Information Services
Library Strategy 2015 to 2018

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www.city.ac.uk/library
1. Purpose of our Library Strategy

The core purpose for developing a Library Strategy is to ensure there is a clear relationship between investment decisions in the Library Services and the University’s overall strategy, goals and objectives.

The Strategic Plan for the University states the following: “We will ensure that we provide our staff with support and resources that are commensurate with those of a leading University.”

In particular, we will:

- “Ensure that our library collections and the way in which they can be accessed reflect our academic needs and aspirations.”
- “Ensure that our physical library space is developed to reflect the changing approaches to collaborative work and the needs of our students and staff.”

All our Library Services, new developments and behaviours must be aligned to fulfil these goals.
2. Drivers for Change

A number of drivers have led to a need for Information Services to review the services they currently offer, the quality of service and the methods of delivery. These are:

- A newly established Directorate who are fully aware of the need to continually review service demands and their capacity to deliver.
- The University Strategic Plan which is changing priorities and focus for improving the quality of education, research and enterprise.
- Current trends across the sector for using technologies to extend the reach of higher education, to personalise education and to engender the community spirit.
- Funding pressures requiring Professional Service departments to do more with less.
- Emerging technology innovations, many of which change traditional service models.
- The increasingly competitive nature of the Higher Education landscape.
- Utilising staff expertise in Information Literacy, Open Access Publishing, Information Management, Copyright and Digitisation to promote good practice across the University.

These drivers combined indicate a need to establish the pillars of continued improvement and innovative methods of service delivery.
In order to deliver excellent Library Services for the critical areas of research and education, a number of guiding principles have been established as follows:

- Library Services must maintain its efforts to refocus from operational back office activities to strategic value-adding services.
- Persistent streamlining of processes which are fully supported by technology to enable the unified management of print and digital collections.
- We will continue to strengthen relationships, to fully understand the needs of our diverse communities and to incorporate user feedback into the future development of our services and facilities.
- Enabling an infrastructure where users will have 24/7 access to our digital library services, available on a wide range of mobile devices throughout the year and 24/7 access to our physical library spaces during exam periods.
- We will maximise access to electronic collections, increase our capacity to support education and learning, and improve our capability for supporting and facilitating research.
Information Services is committed to providing a level of service that is considered “excellent” by its users. To meet this aspiration, our services will be delivered as follows:

- **Unambiguously:** Clearly publicised services which have been articulated, defined and agreed with our users.
- **On demand:** All business, education and research services will be appropriately accessible by authenticated University users.
- **Ubiquitously:** Appropriate services will be available from any internet connected device, mobile or otherwise.
- **Consistently:** Processes will be efficient and standardised with alignment to best practice frameworks. Regardless of location or affiliation, users will undertake the same (minimally obtrusive) steps to receive services.
- **User Driven:** Services must always be aligned to the needs of the institution.
- **Efficiently:** User enquiries will experience efficient and seamless access to expert support from wherever they are.
- **Inconspicuously:** Services will be enabled by technology that are inconspicuous to the user. Technology incidents should not impact service delivery.
- **Innovatively:** Library Services will deliver innovative services to support education, research and enterprise activities.
- **Personalised:** Library Services such as reading lists will be tailored to the needs of our users.

The following guidelines inform our management decisions:

- **User Focus:** We will acknowledge at all times that our primary objective is to service the needs and exceed the expectations of our users.
- **Best Value:** We should aim to be the best value provider of Library Services within our sector.
- **Simplicity:** Wherever possible we should reduce process complexity and therefore cost.
- **Alliances:** We will continue to form alliances, create value added partnerships, and enter consortia in inter-organisational physical and electronic operations.
- **Reorganisation:** In the event of reorganisation, our core operations, services, and communications will be able to adapt to the changes quickly and simply.
- **Competitive Advantage:** We aim for the Library Service to be a significant differentiator for the University.
- **Staff Dependence:** We should avoid over-dependence upon the expertise of individuals within the organisation by ensuring that knowledge is appropriately documented and shared.
- **Innovation:** We must systematically seek and exploit relevant sector trends to create a culture of regular exploration to ensure a constantly evolving Library Service.
5. The Evolving Organisation

The Library Services employs a variety of mechanisms to ensure continual evolution and adapts accordingly to the changes in user needs, technology and its staff.

- The Library has 3 service areas:
  - Technical services.
  - User Services.
  - Academic Services – across subject specialisms to support the Schools and their education and research curriculums.

- Library staff spaces are open plan to ensure sharing of best practice and enhancing cross team collaboration.

- Library staff offer a variety of skills, knowledge and expertise, such as licensing, digital management, and information literacy. They are also required to have a selection of transferable skills, such as project management and delivering excellent customer service both in person and virtually, through social media channels and other online mechanisms.

- Library staff network and learn from other libraries nationally and internationally, enabling our current Library services and spaces to be benchmarked against other libraries.

- We ensure our services and spaces are adapting in response to the changing requirements in academic programmes and learning outcomes.

- Our services change and adapt in accordance to the changes to research council requirements for open access publishing, open data and monitoring of HEFCE research requirements and its outputs.

- We strengthen working relationships and partnerships within the University as well as external to the University, such as our suppliers.
6. The Library Environment

6.1 Library Spaces (Physical & Digital)

The library environment offers a variety of spaces to our users:

- We manage our learning spaces to distinguish us from general University spaces.
- Our spaces are adaptive and responsive to the changing needs of students and their uses of our spaces.
- We monitor our physical spaces and work with the relevant stakeholders to ensure relevancy.
- As print collections decline we will review, evaluate and develop the physical spaces accordingly.
- We offer collaborative working spaces which are responsive and are adapted to meet the needs of our users, in line with changing teaching and learning styles.
- We consider and reshape our spaces according to the changing profile and needs of undergraduate and postgraduate students. We recognise the differing needs of these audiences and manage our spaces accordingly, such as individual study in silent areas, and collaborative working areas with a studious buzz.
- We offer a dedicated space for assistive technology facilities supporting users with accessibility needs.
- In partnership with our colleagues in IT we support and encourage users to bring their own devices.
- We anticipate a change in our role and engagement as we evolve to support e-learning.
- We seek to create spaces for library staff to support the development of cross team collaboration.

6.2 Library Technology

The technologies selected to support Library Services include:

- Library Management System to support acquisitions, cataloguing and the unified management of print and digital collections.
- Discovery system and content knowledge base to support e-resource management and resource discovery via CityLibrary Search.
- Reading list and digitisation systems to support Digital Copyright Management, the CLA submission and Reading Lists.
- Suite of web applications and software to enhance Library Services provision of online support and accessibility.
- Current research information system and digital repository software and services to support the City Research Online digital repository and research outputs of the University.
- Social media to promote our services and engage with users in a new and non-traditional Library spaces.
- Management Information Software, special designed for libraries to capture enquiry and instant chat data and provide tools to analyse enquiry trends, create a knowledgebase for FAQs, create interactive subject/course specific library guides and a bookings calendar to manage group and 1-2-1 teaching sessions and workshops.

Further details of technology enabled services are available in the IT Services Catalogue.
7. Authorisation

The Library Service Committee, a subgroup of the University's Executive Committee (ExCo), oversees the development of the Library Strategy, approve the Library Strategy document and any substantive changes to it.

8. Related Documents

- City Vision 2016
- City Strategic Plan 2012-2016
- IT Strategy
- City Education and Learning Strategy
- Library Operation Plan
- IT Services Catalogue
- City Open Access Policy
- Collection Development Policy

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