently every two months have sent updates to the Talis server where they are collected from and uploaded on to Wolverhampton library and information service. When a student uses the service for the first time they are given a leaflet about the scheme outlining their borrowing rights and the fact that though they were using the same card for Wolverhampton libraries it was a separate service.

#### **IMPACT OF THE PROJECT**

Over the past academic year the university students using their university cards at the many branch libraries as well as the central library Wolverhampton libraries and information services offers have undertaken over 400 loan transactions. The usage of branch libraries came as a surprise but obviously students are finding it useful to borrow items close to where they reside. Even more encouraging is the fact that final year students whose membership expires at the end of July have been contacting Wolverhampton libraries and information services to apply for new membership so they can continue to use its facilities after graduation.

#### **FUTURE CHALLENGES**

Colleagues working at the university campuses at Walsall and Telford are keen for the scheme to expand. The university also has many students living in other Black Country boroughs such as Dudley. However the fact that our neighbouring local authorities all use different library management systems does mean that replicating the process would be more difficult and alternative means of secure but direct transfer would have to be found. We hope to conduct a feasibility study into this over the course of the coming year.

In addition the university is introducing multi-function smartcards over the next year. Our learning centres would ideally like to move away from relying on visible barcodes and install smartcard readers at counters and on self-service machines.

This has obvious implications for the set up at Wolverhampton libraries and information service and they will need at least one smartcard reader at each site to be able to continue to handle our university cards as well as appropriate amendment to their own system. We will have to work closely together on this issue.

Finally both the university and local authority will be continuing to carefully monitor the usage of the scheme.

#### **REFERENCES**

- 1 S. Curry, 'Inspire – realising the future of access', *SCONUL Focus*, **36**, Winter 2005, p43 - 45. For more information on Inspire go to: <http://www.inspire.gov.uk/>
- 2 Details of Wolverhampton demonstration project can be found at: [http://www.inspire.gov.uk/west\\_midlands\\_papers.php](http://www.inspire.gov.uk/west_midlands_papers.php)

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# News from SCONUL

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## **SCONUL Conference breaks the record**

SCONUL's annual residential conference took place this year in Newcastle-upon-Tyne from 21 to 23 June, and more people attended than ever before, attracted by the mix of outstanding speakers in plenary sessions and practical discussions in workshops. Speakers' presentations are available on the website at <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/events/agm2006> and a report appears in this issue of *SCONUL Focus*.

## **SCONUL represented at South African conference**

Jeremy Atkinson of the University of Glamorgan represented SCONUL, and gave a paper, at the conference of CHELSA (Committee for Higher Education Librarians of South Africa) which took place at almost the same time (20-22 June) as our own gathering in Newcastle.

## **CURL and SCONUL respond jointly to EC study of scientific publications**

CURL and SCONUL have sent a joint response to the European Commission commenting (mostly favourably) on the analysis funded by the Commission of the scientific publication markets in Europe: see <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/414&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en> The joint response is available on SCONUL's website.

## **JISC's open access programme boosts publishers and authors**

JISC's open access funding initiative, which provided nearly £400k over three years to publishers to explore open access models of publishing their journals, has given 'valuable impetus' to thinking around open access and has raised awareness among UK authors. These are some conclusions of an evaluation by Key Perspectives: see [www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded\\_documents/OA\\_Funding\\_Initiative\\_Evaluation\\_Report.doc](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/OA_Funding_Initiative_Evaluation_Report.doc)

## **Medical journals available**

Complete back issues covering nearly 200 years of significant biomedical journals were recently made freely available online through a landmark partnership between the Wellcome Trust,

JISC, the US National Library of Medicine and several medical journal publishers. For the full announcement, see [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=digi\\_medical](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=digi_medical)

## **SPARC Europe: moves and awards**

The office of SPARC Europe (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, Europe) has moved to the Bodleian Library's Clarendon Building. SPARC Europe recently bestowed its first Award for Outstanding Achievements in Scholarly Publication on the Wellcome Trust, recognising the Trust's incisive research into the publications market combined with its clear support for the widest possible dissemination of research outputs funded by the Trust. See [http://www.sparceurope.org/press\\_release/Wellcome.htm](http://www.sparceurope.org/press_release/Wellcome.htm)

## **Successful Future Leaders programme to be repeated**

The Future Leaders programme developed by the Leadership Foundation in association with SCONUL, UCISA and the British Library, has seen its first cohort complete the first part, with excellent feedback. The same cohort undertook the second part in July. The course attracted 21 participants from 18 institutions, two places being jointly funded by bursaries from SCONUL, UCISA and the British Library. Planning has begun for the second run of the course, with a call for participants on [lis-sconul](http://lis-sconul) and elsewhere likely in September or October, with modules scheduled for March and July 2007. The fee will be around £5000 per participant.

## **Learning spaces: HEA study**

The Higher Education Academy has commissioned a literature review on the topic of learning spaces in the 21st century: see <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/literaturereviews.htm>

## **CILIP and SCONUL agree to collaborate on events**

The joint CILIP/SCONUL steering group has agreed a protocol for the joint management of events: see [http://www.sconul.ac.uk/activities/cilip\\_sconul/events\\_protocol.html](http://www.sconul.ac.uk/activities/cilip_sconul/events_protocol.html)

## **Health information and libraries**

*Library and information research* 30 (94) 2006 is devoted to the health library and information community, opening with articles by Maggie Haines (formerly SCONUL's Representative at King's College London) and Paul Ayris of UCL. The SCONUL/CILIP Health Strategy Group and

the NHS/HE Libraries Forum both receive mentions.

#### **MLA Designation Scheme: new guidance notes**

No longer are there deadlines for applications for designation of collections under the MLA scheme, which will operate a rolling programme of approvals. New application documents are at [http://www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=73&Section\[@stateId\\_eq\\_selected\]/@id=4363&Section\[@stateId\\_eq\\_left\\_hand\\_root\]/@id=4332](http://www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=73&Section[@stateId_eq_selected]/@id=4363&Section[@stateId_eq_left_hand_root]/@id=4332)

#### **Irish Research e-Library: launch 6 June**

The Irish Minister of Education launched the new nationally-funded electronic research library on 6 June at the National Library of Ireland. Providing full-text access to thousands of quality, peer-reviewed research publications, it is available to all researchers, staff and students at all seven Irish universities, and is managed by the Irish Universities Association Librarians' Group.

#### **M25 Consortium: new website**

The M25 Consortium with its 25 million volumes and 11,000 computers has launched its new website at <http://www.m25lib.ac.uk>

#### **SCONUL international**

The SCONUL office was visited on 26 June by Alvaro Arias, Director of Libraries at the National University of Colombia and Liris Gómez de Cárdenas, University of the Andes, who went on to visit the British Library and the University of Westminster where our colleagues kindly received them at short notice. On the European Union front I have been appointed to the Sub-group on Copyright of the European Commission's High Level Group on Digital Libraries.

#### **Joint groups bonanza**

The CILIP/SCONUL group (formerly the CILIP/SCONUL Steering Group) met on 7 June and agreed methods of sharing the discussion and treatment of strategic issues. It has achieved very positive liaison and joint working and will now meet at least annually – more often when required. Its subsidiary CILIP/SCONUL Health Strategy Group met on 27 June, with the Cooksey review of medical research funding as its main agenda item (see [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent\\_reviews/cooksey\\_review/cookseyreview\\_index.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/cooksey_review/cookseyreview_index.cfm)).

#### **Joint CURL/SCONUL seminar on research space**

A stimulating and heavily-subscribed joint seminar took place at the University of Birmingham on

9 June on the topic of spaces required by researchers for their work.

#### **Research Information Network**

Officers of RIN, SCONUL and CURL met on 12 June for their regular information-sharing meeting.

#### **RIN study of public access to e-resources**

SCONUL and UCISA are amongst the bodies contributing to a study for the UK government of the issue of access by the public to e-journals in higher education institutions. A report with recommendations was published in September. <http://www.rin.ac.uk/public-access>

#### **Research Councils UK statement**

RCUK's long-awaited statement on access to research outputs was published on 28 June and is at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/access> and a response from JISC is at [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=rcuk\\_jiscresponse](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=rcuk_jiscresponse)

#### **JISC statement on repositories of research publications**

On 7 June JISC announced the publication of a report affirming that 'the time is right for major investment in repositories infrastructure'. The report calls for the development of the shared, national services upon which a step-change in the adoption, and use of repositories now depends, see [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=programme\\_digital\\_repositories](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=programme_digital_repositories)

#### **UK Research Councils announce policies on open access to research outputs**

Three of the UK's Research Councils have announced policies to encourage open access to research results. They make it a condition of the grants they award that the results of the resulting research should be deposited in open access repositories. The councils are those for biotechnology and biological sciences, economics and social research, and medical research.

#### **UK Libraries Plus**

UK Libraries Plus held its ever-successful annual meeting and its final one as an independent association on 19 June at the Open University in Milton Keynes. A few days before, the results were announced of elections to a new SCONUL Access Steering Group which will take forward SCONUL Research Extra, UK Libraries Plus and related access schemes. The annual meeting showed increased enthusiasm for the future of cooperative access to higher education libraries. New administrative arrangements from

August, under SCONUL's auspices, mean that UK Libraries Plus has a clear development path. The scheme and its name remain unchanged for the time being.

#### **UK Government information/archives merger**

On 21 June the UK Government announced the merger between the Office of Public Sector Information and the National Archives: see [www.opsi.gov.uk/about/opsi-and-tna.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/about/opsi-and-tna.htm)

#### **HEFCE statement on the reform of research assessment**

Concerned by misleading reports in the press about the status of the research assessment exercise in 2008, the HEFCE Board issued a statement on 20 June welcoming the Government's confirmation that the RAE 2008 should go ahead largely as planned. See <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2006/raestate.htm>

#### **SCONUL: strategic planning**

On 15-16 August, SCONUL's Executive Board met the Chairs of our working groups in order to discuss future strategic plans. Repeating last year's successful arrangement, the meeting was held over two days at a conference centre in Cambridge.

#### **JISC consults on its strategy**

JISC's draft strategy 2007-2009 was issued for formal consultation at the end of July and can be found at [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/draft\\_strategy0709.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/draft_strategy0709.html)

The strategy sets out JISC's broad vision for ICT in education and research and the activities JISC will deliver in partnership to help meet that vision.

#### **Inspire**

Inspire has reached another landmark, with registrations now topping 300 individual library organisations, including 106 public library authorities, 79 higher education institutions, 64 further education college libraries, 36 health libraries, 14 specialist libraries, 8 libraries from Northern Ireland, and one each from Scotland and Wales. Several SCONUL libraries are members of Libraries and Learners in London, an organisation on the brink of joining too.

#### **Copyright licensing (UK)**

Almost exactly a year after the launch of the Copyright Licensing Agency's trial photocopying and scanning licence for UK higher education, the Agency has come to an agreement with Universities UK and the Standing Conference of Principals for licensing arrangements until July 2008. For the

next two years, the cost of the licences will not go up each year following inflation. Institutions may have a licence for photocopying only, or for both photocopying and scanning.

#### **Open Access conference, Glasgow**

Open Scholarship 2006 will be a major conference on open access, to be held at the University of Glasgow from 18 to 20 October, organised by SPARC Europe, the University itself, and LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche). It will address advocacy, policy, functionality and software issues. Information at <http://www.lib.gla.ac.uk/openscholarship>

#### **Also in Glasgow: Digital Curation Conference, 21-22 November**

If you're interested in issues associated with the preservation of digital materials, see the details of the International Digital Curation Conference at <http://www.dcc.ac.uk/events/dcc-2006>

#### **University of Bedfordshire**

On 1 August our member the University of Luton became the University of Bedfordshire.



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# 'The future's now' SCONUL Conference, 21 – 23 June 2006, Newcastle upon Tyne

Conference reviewed by Antony Brewerton  
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This year saw a break with tradition. The SCONUL Conference –the spring Conference– has always taken place in March or April. This year, it was decided that the Newcastle upon Tyne conference should take place in June. As a Geordie wag put it last time, this is spring in Newcastle.

So it was on 21 June that I boarded my early morning train from Oxford to the north east of England. From the outset the omens looked good: that morning's edition of *Metro*, the free newspaper, included a story about the new Rough Guide 'Best things to do in Britain'. Whilst a visit to the Dreaming Spire clocked in at number three, top of the pops was a night out in Newcastle. I was certainly headed in the right direction.

## DAY ONE

Not only was this the right choice of city, the SCONUL Conference planning team had also struck gold with the location of the event. No out of town hotel complex with stunning views of the ring road for us! The Conference was in the heart of the city, on the bank of the Tyne, with the Gateshead Millennium Bridge, Baltic, the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Sage Gateshead a short stroll away. The whole area is brimming with energy and optimism. The perfect location for a forward-looking conference.

The theme of this year's gathering was 'the future's now'. And indeed, the future is now, commented **Suzanne Enright**, outgoing Chair of SCONUL in her opening address. After welcoming us to the largest SCONUL Conference ever –and offering an especially warm welcome to SCONUL's five new member institutions and ten new corporate members– Suzanne expanded on the theme: we have to look to the future but act now.



*Eugenie Prime & Michael Keller*

Who better to take up this theme than keynote speaker **Eugenie Prime**? Those of us lucky enough to attend 2005's conference came away with a warm glow following Eugenie's show closing –and show stopping– presentation on preparing for the future. Something that really struck a cord with me at the Brighton conference (reviewed in *SCONUL Focus* 34) was Eugenie's suggestion that we should let go of emotional baggage, let go of the things we do not need to do any more and do things of greater importance instead. This theme was taken up in 2006, with Eugenie's usual power and humour. For Eugenie many of the things we do as librarians are outmoded and need to be dropped. Worse than this, these activities have become 'unnecessary', 'unwise' and 'insane'. If you don't believe this draw up a chart and see how many of your day-to-day activities fall under these various headings. Then get your staff to do the same, and –if you really want to know the truth– ask your customers to do likewise. Quoting Peter Drucker, Eugenie suggested that we hold on to yesterday's successes, even if they have lost their relevance and potential. The question we need to ask of ourselves is this: 'if this wasn't already on-going, would I introduce this service into my library?' Too many of our activities are on life support systems. Eugenie is keen to pull the plug.

So what solutions did our keynote speaker offer? For Eugenie, the 'I's have it:

- Institutionalisation – we need to create the right culture for change, we need to create a learning organisation
- Innovation – the most innovative companies have the best profits and are most competitive; we need more heretics if we are to survive
- Imagination – as children, we are encouraged to develop our imagination, yet at work it is knocked out of us; we need 'zaniacs' who don't accept the rules, the received wisdom
- Ideation – we need a culture that encourages ideas.

To this list I would need to add one final 'I': Inspiration. Not everyone can come up with and nurture great ideas. We sometimes need to be inspired to do things differently. As always, Eugenie served as a great source of inspiration and a brilliant start to the conference.

Next up was **Mike Keller**, University Librarian at Stanford University, with his views of our future from the other side of the Pond. Equally optimistic, he asserted that 'it has never been a better time to be a librarian'. This isn't what you always expect to hear in this day and age so the audience was rapt. Mike had two propositions for us. Firstly, 'we've got them where we want them'. There is more information than ever, and more informed customers with even greater information needs. We need to provide a route map to information, to assist them through the ever-growing information maze. His second proposition was that 'there is no time like the present to take advantage of these opportunities'. One such opportunity is the opportunity to develop the information skills of our customers. Even the most Google-savvy have a lot to learn and we should be filling their skill gaps in formal sessions or even via encounters at the enquiry desk. As our libraries are becoming less paper-based, digitisation provides more opportunities to raise our profile, promote our collections, utilise cataloguing/metadata skills and review our usage of physical space. Ultimately, we are becoming 'channel editors', a new type of link between information and our customers.

Mike left us with some points to ponder:

- the future is bright but ever-changing and ever-challenging
- we need to be good ancestors for the future

- the past is an imperfect predictor for the future ...but it is the foundation
- we need to look to the future but still do our present jobs
- we need to act strategically, not just tactically
- our role as custodians of culture continues regardless of format.

One of the really great –and at the same time frustrating– things about the SCONUL Conference is the wide array of workshops that complement the papers presented. Topics this year included:

- Digital and institutional repositories: emerging architectures – Steve Hitchcock (University of Southampton)
- 'I haven't got time': library services and competing demands on researchers' time – Martin Wolf (University of Warwick)
- Student expectations: promoting evidence-based practice: a political issue? – Ian Butchart (University of Teesside) and Oliver Pritchard (University of Sunderland)
- Value and impact measurement (measuring the value of library services): the SCONUL VAMP Project – the Vamp Sub-Group
- Changing the physical learning space – Anne Bell (University of Warwick), Jane Core (Northumbria University), Bob Hunter (JISC Learning SPACES programme) and Les Watson (Glasgow Caledonian University)
- Google and the new Alexandria – Todd Miller (WebFeat)
- Resource Discovery Network: advancing education and research by promoting the best of the Web: strategic relevance past, present and future – Caroline Williams (RDN, University of Manchester)
- Disruption the Library 2.0 way: opportunity or threat? – Paul Miller (Talis)

I would have liked to have attended various of these but as my God-like attributes do not yet include omnipresence I was forced to be selective. I did, however, manage to convince others to act as scribes as well. Reviews of some of these sessions appear at the end of this article.

The evening's reception was held in the Biscuit Factory, now an art gallery boasting a wide array of modern pieces. I was especially taken by a screen of metal pillows and a painting of Frank Sinatra on a back door. The welcome came from **Professor Christopher Edwards**, Vice-Chancellor at Newcastle University. It has been sixteen years since the SCONUL conference has graced Newcastle, and both the city and libraries have

changed a lot in this time. Indeed, libraries have probably changed more than any other part of our universities in this time. We need to preserve the best of the past but also look to the future: developing desktop delivery; promoting open access and digital repositories in the fight against rising journal prices; and marketing the library as an asset, rather than a cost. As always, it is good to hear a non-librarian extolling our virtues.



