

## **LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014-2015**

Welcome to the fourth annual report for the Library Service at Ulster. This report reflects on the outcomes of operationalising the Library Services Strategy in its penultimate year.

The Library's vision statement is "To transform the experience of Library users through excellence in the provision and development of sustainable library services and resources". During the course of the 2014-2015 academic year the Library Service achieved a number of strategic ambitions in the context of enhancing the user experience in pursuit of delivering service excellence to support learning teaching and research at Ulster.

Given the importance of the timely delivery of projects and service improvements to the operationalisation of the Library Services Strategy, the University Librarian instigated an internal review of existing governance structures in this context to assess their effectiveness and fitness for purpose. As an outcome of the review, A Library Priorities Oversight Group (POG) was established as a Sub Group of the Library Management Team. This group takes responsibility for drawing up the annual programme of work to operationalise the Strategy, both in terms of assessing the resources required to deliver projects and the establishment of teams to progress and deliver projects linked to the operational plan. A Business Improvement Forum (BIF) was also established to capture ideas for business improvement from the Library staff perspective. This Forum will provide the space to explore ways in which suggestions for new services or improvements to existing services can support the implementation of the Library Services Strategy.

Communicating the value and importance of the Library Service to all stakeholders is critical to maintaining the Library's position as a core essential service which supports all aspects of academic life. Effective communication is also an essential element of responsive customer service; the Library is committed to delivering a responsive service culture where user opinion on the quality of, and satisfaction with service delivery is acknowledged through timely, transparent and accurate communication with all stakeholders.

In order to deliver on this strategic objective, the Library has introduced a communications framework to support internal and external communication. The Library website now details the various ways by which users can provide feedback on services and facilities and outlines the various communication channels employed by the Library to keep users informed of service updates and developments. The following web page, [Keeping Library User Informed](#), provides a focal point for users to access this information.

A companion webpage, [User feedback and actions](#), highlights the various ways in which the Library gathers feedback from users and the Library's response to customer feedback.

During the year the Library Service also partnered with the University's Marketing Unit to produce a promotional Library video for release on social media channels. The video is located on the [StudyatUlster](#) channel on Youtube and was developed with a view to supporting activities focussed on recruitment and promotional events. The University's internal staff communication channel, Insight, is now used regularly to promote Library

services to all members of staff. Short online surveys and promotional campaigns were employed by the User Services Team to capture feedback on specific aspects of service delivery or raise awareness of specific information resources such as eBooks. This approach has enabled in year service improvements and enhancements to be delivered for the benefit of all users.

## **The user experience**

The acquisition of a Resource Discovery Service has been a significant aspiration for the Library Service for a number of years. The Library's ongoing commitment to support users particularly in the context of enhancing the first year experience and supporting the transition to Higher Education were the primary motivators behind the selection and implementation of this service. The requirement to deliver value for money in terms of increasing the usage of electronic resources and demonstrate a positive impact on learning outcomes were also significant factors which influenced this decision.

This long awaited service enhancement, branded locally as USearch, was launched on Monday 8 September 2014 to coincide with the beginning of the academic year. The service is available on and off campus and can be accessed from the Library Homepage, the Portal and via the Library Services link on the VLE. The service delivers a Google-like single search interface to many of our electronic resources (e-journals and databases). It is the Library's intention to expand the range of information resources discoverable via USearch on an incremental basis. Related to this service enhancement, the Library Databases page has been updated with an icon to indicate those eResources that are indexed, fully or partly, by USearch. Consequently, users can now filter the databases page to display Faculty-specific resources or resources indexed by USearch.

Early uptake of the new service has been significant with 139,629 accesses and 72,824 full text downloads in the 2014-15 academic year.

In tandem with this major enhancement in terms of information discovery, the Library has switched to a new EBSCO supplier interface for ease of access to eJournals. In keeping with institutional rebranding the 'UUFindit' button has been replaced with 'UFindit' when searching for full-text availability of articles.

Following the successful introduction of a new user-focussed interface to the Library Home Page in the 2013/14 academic year, the Library Service has embarked on a complete review of all website content to ensure accuracy, improve access and remove duplication of content. A web content policy has been developed as a first step to rationalising content. The policy outlines a formal business process for recording ownership of content along with specific dates for review of content.

