Library Committee
Monday 6 June 2022, 10:30am
Web conferencing meeting via MS Teams

Minutes

Present Members:
Professor Vivek Mudera (Chair); Dr Paul Ayris; Professor Simon Banks; Professor Tom Carlson; Dr Richard Freeman; Dr Liza Griffin; Dr Charles Inskip [for Minutes 28-32]; Ms Viktoria Makai; Mr Ben Meunier; Mr Martin Moyle; Professor John Sabapathy; Mr Andy Smith; Professor Gareth Williams.

Apologies:
Professor Diane Koenker; Dr Rachel Rees; Dr Harriet Shannon; Mr Thomas Turner.

Officer:
Ms Freya Markwell (Secretary)

Part I: Preliminary Business

28.   Minutes of the previous meeting (3-01)

28.1.   Library Committee (LC) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2022.

29.   Matters Arising

29.1.   Arising from Minute 17.2, the Director of Operations (UCL Library, Culture, Collections & Open Science (LCCOS)) confirmed that he would provide an update to LC's Term 1 2022-23 meeting regarding progress of the UCL Sustainable Physical and Digital Places for Education (SPiDER) working group in relation to spaces for hybrid/blended learning, including on any pilots taking place.

29.2.   Arising from Minute 17.4, the Director of Services (LLCOS) confirmed that he had followed up with the Postgraduate Officer (Students' Union) regarding the possibility of UCL publishing a collection of its best 100 dissertations each year as well as opportunities for the publication of dissertations via ProQuest; the publication of dissertations via ProQuest was already in the LCCOS workflow.

29.3.   Arising from Minute 17.6, the Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) reported that he would follow-up with the Vice-President (Operations) to request that the

opportunity and benefits to Professional Services staff of publishing works via the UCL Press be addressed within leadership team meetings.

29.4. Arising from Minute 17.9, the Chair confirmed that he was following up with colleagues in Estates to request a formal update on wheelchair access at the Institute of Education (IOE) library.

29.5. Arising from Minute 21.2.b, the Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) fed back that the revised UCL Records Management Policy would be publicised via the next termly update to Deans and this would also be promoted within future leadership team meetings with Deans. The Chair reported that he had received positive feedback regarding the recently instigated visits from the Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) to Deans and it was agreed that these should be continued into the new academic year.

29.6. Arising from Minute 24.2.a, the Director of Operations (LCCOS) confirmed that he would provide an update to LC's Term 1 2022-23 meeting with regards to Estates masterplan proposals for different study and assessment spaces; the Chair suggested it would be good if these visual representations could also be displayed somewhere to enable students to see them.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

30. **Report of the Pro-Vice-Provost (UCL Library, Culture, Collections & Open Science) (3-02)**

30.1. Dr Paul Ayris, Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) introduced the paper, which focussed on the Key Performance Areas of the Library Strategy and measured performance against those themes since the last meeting of LC. The following key points were highlighted:
   a. Work continued on developing the new UCL Research Institute for Collections (RIC), a virtual umbrella for all collections-related activity in UCL.
   b. The move to digitise as many holdings as possible was progressing well, with the equivalent of 10km worth of material a target for digitisation. A contract had recently been signed with a commercial provider to digitise Anglo-Jewish materials. It was hoped that this would be the first of many of these types of contracts which would support UCL's digitisation objectives whilst also providing a valuable income-stream.
   c. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) invited the Committee to suggest additional venues and mechanisms for the sharing of ideas about the forthcoming Library Strategy being produced by LCCOS in support of the emerging UCL strategy.

30.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

a. The Chair congratulated LCCOS colleagues on the significant work which had been completed as outlined within the report.

b. A question was raised as to whether it was planned to publicise more widely UCL's digitisation of its rare collections. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) confirmed that it was planned to promote the work of the RIC within the media, with the aim being to bring as much visibility to these collections as possible.

c. In response to a question regarding whether the digitised collections would be Open Access, the Director of Services (LCCOS) explained that this was a complex issue. The main avenues available for the digitising of collections included UCL's own in-house digitisation pipeline, occasional philanthropic funding, and contracts with commercial publishers. In the case of the latter, the digitisation work would usually be at the commercial publisher's expense and the collections would then become Open Access after 10 years. The Director of Services (LCCOS) offered to prepare a brief report for the next LC meeting regarding this; it was suggested that this should include information on the rights for these materials to be used for teaching within UCL.

d. The Chair proposed that an event should be arranged with Vice-Deans for Education and Research from across the faculties to gather feedback regarding what would be most useful to include within the new Library Strategy. It was suggested that this should be a physical meeting ideally, and the Chair would also be keen to attend. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) would take this forward.

e. It was suggested that a brief note be submitted to Governance Committee of Academic Board to request their input as to how members of Academic Board might feed into the Library Strategy consultation. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) would follow up on this suggestion.

f. It was suggested that focus groups could be a useful mechanism for gathering feedback from students. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) agreed this would be useful and advised that he would follow up with colleagues within the Library to check that plans were in place to reach out to all faculties at student-level, whether via relevant committees, focus groups or other means.

(Action: Director of Services (LCCOS))
(Action: Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS))

31.   Open Science and Scholarship Report (3-03)

31.1. Dr Paul Ayris, Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) introduced the paper, which looked at current developments in Open Science and Scholarship at UCL since the last meeting of LC. The following key points were highlighted:

a. The fantastic performance by the Open Access team in the Library and Open Science and Scholarship in supporting Open Access requirements

for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), with most faculties now over 90% compliant month-on-month with REF requirements.

b. UCL Press had now passed 6 million downloads and it was expected to reach 7 million by early next spring. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) highlighted thanks to Professor David Price as outgoing Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement (RIGE)) who had been such a champion of the UCL Press.

c. A series of webinars were being hosted through the Open Science office; in the last week, the Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) had led two webinars, one with the Global South with Latin America and the Caribbean, and one with the University of Stockholm. These webinars had provided interesting insights into the different ways that different parts of the world were reacting to Open Access needs; for example, there was a strong preference from representatives from Latin America and the Caribbean for community-led journals on community-owned and -led platforms over transformative agreements which it was felt disenfranchised those who could not afford the costs of these. The Chair congratulated the Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) on these successful webinars, which helped maintain UCL's role as a thought-leader in Open Science and Open Access issues.