Dr David Baker, College of St Mark & St John

## Day Two

Further justification for libraries and librarians came from the first speaker of Day Two. **David Baker**, Principal of the College of St Mark and St John, in his paper *Needles and haystacks*, elaborated on the work he has done for the JISC (Joint Information and Systems Committee) looking at research competitiveness and support for researchers. As we all know, our sector is entering a period of turbulence with a more focused Research Assessment, full economic costing, increased e-publishing and the growing impact of (growing) top-up fees. With less stability the position of libraries becomes more precarious. So what justification is there for libraries? Rather than be seen as a cost, libraries need to promote their roles in institutional competitiveness, student recruitment, research performance, commercialisation and knowledge transfer. Researchers are facing a data deluge. The needle remains the same size but the haystack has got larger and larger. Librarians need to be proactive in what David referred to as the Search-Discover-Locate-Retrieve continuum. We need to carry out our traditional functions of assessment and acquisition, organisation and presentation of information, but manage these functions with increased personalisation and mass customisation. David brought all this together by focusing on the digital library and



Dr David Baker & Dr Tom Graham

digital repositories that will provide librarians with the opportunity to become more relevant, rather than marginalised. We just need to grasp the opportunities this offers.

David struggled masterfully with technical difficulties during his talk, including a complete loss of electrical power. I am sure that **Les**

**Watson**, who followed David to the podium, was most relieved that the technical problems were quickly resolved as he treated us to an all singing, all dancing multimedia presentation on *Learning, libraries and students' lives* as he focused on developments in this regard at Glasgow Caledonian University. Regular readers of *SCONUL Focus* will be familiar with Les's important work; non-regular readers are directed to the editorial and lead article of issue 37 for a flavour of his ideas. Les began by stressing that libraries need to bring synergy between People, Technology and the Environment. He then went on to show how he has achieved this with the £20M Saltire Centre. Les is the best sort of dreamer. He urged us to imagine the future, a future where everyone achieves their full educational potential. He then showed how these dreams can be realised with a new, flexible, customer-focused (not systems-driven) learning centre for a new generation with new needs. Les's presentation culminated in a slide show of his beautiful building, which I frankly found quite moving. Les's final message: dream more.

Dreaming is an activity often undertaken during **Annual General Meetings**. Luckily, *SCONUL* does not go in for overly formal or overly long AGMs so there was no evidence of snoozing. There was, however, lots of evidence of just how busy the institution has been over the last twelve months, as illustrated in the stunningly designed new *annual review* that was presented to the membership at the AGM and can now be found via the *SCONUL* Web site (<http://www.sconul.ac.uk>). The new corporate members were formally welcomed, activities in partnership with CILIP and CURL reported on, and updates given on the strategic review. All this plus the usual formal business was completed in 50 minutes. Proceedings were brought to a close by Suzanne Enright in her last duty as Chair of *SCONUL*. Suzanne has been a real powerhouse in this role and was given a well deserved round of applause for her enormous commitment and achievement in post.

Over the next hour five speakers gave updates on activities in their areas of specialism: SCONUL Access; the SCONUL VAMP Project; the Joint Information Systems Committee; the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council; the Research Information Network. The session was rounded up with a glimpse of the new design SCONUL Web site, still at the tweaking stage but soon to go live.

After a short break came an afternoon of timetabled visits. Again, my inability to be in more than one place at once caused me some annoyance (I really need to work on this, it would make life so much easier). Again, I was forced to choose, this time between various library visits and local cultural highlights. As a committed subject team leader for the arts (in my day job) I plumped for **Baltic**, the Centre for Contemporary Art. As well as an opportunity to look around the exhibits (currently Sam Taylor Wood and a tunnel full of television screens and garbage, an interesting take on information overload ...well that was my interpretation) we also had a tour of the gallery's library. Most of the holdings –archives of the exhibits– are virtual. This is the only library I have encountered where they place stock face out to try to fill up the space. The future now, perhaps?

The evening saw the conference dinner at St James' Park, home of Newcastle United. It wasn't hot dogs and mugs of tea on the menu as you might expect at a football ground, but a lovely meal and the Magpie's own-label wines: Merlot for fans of red wine and Chardonnay for fans of *Footballers' wives*. The welcome came from **Kel Fidler**, Vice-Chancellor of Northumbria University. He explained that the library is invariably in the Top 3 Factors dictating choice of university by students: this is why some VCs are so generous with budget allocations. For those of us less flush perhaps we should use our Top 3 status to our advantage. The after dinner speaker was **Gervase Phinn**. I am ashamed to say that I (and many of my fellow diners) had not heard of Gervase. Some thought he may be a footballer (Gervase?), others a lovey. In fact, he is far more remarkable. Born in a council house in Rotherham, his parents gave him love, books and stories. He grew up to become a school inspector and to discover that most other children were not as lucky as him. He entertained us with heart-warming and hilarious stories from his working life, which included two tips from under tens on how to remember the spelling of diarrhoea ('Die In A Rolls Royce Having Over Eaten Again' was one, the other is far too rude to repeat here). Gervase said that from his experience two things lead to success:

- 1 self esteem
- 2 someone behind you who expects the moon.

Wonderful stuff.

The evening ended with the opportunity to look around the St James' Park dressing rooms ('that's Shearer's seat, Pet') and even go onto the pitch (side): 'There's some librarians on the pitch. They think it's all over. It is now!!' We left the stadium quietly and did not disturb the neighbours.

### DAY THREE

The final day began with a very rich paper from **Liz Lyons**, Director of UKOLN at the University of Bath. *Digital libraries and digital scholarship: changing roles and responsibilities* surveyed the changing research landscape and pointed to ways that librarians might rise to their fresh challenges. The research culture is now more open and participative, with sharing a common theme (with blogs, wikis and other forms of collaborative working). Many of these approaches are the opposite to the way libraries have functioned in the past. Indeed, given that research is a key part of the *raison d'être* of many libraries, we seem to be curiously ignorant of the research process. One area where we can build partnerships with researchers is in developing Institutional Repositories. We need to work with academic colleagues but play to our strengths. We need to consider software, hardware, and tagging. We need to bring added value to the IR process and set standards for our institutions and beyond. Liz then went on to ponder persistent identifiers, mash ups, text mining, and a whole host of other exciting opportunities. Librarians need to step forward and embrace these challenges. At the moment much of this is novel. Soon we will be expected to serve a generation of 'native digital scholars' for



Dr Liz Lyon

whom all this is the way we do things. If we don't act now, the future –our future as research libraries– will be lost.

As I said, this was an incredibly rich (and at times quite technical) presentation and I can only give a taster of it here. For more details readers are urged to visit Liz's PowerPoint demonstration on the SCONUL Web site.



After coffee **Peter Knight**, VC at the University of Central England, treated us to a talk called *Men plan: God laughs*. I must be more God-like than I thought because I spent most of this session chortling away. Peter said he would give us a view of the future for the next 25 years. Surely this was impossible? Not at all. He was going to give us a 'strategic' view, so it would not be informed by facts and figures but prejudices. After warning that previous crystal ball gazing on his part about the future of universities had been quite disastrous he confidently went on to predict that:

- student numbers will rise (because the number of 18 year olds is rising)
- fees will rise
- demand will outstrip supply
- the popularity of subjects will vary and change
- there will be more e-learning
- there will be no more mergers
- the world supply of higher education will rise (especially with the growth of China).

Making predictions for the next 20 years and beyond is less easy and Peter restricted his attempts to cover three key themes: demography; e-learning; and the rest of the world. The undergraduate population looks set to rise steadily over the next 20 years: given trends and the current birth-rate, this is a fairly safe prediction for the next 18 years at least.

E-learning is more tricky: in some ways technology just allows us to do the same things differently; but there are also completely new things coming up. What will fail and fall by the wayside? What will succeed and revolutionise education? Is there to be another killer invention –like Google– which will change everything? This is less easy to predict. One thing to always remember is that we are like monkeys, troop animals. We like the social aspect of learning and we should never lose sight of this.

And what of the rest of the world? Peter pointed out that we will never be able to compete with the American and (growing) Far Eastern universities because of their size and economic strength. Harvard remains the world leader because it is the second richest private institution in the world (after the Roman Catholic Church) and its funding is bigger than the entire funding given to higher education by the UK government. As UK students are increasingly approaching higher education as consumers why shouldn't they pay to go to Harvard, and get the best, rather than aspire to Oxbridge? Add to this the e-learning element (and its distance learning opportunities) and the future could be very different indeed.



All of this was delivered in a hilarious style but this cannot disguise the fact that it was truly thought-provoking material.

The Conference was brought to a close with a **Question and Answer session** for a panel of speakers from the last three days facilitated by the new Chair of SCONUL, Anne Bell. Topics debated included:

- (following on from the last talk) the future from an American perspective
- the difference between the English and Scottish universities
- (building on Eugenie's inspirational start) how to grasp the day
- what key messages we should take back to our staff from the conference

- how to develop the library as a space and support the needs of distance users.

The final question of this session was in three parts. Following on from Gervase's after dinner speech, should young people go on to higher education, and (if so) in which country, and should they train to be librarians? All the speakers were still pro-higher education. One suggested the best country in which to study is Yorkshire. But the final part brought the widest diversity of opinion. I thought Les had the best answer when he said that not being a librarian hadn't done him any harm, until the always rousing Eugenie Prime took the mic and said we should promote librarianship as a career. We promote other professions, why are we so ashamed of librarianship? She concluded: 'I'm not afraid of the L word. I'm glad I'm where I am because I am a librarian ...and where others are because they are not!!'

As always, she brought the house down.

Bring everything together in an orderly fashion, **Anne Bell** reflected on the key lessons from the last three days. The conference had raised more questions than answers. A lot of what we do is clearly, to quote Eugenie, 'unnecessary', 'unwise' and 'insane'. What do we need to review? What do we need to drop? Much of our approach to librarianship in higher education is still informed by an educational model from a different time. What is our role today? Are we channel editors? Should we have hybrid roles or should we be subject specialists? What issues do we need to address as individuals? And what issues does SCONUL need to address on our behalf?

We need to reflect now, but we also need to act now. Indeed, the future is now.

#### POSTSCRIPT

For papers and PowerPoint presentations relating to many of the above talks -plus some of the workshops- go to [www.sconul.ac.uk/events/agm2006/presentations/](http://www.sconul.ac.uk/events/agm2006/presentations/)

**DIGITAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES: EMERGING ARCHITECTURES, STEVE HITCHCOCK, SCHOOL OF ELECTRONICS AND COMPUTING SCIENCE, SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY**

*Rapporteur: David Perrow, Acting Deputy Director, Oxford University Library Services*

This session from Steve Hitchcock set out to advance our understanding, and focus our thinking, on what an institutional repository (IR) is, and what it is not.

Starting with Lynch's 2003 classic definition of an IR:

'a university-based institutional repository is a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organisational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution. ...An institutional repository is not simply a fixed set of software and hardware.'



*SCONUL Conference 2006, St James' Park, Newcastle*

- Cliff Lynch, 2003 <http://www.arl.org/newsltr/226/ir.htm>

Steve led us through a dialogue, looking at three schematics for where IRs fit in the digital environment (from UKOLN, the OCLC 2003 environmental scan, and the Hull University RepoMMan project), and ending up with Edinburgh University's model for developing their IR and further digital content. He concluded that creating an IR is like the search for the Holy Grail: the important thing was to be persuaded to set off on the journey, with costs and benefits unknown, but in the belief that something precious would emerge in the end. The technology was not important, so discussion about software were left aside so that we could concentrate on identifying user needs and the data types that should feature in an IR.

Ultimately an IR is how an institution chooses to express itself in digital form, and therefore there will be as many varieties of IR as there are institutional personalities. IRs need to be embedded in the institution's strategy, and the data capture built around institutional workflows. It may be wrong to think about one IR – an institution may have multiple repositories, and we must think about how these relate to the wider digital library and the next generation library management systems:

'As I've looked more at various institutional deployments and planned deployments, I think that the distinction between digital libraries, digital collection management systems, digital archives, and institutional repositories is less clear than I might have felt in 2003.'

- Cliff Lynch, 2006, quoted in <http://poynder.blogspot.com/2006/03/institutional-repositories-and-little.html>

**'I HAVEN'T GOT TIME' – LIBRARY SERVICES AND COMPETING DEMANDS ON RESEARCHERS' TIME, MARTIN WOLF, UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**

*Rapporteur: Steve Rose, Head of OULS Reader Services, Oxford University Library Services*

This interactive workshop, led by Martin Wolf from the University of Warwick, explored ways in which our profession may best support the information needs of researchers.

It was felt that the independent way in which many researchers operate can pose a problem in attempting to understand their needs and in

determining how we may best respond. The trend for researchers to use many different libraries was noted, emphasising the need for greater co-operation and collaboration amongst higher education libraries.

Librarians need to be determined in their attempts to infiltrate the researchers' world. Some participants had experienced some resistance but it was concluded that perseverance can pay dividends. It is well worth trying to become actively involved in research committees and in ensuring professional input to organisational research strategies.

As a profession, we are constantly evolving and acquiring new skills. With this in mind, it was felt that our credibility could be enhanced by teaching research methods. In particular, it was noted how in the health sector many information professionals have embraced the research methodology agenda by teaching how to undertake systematic reviews of the literature and how to critically appraise results. Other value-added services such as offering training in the use of bibliographic software and being involved in the co-ordination of RAE responses were suggested as ways in which we might demonstrate our worth whilst making the life of the researcher a little easier!

Other themes which featured predominantly at the conference were also raised here. For example, the importance of ensuring library space was conducive to researchers' needs was mentioned. The creation of seminar rooms and break out rooms within the library was felt to be important to ensure that libraries offered more than private study spaces in assisting the research journey.

Reverting to the first point in this write-up, the work of the Research Information Network (RIN) was welcomed, in particular RIN's programme of work to ensure we gain a greater understanding of researchers' needs. Indeed we need to conduct our own research to understand the information services required to support research!

All in all an enjoyable, lively session with plenty of food for thought.

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: PROMOTING EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE: A POLITICAL ISSUE? – IAN BUTCHART, UNIVERSITY OF TEESSIDE AND OLIVER PRITCHARD, UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND**

*Rapporteur: Toby Bainton, Secretary of SCONUL*

The room was crowded for a workshop on student expectations, jovially but expertly led by Ian Butchart (Teesside) and Oliver Pritchard (Sunderland). The basic questions posed at the start of the workshop were: how useful is hard evidence of what students expect from their library, and (on the other hand) how far is the issue a political one? Those present agreed with Ian and Oliver that this is invariably a political issue, in the sense that people in positions of power in the institution always have an interest, and often a direct involvement. Though students are not mere customers, simply buying a degree, their wishes are important and libraries are at the front line of their experience in achieving their degree. They can easily be persuaded to mount embarrassing public campaigns (sometimes not terribly well thought out or justified), but at least they do care about their libraries. Hard evidence of their needs is useful to defend ourselves in such situations. And when faced with long lists of wants, we can perhaps use voting technology to encourage prioritisation and an appreciation of the realities of resourcing.

**VALUE AND IMPACT MEASUREMENT: THE SCONUL VAMP PROJECT, THE VAMP SUB-GROUP**

*Rapporteur: Antony Brewerton, SCONUL Focus Editorial Team*

VAMP, the Value and Impact Measurement Programme, grew out of the SCONUL survey of members' top concerns, one of the clear messages of which was that the membership needed support in showing their value to senior stakeholders. The programme is co-ordinated by a sub-group of the Working Group on Performance Improvement. Its remit was approved by the SCONUL Executive Board in February 2006.

So what is VAMP all about? The aim of VAMP is to provide advocacy tools for senior colleagues in university and other member libraries. These tools should provide proof of value and impact. They may be used for benchmarking activities, to ensure income streams are maintained, and also provide justification for the continuing roles of libraries and librarians.

The VAMP project team comprises Maxine Melling (chair), Philip Payne, Rupert Wood and Stephen Town (project manager) who led the workshop session I attended.

The purpose of the session was really to provide a forum for discussion amongst the membership and allow VAMP to discover what colleagues would find most useful as a project outcome.

To focus our thinking, Stephen posed three questions:

- 1 How does accountability and reporting work in your institution?
- 2 What evidence do you present in your own institutions to demonstrate value and impact, or the worth and contribution of your library service?
- 3 What additional tools do you want from SCONUL to help you provide evidence of worth and contribution?

These points were discussed in groups. Feedback was often quite consistent. For topic one it would be fair to say that reporting lines vary, with some based on committees but many just based on line management. Although most librarians are strategic thinkers, real library involvement in university strategic planning was not always deemed important by university management. Often 'strategic plans' demanded from libraries are nothing more than budget forecasts.

Question 2 showed that we have an array of tools we use to demonstrate our worth (annual reports, surveys, benchmarking, balanced score card) but these are only useful bargaining tools if we have buy-in from above. Most targets are self-imposed by the library and not demanded or scrutinised by university management.

The final question solicited more questions and a (hopefully) useful shopping list for VAMP:

- how can we evidence our impact?
- what are the big picture measures of impact, to show we are relevant against Google?
- how can we measure impact on different groups (undergraduates, researchers, academic colleagues)?
- how can we show we are supporting change?
- what tools can we use to help us win (or keep!) resources?
- where are examples of best practice in different areas of service provision?
- where is evidence-based librarianship?



- who should we really benchmark against?
- how can we access information for benchmarking, etc?

Far-reaching projects, contact lists and a Web site bringing together examples of best practice were also demanded.

This was a lively session with much passion and interest in progressing the work of VAMP. It is intended that, building on the information gathered, the sub-group will work on product development between July and December 2006 and deliver the tools to members early in 2007.

Keep reading *SCONUL Focus* for more news of developments.

**CHANGING THE PHYSICAL LEARNING SPACE, ANNE BELL (UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK), JANE CORE (NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY), BOB HUNTER (JISC LEARNING SPACES PROGRAMME) AND LES WATSON (GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY)**

*Rapporteur: Carol Kay, University of Liverpool*

Jane Core from Northumbria University started the session by talking about the planning of new learning spaces, focusing on the variety of spaces required to satisfy new learning styles and methods of assessment. She predicted an emphasis on student-facing services and on the building of new service relationships.