The Library is committed to providing a simple and convenient route to assist users with payment for Library services and in keeping with this, an ePayments facility for Library charges was introduced in February 2015. This service enhancement was frequently requested by users and uptake has been significant during the first year of implementation.

The replacement of the Library's bespoke online Document Delivery request form has delivered a welcome service enhancement for all Library users and in particular, research active staff and students who are the highest users of this facility. A pilot service was

initiated in Semester 1 of the 2014/15 academic year whereby all users were given the choice of continuing with the print-based service or using the enhanced online facility for the duration of the pilot project. Service enhancements included:

- The collection of document delivery book requests from the users Library of choice where possible
- A single electronic application form for book or journal article requests
- Integration of the electronic request form with the Library catalogue
- A tick box agreement for the copyright declaration
- All journal article requests to be delivered via Secure Electronic Delivery (SED) to the user's desktop where possible

During the pilot period, 631 Document Delivery requests were submitted, 220 Book requests and 411 journal article requests. An analysis of the requests highlighted a shift towards Secure Electronic Delivery (SED) of journal articles with approximately half of all such requests being satisfied using this cost-effective method of e-source and supply. At an average cost of £5 per request, this represents the most cost efficient supply model offered by the British Library with some requests being satisfied within hours of receipt of request from Ulster University Library. This has effected an overall reduction in the average cost per request.

A post pilot user satisfaction survey was conducted during the week beginning 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. Feedback was extremely positive with the majority of users preferring the benefits of the new service with SED.

The full integration of this service has delivered on two strategic objectives for the Library. The early adoption and cultural shift towards use of the enhanced online request facility and the significant increase in the number of journal article requests delivered via Secure Electronic Delivery (SED) has enhanced the user experience through the delivery of a personalised electronic service and has enabled the Library to deliver the service more efficiently and achieve value for money.

## **The Digital Library**

An integral element of the Library Services Strategy is the commitment to deliver a significant increase in the volume and multiplicity of resources held in electronic format. The proportion of journal holdings held electronically, specifically, legacy journal collections has been a specific focus of attention in the 2014-2015 academic year. A significant staff resource has been directed to a large piece of work to begin the process of checking catalogue records for print journal holdings for accuracy prior to publishers being contacted to obtain quotes for conversion from print to e format where possible. An incremental, prioritised approach to delivering this strategic objective will be necessary to remain within existing budgetary constraints.

The Library is also committed to delivering an increase in the proportion of new book titles purchased as eBooks where available, specifically in relation to the Required Reading element of module reading lists.

The use of eResources continues to grow at Ulster, the most recent Sconul data for 2013-2014 shows a 42% increase in eBook section downloads from the previous year with

1,241,610 downloads in 2013/14 compared to 842,035 in 2012/3. Journal article downloads are also high with a figure of 1,331,819 recorded for 2013/14 academic year.

To support the upward trend in demand for eResources and in the spirit of the communications framework, the Library promoted the availability of eBook services through a co-ordinated use of social media, plasma display screens and the Library Home Page. The activity took place during the first week of December and focussed on specific Faculty Resources each day. User were advised on the advantages of using eBooks and were directed to model examples of eBooks so that the impact of the promotion could be accurately assessed. The promotion delivered an increased awareness and uptake of underused eBooks.

Following an evaluation and review of current subscriptions to electronic databases, the following resources were added to the Library's portfolio in support of learning, teaching and research at Ulster in the 2014/15 academic year:

