

University of Limerick
Library & Information Services

Library Development Plan 2007 – 2011

Contents

Library Development Plan 2007-2011: Consultation and Research	3
Context and Challenges	4
Strategic Intent: Mission, Vision, Values	6
The Library Development Plan 2007-2011	8
Strategic goals:	10
1 Connecting people to information	
2 Enhanced library environments	
3 Digital innovation	
Enabling factors	13
4 Promoting partnership and collaboration	
5 Enhancing the contribution of library staff	
6 Creating and sustaining organizational capacity	

Library Development Plan 2007 – 2011: Consultation and Research

This Development Plan is developed in the context of the University Strategic Plan and has been informed by a detailed consultation process and review of the library environment. This included:

Views of key stakeholders

- Faculty and student focus groups and individual interviews
- Researcher surveys
- UL student satisfaction surveys
- Class reps meeting
- Student survey

Library environment

- Library staff SWOT analysis
- Literature review
- Review of trends
- Quality review – self-assessment
- Quality review – Peer Review Group Report
- Visits – national and international libraries

Next steps

Discussion with Library Development Committee

Departmental analysis for operational planning for 2007/2008

Development of performance indicators

Context and Challenges

The Library and the University operate in a rapidly changing and complex information environment. Developments in information, education, communications and technology are transforming the information landscape. The result is a radical transformation of the information resources and services that the academic library is expected to provide. New services and methods of access are required alongside the traditional elements of librarianship—the organisation, preservation and delivery of information, information skills teaching and presentation of information.

The delivery of resources in print and digital format and the delivery of services in person and online are providing major challenges for library service. The definition of collections continues to change as we manage the migration from print to electronic. The trend to digital publication of scholarly resources is increasing significantly and already the transfer to e-journals and e-reference has almost been achieved for some subjects. We expect that e-books will mirror this pattern. At the same time libraries are experiencing an increase in demand for the unique primary materials of special collections. The demand for seamless access to information from anywhere continues to grow while so too does online and in person requests for help in access and sourcing information.

Planning is currently underway for phase 2 of the library building and it is likely that this major expansion, doubling the current library space, will become available during the period covered by this plan.

The library enjoys a rich diversity among its readers in terms of age, geographic location, ability, discipline and financial resources. The need to tailor services and resources to their varied needs and to accommodate changes in our customer base is an essential feature of service development. In particular, the aim is to increase services in support of research and lifelong learning and of the delivery of services independent of location.

Within this changing information landscape the library has key challenges to which it must respond, including:

- Increased expectations of library readers for access to resources and services anywhere any time.
- Greater demand for resources and services resulting from increased research activity
- Trend towards independent, and self directed learning and towards group and collaborative learning styles
- New and enhanced skills base required of library staff
- Physical library remains an important element of the student experience and an enhanced scholarly community
- Ensuring a balance between services delivered using technology and those requiring personal support
- Increased internationalization of the student community
- New subjects and new areas of research activity requiring the establishment of new collections and services
- Changes in scholarly communication and publishing, which will alter models of research output.
- Increased digitization providing enhanced access
- Changing learning styles which affect library design and demands for new services
- Increased need for reference and information skills as necessary to exploit information resources and manage information

Strategic Intent: Mission, Vision, Values

Mission

The University of Limerick Library supports the teaching, learning and research activities at the University by providing quality information resources, education, support and facilities to students, faculty, staff and researchers. To achieve this, the Library will:

- Build collections to support current and future needs
- Provide quality services and seek continuous improvement
- Provide a safe and secure physical environment which encompasses the best traditional library practices and state-of-the-art resources and study facilities
- Listen and respond to customers' needs promptly and efficiently
- Treat all Library customers with fairness and courtesy
- Provide appropriate training courses and guidance to enable each reader to make the most productive use of all information resources
- Co-operate with resource sharing, research and other initiatives at regional, national and international levels

Vision

Our vision is to be a vibrant and pioneering library service providing high quality scholarly resources and services, and an environment that encourages reflective and collaborative inquiry, so that the Library enables the University of Limerick to achieve excellence in teaching, learning, research and community service

Values

Knowledge and Education

- We affirm the fundamental value of libraries in learning, research and the sharing of knowledge
- We hold important our role as a partner in the library and information community in which we collect, preserve and enable access to information.
- We take responsibility for our own learning and growth to become more effective in our work.

Intellectual Freedom and Integrity

- We support academic and intellectual freedom and the individual's right to privacy, confidentiality and fair access to information.