Bob Hunter then spoke about the JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) Learning Spaces Programme and emphasised the growth of VLEs and student-owned technologies such as blogs, wikis and i-Pods. We will need effective change management to future-proof the role of library staff in this environment, using technology as the enabler and not the driver.

Finally, Anne Bell from the University of Warwick spoke about the Warwick Learning Grid where flexibility, engagement and experimentation have been key to the success of the project. Some of the innovations included the use of peer support models with students acting as 'Learning Ninjas' backed up by smart referrals and targeted expert support. Anne commented on the positive student feedback that had been received and said that the students were motivated to study by the positive, helpful, self-regulated environment of the building.

Overall, this was a very interesting workshop which gave plenty of food for thought for those planning new buildings or refurbishing existing libraries.

**RESOURCE DISCOVERY NETWORK: ADVANCING EDUCATION AND RESEARCH BY PROMOTING THE BEST OF THE WEB: STRATEGIC RELEVANCE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, CAROLINE WILLIAMS, RDN, UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

*Rapporteur: Frances Norton, The Wellcome Trust*

Caroline Williams, executive director of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) gave an outline of the mission, ambitions and thinking behind the rebrand and relaunch of the RDN as Intute.

The changes follow from a 2003 JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) review, which mandated wide-ranging changes technically, organisationally and in terms of communications and marketing.

The result has been the relocation of the hosting to MIMAS, bringing with it all the benefits of a national data centre. The underlying data (internet resource catalogue) has been aggregated and deduplicated into one database, to enable better searching, currency and relevance. The eight previous hubs are now presented as four key areas:

- Science, engineering technology and geography
- Arts and humanities
- Social sciences
- Health and life sciences.

The Virtual Training Suite and Online Internet Tutorial remain.

Following the presentation, the group discussion followed two main threads: institutional personalisation; and scalability.

**Institutional personalisation:**

The need for faculty branding and linking to institutional teaching and learning programmes was important as universities sought to distinguish themselves from their peers and to create a unique offer for discriminating students. Intute developers were urged to consider how local addition and more importantly deselection from the parent Intute version could be facilitated.

**Scalability:**

There was discussion about the size versus usefulness of Intute and some discussion about where

the focus for the increase in use (up 45% from previous year) was coming from, and how this would be captured and reported in future.

The new service would be launched at the Wellcome Trust on 13 July 2006. [www.intute.ac.uk](http://www.intute.ac.uk)

**DISRUPTION THE LIBRARY 2.0 WAY: OPPORTUNITY OR THREAT?, PAUL MILLER, TECHNOLOGY EVANGELIST, TALIS**  
*Rapporteur: Antony Brewerton, SCONUL Focus Editorial Board*

As the title suggested, this session explored whether we should view Library 2.0 as an opportunity or threat, with an introduction from the speaker and then a discussion from the floor. Paul began by reviewing what was deemed good –and bad– about libraries today. Our users like the physical space (the OCLC Perceptions Report (2005) stated that 96% of those polled had visited a library at least once in their lives and most people still view the library primarily as a building with resources) but they don't like our Web presence (only 27% in total used their library's website according to the report, with only 8% recorded for the UK). According to Paul, the main reason seems to be that our sites are too complex, too wordy and too stuffy for the Google user. Lots of companies describe themselves as Web 2.0 companies: innovative, nimble, participative, open, responsive, relevant, user-centric. Are we? We need to open up the library and push it out to our users. We need to learn from Amazon, MySpace, Google ...all the sites our users like to use.

Paul then showed examples of good practice. In the US, Plymouth State University's catalogue ([www.plymouth.edu/library/opac](http://www.plymouth.edu/library/opac)) uses blogging software to allow Amazon-style links ('also borrowed', 'reader reviews'). Talking of Amazon, we already have the capability of adding software to our universities' machines so that when someone searches Amazon a box can appear saying if the title is available in the university library, if it is on loan or on the shelf. (For more stunning examples and URLs please see Paul's presentation at [www.sconul.ac.uk/event\\_conf/agm2006/presentations/presentations/Miller.pdf](http://www.sconul.ac.uk/event_conf/agm2006/presentations/presentations/Miller.pdf)).

Paul then moved to detail developments at Talis, with information about the Talis Directory (a shared store of data about libraries, systems, collections and locations, controlled very much by a community of users) and Talis Whisper, with capabilities to link the library catalogue to cover images, Amazon price details, local/national

availability from a cartel of libraries and even location maps for more complex library systems (Oxford, London, etc.. One example of this new way of thinking is Mash Ups. My only real experience of this so far has been with bootlegging in music (for example, Madonna's *Ray of light* mashed up with the Sex Pistols' *Pretty vacant*: Madge has never sounded so good) but Paul was quick to show us more practical applications (such as using Google Maps to show the spread of disease or availability of services). Talis is currently running a competition to promote this more collaborative approach to using technology.

Although we often get hung up on the technology, all this is only really going to work if we have collaboration, sharing and working together, with suppliers (liked Talis) and each other. Paul urged the whole community to get involved.

As we all know, librarians are good at such collaboration and the room was generally excited by Paul's visions of the future. Issues that were raised largely concerned possible constraints that might make the future less bright. Would there be problems reproducing book jackets? Paul reassured us that Amazon were happy to co-operate. Could we define what appears –and what does not appear– on Whisper (for example, not adding restricted collections which cannot be accessed by external users ...and what about electronic resources with restrictive licences?); We need to provide the data to make the system reflect availability.

Despite some obvious concerns about practicalities, the packed audience all seemed to find this an exciting view of the future. And Paul had certainly lived up to this job title, as Technology Evangelist!

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# The SCONUL Value and Impact Measurement Programme (VAMP): a progress report

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## BACKGROUND

The requirement for the Value and Impact Measurement programme arose from a recent survey of SCONUL members which suggested a need for university library directors to have data and methods available to convince senior institutional stakeholders of the contribution and worth of their library services. Independently SCONUL's Working Group on Performance Improvement (WGPI) has a continuing commitment to provide a toolkit of data, measurement techniques and instruments which meet the needs of the membership.

In September 2005 the WGPI was asked by the Executive Board to consider how SCONUL might respond to this member feedback requesting assistance in the area of impact and value for money. The Board had earmarked a significant sum of money for work in this area. Having agreed that this area of work is both topical and relevant, the WGPI formed a small working party to scope a project proposal with the following membership: Maxine Melling (Liverpool John Moores), Stephen Town (Cranfield), Philip Payne (Birkbeck) and Rupert Wood (Reading).

Subsequently an outline schedule of work was developed and given the title of the Value and Impact Measurement Programme (VAMP). SCONUL's Executive Board approved the programme in February 2006 and allocated the funding. The proposed programme is intended to provide some new instruments and/or techniques in specific areas currently lacking, and also to

generate a full coherent framework incorporating other existing WGPI offerings. The proposed programme would therefore link the current aspirations of members with the long term commitments of the WGPI.

## TARGET AUDIENCE AND BENEFITS

The intended audience of any products developed would ultimately be senior institutional stakeholders of academic libraries, but only through local university librarians or equivalents. The products will therefore be for librarians to use within their institutions, mainly for advocacy purposes. The programme is not intended to generate SCONUL products which will be directly consumed by these stakeholders.

The benefits of having effective tools and techniques might include:

- 1 Attainment and retention of library institutional income
- 2 Proof of value and impact on education and research
- 3 Evidence of comparability with peer institutions
- 4 Justification of a continuing role for libraries and library staff.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The anticipated overall material product of this programme will be a framework or toolkit which is web based, and which guides library leaders in the use of products and services that can be used to demonstrate the value and impact of their library and information services. A range of performance and improvement tools and services already exists, many of which are offered through, or associated with, the WGPI. The programme will therefore incorporate an audit and critical review of existing products mapped against member requirements, followed by a gap analysis to identify where new instruments may be needed. Within reason and the boundaries of available resources, work packages will then be commissioned to address existing gaps.

Areas of good provision with products currently available include customer satisfaction surveys and measures, SCONUL's own statistics, and the opportunities for benchmarking provided by these products and the *Benchmarking manual*. There is however a feeling that not all of these services are well enough known and taken up as broadly as they might be. Areas of weakness or

current development in the measurement tools offered might include value for money, staff measures, and process costing. There is also a need to recognise and elaborate for the membership the work of the Impact Measurement Initiative jointly undertaken by SCONUL and LIRG (Library and Information Research Group).

It is intended that the bulk of the investment sought for the programme will go into developing or identifying techniques and instruments for impact and value for money measurement, identifying where existing products and services may contribute to these, and to incorporating them into an overall toolkit including all existing offerings. The overall framework or toolkit will also assist those who are required to work within Balanced Scorecard, Critical Success Factor or Key Performance Indicators regimes. The programme will be informed by consultation with the SCONUL membership, and interested parties will be sought for this purpose. A number have already volunteered.

#### **PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND PLAN**

The project will be overseen by the WGPI as project executive board working through the subgroup identified above. Stephen Town has agreed to act as project manager and this role is intended to ensure practical delivery of the overall programme. Individual projects will be let on a commissioned or competitive basis depending on their nature. The subgroup view is that this programme requires a closely managed combination of diverse inputs from various sources, as there is no obvious supplier for the complete range of products sought. Some products could also not be defined or scoped at the outset.

The project plan with key milestones is given below. The programme is based on a number of work packages (WP).

#### ***Phase 1: Definition and scoping study***

March – April 2006

- WP1.1 A critical review of current initiatives and work in the field, including awareness of international programmes and research and work from other sectors.
- WP1.2 A survey of SCONUL members to clarify and define their requirements (two-stage: general email plus follow-up face-to-face)

May – June 2006

- WP1.3 A synthesis of findings from the above to define gaps in current offerings and hence succeeding work packages in Phase 2
- WP1.4 SCONUL Conference workshops to engage members and seek feedback on Phase 2 proposals.

#### ***Phase 2: Product development***

July – December 2006

- 1 The development of new tools and products to measure value and impact, and to meet other requirement gaps.
- 2 Review of existing tools and products.

#### ***Phase 3: Product delivery***

January – April 2007

Delivery and dissemination of new and existing products through a maintained web site.

#### **PROGRESS TO DATE**

This paper is not intended to describe in detail the findings, subsequent discussions and conclusions of the first phase of the work. SCONUL members will be able to read for themselves the products of Phase 1 on the VAMP area of the SCONUL website, which should be available by the time this is published.

It is probably sufficient to record here that Evidence Base at UCE Birmingham were commissioned to undertake the critical review (WP1.1), LISU at Loughborough University were commissioned to undertake the member survey (WP1.2), and together to develop the synthesis (WP1.3). These initial products were all delivered on time and were well received by the subgroup. The SCONUL Conference workshops (WP1.4) were well attended, and delivered a combination of endorsement of the programme and additional ideas and suggestions for incorporation. Professor Peter Brophy of Manchester Metropolitan University was additionally commissioned to provide expert opinion on all the work done so far, and this again provided endorsement of both the intent and content of the programme and the recommendations for the next phase, together with some valuable additional thoughts. Thanks

are due to all those involved in the first phase for their excellent contributions.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

Taking into account the work done so far, the plans for the next phase are given below. The proposals for specific work packages are listed under the headings of either 'content' products (the specific tools, techniques and methodologies for measurement and improvement), or 'process' products (supporting, enabling or presentation mechanisms to allow members to make best use of the content products). This breakdown now effectively replaces the original second and third programme phases described above.

#### ***Content products***

##### **2.1 Value and impact guidelines**

These are for measures and techniques which focus on outcomes. The intention is to provide guidelines on what is available, plus a technique for defining local measures. It may also be helpful to define what cannot be achieved.

- WP 2.1.1 Institutional value (e.g. VFM and economic impact)
- WP 2.1.2 Impact on learning and teaching
- WP 2.1.3 Impact on research

##### **2.2 Staffing and operational measures guidelines**

The objectives here are to define methods for unit costing of different library operations and services, for assessing the particular contribution of library staff, and for providing standard approaches to activity and process costing.

- WP 2.2.1 Staff costing
- WP 2.2.2 Staff added value and other measures
- WP 2.2.3 Other operational costing methods
  
- WP 2.3.1 Review of existing products and tools, including reasons for non-use
- WP 2.3.2 Re-branding and packaging of existing tools for web site, including training, guidance and cases

#### ***Process products***

There is a need to present all the above in a coherent way to the membership, and to create the human processes which will develop and sustain this area of activity into the future. The establishment of a group of those interested and active in

advocacy will be a key to the effective continuation of work in this area.

- WP 3.1 Website development
- WP 3.2 'Community of practice' establishment
- WP 3.3 Maintenance and sustainability strategy

All these work packages need to be commissioned in the immediate future to meet the programme timeline. Process product projects can begin immediately, but are obviously dependent for completion on the content products.

The VAMP subgroup welcomes communication and feedback from the membership and others on any aspect of the programme, or interest in undertaking any of the work packages defined above. The author is the point of contact, with details given above.

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# Library trends



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Every year, SCONUL's higher education institution (HEI) members in the UK complete a detailed statistical return which is collated by LISU (the Library and Information Statistics Unit) and from which three major reports are prepared: the detailed *Annual statistics* volume; the *Higher education library management statistics*; and a report on trends by sector. The data are checked and edited for completeness, and added to the Statistics on the Web database, for direct interrogation by contributors. This paper presents a brief synopsis of the latest statistics, highlighting the key features and trends over the last five years, for the SCONUL membership as a whole.

Over the period covered, there has been a number of changes within higher education. Many institutions have merged; others have joined SCONUL, or changed their status. To add to the confusion, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) has changed the way in which it records full-time equivalent (FTE) student numbers, reducing the total count by an estimated 3%. This has led to an apparent fall in total student numbers in 2004-05, which affects the detail of the percentage changes in trends per FTE student, but will not have a major impact on the pattern of the longer term trends.

Overall, in 2004-05, SCONUL members:

- provided library services to 99.5% of all UK publicly funded students (FTE) in higher education, compared to 98.6% five years ago
- spent an estimated £519 million during the year, an increase of 26% over five years
- acquired 2.6 million books to give a total stock of 112 million books
- held 1.2 million current serial titles (twice as many as five years ago)
- employed over 10,000 library staff, of whom 37% held professional posts
- received 122 million visits, and made 95 million loans.

In broad terms, expenditure in academic libraries is keeping up with both increasing student numbers and the general rate of inflation: total library expenditure per FTE student has increased by 14% for SCONUL members as a whole over the last five years, compared to an increase of 13% in the retail price index.

Around half of total library expenditure goes on staff, with little variation between the sector averages or over time. This is in contrast to the position in the public library sector, where continued pressure on budgets has led to disproportionate cuts in the materials fund and a consequent increase in the proportion of the total spent on staff. Overall, there have been increases in staff expenditure per FTE student over the last five years in all sectors, averaging 13% for SCONUL members as a whole. This compares with a rise of 21% in average earnings in the UK between 2000 and 2005, however.

Information provision – books, serials, electronic resources, interlibrary lending and binding – accounts for around one third of total academic library expenditure. Over the last five years, average spending on information provision per FTE student has increased by 14% for the SCONUL membership as a whole. This compares to increases in the average price of academic books of 5.3% and in serials of 34%, over the same period. However, the breakdown of information provision expenditure has changed markedly – in 1999-2000, 33% was spent on books, 50% on serials and 11% on other electronic resources, while five years later, the balance has changed, with 27% being spent on books, 52% on serials, and 15% on other electronic resources.

There are some areas of the library service where little has changed over the last five years, particularly when the increase in student numbers is taken into account. The overall availability of the service is one example here, with an increase of 2.2% in the number of study place hours per week per FTE student, and a fall of 3.4% in the floor space available per FTE student, over the five years since 1999-2000. It is encouraging, though, that average opening hours have increased steadily, from 72.3 in 1999-2000 to 81.4 in 2004-05. Another relative constant is the provision of book stock, which has been between 65 and 68 books per FTE student for the last five years.

At the other extreme, some of the greatest changes have been associated with provision and use of electronic resources. This is an area where the

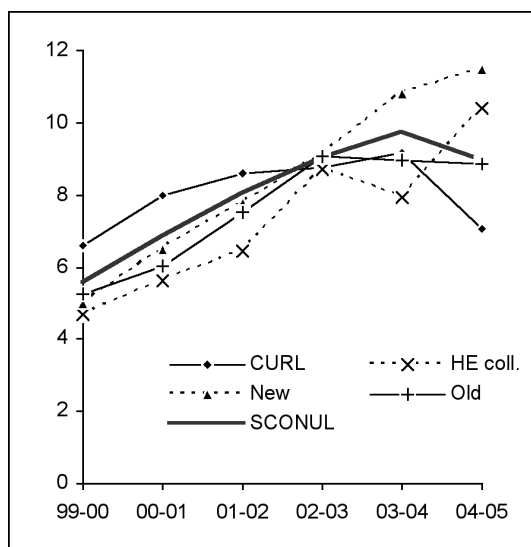
models of provision are still evolving, and it remains difficult to collect comprehensive, comparable and accurate data on both the levels of provision and of use, although the position improves every year.

The proportion of library study spaces with workstations has increased by 36% over the last five years, so that one in four spaces overall now has its own workstation. The rate of increase shows no signs of slowing, despite the increase in workstation provision reported throughout university campuses. Returns from a similar survey by UCISA (Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association) indicate a 26% fall in the average number of students per computing services workstation over the last five years.<sup>1</sup> Together with greater numbers of student-owned PCs (estimated at over three-quarters of students having their own in 2004-05) and network points in halls of residence, the demand for electronic library services – although not necessarily for library-based workstations – can only increase.