<b>a-n: The Artist's Information Company</b>	Non-profit company highlighting the role of visual artists in society and which supports them by widening access to professional information. Contains critical & practical resources covering applied art, art history, cultural policy, & fine arts.
<b>ArtSource</b> Upgrade to an existing resource	Covers subjects from fine, decorative & commercial art to architecture & architectural design. With detailed indexing & abstracts and full-text for an array of journals (750+ full-text), books (220+ full-text) & more. Includes a 63000+ image collection.
<b>Early European Books, parts 1-4</b>	EEB is long-term project to create a growing digital library of early books printed in continental Europe from the period 1450-1700.
<b>ELexicons</b>	Online dictionary of typography which includes Typography, Graphic Design, Graphic Art, Illustration & Lettering.
<b>ProQuest Social Sciences Premium Collection</b> Upgrade to existing resource	Index and full text databases on the social sciences, including politics, sociology, education and criminal justice.
<b>ProQuest SciTech Collection</b> Upgrade to existing resource	Article records, deep indexing and full text covering both technological and natural sciences.
<b>ProQuest Art, Design and Architecture Collection</b> Upgrade to existing resource	Current and comprehensive indexing for fine art, art history, architecture, design and applied arts.
<b>The Purple Guide</b>	The Purple Guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at Music and Other Events details the practices and issues that need to be

	considered when events are being planned. The contents highlight legal criteria and non-legislative good practice.
<b>Vogue Archive</b>	Entire run of Vogue (US edition), reproduced in high-resolution colour pages. Preserves the work of the greatest fashion designers, stylists & photographers and is a unique record of fashion, culture & society from the dawn of the modern era.

**Appendix 1** provides a full breakdown of Library expenditure on Information resources for the 2014-2015 academic year.

### **Support for teaching, learning, research, innovation and administration**

As agreed at LISASC in May 2014, the Library initiated a pilot of revised opening hours from semester one of the 2014-15 academic year. It was agreed that the Library would close at 9pm, Monday to Thursday during the academic semester with extended opening provided to support the examination periods in both semesters. Staff hours have been redirected to support and enhance the user experience by focusing on developing and improving high demand services for library users such as eResource support and the development of strategic initiatives such as roving support. Staff support was also available to enhance the user experience in the context of the delivery of Induction and Information Skills training.

As a step-change towards implementing a more personalised user service delivery model, mobile technology was introduced to provide roving support during the Induction period. A total of 178 hours of roving support was delivered across all campus libraries across both semesters.

Work is also at a developmental stage to use mobile technology to further improve the quality of service provided to library users with the purchase of Soprano, a cloud-based application, which enables access to the Library's Management System from a tablet or mobile device with internet access. With Soprano in their hands, Library staff will be able to issue and return items, make reservations, register new users, and answer enquiries from any location. The Soprano module will also enable a suite of innovative user services such as Click and Collect and Pick Lists of items that have been reserved by users, these services are currently at the scoping stage.

The importance of Information Literacy as a life-wide and employability skill cannot be overestimated. To this end, the Library delivered an Information Literacy Strategy (2014/15 – 2015/16) to formalise and contextualise the significant contribution that the Library makes as a key enabler of Ulster's Corporate Plan in tandem with the Learning and Teaching, Widening Participation and Employability and Lifelong Learning strategies. The full Strategy document can be consulted online at :

[http://library.ulster.ac.uk/info/information\\_literacy\\_strategy.pdf](http://library.ulster.ac.uk/info/information_literacy_strategy.pdf)

The Information Literacy Strategy was operationalised in 2014-2015 with an action plan which focussed on the promotion and integration of Information Literacy into all academic programmes. As a precursor to this, Information Literacy provision across all programmes was audited to identify and address gaps; a portfolio of pre-arranged drop-in sessions was organised to address specific information literacy competencies such as Harvard

Referencing, using Refworks bibliographic management software, and the delivery of training sessions on bibliometrics.

The delivery of induction is a core element of the Information Literacy Strategy. During the 2014-2015 academic year, Library Induction (including ICT and Reprographic Services) was delivered for a total of 6 weeks across semesters one and two. A LibGuide to support the Induction process has been prepared and is available from the Library Home Page on the A-Z subject listing at: <http://guides.library.ulster.ac.uk/induction>

The following information is derived from the data which has been collated following attendance at a pre-arranged Library induction or subject specific information skills training session which included an element of induction.