Valuing People

- We encourage respectful, open and honest interactions and communications, which allow individuals to work productively and effectively.
- We act with courtesy, professionalism and integrity in dealing with library users and colleagues.

Collaboration

- We are committed to working together and sharing knowledge, with each individual taking responsibility for his/her work and for overall team effectiveness.
- We participate in partnerships within the university and beyond to benefit library services and collections.

Service Excellence

- We promote consistently high standards to ensure high quality in services to library users and colleagues. We take responsibility for being responsive and positive in providing library services.
- We strive to provide excellent collections to library users.
- We aim to meet the challenges of a continually changing academic and information environment.

Initiative and Creativity

- We aim to contribute to the university's pioneering and innovative spirit by encouraging innovation and responding creatively to new challenges and service improvement.
- We value innovation and creativity in enhancing library effectiveness.
- We are willing to take risks and to learn.

The Library Development Plan 2007-11

This Development Plan sets out the high level strategic direction for the library over the next four years. It will inform our annual operational plan and strategic initiatives which will set our more detailed programmes and projects.

The plan has been developed within the context of the University's Strategic Plan 2006-11 and related strategies. The library must also plan for and anticipate changes in the library and information worlds to ensure that the University is provided with the information resources and services required to excel in its mission.

The Development Plan has been drawn up following a detailed consultation process with key stakeholders, including, faculty, University management, library staff, Governors and students to identify trends, needs and problems. Our planning was informed by a detailed review of trends impacting on libraries and through our network of professional colleagues and developments in libraries.

Our deliberations have resulted in the identification of three strategic goals and three key enabling factors that represent the priority areas for development for the next four years. The strategic goals are our key developmental directions to enable us to realise our vision and the enabling factors are the areas in which the library needs to further develop in order to deliver our goals. These strategic goals and enabling factors are:

Strategic goals

1 Connecting people to information

Support excellence in learning, research and teaching by providing high quality academic collections, services and programs.

2 Enhanced library environments

Create enhanced library environments and facilities that encourage and advance learning, exploration, interaction and intellectual growth.

3 Digital innovation

Exploit digital information technologies to provide enhanced access to collections and services within a virtual library environment.

Enabling factors

4 Promoting partnership and collaboration

Develop good relationships with library readers, stakeholders and benefactors. Build partnerships within the university and with regional, national and international organisations.

5 Enhancing the contribution of library staff

Ensure the support of high quality library staff for collections development and service delivery.

6 Creating and sustaining organisational capacity

Create and maintain an effective and flexible library organisation to ensure the proactive delivery of collections and high quality services to the University.

Strategic goals

Goal 1 Connecting people to information

Support excellence in learning, research and teaching by providing high quality academic collections, services and programs.

Objectives

1.1 Collections

Build print collections in support of learning and research needs in response to current emerging requirements and in areas that add to UL's distinctiveness.

Support undergraduate information needs through the provision of recommended reading materials and general reading collections.

Build our collections of e-books, e-journals, e-reference and other full text resources.

Maintain and develop Special Collections' response to research strategies, in areas of uniqueness and strength or where there is a clear benefit to the University.

Work with key stakeholders, donors and community groups to identify and acquire relevant collections.

Establish a Collection Enhancement Endowment Fund to be able to respond flexibly to opportunities of book, manuscript and archive acquisition opportunities.

1.2 Reader services

Enhance and expand reader-centred services that respond quickly to changing needs.

Contribute to learning initiatives, e.g. e-learning, problem-based learning, working with other central services providers to deliver integrated learner support services as appropriate.

Collaborate with other university services to explore developing a co-ordinated response to student enquiries.

Respond to the needs of students from non-traditional backgrounds in order to enhance their learning experience.

Develop support for international students in collaboration with other university services and develop an Ireland Experience.

Identify and develop a range of targeted services to market to alumni, industry and graduate groups.

Increase provision of self-access services.

Introduce further extensions of opening hours in line with evolving needs.

1.3 Research support

Enhance and tailor resource provision and support services for faculty, postgraduates and researchers, based on identified needs.

Explore the role of the library in the curation of primary research data.

Increase information literacy as part of research skills provision.

Further develop the use of archive and special collection material in integrating research with teaching.

Promote awareness and discussion of scholarly communication issues and copyright issues.

1.4 Learning and information skills

Increase the effective use of collections and information resources.

Expand and develop instruction and training programmes for information literacy skills, in collaboration with academic colleagues, as a key competency for effective learning and as an essential life long learning and career skill.

Redesign library orientation and training to ensure ongoing support for first year students.

Tailor information skills training for specific groups.