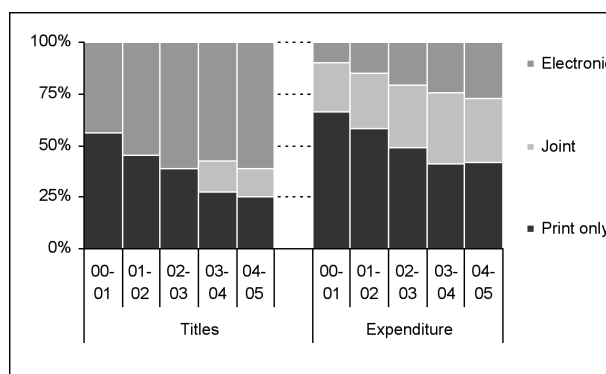
Some interesting patterns are apparent in the numbers of serial titles per academic staff member (fig 1). While this had been increasing steadily, due mainly to the proliferation of electronic titles available in bundled deals at marginal cost, since 2002-03 the picture has been much less stable. Despite a fall of 8% in the latest year, the overall increase over five years is 61%. The reasons for this instability are far from clear. The number of print titles to which libraries subscribe continues to fall – in the three years since 2001-02 (the first year for which reliable breakdowns for the whole membership are available), the number of print-only subscriptions has fallen by 32%, to 308,000, while the number of electronic (including electronic with print) subscriptions has increased by 69% to 908,000.

In contrast, the greatest part of the serials budget is still spent on printed serials, despite a 15% fall since 2001-02, and relatively little, compared to the number of titles, goes on serials available only in electronic format (fig 2). There are some indications that the trends may be changing, along with the changing models of provision and charging. It is likely that moves towards open access journals and institutional repositories may be influencing the ways in which libraries provide these increasingly expensive resources to their users.

**Fig 1 Serial subscriptions per academic staff**



**Fig 2 Breakdown of serial titles and expenditure**



(Electronic titles includes joint formats up to 2002-03)

It might be thought that the increasing provision of electronic resources, and their availability at sites remote to the library premises, might lead to a reduction in visits. Looking at visits per FTE student, there has indeed been a fall over the last five years, of 7%, although this has levelled off in the most recent two years, at 72 visits per FTE student per year, or around two per student per week during term time. Users may be making fewer visits to academic libraries, but this does not appear to affect the number of loans. Students are continuing to borrow, with loans per FTE student up by 10% over the last five years, to an average of 56 loans per FTE student in 2004-05. This pattern of loans per FTE student supports the view that remote use of non-loan services is likely to be the main factor in declining visits.

With activity increasing in the area of electronic resources and serials, it is inevitable that some other areas of library activity will show declining trends, as they are superseded by new and innovative services. One area which appears to

be diminishing is that of book acquisitions, where there is a general downward trend apparent in all sectors, with an overall fall of 15% over the last five years. Just 1.5 new books are now acquired per year for every FTE student, on average. Combined with the pattern of maintaining overall book stocks reported above, this might suggest that the average age of stock is increasing, and increases in loans suggest that the stock is being more heavily used. SCONUL began to collect data on e-book subscriptions in 2003-04; however these are not yet sufficiently complete or reliable to estimate the extent to which such resources are supplementing, or perhaps replacing, more traditional formats. The impact on the library of e-book provision is likely to be relatively low at present, as on average less than half of one percent of the book stock is electronic – the average number of e-book subscriptions per member is just over 3,000, compared to almost 700,000 printed volumes per member<sup>2</sup>.

Summarised in this way, the *SCONUL Annual statistics* clearly show how academic libraries are changing to meet the demands of their users in the ever changing technological and information environment. They also highlight the importance of measuring activity from an early stage in rapidly developing areas, to assess the impact these are having not only on the management and operation of the library, but also on the users.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 [http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/activities/stats/index\\_html](http://www.ucisa.ac.uk/activities/stats/index_html)
- 2 2004-05. Based on data from 124 out of 161 members.

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# CURL/SCONUL digest of scholarly communication news

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*This is taken from the CURL/SCONUL Digest of Scholarly Communication News of June and August 2006 an online newsletter (supplied to SCONUL representatives in member libraries) provided by the CURL/SCONUL Group on Scholarly Communication for internal distribution to staff of library and information services in SCONUL institutions.*

*The Group also encourages the use of the 'Digest' to inform academic staff within universities in the UK and Republic of Ireland of developments in scholarly publishing.*

#### JISC OPEN ACCESS INITIATIVE EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluation report on JISC's (Joint Information Systems Committee) open access funding initiative – which provided £384,500 over three years to publishers to explore open access models of publishing for their journals – concludes that the initiative has given 'valuable impetus' to thinking around open access and 'has had the effect of raising awareness among the UK author community'. The funding – managed by the JISC Collections Team for the Journals Working Group – has provided publishers with 'a timely opportunity to develop and experiment' with open access publishing, with all participating publishers remaining committed to their open access projects after funding has ceased. Authors too have found the experience positive, the evaluation study has found. The funding was designed to allow publishers to waive all or part of the open access fee they normally charge to authors based in the UK. As part of the evaluation process, 124 authors who benefited from the JISC funding took the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience of publishing in open access



form. The results show that not only was the JISC funding influential in encouraging authors to publish in this way, but that 78% of them were likely to choose to publish in an open access form again. The evaluation report is at [www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded\\_documents/OA\\_Funding\\_Initiative\\_Evaluation\\_Report.doc](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/OA_Funding_Initiative_Evaluation_Report.doc)

#### **ELSEVIER OFFERS OPEN ACCESS OPTION**

Elsevier will be offering to their authors the option to pay a sponsorship fee to ensure that their article, already accepted for publication, is made freely available to non-subscribers via ScienceDirect. Six journals in Physics are the first to offer such an option: *Nuclear physics A*, *Nuclear physics B*, *Nuclear physics B proceedings supplements*, *Nuclear instruments and methods A*, *Physics letters B*, and *Astroparticle physics*. This option will also be offered for authors in thirty more journals across other fields such as life and health sciences. The author charge for article sponsorship is \$3,000. This announcement by Elsevier of an open access option is welcome but not entirely unexpected. There might be a commercial risk to Elsevier of losing authors to those journals which do offer an open access option, particularly in the light of an initiative by CERN announced at the Berlin 4 Open Access (OA) meeting on discussions with publishers about conversion of the major physics journals to OA. Elsevier are proposing to charge authors colour charges on top of the OA fee, whereas some other publishers make no additional charge. On the individual journal websites at [www.elsevier.com](http://www.elsevier.com) there is mention of only charging subscribers for articles without an open access sponsorship fee, but is this a commitment by Elsevier to reduce Elsevier subscription rates as OA income increases? Publishers vary in their policy on this. However, we are now beginning to see a situation where the differences between publishers on such issues are more transparent, and authors will be able to make an informed choice.

#### **EASING THE PROBLEMS OF JOURNAL OWNERSHIP TRANSFER**

Staff in SCOUNL and CURL (Consortium of University Research Libraries) libraries know only too well the problems caused when the ownership of a journal to which their library subscribes changes ownership to another publisher, and change of ownership is happening ever more frequently. A new working group has been established by publishers and librarians to help with these problems. The purpose of this working group, provisionally called TRANSFER and set up under the auspices of the United Kingdom Serials Group (UKSG), is to create a code of practice for the transfer of journal titles between publishers. Publishers

that adhere to the code of practice could become 'compliant' in much the same way as the COUNTER logo is displayed by publishers and vendors compliant with the COUNTER Code of Practice. The goal is to ensure that the transfer of journals between compliant vendors, and, in time, all vendors, follows agreed standards which will reduce the administrative load for librarians and ensure seamless access.

#### **EYSENBACH STUDY OF OA CITATION ADVANTAGE**

A recent article by Gunther Eysenbach in *PLoS Biology* adds to the growing evidence of a citation advantage for authors publishing in open access journals. Professor Eysenbach examined the citation record for 1492 research articles published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* in 2004. He found that articles published as an immediate OA article on the journal site have higher impact than self-archived or otherwise openly accessible OA articles. Strong evidence was also found that, even in a journal that is widely available in research libraries, OA articles are more immediately recognized and cited by peers than non-OA articles published in the same journal. (G. Eysenbach *Citation advantage of Open Access articles*, *PLoS Biol* 4(5), 2006: e157, available at [http://biology.plosjournals.org/archive/1545-7885/4/5/pdf/10.1371\\_journal.pbio.0040157-S.pdf](http://biology.plosjournals.org/archive/1545-7885/4/5/pdf/10.1371_journal.pbio.0040157-S.pdf)).

#### **BRITISH LIBRARY CONSULTATION ON FUTURE CONTENT STRATEGY**

On 25 April the British Library published a consultation document: *The British Library's content strategy – meeting the knowledge needs of the nation*. This sets out the library's proposals for what information resources should be collected in order to meet the needs of UK research, both today and in the future. The document forms the first part of a two-stage process. In this first stage the British Library has articulated the overarching principles of their content strategy, and in addition has applied these in some detail to the areas of arts and humanities, and social sciences. In a later stage, the library will consult in detail on STM (scientific, technical and medical) strategy. Comments on the proposals will give the library important insights into the balance of opinion in stakeholder communities. There are 14 issues on which comment would be particularly welcome. All the content strategy documents are available through the web-page <http://www.bl.uk/about/strategic/contentstrategy.html>.

#### **ARL SURVEY ON LARGE PUBLISHER BUNDLES**

A survey of ARL (Association of Research Libraries) member libraries reveals underlying concerns amongst the major US academic libraries with the bundled deals offered by the major publishers. While it is recognised that 'big deals' offer library users a wide range of content, the US libraries are concerned about restrictive terms – for example, on non-disclosure and cancellation possibilities – and about arrangements for long-term access (as increasingly they cancel print subscriptions to continue with the large bundles). The report's author, Karla Hahn concludes: 'While it is impressive that so many libraries report a sense of good value obtained by their contracts, it is disturbing that so many reported that they did not have affordable alternatives (often for the same contract). This suggests that libraries may be making the best of a bad situation. A deal may be perceived as a good one simply because there are no other deals to be had.' What comes across is a sense of being trapped in high-cost commitments with limited scope for improvement through negotiation. The report by Karla Hahn, *The state of the large publisher bundle: findings from an ARL member survey*, is published in *ARL bimonthly reports*, April 2006 <http://www.arl.org/newsltr/245/bundle.html>.

#### **HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF 'ORPHAN WORKS'**

A Bill has been introduced into the US Senate that would make it easier for libraries, universities and archives, including the Library of Congress, to digitise collections that contain 'orphan works.' These 'orphans' are the many works in danger of slipping into obscurity because the copyright owners cannot be found. Digitizing copyright material requires the copyright holder's permission, which is not always easy to obtain. The Bill would limit the liability of those who use copyright works after an unsuccessful but 'reasonably diligent' search for an owner. The Bill also awards 'reasonable compensation' to owners who contact those who use their works without permission. Library and publisher organisations are working on precise language to recommend for incorporation into the Bill. Although this is a US proposal, acceptance of the principle that 'orphan works' can be digitised after a reasonable effort to trace the copyright owner will benefit libraries world-wide.

#### **JOURNAL BACKFILE DIGITISATION CONTINUES Apace**

Blackwell Publishing has announced the launch of its Journal Backfile Digitisation Programme. During the two and a half years of the project the full text of the complete runs of at least 500

journals will be digitised, comprising 6.5 million pages. The first 121 journals to be digitised are available for purchase now, 51 of the journals being in social sciences and humanities, 37 in medicine and healthcare, and 33 in science. Meanwhile the Wellcome Trust and JISC continue their valuable digitisation of medical journal backfiles. Though only 17 journals involved at present, they are some of the most important journals in the history of medicine containing articles on the most important medical discoveries of the past two centuries. This content will be freely available via PubMed Central, with easy access via Google. Reliable links to and citation of backfile articles will become increasingly important, and with this in mind JSTOR have added 640,000 Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) to the CrossRef database for the articles they have digitised. Backfile digitisation is now big business for commercial as well as for public-sector organisations.

#### **NEW ACCESS MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION**

Connecting users to electronic library resources through access management systems has been a key development area for JISC over many years. The JISC-funded Athens service has been a world-leader but the technology continues to develop. JISC has continued to fund research in this area and in August 2006 will launch a new Access Management Federation for UK higher and further education institutions. All institutions will be invited to join the federation and adopt new systems such as Shibboleth. The Athens service in its current form will not be funded by JISC after July 2008, giving plenty of time for institutions to adopt the new systems. A briefing paper for institutions is at [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded\\_documents/JISC-BP-ShibFedAcc-Inst.pdf](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/JISC-BP-ShibFedAcc-Inst.pdf).

#### **A 100-YEAR OLD OA AUTHOR!**

A Japanese mathematician has become the world's oldest open access author. Shokichi Iyanaga - born in 1906 - has published his article, *Travaux de Claude Chevalley sur la théorie du corps de classes: Introduction*, as 'Open Choice' in Springer's *Japanese Journal of Mathematics*, April 2006. Even though some of us in the OA movement are getting on in years, the general perception is that open access is for the up-and-coming generation. Shokichi Iyanaga's choice of OA publication shows that you are never too old to benefit from the additional exposure OA gives to your work.

#### **POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

On 20 July a meeting was held between Lord Sainsbury, two DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) officials and four representatives from

CURL, SCONUL and SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) Europe. The general proposal from the representatives of the library community was that government should work towards providing a clear policy framework to maximise dissemination of research results in order to promote better science and more effective knowledge transfer. Lord Sainsbury welcomed the briefing document supplied before the meeting, particularly the evidence of lack of access for one university to the research publications from another university. The need for further evidence was discussed at the meeting, for example on the lack of access for the staff of SMEs (Small and Medium Sized Enterprises) and the overall economic benefit from open access. SPARC Europe and the CURL/SCONUL Scholarly Communications Group will work on the issues discussed at the meeting and supply further information to the DTI. Overall the meeting was very constructive. Less productive was a meeting of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee held at The UK Parliament's Portcullis House on 17 July. Several MPs and a peer attended, Mark Walport and Bob Campbell gave powerful presentations, but the discussion was polarised with no positive outcomes. Both meetings indicate, however, the scholarly communication issues are still on the political agenda.

#### **RESEARCH COUNCILS UK (RCUK)**

The long-delayed RCUK Statement on Access to Research Outputs was published on 28 June and is available at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/access/2006statement.pdf>. In order to achieve consensus amongst all Research Councils, the RCUK Statement kept to general (and yet still very valuable) principles, leaving the individual Research Councils to publish policies on how they plan to implement the principles. To date four Research Councils (RCs) have decided on detailed policies - viz BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council), CCLRC (Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils), ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council), and MRC (Medical Research Council) - while the remaining RCs are still considering their position. It is a notable feature of three of the RC policies that mandates have been put into place for grant-holders to deposit their work in a repository. The possible effect of open access upon learned society journal surpluses remains the stumbling-block to future progress, with societies reluctant to look for alternative ways of funding conference grants and scholarships which have come from journal subscription income. Publishers have been pressing the RCs to delay any change until this issue

has been resolved, and while most RCs are pressing ahead with change, RCUK will be conducting a two-year research project on the impact of changes in publishing models.

#### **US PROVOSTS SUPPORT OPEN ACCESS**

The provosts of 25 leading US universities have issued an open letter supporting Senate Bill 2695, the proposed Federal Research Public Access Act. This Act would require US federal agencies whose annual budgets exceed \$100 million to develop policies ensuring open public access to the research supported by their grants or conducted by their employees. The letter is very direct in stating that 'enabling the broadest possible access to new ideas resulting from government-funded research promotes progress, economic growth and public welfare'. The letter does cover the situation of learned societies and other publishers but in a more positive way than the situation is usually covered in UK statements. The US Provosts write that 'open access can also match the missions of scholarly societies and publishers', although they also state that the proposed Act 'challenges the academy and scholarly publishers to think and act creatively'.

#### **CONTRACT AWARDED FOR UKPMC (UK PubMed CENTRAL)**

Discussions over the past two years between the Wellcome Trust and other funders of medical research have resulted in the award of a contract for a UK service similar to that provided by the US-based PubMed Central. The contract for the new service has been awarded to a consortium of the British Library, the University of Manchester and the European Bioinformatics Institute. The system will be based upon software made available by the US National Library of Medicine - so as to enable the interchange of records between the UK and the US - but will have features not present in the US service, such as attribution of funding by the different UK funders for individual pieces of research. UKPMC will ensure that research funded by any of the partners - which include MRC, BBSRC and the Department of Health - will be fully searchable and freely available to any user of the service. The launch of the service is scheduled for January 2007. Further information is available in the press release at <http://www.egovmonitor.com/node/7015>.

#### **RIN**

One of the early achievements of the Research Information Network (RIN) has been to establish a cross-stakeholder Scholarly Communications Group. This group has been working on an informal basis but its structure will be formalised

over the next few months. The group has been looking at the functions of the scholarly communication process, trying to identify what needs to be covered in an efficient system before moving on to look at how those functions may best be covered. In working in this way, the group has so far managed to avoid the confrontation which has bedevilled other cross-stakeholder meetings, although some of the hard issues have yet to be faced.

#### **ALPSP/STM STATEMENT ON RESEARCH DATA**

The publishing organisations ALPSP (Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers) and STM, the International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers have issued a joint statement on their position on access to research data. The statement recommends that research data should be as widely available as possible. The publishing groups draw a distinction between raw research data and published datasets. They recommend that publishers should not claim intellectual property rights in datasets submitted by an author as part of the publication of a journal article, and that best practice should be that underlying research data should be made publicly available. This clarification of publisher attitude is very welcome.

#### **LIBER/OCLC COLLABORATION**

LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche), EROMM (European Registry of Microform and Digital Masters) and OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre) have agreed to work together to exchange bibliographic records about digital masters. Under this agreement, full information about digitised print material from both European and US libraries will be brought together in a central Registry of Digital Masters, which will be freely accessible for online searching via OCLC's Worldcat. LIBER and OCLC hope to involve libraries and groups in more regions of Europe to make this a global registry of great value in the preservation of academic content. Please contact Paul Ayris, Chair of LIBER's Access Division, for more details ([p.ayris@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:p.ayris@ucl.ac.uk)).

#### **JISC NEGOTIATES INCLUSION OF OA AND NON-NESLI2 CONTENT IN UK LOCKSS**

The UK LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe) service – funded by JISC and by CURL – is now established in 24 UK universities, with support from staff based at the Digital Curation Centre. A further major step forward to ensure the long-term preservation of content of importance to UK HE is now under way. A survey of UK LOCKSS sites has been conducted to identify those publish-

ers and journal titles to which the UK sites would give priority for inclusion in LOCKSS. Negotiations are already under way with publishers of content included in NESLI2 deals, and the recent survey concentrated on content not available in NESLI2 (National Electronic Site Licence Initiative 2). A further look will be taken later in the year at a wider range of open access journals. A short-list of publishers has been drawn up for Content Complete Ltd to undertake negotiation on behalf of JISC for titles to be included in UK LOCKSS.