- 6532 students attended an induction session
- 13,792 students attended a subject-specific information skills session
- 2014 information skills sessions were planned and delivered
- 1,914.36 staff hours were committed to supporting Information Literacy, (1570.5 hours for planned delivery, 343.86 hours of informal support)
- 9 sessions were delivered specifically to support International students, 399 students attended

**Appendix 2, tables 1 and 2** provides a breakdown by Faculty and campus of attendance at Induction and subject-specific information skills sessions in the 2014-2015 academic year.

## **Widening Participation and Access Initiatives**

The Library continues to collaborate with academic schools and colleagues in Employability and Marketing to promote the Library Service and support student recruitment initiatives at Ulster. During the course of the academic year, Library staff hosted tours and promotional events for a total of 1142 attendees at Open Days and Faculty specific events. These events provide a welcome opportunity for Library staff to promote the high levels of Library support offered to all Ulster students to help them to succeed with their academic studies.

Support is also ongoing for colleagues and students based in Partner Institutions both locally and nationally. The Head of Customer Focus and Business Support works closely with the Collaborative Partnerships Forum and Subject Partnership Managers to provide advice and support to colleagues and library users on all aspects of library provision in this area. In this respect, the Head of Customer Focus and Business Support continues to meet with colleagues from Partner Institutions on a bi-annual basis. Mr Ihar Ivanou, the new Head of Learning Resources at QAHE spent two days in the Library at Ulster on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2014. A programme of meetings was arranged to include meeting with colleagues in the International Office. Mr Ivanou was given a full overview of the University Library and an understanding of how the various operational aspects of the service fit together to deliver a seamless information service to users. The visit also provided an opportunity to highlight forthcoming service developments.

## **Research support**

Given the centrality of the role that the Library plays in supporting all aspects of university life, the Library has directed a considerable resource towards refocussing library support to operationalise the strategic objective of embedding Library Services in support of research activity.

As a result of a partnership approach between the University Librarian and the Administrative Manager (Research Policy), a revised model of support has been agreed based on the recommendations of the Library Research Working Group. Going forward, Library support will focus on pro-active engagement and collaboration with research active staff to include:

- Engagement with Research Institutes to deliver information sessions of interest to researchers e.g. advice on early career publishing.
- The provision of on-demand support sessions based on a scaffolding approach to skills development
- A developmental approach to the delivery of in-depth bibliometric support
- Willingness to contribute to and assist with scholarly output where the competencies of professional library staff are required
- A commitment to review library space to provide, where possible, space for independent study and research.

The professional expertise of library staff will also be used to provide enhanced support for disseminating Ulster's research output through the creation and management of metadata to international standards and the efficient and effective use of discovery services, databases, and search engines to maximise the discoverability of Ulster's research output. This will help to raise Ulster's external research profile and increase the impact of research output.

The Library has also developed a LibGuide to provide institutional support for Open Access. This is a shared initiative with content being contributed by members of the Library Subject Support Team and colleagues in the Research Office.

In recognition of the strength of the Library's position to avail of membership agreements or discounted Article Processing Charges (APCs) in the context of existing journal subscriptions and deals, the Library has also assumed responsibility for the management of the payment of APCs from the RCUK block grant.

## **Special Collections**

For the first time, the Library has produced a Strategy for Special Collections and Rare Books at Ulster. The Strategy and associated action plan sets out the Library priorities in relation to the curation, digitisation and promotion of the collections to fully exploit these important cultural assets.

In parallel with this, a Special Collections LibGuide has been developed In order to promote the collections both internally and to the external research community, and can be viewed at: <http://guides.library.ulster.ac.uk/specialcollections>

The Library was delighted to host a visit from the Right Reverend Bishop Ken Goode, accompanied by members of the Diocesan Finance Committee and the Diocesan Council on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015 to observe the Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Library in situ at the Magee campus. Frank Reynolds and Fionnuala Carlin delivered presentations



highlighting a number of significant items held in the collection and outlining the education and outreach work that has been carried out to date. In the context of promoting the collection, the Library has loaned two items to the Museum Service of Derry City and Strabane District Council to appear in the Ulster Plantation exhibition at the Guildhall.

## **Staff Training and Development**

The LibQUAL+® user perception survey highlighted the importance of high quality customer service in the Library at Ulster and affirmed that library staff are highly valued by users.