Goal 2 Enhancing library environments

Create enhanced library environments and facilities that encourage and advance learning, exploration, interaction and intellectual growth.

Objectives

2.1 Create enhanced library environments and facilities that encourage and advance learning, exploration, interaction and intellectual growth, through the completion of phase 2 and refurbishment of phase 1 of the library building.

2.2 Design library space to support a mix of traditional library usage and changing learning styles.

2.3 Provide quiet contemplative reading areas for undergraduates, post graduates and faculty..

- 2.4 Dedicate space for a new reading and study area, infused with technology, to enhance social learning and enrich the user's experience.
- 2.5 Support collaborative, technology-rich learning and research styles within new spaces.
- 2.6 Redevelop the entrance area as a primary service zone to include a welcome desk, improved access control, quick search and self-service facilities.
- 2.7 Develop technology-enabled teaching and research spaces to support faculty experimentation and the implementation of evolving technologies, resources and pedagogies.
- 2.8 Provide design guidelines for a standard study area for inclusion in new campus buildings.
- 2.9 Participate in off-site national collaborative storage arrangements as appropriate.

Goal 3 Digital innovation

Exploit digital information technologies to provide enhanced access to collections and services within a virtual library environment.

Objectives

- 3.1 Exploit information technologies to provide improved access to collections and services development within an enhanced virtual library environment.
- 3.2 Develop a web presence to provide seamless, user-focused access to library content. Integrate library content with VLE and Web portal projects.
- 3.3 Deliver a range of online services including: e-print service, online information skills tutorials and online enquiry services, such as Ask a Librarian.
- 3.4 Develop and establish an institutional repository to preserve and disseminate the research output of the University.
- 3.5 Develop a digitisation programme to include archive collections and to support digitisation projects in the University.
- 3.6 Promote the electronic submission of theses.
- 3.7 Explore the development of a virtual research environment, bringing together resources, information and advice to support researchers.
- 3.8 Evaluate developments in digital curation, digital press and related innovations. Exploit these for the benefit of the university as appropriate.

Enabling factors

The following three factors have been identified as essential to enable the library to deliver its strategic goals:

Factor 4 Promoting partnership and collaboration

Develop good relationships with library readers, stakeholders and benefactors. Build partnerships within the university and with regional, national and international organisations.

Objectives

- 4.1 Enhance our communications strategy to ensure consistent and effective communications and respond to users' feedback on library services.
- 4.2 Strengthen our relationship with individuals and University departments to enhance our shared mission.
- 4.3 Foster strategic partnerships with relevant professional, social, government and cultural institutions at local, national and international levels.
- 4.4 Build on our strong collaborative partnerships with other libraries by participating in collaborative initiatives that expand services and collections.
- 4.5 Encourage positive library interactions with the community through publications, exhibitions and special events.

Factor 5 Enhancing the contribution of library staff

Ensure the support of high quality library staff for collections development and service delivery.

Objectives

- 5.1 Recruit and retain high quality innovative staff.
- 5.2 Review organisational staff structure to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and responsive to our changing environment.
- 5.3 Implement the University's performance management and development system to plan for staff development and create a culture of organisational effectiveness,
- 5.4 Increase and enhance the knowledge, professionalism, service orientation and skills of library staff.

- 5.5 Ensure staff development and training are aligned with strategic directions of the library.
- 5.6 Support staff in maximising their potential within the library through opportunities for development and continuous learning.
- 5.7 Foster a sense of community, open communications and common purpose amongst library staff.
- 5.8 Create an organisational culture that elicits individual creativity balanced with effective teamwork, commitment and ownership of library services.

Factor 6 Creating and sustaining organisational capacity

Create and maintain an effective and flexible library organisation to ensure the proactive delivery of collections and high quality services to the University.

Objectives

- 6.1 Create an organisational culture that supports customer focus, flexibility and responsiveness to change.
- 6.2 Ensure our ability to adapt to a changing academic and information environment by developing our capacity for growth and innovation.
- 6.3 Ensure that the library's case for maximising its income is made and understood.
- 6.4 Consider new forms of income generation and seek alternative funding to finance special library initiatives and developments.
- 6.5 Collaborate with the UL Foundation to develop philanthropic opportunities for the Library.
- 6.6 Integrate the library into the appropriate planning processes of the University.
- 6.7 Continue to utilise planning and project management frameworks to progress activities, services and proposed initiatives.
- 6.8 Use benchmarking, key performance indicators and quality processes for ongoing evaluation and improvement. Undertake continuous review and evaluation of all services and operations of the library