#### **UK SERIALS GROUP (UKSG) RESEARCH PROJECT ON LINK RESOLVERS**

The importance of linking technologies to the future development of library services is widely recognised. However, the experience of some libraries is that in practice linking technologies have also introduced a range of new problems. There can be significant delays in the updating of knowledge bases, the titles in packages from content aggregators can be inaccurate as is identifying who needs to do what to solve such problems. By studying the roles and expectations of the various players in the supply chain UKSG hopes to identify and clarify the expectations, performance issues and barriers that need to be overcome to ensure a smooth supply chain to the end user. More information can be found at: <http://www.uksg.org/resolvers.asp>.

#### **GOOGLE COURT VICTORY IN GERMANY**

Google has obtained a significant victory against the German publisher Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft (WBG), who had asked for an injunction in a German court to stop Google from scanning books in its Library Project. WBG dropped their case on 28 June after the judge told them they only had a low chance of winning. Although backed by the German publishers associations, the publisher failed to bring arguments in support of its action and the court ruled that no copyright infringement resulted from the development of Google's project. The court admitted Google's argument that the publishing of short snippets from a book did not infringe German copyright law. Meanwhile the scanning of books from six US libraries and from the Bodleian Library continues apace. After the court ruling on 28 June, Google stated that they recognised the importance of the copyright law as they considered that authors and publishers were entitled to be rewarded for their creations. Google also believes the project would serve authors and publishers as their books will be easily found and therefore able to be purchased through the internet.

## OXFORD JOURNALS OA REPORT

Findings from three preliminary studies into the effects of open access on authors, readers, usage, and citations have been made available by Oxford Journals. The reports were shared with interested parties at a one-day workshop in June and are now publicly-available at [http://www.oxford-journals.org/news/oa\\_report.pdf](http://www.oxford-journals.org/news/oa_report.pdf). The main lesson from the findings seems to be that a longer sequence of time-data is needed before any firm conclusions can be reached. Usage of OA content is certainly high but the Oxford Journals already achieve high use. The financial balance-sheet is providing mixed messages but it is too early to comment on the long-term viability of the OA publication-charge model. All credit to Oxford University Press for conducting the open access trials and for their willingness to share the results in a very open way.

## ROYAL SOCIETY OPEN ACCESS OPTION

After criticising the open access movement a few months ago, and then being criticised by its own Fellows, the Royal Society has now decided to offer its own open choice option that it has named 'EXiS'. The Society's position statement on open access – available at <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/page.asp?id=3882> – is cautious in its recognition of open access as a legitimate publishing model, but the change of heart at the Society is still welcome. The author charges for EXiS are based on a different structure from that adopted by other publishers, and it will be good to see how authors react to the charging structure. Real competition between publishers for authors is now emerging in the various open publishing options.

## AND FINALLY, AN OA POLITICAL LEADER?

Rumour has it that one of the French Presidential candidates, Ségolène Royal, supports open access and quotes the Berlin Declaration. She is also supposed to be leading in the polls. Can anybody see an OA political leader in the UK?

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# Report from the SCONUL/CILIP Health Services Group (HSG)

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The new joint HSG was formed on 10 April 2006, and is part of the joint working taking place between SCONUL and CILIP. The group is intended to take forward the work of the SCONUL HSG Working Group and CILIP's Health Executive Action Group (HEAG).

The membership of the group is Paul Ayris from UCL, representing the NHS/HE Forum; Eric Davies, Chair of CILIP's Policy Development Committee; Chris Fowler from Southampton University; Kath O'Donovan from Sheffield University; Ian Snowley, CILIP President Elect, (Chair); Alan Fricker representing CILIP's Health Libraries Group; Sir John (Muir) Gray representing the National Library for Health, plus Toby Bainton (SCONUL) and Guy Daines (CILIP) as joint secretaries.

The Group agreed to focus on the following areas of work:

### *Response to consultation exercises*

A response to the Department of Health consultation document *Informing healthier choices* has been submitted along with comments on the Public Health White Paper *Our health, our care, our say* and the Cooksey review of health research funding.

### *Horizon scanning/dissemination*

Proposals originating from the HEAG for funding to carry out a healthcare policy mapping exercise was made to CILIP, but were not successful. The HSG will discuss alternative sources of funding for this work.

### *Collaborative working with other national/international groups*

The group has also made contact with the (US) Medical Library Association, and hopes to carry out some joint work in the future.

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# News from member libraries

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## The British Library

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### 96% OF BRITISH LIBRARY READERS RATE SERVICES AS EXCELLENT

The BL has become the first public sector organisation to use video to bring its annual report to life. An interview with chief executive Lynne Brindley highlights the British Library's key achievements as part of the online edition of the Annual Report (2005/06) at [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk).

Of the readers using the British Library Reading Rooms, 96% rated the services and facilities as 'excellent' or 'good'. In addition to this success, visits to the Reading Rooms are up 17% and the number of items supplied and consulted was up by over 11% on the previous year. A MORI poll also recorded that 75% of Britons are aware of their national library and its role, an increase from 50% five years ago. The British Library's exhibition and events programme has also increased awareness with visitor numbers growing by 3.6% during a period when most visitor attractions in London saw visitor numbers fall.

Improving user experience is one of the main strategic priorities for the library and other successes include:

- almost 12 million pages of digital material available to view over the web against a target of 4.25 million
- over 6,000 reader passes have been issued to researchers using the Business & IP Centre
- agreeing a long-term strategic partnership with Microsoft with initial plans to digitise 100,00 out-of-copyright books
- delivery of international research articles automatically online from British Library Direct through search results on Google Scholar
- website usage with nearly 50 million hits by more than 4 million users
- Mozart's Catalogue and Alice's Adventures Underground are record breaking additions to the award winning Turning the Pages technology

- one of the largest grants ever made for conservation research in the UK has been awarded to the British Library.

Launching the British Library's *Annual report 05/06*, chief executive Lynne Brindley said, 'It has been an extremely successful year with the British Library meeting record levels of demand and improving the experience of everyone who uses our services and facilities whether onsite or remotely. We continue to forge connections with our users and partners and show the relevance and value of the British Library to a wider public. The feedback from our users has been excellent and we continue to strive to innovate and improve to ensure our relevance as an information provider in the 21st century.'

The British Library won the award by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy for its annual report and strategy 'Redefining the Library' for the second year running.

The British Library's *Annual report 2005/06* is available at:  
<http://www.bl.uk/about/annual/2005to2006/introduction.html>

### MORE CULTURAL HERITAGE ACCESSIBLE VIA THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY

This year has seen more digitised items and collections of the European national libraries added to the European Library ([www.TheEuropeanLibrary.org](http://www.TheEuropeanLibrary.org)).

These digital treasures include:

- Czech Republic: *Kramerius* – a collection of 19th and 20th century digitised periodicals and monographs
- Denmark: An online archive of digital facsimiles of the works of Hans Christian Andersen
- Estonia: *DIGAR* – a digital archive of publications from a wide range of public institutions in Estonia
- Hungary: *Corvinas*, part of the Bibliotheca Corviniana – this was the second largest collection of books in Europe in the Renaissance period, after that of the Vatican
- Latvia: a collection of digitised posters from culture, politics and the social life of Latvia from 1899 – 2000
- Slovakia: *Memoria slovacica, Memory of Slovakia* – a digital library of cultural and scientific heritage held by the Slovak National Library and other heritage institutions.

And the national libraries of Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Serbia and Switzerland have added resources in maritime archaeology, maps, graphic art, rare manuscripts and children's literature.

Currently, the European Library provides searchable access to collections from 19 of the 45 member libraries of the Conference of European National Librarians. In September a new project will be launched to bring the remaining EU/EFTA member states of Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain and Sweden into the European Library network as full-partners. As a result, by mid 2007, two thirds of CENL will be accessible via the European Library.

#### **FUTURE LEADERS**

SCONUL, UCISA and the British Library are supporting a new and ambitious programme to help experienced professional Information Services staff to develop their potential. The Future Leaders Programme, developed with the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, is aimed at offering those with proven management experience the opportunity to enhance their leadership potential and to lead on a range of new and exciting projects.

'The Future Leaders Programme,' says Toby Bainton, Secretary of SCONUL, 'will offer participants the chance to create and implement continual leadership development plans. In doing so, the information services sector will have available a well-trained body of staff, ready to assume the leadership roles required to take forward the many exciting projects in which it is involved'.

In addition, Jan Wilkinson, Head of Higher Education at the British Library, points out: 'The programme will offer those who have the potential and determination the opportunity to be more visionary and strategic in their outlook, and to learn from the leading authorities in their fields and benefit from peer coaching and feedback'.

For further information about the scheme please contact:

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## **Brunel University**

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#### **CLOSURE OF OSTERLEY CAMPUS**

The Osterley campus library closed its doors in August 2006 following the sale of the campus and the move of the school of health sciences and social care to Uxbridge. This is the third year in succession that we have closed a campus library and amalgamated stock and staff. This year we expanded within the building – taking over classroom space - and the move involved the physical relocation of almost the entire stock of the library.

The Osterley campus was originally part of the West London Institute of Higher Education which merged with Brunel University in 1995. However, it can trace its lineage back to Joseph Lancaster's pioneering school founded in 1798 at Borough Road, Southwark.

#### **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

Rather like buses, you wait for ages and then several offers arrive at once... This summer we acquired three special collections. The library of the Operational Research Society relocated from Imperial College to Brunel in August and a document delivery service is being established for ORS members. Agreement was reached with the National Jazz Archive (based at Loughton Central Library in Essex) to house its collection of duplicate books and journals. This material will support teaching and research in the school of arts as well as providing a specialist collection for jazz researchers in West London. The NJA archive will move to Brunel in September or October and be housed in a new secure special collections room. It will be joined next spring by the archive of SALIDAA (South Asian Diaspora Literature & Arts Archive) which is moving from Leicester University to Brunel to support the teaching of post-colonial literature in the school of arts.

In late 2005 the library acquired, through the school of social sciences and law, the library of the International Labour Office, formerly held at its office in London. Finally, Brunel has acquired the library and archive of the Channel Tunnel Association which has joined the specialist collection on railway history, housed with the university archives on its Runnymede campus.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY**

A project manager has been appointed to establish BURA (Brunel University Research Archive) – our institutional repository of PhD theses and university research outputs. The submission of

PhD theses is voluntary at this stage but we hope to move to compulsory submission over the next couple of years.

### **24x7**

The main library at Uxbridge opened 24x7 for a four week period immediately before and during the exams. Several university libraries have been open 24x7 for limited periods or in a few cases as part of regular opening hours. What was perhaps of interest in our case was the level of usage - with about 200 students regularly using the library until 2.00 or 2.30. On one Friday morning there were more students in the library at 2.30 (329) than at 11.30. The impact on cleaning and shelving was far greater than we anticipated, with over 10,000 books waiting to be reshelved at one point before we could recruit extra staff. We have funding to do something similar in spring 2007, although whether we open 24x7 or fewer hours for a longer period will depend on the views of the students.

### **WLAC**

When the Uxbridge Library was extended in 2004, an assistive technology centre was created for disabled students with state-of-the-art facilities and software. This has now been absorbed into the new West London Assessment Centre (WLAC) which offers needs assessments and DSA-related (disabled students' allowance) support services for students in the region. The centre is managed by the disability and dyslexia service but is housed in the library.

### **SENIOR STAFF AWAYDAY**

Finally it may be of interest to record that in July the entire senior team (23 staff plus a facilitator) went on an overnight 'awayday' at a nearby conference centre (Beaumont House) to explore different ways of thinking about the library as an organisation. This is the first stage of a process which should culminate in a new medium-term vision and strategy by the end of 2007. While there is often a tendency to be cynical about such events, I think I can fairly report that, with a good facilitator, one can come back to base feeling energised and enthusiastic. The challenge will be to maintain that enthusiasm, translate it into specific actions and embed it into the organisational culture. At the time of writing that challenge is ahead of us, but I am optimistic, of course!

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## **University of Cambridge**

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### **MELLON MILLION FOR NINETEENTH-CENTURY COLLECTION**

The library is celebrating the award of a million-dollar grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation towards the cost of creating online catalogue records for the nineteenth-century British publications stored in the topmost floors of the tower. The collection is of major national and international importance as a source of primary material for historical and literary research. It reflects the Victorian view of the world, from their most ephemeral and controversial opinions to those read every day in the parlour and the schoolroom.

Originally acquired by the library under legal deposit legislation, the collection consists of 170,000 publications – books, pamphlets, school textbooks, calendars, games, timetables, trade catalogues – that were relegated to the 'secondary' sheaf catalogue, being considered unsuitable for inclusion in the 'primary catalogues' of an academic library. Many of the books are in mint condition, with their original bindings. There are popular science titles, travel guides, children's books, religious tracts, works by and for women, pamphlets on social issues and thousands of 'penny dreadfuls' - the hugely popular, luridly illustrated tales of adventure and romance.

Whilst the nineteenth-century collection is at present 'serendipity heaven', the limitations of the handwritten and now increasingly illegible sheaf catalogues have meant that a vast amount of nineteenth-century publications is currently 'invisible' to scholars. The library's online catalogue offers a sophisticated search facility that will enable readers to search the collection effectively for the first time. Work will start in the next few months and will be completed by 2010. For more information, contact Vanessa Lacey at vl203@cam.ac.uk

### **ARCHIVING OF CHEMISTRY DATA**

The library's work in developing the DSpace@Cambridge ([www.dspace.cam.ac.uk](http://www.dspace.cam.ac.uk)) digital repository service has now led to a further project, SPECTRA (Submission, Preservation, and Exposure of Chemistry Teaching and Research Data), exploring the use of institutional repositories for chemistry data. Funded by the JISC under its Digital Repositories Programme as an 18-month project ending in March 2007, SPECTRA is a partnership between the university libraries and the chemistry departments of the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London, with



Cambridge University Library as the lead institution.

Chemical information is essential to many sciences outside chemistry, including material, life and environmental sciences, and supports major industries including pharmaceuticals. The reporting of the synthesis and properties of new chemical compounds is central to this. However, it has been reported that at least 80% of chemistry data is never published. The SPECTRa project addresses this problem. Its specific aims are to investigate the needs of the academic chemistry research community in archiving and publishing experimental data; demonstrate how these needs may best be co-ordinated with emerging institutional strategies for repositories handling both data and publications; facilitate routine extraction of data in high volumes and their ingest into institutional repositories; investigate the cultural issues in capturing and re-using scientific data; and explore interoperability issues involving archiving data in repositories. Further information is available on the project website: [www.lib.cam.ac.uk/spectra](http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/spectra)

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## Central School of Speech and Drama

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Antony Loveland has been appointed as head of library services. Antony comes to CSSD from Senate House Library, University of London, where he was team leader for the arts collections and head of information services. He will lead the strategic development of the library service at what is an exciting and important time for the school.

In 2005 the School became the newest member of the University of London and it was awarded Centre for Excellence in Theatre Training status by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). In 2006 it also celebrates its centenary year and in the autumn it will take its first cohort of MPhil and PhD students as it seeks to develop a strong research culture. It will be Antony's job to ensure that the library fully plays its role in supporting this new strategic direction.

Antony Loveland  
Head of Library Service  
E-mail: [a.loveland@cssd.ac.uk](mailto:a.loveland@cssd.ac.uk)

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## Cranfield University

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### SHRIVENHAM CAMPUS DEVELOPMENTS

Cranfield has won a new contract with the Ministry of Defence at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom at Shrivenham for the provision of education and research in management, technology and leadership for the defence community. This Academic Provider contract commenced on 1 August 2006, is worth £366M over twenty-two years, and follows twenty-two years of successful contracts since 1984. The contract was won against competition from a number of other UK universities. Cranfield is now working with partner subcontractors, principally the Open University and King's College London, for some elements of delivery.

This new contract is significantly different from previous arrangements. There will be an increasing concentration on management and strategic leadership, in addition to technology. Eighty different courses are currently required. Future emphasis will be on more flexible forms of educational delivery, including the requirement for more distance learning and the development of a modular masters degree programme for army officers. No further undergraduate education is retained at the Defence Academy itself; all is now conducted in other UK universities. The contract now involves a Directed Research programme.

The former Royal Military College of Science has now been transformed into the Defence College of Management and Technology (DCMT), one of the three main constituent Colleges of the Defence Academy. Cranfield is also now using this name for its school at Shrivenham.

The former department of Information Services has also been reconfigured to meet the new contract requirements. The library is a significant element of the Academic Provider contract, and the concept is for a service which meets not only traditional requirements, but has an overall impact on knowledge management within the organisation, and is able to offer all its services effectively to distant students. A new library strategy has been produced to help achieve this vision. Some elements of the former Media Services have been transferred to the facilities management contractor working alongside the University at Shrivenham. The new department title of Knowledge Services reflects these changes.

Knowledge Services now consist of two main divisions: the DCMT Library, and Cranfield Studios. Cranfield Studios provides design, development and delivery of high quality e-learning materials as well as design services for print and web-based educational and marketing materials. The library was relocated in summer 2005 to a refurbished building in the centre of the campus. Effort was made in the process to incorporate both new thinking about the provision of learning spaces and quality design elements. Simultaneously with the opening of the new physical library, a new digital library was launched to provide a coherent portal for all library services.

The library staff structure has also been redeveloped to provide a broader and deeper range of subject specialists across the disciplines of defence, leadership and management, and science and technology. A range of new repositories is being developed for academic and educational materials. A new postgraduate-level information literacy package based on the SCOUNUL Seven Pillars model has been created drawing on the strengths of both divisions of Knowledge Services, and this may be made available to other institutions in the sector. The library has also increased its opening hours by more than 50%.