In order to maintain this high standard of customer care, a Library-wide approach to delivering Service Excellence training was initiated as part of the ongoing programme of training and support for staff, a half-day course was developed by Campus Library Managers (CLMs) in conjunction with Staff Development and was rolled out across all campus Libraries from March 2015 onwards. The objective was to raise awareness of a variety of approaches to improve the experience of library users through front-of-house services. The course was practical in nature and included elements of active learning and participation. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. The course content will be made available within a Library support area on the VLE as an aid to independent learning.

The excellence of the quality of service provided by Library staff continues to be recognised by users. Mr Mick Carragher, Assistant Librarian for ADBE and C&E was nominated for the UUSU award in the category of Excellence in Student Support, this encapsulates the ethos of service excellence that pervades the Library staff team at Ulster. External recognition of professional standards is a significant achievement and Niall Burns, Sub Librarian is to be congratulated on his award of Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy.

Library staff continue to engage with Staff Development to enhance and develop their skills base as roles continue to evolve and change. Several library staff have participated in coaching courses offered by Staff Development throughout the academic year. Coaching will play an important part in the Library's programme of CPPD activities, as we move forward with a solution-focussed approach to managing change in the context of the transition to the Greater Belfast Development and the introduction of new models of service delivery.

## **Library Space**

Library space and its configuration to support learning, teaching and research is a service that promotes user engagement and connectivity with the Library Service. A number of priorities in relation to improving library space were identified in the Library strategy implementation plan for 2014/15. This reflects the Library's response to feedback from the LibQUAL+® user perception survey where Library space was identified as an area where the Library is currently falling below the desired level of service for specific categories of users.

As a first step towards service improvement, the visibility and availability of Library Group Study Rooms has been promoted by publishing information on the Library Home Page that details the capacity and equipment available in each room, on a campus basis. This information is available on the Library website at [http://library.ulster.ac.uk/info/group\\_study\\_rms.php#studyrms](http://library.ulster.ac.uk/info/group_study_rms.php#studyrms)



The Library also utilised a donation from strike monies to enhance the user experience with the purchase of 10 LCD panels to replace outdated technology and add technology to Group Study Rooms where none was available.

As a first step towards meeting the University's aspiration to deliver a new technology-focussed campus in Greater Belfast, the Library at the Belfast campus transitioned into an interim location in Block BB on 20th July 2015. The move was predicated on two years of careful planning and preparation.

Whilst the transitional space is not a bespoke Library space, the environment is attractive and will provide a comparable user experience until the final Library move into Block BC. Communication is an essential element of the change process and communication around the Library move was admirably managed by Marion Khorshidian, Campus Library Manager and Stephen Milliken and David Crabtree, Information Assistants, based in the Library at Belfast. The team used Microsoft Publisher to develop an internal electronic newsletter to keep staff on all campuses informed about all aspects of the Library move. Such was the success of the electronic newsletter that it has been retained as an essential cross-campus Library communication tool for the duration of the GBD project.

The Library Service is committed to environmental initiatives and takes its responsibilities seriously in pursuit of sustainability objectives. In May 2015, the Library Team at Magee achieved the Bronze Award in the NUS Green Impact environmental initiative. The Library's Green Impact team was ably led by Una McGinley and the team achieved its award in a very tight time frame. The team are now looking forward to embarking on working towards achieving the Silver Award and raising the profile of this important aspect of University life.

The measure of satisfaction with any service provides an indicator of how well a service is delivering on and meeting the expectations of its users. I am delighted to report that the Library Service at Ulster scored 90% in the NSS survey for 2014/15, a score well above the sector average.

The Library Service has completed another busy year of service improvement and enhancement through its operational plan for 2014-2015. Great progress has been made towards modernising and future proofing the service with the delivery of a suite of high impact library services coupled with a highly valued, skilled, customer-focussed staff. I am looking forward to continuing this work as the Library moves into the final year of its current strategic plan.