Key appointments within Knowledge Services are: Stephen Town, Director of Knowledge Services; Dr Darien Rossiter, Deputy Director of Knowledge Services with special responsibility for technologies and repository developments; Michael Davis, Development Team Leader for web related technologies and services; Lesley Castens (joining from Bristol University in November), Associate Director, Library Services. DCMT Library Subject Team Leaders are Lynne Seddon (Defence), Wendy Buckle (Management) and Rachel Daniels (Technology).

Further information can be found at: <http://diglib.shrivenham.cranfield.ac.uk/>

Stephen Town  
Director of Knowledge Services  
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## De Montfort University

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### JACQUI WEETMAN

Jacqui Weetman, academic team manager responsible most recently for the creative industries section, left DMU Library in June after nearly seven years to take up a new post in the United States.

Her new post – as information literacy librarian at the College of New Jersey – enables Jacqui to rejoin her husband who recently started a new job in nearby Princeton.

The post of information literacy librarian is ideal for Jacqui as this has been an important feature of her work at DMU and she has presented conference papers, and published journal articles, on academic staff perceptions of information literacy.

### GRETA FRIGGENS

Greta Friggens, senior assistant librarian (student experience) left us in mid-August to take up the position of faculty librarian, creative and cultural industries, at the University of Portsmouth. Greta had supported a wide range of departments within the faculty of art and design for almost ten years.

The new post provides an opportunity to continue to develop the liaison and information literacy roles, whilst opening up the new challenge of contributing at a more strategic level to the Library Management Group.

Greta and partner Mark are relishing this opportunity to start a new life at the seaside!

### SENIOR ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

As part of the restructuring activities, the six senior assistant librarians within Academic Services have been assigned responsibility for a faculty (or support a site librarian) and a cross-service portfolio, including e-service development, partner college outreach and the student experience. Liaison responsibilities are thus linked together with input into key areas of the service, enhancing developmental opportunities for this essential tier of staff.


### DO STUDENTS READ FOR PLEASURE?

It was the BBC's Big Read in 2003 which started it ...

The quest to find Britain's favourite book inspired a group of librarians from the academic services team at De Montfort University to engage our users with library resources 'beyond the reading list'.

For the Big Read we developed a website which listed the 100 titles on the long list, with links to information about the authors and the texts. There was an opportunity to vote online to identify the university's favourite book (*Lord of the rings*) and to post reviews. Lunchtime and evening events



where members of academic staff spoke on topics ranging from 'the marketing of Harry Potter' to the poems of Pablo Neruda were open to members of the public as well as students.



Department of  
**Library Services**

www.library.dmu.ac.uk

### Hero or Villain?

**Do you dare to decide?**

One person's hero can be another's villain, it is all a matter of perspective. Facts, interpretation, context and time frame all play a part. So when deciding, accumulate the facts, think and evaluate..... take an informed opinion.

**Read for balance.**

So remember citizen ,  
investigate for course research  
investigate for interest  
investigate for pleasure.

We found many positive benefits from these activities, which have justified the work put in to organise it all:

- Within the library it provided opportunities for collaborative working across teams – the website would not have existed without the input from colleagues in the technical services team. All library staff were encouraged to join the project group and/or contribute reviews.
- The initiative was covered in the university newsletter, raising the profile of library services. Events were also promoted via e-mails to all users across the university.
- New channels of communication were opened up with the academic staff who contributed their time to speak at events and also with the public library which advertised them.
- Most importantly, the initiative caught the imagination of our users who wrote reviews and voted enthusiastically.

Heartened by the success of our first attempt, we have continued for the last three years with a range of activities focusing on World Book Day.

This year our activities extended further with a series of lunchtime forums for academic staff to discuss student reading habits. Led by Carole Keddie and Kaye Towlson these have covered the function of reading lists, ways of expanding the learning experience and the question of whether reading for pleasure is in any way related to academic success. The meetings have given us a more rounded view of how our resources are being used and the issues involved with encouraging more proactive use of the collection.

Although reader development is not an obvious area of activity for a university library, we have found that it provides new perspectives on resources, opportunities for staff development, raises our profile, and as a bonus is enjoyable and interesting to do.

Dave Thompson  
E-mail: [DThompson@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:DThompson@dmu.ac.uk)

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## University of Derby

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### RESTRUCTURE

Following our radical reorganisation into a converged structure three years ago, further changes have taken place. Under Richard Maccabee, Director of Learning & Information Services, there are now three operational divisions: IT & E-Learning Development, IT Infrastructure, and Library & Customer Operations. The latter is headed by Pat Johnson, with Richard Finch as University Librarian and SCONUL Representative.

### PLATO

Looking for a resource to help deal with plagiarism? PLATO (Plagiarism Teaching Online) is an interactive software package designed to raise students' awareness of plagiarism and improve their referencing skills. It has been developed by our Interactive Media Unit from an original idea of Chris Martindale, manager of our business, computing and law faculty support team. As well as being rolled out for use in the university it is being marketed by our commercial e-learning unit Innovation 4 Learning (see [www.preventplagiarism.co.uk](http://www.preventplagiarism.co.uk)).

### SELF ISSUE

We are proceeding with full implementation of self issue and return at the main Kedleston Road campus with three 3M V3 stations.

### ToCROSS

In partnership with TALIS and publishers Emerald we are coming to the end of a successful JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) funded project exploring the feasibility of using RSS feed to place publisher and e-journal content details into library catalogues. The university's contribution, led by Melanie Keady, E-Resources Development Manager, has been to provide a test bed and evaluation. (See [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=project\\_tocross](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=project_tocross)).

#### **DIGITAL RESOURCES**

We are making full use of the new CLA licence to digitise book chapters and journal articles to support over 170 taught modules. This has been greatly appreciated by staff and students and we are now looking to widen the take-up.

Linda Swanson, Copyright & Legislation Manager, will be pleased to provide more information ([l.m.swanson@derby.ac.uk](mailto:l.m.swanson@derby.ac.uk)).

Richard Finch

E-mail: [R.J.Finch@derby.ac.uk](mailto:R.J.Finch@derby.ac.uk)

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## **Edge Hill University**

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#### **AWARD OF UNIVERSITY STATUS**

June 2006 saw Edge Hill receive confirmation of its new status as a university. Formerly a college of higher education, Edge Hill has a 121-year history of providing education and training, from its roots as a women only teacher training college, through to its present status as Britain's newest university.

#### **EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY OFFA AGREEMENT AND THE UNICARD**

Edge Hill's OFFA Agreement, quoted by the *Times higher education supplement* as offering one of the best bursary and support packages for students starting courses this year, includes a 'study support pack' of £200 for all students paying the full £3,000 fee. The university's new smart card, known as UNICARD, will provide an integrated and effective approach to managing the packages. Learning Services and IT Services are leading the implementation of the UNICARD and related smart card technology and which goes live in September. The study support entitlement accessed via the UNICARD will enable students to obtain a range of study support facilities such as printing, photocopying, Learning Services peripherals and book purchase.

Key elements of the UNICARD will be a range of 'purses' from which students can spend. Students will be able to use their UNICARD in catering

outlets, in learning resource centres as a library card, and for 24x7 access to facilities, adding funds onto the card from a number of key locations across the university and via the web by the end of the year.

Learning Services are also introducing a 'Books on demand' service which will enable students to use funds from their UNICARD to purchase texts for their studies. Books purchased using the UNICARD will receive a discount, and this value added service is regarded as a key part of the launch of the card.

#### **INTEGRATING INFORMATION AND STUDY SKILLS**

This summer saw a multi-disciplinary team within Learning Services develop and implement a 15 credit, 8 week module aimed at enhancing students' information and study skills. The module, entitled Spring Board: enhancing your study skills was delivered and supported entirely online via WebCT. It has been enthusiastically taken up by 150 students who have given up time over their summer holidays to participate. Whilst a comprehensive evaluation is under way, early indications based on WebCT usage statistics, discussion activities and student feedback suggest that it has been a success.

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## **Heriot-Watt University**

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#### **TECHXTRA**

Heriot-Watt University Library has recently been working with the Institute for Computer Based Learning (ICBL) to develop TechXtra (<http://www.techxtra.ac.uk>). TechXtra is a suite of ten freely available services which simplify access to a multitude of different types of technology information from a host of different sources.

TechXtra facilitates immediate access to the freely available full-text content of hundreds of thousands of eprints, technical reports, theses, articles, news items, job announcements and more. In cases where the full-text is not freely available, TechXtra provides links to vendors for pay-per-view options. TechXtra searches a combination of digital repositories, journal databases, technical reports servers, web information, news sources and more, all with a focus on technology information.

The suite of services includes:

**Database cross-search** - This searches over 4 million items from 25 different databases, provid-

ing access to articles, key websites, theses and dissertations, books, industry news, new job announcements, technical reports, eprints, learning & teaching resources and the latest research in engineering, mathematics and computing. Sources include: Australian Research Repositories Online to the World, arXiv (eprint archive in computer science, maths and related subjects), CiteSeer (research articles in computer science), Directory of Open Access Journals, ePrints UK (selected open archives in the UK), Copac (union catalogue from the Consortium of University Research Libraries), National Engineering Education Delivery System (digital library of learning resources), NASA Technical Reports (12 different NASA technical report series).

**Job announcements** - OneStep Jobs brings together the latest job announcements from more than 35 top sources, including Jobs.ac.uk, ICE-recruit, The engineer, Redgoldfish, Jobsite, Engineeringjobs.co.uk, 4engineers.co.uk, Matchtech, TipTopJobs and more.

**Industry news** - OneStep Industry News brings together news feeds from over 80 top sources, including *The engineer online*, Engineeringtalk, *New scientist*, scenta, Moreover, Yenra, *Control engineering news*, *Design news*, EurekAlert, Slash-dot, *PC magazine*, BBC Tech News and more.

#### **FREE TRADE MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS & TECHNICAL DOCUMENT DOWNLOADS**

#### **On-line bookstore**

#### **Offshore engineering information service –**

Information about publications and meetings dealing with: oil and gas exploration and production; offshore health, safety and environmental protection; resources of the seabed and renewable energy; and marine technology.

**Discovery guides** – Free in-depth reports on topical engineering, mathematical and technology issues.

#### **Information about validated engineering design**

**data** – Over 1,300 abstracts of data item design guides. Access to the full text is via subscription only.

**Recent advances in manufacturing** – A database of bibliographic information for manufacturing and related areas, covering items in over 500 niche and mainstream journals and magazines, plus details of books, videos and conference proceedings.

**Selected links to top sources of technology information** - Internet tutorials, newsletters and gateways.

For more information about TechXtra, contact:

Roddy MacLeod  
Senior Subject Librarian  
Heriot-Watt University Library  
Edinburgh  
Tel: 0131 451 3576  
E-mail: r.a.macleod@hw.ac.uk

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## **Leeds University**

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### **FAY AND GEOFFREY ELLIOT READING ROOM**

Rare documents marking the rise and fall of Oscar Wilde were on show at celebrations for Leeds University benefactors Fay and Geoffrey Elliott. A reading room in special collections has been named after them, in recognition of their contribution to the university. Wilde manuscripts and a rare copy of student magazine *The chameleon* are among items acquired by the university with support from the Elliotts. Wilde's contribution to the magazine was modest but Lord Alfred Douglas' poem which ends with the line 'The love that dares not speak its name' became the focus of Wilde's trial for indecency. Leeds library has also acquired unpublished poems by John Betjeman and other rare works, building on the collection of literary treasures donated by the Elliotts in 2002. The photograph shows Fay and Geoffrey Elliott unveiling the plaque naming the Reading Room.



### **DESIGNATED COLLECTIONS**

The last academic year was a busy one for our special collections. In addition to the naming of the reading room, five of the library's premier special collections were awarded 'Designated' status by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Designation is reserved by MLA for collections they recognise to be of outstanding national and international importance. The five Leeds

collections Designated are the English literature collection, the Leeds Russian archive, the Liddle collection, the cookery collection and the Romany collection. Colleagues may have seen our cookery collection featured in the BBC's 'Tales from the palaces' and our Shakespeare first folio losing out to the Spitfire in 'People's museum'.

#### **LEEDS READ 2006**

Literature of a different kind was celebrated by the staff and students of the university during Leeds Read 2006. For the second year in succession members of the university were asked to nominate and then vote from a shortlist to find the Leeds Read of 2006, which turned out to be George Orwell's 1984. Other events included 'Blood on the Bookshelf' a talk by novelists Steve Mosby (*The cutting crew*, *The third person*) and John Connor (*A child's game*, *The playroom*, *Phoenix*), and 'Illuminating the past: medieval manuscripts in the library collection' an illustrated talk by Oliver Pickering which was followed by an opportunity to view many of the manuscripts at close quarters. Plans for 2007 are already in motion – Leeds Read 2007 – this year it's poetical!

#### **LILAC 2006**

Lilac 2006 took place at the University of Leeds, 27-29 March 2006. Nearly two hundred delegates enjoyed a range of parallel sessions and truly inspirational keynote speakers, including Lynne Brindley, chief executive of the British Library. Delegate feedback suggests Lilac was a terrific success, particularly in disseminating new ideas, fostering networks of information professionals, and inspiring good practice across sectors: 'parallel sessions and keynote speakers were very good and really brought new knowledge to conference delegates.' Papers and presentations are available at: [www.cilip.org.uk/informationliteracy](http://www.cilip.org.uk/informationliteracy)

#### **STOCK MOVES**

This summer sees a lot of activity in the form of stock moves. This is to accommodate stock which will be moving from our Bretton Hall site in summer 2007 when the Bretton Hall campus closes. Work has been helped by the opening of our new Hillary Place store which has provided the library with an additional 2,480 linear metres of floor space.

#### **NEW GROUP AREAS**

During this summer Leeds is creating new group study areas in the Edward Boyle and Brotherton libraries, with similar accommodation for the Health Sciences Library due to follow in the spring. Wireless enabled with different furniture

options available, these areas will be assessed to provide information for future space planning in the library.

#### **WELL-BEING**

The library featured prominently in the results of this year's university workplace well-being survey. The survey looked at staff's clarity over personal objectives, contribution to the work of the university, understanding of university strategy, and support by managers and peers. Library staff scored consistently higher than the university average, results which reflect the very positive results of our own annual staff perceptions surveys.

Liz Waller

Head of Public Service Strategy

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## **Leeds Metropolitan University**

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#### **LIBRARY FOCUS GROUPS**

In February 2006 a series of focus groups was run for the library by Priority Research Ltd to determine user opinion on a range of issues. Our 2005 Charter Mark assessment suggested that whilst we regularly asked our users if they were satisfied with the services we offer we should also look at how they feel they are treated. Therefore the main area of consultation was asking users how they feel the library is doing in treating its users fairly, sensitively and equally. In total 89% of respondents described us as fairly or very good while 11% felt neutral about our treatment of them. The groups comprised full and part-time students, staff and postgraduates at all three campuses. They also discussed use of the learning environment and potential conflicts arising from this and issues arising in finding resources.

#### **WIRELESS NETWORKING**

Wireless networking in the libraries at both the Civic Quarter and Headingley campuses has been extended. This enables users with their own wireless laptops or other mobile devices to access the internet and thus a wide range of university and other services. In conjunction with this a laptop loan service is available from the media loans counters for those students without their own equipment.

#### **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

The library continues to expand its collection of electronic resources with the History E-Book Project now available via the catalogue. To the

subscription to *Sage Journals Online* 329 titles have been added covering communication and media studies, education, criminology, health sciences, management, politics, counselling, and sociology. In addition more than 600 *Science Direct* titles will be added in the near future covering the areas of health sciences and psychology along with the *Online dictionary of national bibliography* and some JSTOR collections.

To promote these resources to academic staff, learning advisers ran a series of well attended 'learning lunches' including demonstrations and lab sessions.

#### **HEADINGLEY LIBRARY REFURBISHMENT**

Over summer 2006 the library at our Headingley campus will be transformed. The ground and first floors of the building will be completely refurbished to provide improved learning support facilities for students and staff at Leeds Met. Careful design and new flexible furniture will lead to:

- an improved layout, with all the books together in one easy-to-find sequence
- more group study space – the whole of the ground floor will be for group work
- more silent study space
- wireless network access throughout the building
- new, modern storage systems for backruns of print journals
- purpose-built facilities for disabled and dyslexic students
- an easier to use help and advice service from the new help desk

Library staff took the opportunity to bury a 'time capsule' of library momentos such as an induction video, staff photos and user guides showing how information and libraries are used in the early part of the 21st century. (see photo)



For further details, please contact k.everest@leedsmet.ac.uk.

#### **ZONING OF THE STUDY ENVIRONMENT**

During 2005/6 we piloted zoning our Civic Quarter library creating silent, quiet and group work floors in order to support the differing needs of students. We encouraged feedback via customer comments, course committees and an online survey. Although the majority of our students and staff agreed with the idea in principle there was confusion over what was meant by 'quiet'! In addition those studying subjects such as history whose books were on the 'group' floor were not happy. We had expected that students would take their books to the zone most suited to their need and were expecting increased reshelving but in fact they wanted to sit near their books.

For 2006/7 we have responded to the feedback by designating the quiet floor 'silent' and reversing the other floors. This means that the 'group' floor is now the journals area and both bookstock areas are now silent. We will also extend the idea to the Headingley library where the refurbishment enables us to create a silent study room and a group work area

#### **RFID**

Learning Support Services will be introducing radio frequency identification (RFID) technology into the libraries for the start of the 2006/7 academic year. This will provide a faster service for staff and students to borrow, return and renew resources via new self-service machines, including audio-visual material for the first time. It will also increase security and has the potential to improve our stock management by, for example, enabling us to locate items lost or 'hidden' on the shelves. Over the summer 370,000 items will be tagged to get the stock ready ahead of supporting students to use the new system throughout the autumn term. In addition demonstrations to staff are timetabled for events at the university's annual staff development festival. After a tendering process, the contract was awarded to D-Tech who have previously installed their Bibliotheca system at Middlesex University. Contact [d.a.young@leeds-met.ac.uk](mailto:d.a.young@leeds-met.ac.uk) for further information

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## **Loughborough University**

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#### **LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY'S INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY**

On Wednesday 28 June, Loughborough University's institutional repository – a new service to help

increase the visibility and preserve the university's research - was officially launched by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Shirley Pearce. The institutional repository, being developed and managed by the University Library, is a digital collection of Loughborough's research and there are now over 1700 items in the repository. The collection includes a range of different materials such as pre-prints; published articles; theses and official reports. [<http://magpie.lboro.ac.uk/dspace>]

At the launch event held to celebrate the success of the pilot phase of this service, the Vice-Chancellor made a presentation to Dr Keith Pond from the business school who submitted the 1000th item. Bill Hubbard, from Nottingham University's SHERPA Project, Professor Charles Oppenheim from Information Science, and Dr Gabriel Egan from the English & Drama Department also said a few words in support of the repository and the open access movement.



Mary Morley, Director of the Division of Information Services and Systems and University Librarian said: 'I am delighted at the progress that has been made with the library-led development of Loughborough University's institutional repository.'

Professor Pearce, Vice-Chancellor said: 'The institutional repository has already started to play a significant role in improving the outside world's access to the first class research being undertaken at Loughborough.'

Institutional repositories are part of a growing international open access movement and around one third of universities in the UK have already established similar services. The repository ensures the University's research is as visible and accessible as possible to a global community, helping to raise the profile of Loughborough and its academics.

For information about institutional repositories and the open access movement, see: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/library/institutionalrepository.htm> or contact Joanna Barwick, Support Services Librarian: [J.P.L.Barwick@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:J.P.L.Barwick@lboro.ac.uk)

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## Manchester Metropolitan University

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### THE ONGOING SUCCESS OF THE INFO SKILLS PROGRAMME

Since MMU Library's information skills programme (InfoSkills) was established in 2004, we have been providing relevant and timely InfoSkills training for students across the university. Over the last year or so, the programme has generated a lot of interest from other higher education institutions who are keen to adopt our strategies and techniques. The InfoSkills team has been very active in marketing the programme and has presented papers at several events this year, including Lilac (Librarians Information Literacy Annual Conference), and the Developing Skills for Study in Higher Education conference at the University of Wolverhampton in June 2006. The conferences highlighted the need to provide quality information literacy training for university students. Through sharing experiences with other institutions, MMU Library has not only been able to gather ideas on ways to enhance the development of its InfoSkills programme, but has also seen that our current provision is amongst the most innovative in the country.

### BRINGING YOU THE LATEST FROM OUTER E-SPACE: MMU'S RESEARCH REPOSITORY

The development of Manchester Metropolitan University's repository e-space is well under way. Hosted by BioMed Central, the repository now holds 170 individual records representing a cross section of research from university departments and research institutes.

e-space employs the Open Archives Initiative (OAI) Protocol for Metadata Harvesting and allows search engines, such as Google and OAIster to retrieve metadata. Using this technology, material held on e-space can easily be found by scholars around the globe.

The repository will be launched formally in September 2006 followed by events across the university. For further information, please visit the e-space website (<http://e-space.openrepository.com/e-space/>).

Mary Harrison



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## National library of Scotland

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### **\$8 MILLION BOOK *BIRDS OF AMERICA* HEADLINES AT NLS SUMMER EXHIBITION**

Our summer exhibition tells how influential men in 1820s Edinburgh helped get production started on what is now one of the world's most valuable books. On display from 4 July to 15 October a volume of John James Audubon's famous *Birds of America*. The four-volume book contains 1,065 life-like illustrations of 489 American species. At 'Birds of a Feather: Audubon's Adventures in Edinburgh' you can also see five original plates from the book. More information is on the NLS news page: <http://www.nls.uk/news/>

### **'SHERLOCK HOLMES' MANUSCRIPT DONATED BY CONAN DOYLE ESTATE**

The manuscript for a Sherlock Holmes story was presented to the National Library of Scotland last week. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote *The adventure of the illustrious client* in 1924. As one of the tales in *The casebook of Sherlock Holmes*, it was published in 1927. At NLS on 30 June, the executor of the estate of the author's late daughter handed over the manuscript. It is the latest item to join our collection of Conan Doyle papers. More information is on the NLS news page: <http://www.nls.uk/news/>

### **POWER AND POLITICS AT THE BOOK FESTIVAL**

If you have questions about who really controls Scotland today, you might find the answers at the Edinburgh International Book Festival. 'Scottish powerplay' is the theme of the National Library of Scotland's Donald Dewar Memorial Lecture for 2006. Brian Taylor, political editor of BBC Scotland, gives this year's annual talk in the RBS main theatre in Charlotte Square Gardens. Details of this and other NLS events can be found at: <http://www.nls.uk/events/>

### **THE BRIDGE READINGS**

Introducing a new series of free literary readings by Scottish writers to be held monthly at NLS on George IV Bridge. The Bridge Readings will showcase a writer each month who will read from their work, or take part in an 'in conversation', by an audience Q&A session and then a book signing. A.L. Kennedy opened the series on 27 July, with the following authors appearing in August and September: Laura Hird (17 August): Edinburgh-born and based, Hird read a selection of her writing and discussed her work in anticipation of her new short story collection to be published by Canongate in October; Alasdair Gray (20 Sep-

tember): In a rare outing, the celebrated author of Lanark in conversation with Stephanie Wolfe Murray, his first publisher.

### **FUNDING ANNOUNCED FOR TRUSTED DIGITAL REPOSITORY**

The Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport has announced that NLS has been successful with its bid for funding to establish a Trusted Digital Repository (TDR) for Scotland. The Scottish Executive will make up to £1.8 million available over the next two years for the installation of high capacity digital storage, procurement of software and establishment of a small project team. Just as NLS collects, catalogues, stores, preserves and makes accessible its physical collections, the TDR will perform a similar role for its digital collections. One of the primary drivers for the TDR is the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 which will extend the library's right to claim non-print publications under legal deposit. The regulations are still being developed, but it is likely that electronic journals, web sites and similar items will be included. In addition to legal deposit content, the TDR will house the NLS's own digitised collections and may host digital materials on behalf of other organisations.

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## University of Northampton

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### **MERGER OF INFORMATION RESOURCES AND SERVICES AND IT SERVICES**

In April 2006 Hilary Johnson (previously Chief Librarian) was appointed the new Director of Information Services. This follows the decision to merge Information Resources and Services and IT Services. The new Department of Information Services comes formally into operation on the 1 September 2006.

### **SFX AND METALIB**

The SFX link resolver has been implemented and will be launched in September 2006 in time for the start of the academic year. Metalib (version 4), the federated search product which allows users to search across multiple electronic resources, will be implemented in December 2006. Version 4 of Metalib offers better DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance, clustering of results (using Vivisimo) and easier customisation.

#### CHANGES TO AVENUE LIBRARY

Avenue Library at the University of Northampton has undergone a major refurbishment and upgrade this summer. The library at Avenue houses stock and equipment to support the school of the arts and the school of applied sciences. The upgrade work will enhance Avenue Library by means of:

- improved video editing rooms, with better lighting and ventilation
- increased capacity for printed journals
- a new open access IT suite, containing 12 PCs and 8 Macs, with seminar room capacity
- a larger room for multimedia playback and storage
- increased space for group study
- new, up-to-date self service machines
- a streamlined help desk, with enhanced staff capability
- a new enquiry desk for contact with academic librarians
- a more open layout, giving greater flexibility for future use.

Adele Walton

Academic Librarian

E-mail: [adele.walton@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:adele.walton@northampton.ac.uk)

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## Open University

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#### NATIONAL AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR OPEN UNIVERSITY INNOVATIONS

Gill Needham, head of strategic and service development at The Open University's Library and Learning Resources Centre, was one of 50 lecturers and support staff awarded £10,000 National Teaching Fellowships from the Higher Education Academy. The awards are given to promote excellent teaching in universities.

Gill's contribution to higher education involved major changes in the Open University's library services that have enabled its students – now 200,000 annually – to have access to electronic resources for the first time. She developed and implemented an information literacy strategy.

'It ensures that no Open University student will graduate without developing the full range of information skills essential in the 'Knowledge Society'. This is a fundamental challenge for all universities: students need to be able to find, organise and present information and, most important of all, to be able to sift, critically evaluate and challenge what they find,' Gill points out.

The recipient also designed and developed an online, interactive flexible resource, which could be used by different courses in different ways. SAFARI (Skills in Accessing, Finding and Reviewing Information) takes students through stages of planning and carrying out an 'information journey' and then evaluating and presenting what they find. It is interactive throughout and has a range of different kinds of activities to keep students involved – these include text-box activities, clickable diagrams, drag-and-drop and real-time searching. Students are able to save the responses they type into SAFARI and print out the practical checklists – popular features of the system. SAFARI receives more than 90,000 hits each month and also is used or recommended to students in 26 other UK universities and nine in other countries (including Yale, the Indira Gandhi National Open University and the University of New South Wales).

Gill also developed a free-standing fully accredited course in information literacy – U120 making sense of information in the connected age (MOSAIC). This 10-week course (worth 10 credit points at level 1) was the only course of its kind in the UK (and possibly in Europe). The course received an Open University Teaching Award in 2004 and has now been superseded by a new 10-week course, TU120 Beyond Google: working with information online. The course aims to teach evaluation skills and searching techniques alongside helping students to explore the changing information landscape.

See <http://tscp.open.ac.uk/tu120> and <http://www.open.ac.uk/safari> for more details.

Sam Dick

E-mail: [S.J.Dick@open.ac.uk](mailto:S.J.Dick@open.ac.uk)

#### GOING BEYOND GOOGLE

In a recent article in *CILIP update* (July 2006), Peter Williams (subject librarian for architecture and computing at the University of East London) asks 'How does IL fit into a world of blogs, wikis and tags'

This is exactly the challenge that the IL (information literacy) team at the Open University Library have tackled with a new short course called *Beyond Google* which begins in October. Working with expert colleagues in the Technology Faculty we have abandoned our established 'seven pillars'-type model and taken a fresh look at the needs of our students. We recognise that the majority are no longer interested in achieving the

'perfect search' (if this was ever the case). What they do need is help with the information and tools they are presented with in their daily lives, not just their studies. The internet has been a powerful force in de-compartmentalising our lives. Students no longer expect to keep a set of tools, techniques and skills exclusively for their academic work. As librarians we need to understand the tools students choose to use and recognise that we may no longer be the experts. *Beyond Google* is a very pragmatic course, with search as its central theme. It acknowledges that, for most people, Google will be the first port of call, but encourages them both to think about what Google is doing, and also to venture further afield. Another theme of the course is the democratisation of information and the role of the student as knowledge creator and publisher. Students are required to experiment with various social networking tools and reflect on their experience. The course is delivered online and is predominantly activity-based. We have also recognised that many of our students like to learn 'on the move' by including MP3 files and podcasts. Students will receive an MP3 player with their course materials.

For more information see <http://www.openuniversity.co.uk/tu120>

Jo Parker  
Gill Needham

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## University of Plymouth

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### READING LIST SYSTEM

We are currently working collaboratively with teaching staff to establish a core of reading lists as part of the pilot project using the TalisList system. The aim is that teaching staff set-up and manage their own reading lists using the simple web-based interface. To date we have 68 academics expressing interest in being involved in the pilots with the first lists being created in time for the new academic year in September.

### CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

In January 2005 the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) awarded four Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) to the University of Plymouth, the maximum award possible for any university. In addition, the university is a partner in a fifth successful bid, led by Liverpool Hope University College. These awards confirm the status of the University of Plymouth as one of the UK's top universities for teaching excellence.

The key purposes of the CETLs are to reward excellent teaching practice and invest in that practice further. The benefits of this investment will be felt by students, staff and other stakeholders in Plymouth, in the region and nationally.

Each CETL has a distinctive focus, reflecting its track record of successful student learning. The university's four CETLs are:

- Centre for Excellence in Professional Placement Learning (Health and Nursing)
- Experiential Learning in Environmental and Natural Science
- Higher Education Learning Partnerships
- Centre for Sustainable Futures
- LearnHigher.

This is major recognition of the university's excellence in teaching and learning and as such the IT and library staff in the university are taking an active part in the development of the Centres' work.

### NEW POSTS

Jayne Moss has recently been appointed into the vacant post of senior subject librarian (technology). Jayne was previously the subject librarian working with the faculty of social sciences and business at Plymouth, but now has subject responsibilities for the school of engineering and the school of computing, communication and electronics.

### SECURE ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

The library has implemented the British Library's secure electronic delivery service as its default delivery method for all photocopy requests. This has proved to be extremely popular, with 80% of requests being delivered to the requestor's desktop within three days. Reported problems (the majority because guidance notes have not been read) are currently running at under 3% of all documents delivered.

Contact: [graham.title@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:graham.title@plymouth.ac.uk) for further information

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## University of Reading

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### OUR SUMMER OF MOVE

Three library collections were relocated during the summer of 2006. The Music Library (which closed in 2005 following the closure of the sub-department of music) has been edited and integrated with our Bulmershe Library site. Applied language material from another closing depart-

mental library was weeded and redistributed to Bulmershe and Main Library Whiteknights. Most importantly this summer, we relocated archive and rare book material from the Main Library Whiteknights and other less suitable stores to a new special collections store. The new Special Collections Service is due to open to readers in October 2006.

Readers will be able to use rare books and archives belonging to both the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) and the University Library's special collections in its reading room at Redlands Road, within the MERL complex. Staff from both units formed a partnership to run the service following the decision to build, next to MERL, a new state-of-the-art store for University Library archives and rare books. Its controlled environment and improved security will ensure the long-term preservation of unique special collections such as the Cole Library and the Beckett Collection. Rupert Wood, the University Library's head of collections, said 'We're really looking forward to having our priceless collections housed in the new purpose built store and bringing together these two excellent services.'

For more information see: [www.library.rdg.ac.uk/colls/special/jointservice](http://www.library.rdg.ac.uk/colls/special/jointservice)

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## Quality assurance in higher education: mission (im)possible

Jeremy Atkinson  
*Chair of SCONUL Working Group on Quality Assurance*  
*Director of Learning & Corporate Support Services, University of Glamorgan*  
Tel: 01443 482600 E-mail: [pjatkins@glam.ac.uk](mailto:pjatkins@glam.ac.uk)

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Earlier this year, I was invited, as Chair of the Working Group on Quality Assurance, to represent SCONUL at the second FOTIM (Foundation of Tertiary Institutions of the Northern Metropolis) International Quality Assurance Conference held in Pretoria, South Africa in June 2006. This second conference, titled *Quality assurance in higher education: mission (im)possible*, was being arranged in partnership with CHELSA (Committee for Higher Education Librarians of South Africa), SCONUL's equivalent body in South Africa. A wonderful opportunity and not one I was likely to turn down, though the event did clash with SCONUL's own conference in Newcastle upon Tyne!

The conference was planned to focus on two themes in parallel:

- quality assurance in higher education with sub themes of managing quality assurance, national reviews, surveys, Institutional Audits, Programme Reviews, and community engagement;
- quality assurance and quality management in higher education libraries.

I was invited to present a keynote paper to the whole conference (a challenging prospect!), as well as lead a workshop for the library strand.

A key event in South African higher education was the Higher Education Act of 1997, which aimed to regulate higher education and which led to the establishment of a Council on Higher Education and provision for the establishment,

governance and funding of public higher education institutions, with related quality assurance mechanisms. HEQC (Higher Education Quality Committee), a sub committee of the Council on Higher Education, was set up with a mandate to promote quality assurance, audit quality assurance mechanisms and accredit programmes of higher education. These were significant changes for South African higher education institutions, which had not been subject to the same kind of funding and quality assurance processes we have grown used to over a prolonged period in the UK. Allied to the whole agenda of transformation in South Africa, this has represented a very significant change agenda for South African universities and their library services.

The South African university sector is much smaller than the UK and, following some recent mergers of institutions, there are only 16 universities and 6 universities of technology. CHELSA is therefore also a much smaller body than SCONUL with currently only volunteer input.

The conference was attended by approximately 170 delegates, including approximately 60 library staff, mostly from South Africa, but with representation from other African countries and a small number of international delegates. With new Institutional Audit processes having only been recently introduced (very similar to those in England), the conference organisers from FOTIM and CHELSA were keen to get perspectives from other countries.

In my keynote paper, *Engaging with key stakeholders: the UK experience of quality assurance of learning resources*, I provided an overview of SCONUL's past and current activities in this important area. Since 1993, SCONUL has worked closely with its ICT partner body UCISA (Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association) to respond to the need for engagement with quality assurance bodies in the UK, particularly the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency), and to provide practical help and advice to SCONUL and UCISA members. I described the wide ranging and successful activities of the SCONUL Working Group on Quality Assurance, which has aimed to engage with these key stakeholders. This has included in depth liaison with the QAA and other bodies to ensure that there is appropriate emphasis on quality processes in services as well as resources and that auditors and reviewers are appropriately trained so that they can fully understand the nature and role of library and ICT services.

I highlighted the benefits that have resulted from the production of aide-memoires for auditors and reviewers, as well as guidelines for learning resources and academic staff, which have been agreed or endorsed by the QAA or its predecessors. Documents produced by the Working Group have included:

- Aide-memoire for assessors when evaluating library and computing services (for Teaching Quality Assessment, produced in 1996)
- Aide memoire for reviewers evaluating learning resources (for Academic Review, produced in 2003)
- Guidelines for QAA Institutional Audit in England (produced in 2004).

A more recent development has been the collection of documentation to help SCONUL members in their preparation for quality assurance events. These documents, held in a password protected area on the Working Group's website, have included narrative descriptions of members' experiences of events and examples of documents produced by institutions for Institutional Audit and Collaborative Audit in England, and Institutional Review in Scotland and Wales.

In the workshop I led later that day, attended mostly by library staff, I helped the delegates develop the content for some initial guidelines for librarians to use with their own staff and with academic staff when preparing for Institutional Audit. CHELSA will develop this work for use across the sector.

The library strand of the conference was well attended and papers concentrated on a number of topic areas:

- the role of CHELSA in the quality assurance of higher education libraries in South Africa
- practical experience of quality management frameworks used in libraries;
- the role of the library in the preparation for institutional audit and compiling the library section in the institutional portfolio
- practical experience with the application of LibQUAL in libraries.