Janet Peden  
June 2016

## Appendix 1

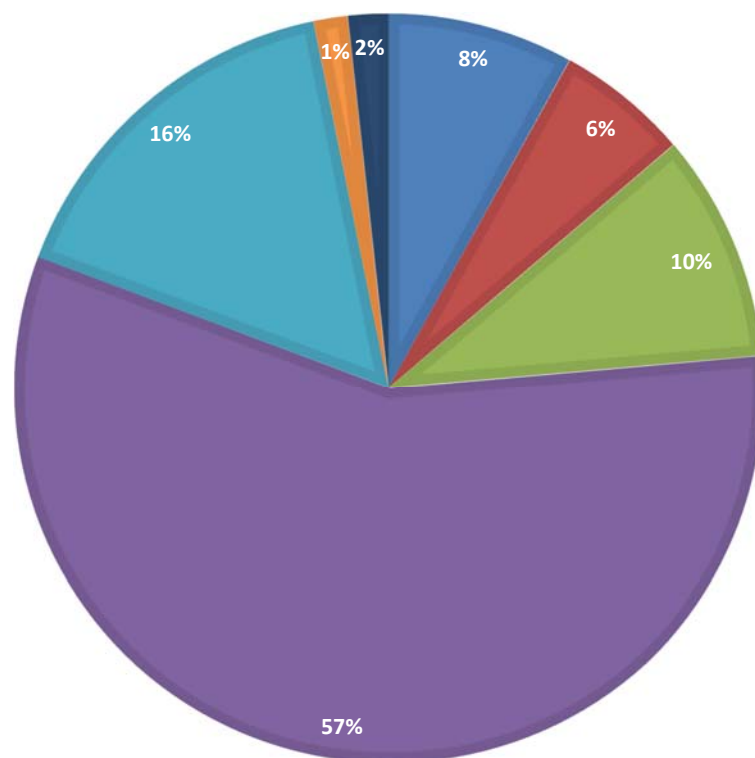
### Spending on Library materials and services, 2014/15

Based on Library outturn July 2015

Material/service	Expenditure £	Note
Books - print	268,897	
E-books	191,652	Includes both individual titles and collections
Journals - print	330,202	
E-journals	1,913,425	Includes full text databases, e-journal collections and individual titles
Databases	538,003	
Document Delivery	49,523	
Enabling resources	58,281	Reading list service Resource Discovery Service
Total	3,349,983	

## LIBRARY MATERIALS AND SERVICES 2014-15

■ Books - print   ■ E-books   ■ Journals - print   ■ E-journals  
■ Databases   ■ Document Delivery   ■ Enabling resources



## Appendix 2

**Table 1**

**Information Literacy Classes: Induction only**

Faculty	ADBE		Arts		C&E		L&HS		SS		UBS	
Campus	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended
<b>B</b>	23	570	3	59							4	99
<b>C</b>			24	213	8	82	33	542	5	92	4	199
<b>J</b>	12	358	1	2	5	612	34	623	45	833	32	937
<b>M</b>			11	173	8	145	12	397	24	397	11	199
<b>Totals</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>1562</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1322</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1434</b>
<b>+/- from 13/14</b>	-4	-266	3	-517	-1	-710	-11	-272	7	127	12	228
<b>% +/-</b>	-10	-22	8	-54	-5	-46	-12	-15	10	11	31	19

**Total number of Induction sessions delivered: 299**

**Total number in attendance: 6532**

## Appendix 2

**Table 2**

### Information Literacy Classes: Subject focus/Subject-based Induction

Faculty	ADBE		Arts		C&E		L&HS		SS		UBS				
Campus	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	No of Classes	Number Attended	Total no of Classes	Total Expected attendance	Total Attended
<b>B</b>	38	645	3	40							19	351	60	1247	1036
<b>C</b>			37	430	8	82	252	1006	20	137	43	675	360	3256	2330
<b>J</b>	105	670	2	2	37	445	299	1332	273	2026	162	2076	878	7381	6551
<b>M</b>			12	138	7	224	197	1513	161	1415	40	585	417	4388	3875
<b>Totals</b>	143	1315	54	610	52	751	748	3851	454	3578	264	3687	1715	16272	13792

**Total number of subject sessions delivered: 1,715**

**Total number in attendance: 13,792**