There was a particular emphasis on the use of LibQUAL in South African university libraries and, given the relatively small size of the sector, some interest in using the approach in all universities to help with benchmarking.

My attendance at the conference also highlighted some further potential areas for SCONUL-CHELSEA collaboration, particularly for the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Working Groups in the areas of providing guidelines for institutions preparing for quality assurance visits and the application of LibQUAL.

I would like to record my thanks to CHELSEA, and particularly Joyce Gozo, for their hospitality and for funding my attendance at the conference including travel. It was a very worthwhile experience and has pointed the way for some further SCONUL-CHELSEA collaboration. I even began to accept the very early start to the conference day in South Africa, with registration beginning at 7.30 am!

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## **All change: delivering library services to disabled students in a changing context**

**CLAUD summer conference 2006,  
University of Gloucestershire,  
Park Campus, Cheltenham,  
Friday 14 July 2006**

Mary Bird, Emily Heath and Alice Hine

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CLAUD is a consortium of librarians in higher education networking to improve library access for disabled users in southern and south western England. In its well-established annual summer conference series, CLAUD offers a forum for finding practical solutions to the difficulties involved in providing truly accessible library services. The 2006 annual conference on 14 July also served as a celebration of CLAUD's 10th birthday. The conference provided an opportunity to assess the current situation in library services for disabled users. Issues to be addressed during a day of stimulating talks and discussions were what disabled users want from libraries and how libraries can match provision to their needs, and the emerging national context of CLAUD's work in terms of legislation and policy.

During the last ten years several factors have influenced library provision to disabled students in higher education. As well as a vast increase in student numbers and the explosion in electronic information, legislation now means that modifications that were once voluntary are now required by law. The challenge for higher education libraries is to find out what services and accessibility needs disabled students have and to ensure that these needs are met.

## What students want from us - the learning needs of disabled users

Andrew Bradley

The first talk of the day was given by Dr Andrew Bradley, a senior lecturer in events management and sports tourism at the University of Gloucestershire, who has written extensively on disabled students' experiences of teaching and learning in higher education. His talk addressed the learning needs of disabled users by asking what they want from libraries, providing a useful overview of the current situation. The problem to be addressed in higher education is that disabled students start out with the same qualifications and aspirations as other students, but then encounter more barriers to learning, therefore achieving poorer outcomes in terms of degree classification. In the academic year 2005-6 there were 26,000 disabled students in higher education, but this is an understatement because it is based on self-assessment: only those students who choose to disclose their disability are included in the count.<sup>1</sup> Healey *et al* have estimated that as many as 10% of students in higher education may have a disability.<sup>2</sup> Andrew explained that the key to supporting disabled students is to concentrate on the barriers that they face in education, emphasising that the higher education experience extends outside the lecture theatre to libraries and other services. Leyser *et al.* have noted that the progress of students with disabilities in higher education is affected by the attitudes and willingness of academic and support staff to provide accommodations.<sup>3</sup> It may be easy to make changes to buildings and services but the most important thing is to change the attitudes of staff.

Many studies of disabled students in higher education have not involved enough actual student experience to draw informed conclusions. Universities and colleges now have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments in advance to meet the needs of disabled students and these must be based on informed evidence. Andrew has been carrying out a study to find out what disabled students want from university services. A total of 2572 questionnaires were sent to disabled students at four UK universities, and 1172 were returned. The focus was on the barriers they had faced, and what steps had been taken to reduce these barriers. The findings showed significant variation in student experience. Variation depended on individual disabilities, although there was also variation amongst students with similar disabilities. Experience also depended on the subject studied and the institution.

In the section on the helpfulness of the staff in university libraries, there was the greatest number of neutral responses. This could be interpreted in several ways. It could indicate that students sometimes find library staff helpful, or that they do not use the library. If this is the case, the reasons need to be examined. Andrew commented that in his experience a lot of disabled students are petrified of using university libraries, which are seen as containing thousands of books written in impenetrable language. The library is an essential part of university life and the barriers facing disabled students need to be broken down.

The questionnaire also highlighted the difficulties faced by disabled students in other areas of university life, including lectures and assignments. The project was now being further developed and moving to a qualitative model of research. The questionnaire provided useful information but the best way to find out about students' experiences is by talking to them and experiencing what they experience. Individual discussion with disabled students is essential so that assumptions are not made about groups of students with similar impairments. The key finding of the project was the importance of a highly flexible approach to provision for disabled students, because of the variation in student experience. Because not all disabled students are the same, many different solutions to the barriers faced are needed. Andrew concluded that the idea of a group of 'disabled students' should be abandoned in favour of recognising the 'continuum of learner difference', the idea being that the difficulties faced by disabled students are no different to the difficulties faced by everyone else. The response to this idea was that groups of disabled people have fought long and hard for recognition, and so it is important to recognise their needs. The main message from this talk was the need for a flexible approach, and that we should move away from writing policy towards implementing adjustments that will benefit all students. Much of the good practice for disabled students is good practice for everyone.

## Educating librarians to meet the needs of disabled users

Jacqueline Chelin

Jacqueline Chelin, deputy librarian and joint programme leader for the MSc in information and library management at the University of the West of England (UWE), was the second speaker, giving a talk on 'Educating librarians to meet the needs of disabled users'. Appropriately for a con-

ference on disability, Jackie began by asking us if we could all see and hear her. Having confirmed this, she described her work collaborating with CLAUD on the planning of UWE's new MSc programme in information and library management. As the joint programme leader for the MSc, and having a strong interest in issues relating to disability, Jackie wanted to embed disability issues into the MSc curriculum. The CLAUD steering group helped her to do so by giving advice on module specifications. The idea was to develop a set of supporting materials to underpin a range of modules, direct students to relevant publications and websites, utilize practitioner documents such as policies, procedures and guidelines and encourage students to add their own useful findings to the resource base.

It was also important for Jackie that a problem-based approach was taken: she gave the audience some background to this approach, which aims to bridge the gap between theory and real-world practice, and is designed to integrate subject knowledge in order to solve particular problems. Rather than being passive learners, students become active problem solvers who can take responsibility for their learning. Jackie commented how library managers often mention that students emerge from library schools not trained to do anything in particular. The library schools' answer to this is that they are educators rather than trainers. Jackie sees the problem-based approach as being one that could help library schools educate their students whilst giving them insights into real-world practice.

As an example of this, she gave us information on the 'LIMES' (Library Information Management Employability Skills) project, which is a two-year project partnership between Loughborough University, Liverpool John Moores University, and the University of the West of England. The project partners are currently identifying perceived gaps in the necessary skills of library school graduates. UWE is contracted to help produce learning materials for library schools to share. The aim is that a database of new learning and teaching materials will be created and hosted on a website for library and information departments, in order to enhance the employability of their graduates.

To give us a taste of developing module specifications, Jackie asked us to divide into groups and carry out an activity involving looking through some abbreviated example module specifications, and then identifying any issues relating to disability that could be addressed in the teaching or

learning for the module. After the group feedback Jackie went on to discuss a trial project she had carried out with current UWE students on the MSc course, involving developing a 'learning object' Word document and asking students to contribute ideas on disability issues within discussion groups. She was honest about difficulties the project faced, such as students commenting that they felt they had a lack of time to contribute to the learning unit, and would have preferred it to be an assessed piece of work. In the future Jackie hopes to continue to make improvements to the MSc course, widening out investigation of disability issues into as many modules as possible.

### **The impact of the disability equality duty on our services to users**

*Deb Viney*

Deb Viney, diversity adviser for the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, gave an interesting and animated presentation outlining the issues surrounding the disability equality duty (DED) and its impact within the library environment. The new duty was introduced in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and will come into force in December 2006.<sup>4</sup> She began by giving a comprehensive overview of the key aspects of the General DED and the intent behind this new legislation. The emphasis is on making organisations more proactive, rather than reactive, and the legislation applies to disabled students, staff and visitors. Deb stressed the 'need for organisations to seek ways to engage disabled people, in order to obtain their views about service developments'. She outlined the aspects of the Specific DED, emphasising that the main element of this will be the requirement to produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and associated action plan. It was also stressed that the first DES for the period 2007-2009 must be published by 4 December 2006. Deb went on to discuss what institutions must do when producing their DES. There is a need to involve disabled people in producing the scheme and developing the action plan, and institutions need to identify how they will gather and analyse evidence to inform their actions and track progress. Ways to assess the impact of their existing and proposed activities on disabled people also need to be considered.

Deb then outlined the effects of this new legislation on service to library users. There is a need for any feedback to be published with an explanation of planned responses to address the issues raised. The necessity for increased monitoring of disabled library users and of their opinions along with an



'increased attentiveness to potential harassment of and prejudice about disabled people' was also emphasised. She went on to highlight the need for a programme of activities designed to encourage positive attitudes to disabled people, emphasising the importance of good communication. The different ways in which library staff can help their institution to meet its general DED and how library staff can contribute to the development of its DES and its action plan were discussed at length. This part of the presentation covered various issues revolving around the review of policies, procedures and practices to help meet the DED, such as training to ensure that staff display positive attitudes towards disabled people, have a broad understanding of their needs and challenge inappropriate attitudes. Also important is user feedback and surveys amongst staff and library users regarding disability issues. Key points regarding staff contributions to the DES and its action plan included the importance of on-going engagement of disabled students, the involvement of disabled staff and anticipating future issues.

To conclude, Deb touched briefly on several other library related issues. These included the developments in services for people with print impairments, such as electronic study packs, the introduction of DAISY formats (Digitally Accessible Information Systems), the development of other electronic resources, and the need to develop national and international catalogues of such resources. The need for all library staff with user contact to have at least a general familiarity with any available assistive technology devices was emphasised, as was the importance of library publicity materials to be honest about any physical access limitations and the adjustments which address those limitations (e.g. book fetching from inaccessible areas). Finally, it is important to recognise that some students have a particular need for quiet study space, and libraries are often the quietest area in which to locate such facilities.

### **The place of disability work in the new era of diversity and equality**

*Kate Devlin*

In the final session of the day, Kate Devlin, diversity and equality manager at the University of Exeter, gave a stimulating and thought-provoking presentation on some of the disability issues within the diversity and equality agenda. First impressions of Kate Devlin were of an energetic lady with a devilishly good sense of humour. By the time Kate had finished talking, this impression remained, but with an added sense of her passion

and commitment to preventing discrimination against disabled people, or indeed any marginalised group.

Kate began by questioning how services for disabled students fit in to the wider context. She outlined the move in term usage from 'equal opportunities' to 'equality and diversity' and briefly discussed some of the findings from the Equalities Review Interim Report<sup>5</sup>. To make us think about the many different marginalised groups in society, Kate asked us to form groups and identify, writing our lists down on flipchart paper, all the groups who experience discrimination in Britain today. Afterwards our flipcharts were hung up and lists compared, with Kate picking out certain groups to tell us relevant facts about the discrimination they suffer, such as that employment possibilities plummet for women after having children. More unexpected groups we identified as discriminated against included hoodie wearers, estate agents, cold callers and librarians!

Kate went on to make the serious point that people from each one of our many categories – be they Muslim, black, a mother or elderly – could also be disabled. People do not straightforwardly fit into boxes but rather have multiple identities, and therefore should be treated and listened to as individuals – experiences of discrimination vary widely, depending on a person's impairment. She also discussed the issue of removing the 'disability' label, brought up earlier in the day by Andrew Bradley, arguing that disabled people have fought long and hard to have their needs and views heard and that taking this identifying label away could undo this progress.

The importance of communication was a theme highlighted throughout the day. It is important to communicate with people in order to understand more about their needs – and subsequently better support these needs. Kate sees the main barriers to progress concerning disability issues as being social attitudes and a failure to take account of such individual requirements. No one knows better than the individual what they need, and therefore we must listen and consult with them before making policies. This is something we, as information professionals, can all try our best to do.

The conference was an enjoyable and informative day, giving delegates the opportunity to learn about the current issues for libraries and how these fit into the wider context of disability issues. There was also plenty of opportunity for discus-

sion and to share ideas with colleagues. Throughout the day several themes emerged to illustrate the major issues for libraries providing services to disabled students. It is clear that good communication is vital, both to learn more about disabled students' needs from their own experiences, and also to solicit feedback from students to ensure that their needs are being met. Good communication is also necessary to inform students about the support available. It is very important to listen to the individual needs of disabled students, avoiding making assumptions about people because you happen to know they have a disability. Disabled students have diverse needs and experiences of higher education and therefore a flexible approach to service provision is essential. Finally, the need for well-trained staff with a good understanding of disability issues and a positive attitude is one of the best ways to provide a good service to disabled people.

Conference presentations will be available on the CLAUD website: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/claude>

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- 2 M. Healey, A. Jenkins, J. Leach, and C. Roberts, 'Issues in providing learning support for disabled students undertaking fieldwork and related activities' (Cheltenham, Geography Discipline Network, University of Gloucestershire) Available at: <http://www.glos.ac.uk/gdn/disabil/overview/> (Accessed 9 August 2006)
- 3 Y. Leyser, S. Vogel, S. Wyland, A. Brulle, V. Sharoni, and G. Vogel, 'Students with disabilities in higher education: perspectives of American and Israeli faculty members' *International education*, 29(2), 47-67
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- 5 The Equalities Review: Interim Report for Consultation. Available at: [http://www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk/publications/interim\\_report.aspx](http://www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk/publications/interim_report.aspx) (Accessed 10 August 2006)

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# New publication by university library & learning services, Northumbria University

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Planning & Research Note No.193 *Review of library Christmas opening*  
2005 (C Willoughby)

Planning & Research Note No.194 *Learning café survey (City campus library, Coach Lane campus library & Lipman)* (P Vardy & C Willoughby)

Copies are available at <http://northumbria.ac.uk/sd/central/library/stats/survey/prn191-200/?view=Standard>

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# Online Information Conference

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**Note! Discount of 25% for SCONUL members who book as a full delegate by 3 November 15% thereafter.**

This year's **Online Information Conference** runs from 28 to 30 November 2006 at Olympia, London. Thomas A. Stewart, editor and managing director of the *Harvard Business Review*, and a pioneer in the field of intellectual capital is to host the opening keynote address.

Prior to joining *HBR*, he was editorial director of *Business 2.0* and a member of the board of editors of *Fortune*. In a series of *Fortune* articles, he pioneered the field of intellectual capital, which led to his groundbreaking 1997 book, *Intellectual capital: the new wealth of organizations*. His second book, *The wealth of knowledge: intellectual capital and the twenty-first century organization*, published early in 2002, reveals how today's companies are applying the concept of intellectual capital into day-to-day operations to dramatically increase their success in the marketplace.

This year's Online Information Conference will see Stewart opening the programme with a keynote address entitled: *'Ideas, creativity and knowledge are capital: everything else is just money now.'* During the session, Stewart will analyse the four pillars of the knowledge economy:

- knowledge is what we buy and sell
- knowledge assets separate winners from the also rans
- knowledge defines our work and describes what we do
- the returns to knowledge should exceed the returns to any other investment.

The Online Information Conference features over 30 sessions from over 90 experts. Themes for this year include: the impact of information on 21<sup>st</sup> century organisations; collaboration and communities; information discovery; enterprise search; information developments and China; new technologies; and professional development.

One of the hot topics for librarians and information suppliers is Web 2.0. Day one of the conference also features an *'Information search, discovery and exploitation'* track, which will include a session dedicated to Web 2.0. In addition, the conference will cover topics such as taxonomies and metadata, intranet developments, publishing and library developments, enterprise search, and winning strategies for the 21st century information professional.

The conference also hosts the fourth annual **International Information Industry Awards**, which take place on 29 November 2006 at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London.

Running alongside Online Information this year is a new show, **Information Management Solutions 2006**. IMS focuses on the business applications and benefits of available technology, not on the technical infrastructure of information management. The event will provide a forum for professionals to find unlimited, relevant advice, educational content and solutions under one roof.

For more information, or to view the conference programme in full, please visit: [www.online-information.co.uk/conference](http://www.online-information.co.uk/conference).

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# Advice for authors

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*SCONUL Focus* is the journal of SCONUL, the Society of College, National and University Libraries. It aims to bring together articles, reports and news stories from practitioners in order to generate debate and promote good practice in the national libraries and the university and higher education college sector.

Contributions are welcomed from colleagues in all fields and at all levels: we merely request that the items contributed are concise, informative, practical and (above all!) worth reading.

Although we do not make strict stipulations about length we do recommend authors to consult a recent issue of *SCONUL Focus* to see if their approach seems in keeping with other published pieces.

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email: [sconul@sconul.ac.uk](mailto:sconul@sconul.ac.uk). An online version can be found via [www.sconul.ac.uk](http://www.sconul.ac.uk).

Items should be submitted (preferably) via email or on disk to your contact on the Editorial Board or Antony Brewerton ([awbrewerton@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:awbrewerton@brookes.ac.uk)).

As well as text, we are also keen to publish images and would especially like to include author photos where possible. Please either send prints or digital photographs (resolution 300 dpi or above) to your contact on the Editorial Board.

It is helpful if authors follow our house style when submitting their articles:

- Spelling in '-ise' etc. is preferred to '-ize'.
- Capitalisation is ruthlessly minimal. In individual libraries it is usual to refer to 'the Library', 'the University', 'the College' etc. Please resist this in our newsletter: unless there is any ambiguity use 'the library' etc.
- Spell out acronyms at their first occurrence. Avoid 'HE' for 'higher education', which we prefer to write in full (our overseas readers may be unfamiliar with the abbreviation HE).
- Please use single quotation marks, not double.
- Web addresses should be written in full and –where possible– be underlined for purposes of clarity.
- References should appear as numbered footnotes at the end of the article, in the following forms (we prefer not to reverse surnames and initials)

1 A.N.Author, *Title of book*, Place: Publisher, 2000, pp 23-6

2 P.B.Writer, 'Title of chapter or article', in Q.V.Editor, ed., *Interesting articles about libraries*, Place: Publisher, 2000, pp 262-3

3 B.M.Researcher, 'Title of article', *Journal of pseudodocumentalism*, 70 (2), 1989, pp 117-20

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We look forward to hearing from you.