31.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

a. It was understood that there were practical and financial reasons why a commercial model was needed in relation to the digitisation of UCL's archives, however it was suggested that this did not sit entirely comfortably alongside the focus on the benefits of Open Access. The Director of Services (LCCOS) highlighted that the contents of UCL's archives had been collected for over 200 years and some items were centuries old; in this context, the ten-year period before the digital versions would become Open Access could be seen as less consequential. Third party funding for digitisation was becoming increasingly rare, therefore the commercial route could be the only way for UCL to secure long-term digital curation as part of its duty of stewardship and conservation. It was suggested that a statement should be included within the Library Strategy to address this tension; the Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) would look at preparing a statement on this for inclusion within the strategy.

b. The number of UCL Press downloads was impressive but it was suggested that it would be useful if these numbers could be supported by more textured measures/qualitative data on the use of these resources. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) responded that this question was being looked at within the Open Science Office and he was following up with the new Vice-Provost (RIGE) to look at how best to develop metrics and measures going beyond simply the number of downloads. One option being explored was for a researcher to be employed to undertake research on what would and would not be possible in this area.

c. It was noted that the Open Science agenda had so far been largely dominated by hard sciences and STEM subjects, and so tended to be framed by disciplinary concerns in those areas, for example around reproducibility. It would be useful if UCL could consider more nuanced ways of thinking at a granular disciplinary level for other disciplines such as the Arts where some of these modes of evaluations might not be so applicable. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) responded that he was keen to look at how Open Science could be more inclusive of non-STEM subjects and reported that he had received valuable input from Professor Margot Finn from the department of History on how Open Science works within History. The Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS) would follow up with Professor Finn regarding the possibility of preparing a paper focussing on these considerations.

(Action: Pro-Vice-Provost (LCCOS))

32.   Enabling our Academic Mission (Oral report)

32.1. Mr Andy Smith, Chief Information Officer, provided an oral summary of the recent Enabling our Academic Mission ("Enablers") discussion paper which formed part of the UCL Strategic Plan 2022-23. The following key points were highlighted:
a. The Enablers paper responded to some of the needs, drivers and pain points which had come up within the prior strategy discussion papers. A key aim of the strategy was to improve the user experience for staff in working to get UCL's mission discharged.
b. This paper was not just a set of ideas for the future but also set out a lot of work which was already underway, with a view to ensuring any changes were being carried out in the most coherent and efficient way.
c. For the institution to run most effectively, this would require join-up at multiple levels and in multiple ways to enable staff to work as part of a single process or service. Many processes and services across UCL involved multiple components and steps which staff as the user needed to navigate themselves; a key focus of this strategy was to look at what could be done to make these processes more seamless and connected with end-to-end process owners.
d. The Enablers paper set out the importance of a continuous improvement approach and growth mindset.
e. Areas of priority included Estates and space, as well as improved technology platforms to support processes with a focus on the experience of the user.

32.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
a. The Chair highlighted the importance of the student experience, including that of research students, as well as the academic staff experience, and

noted the key role of the Library as a service which brought all these groups together.

b. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have clarity on the scope of the Enablers paper as the concept of things that enabled UCL's academic mission could be seen as quite broad. The Chief Information Officer highlighted that the paper was not claiming to cover everything but instead outlined those key priorities which had been chosen to focus on.

c. Consideration needed to be given as to how Library Services and estates infrastructure could best support the different models of education which were likely to emerge over the coming years, such as the move towards more digital assessments.

d. It was suggested that there had been previous cases of strategic policy being set centrally without sufficient joined-up thinking, with the burden typically falling on staff within departments to implement these changes without necessarily having the sufficient infrastructure to support this. The Enablers paper was welcomed in its aim to address this issue, but it was suggested that there would always be some hard constraints; it would be useful to have a mechanism in place to ensure continued flow of communications once it came to the implementation of any new or amended processes.

e. A comment was raised regarding the likely impact of financial constraints over the coming years. The Chief Information Officer responded that constraints such as inflationary pressures would have an impact and noted that it would be key to focus on making the best use of UCL's current estate to respond to the needs of students and staff most effectively and economically. An Estates Masterplan was currently under development which would start to lay this out.

f. The Student Centre was highlighted as a great success which set a benchmark for what could be achieved within UCL's physical estate. As well as providing a fantastic space for students to study and to feel 'at home' within UCL, it was also seen as world-leading, with visitors received from other global institutions who had come to take inspiration for their own institutions. It was suggested that a second Student Centre should be considered as a matter of priority; the Chief Information Officer agreed to feed this back as part of the strategic discussions.

33. Library Services Usage (3-04)

33.1. Mr Martin Moyle, Director of Services (LCCOS), introduced the paper which summarised recent usage of UCL Library Services' physical and digital collections, for information and comment. The following key points were highlighted:

a. The opening of the Student Centre in 2019 had seen UCL become the busiest library service in the UK. Whilst UCL had slipped into second place during the unusual circumstances of 2020/21, this consistently high

ranking highlighted the significant efforts of Library Services staff in upholding services to students particularly throughout the pandemic.

b. Physical lending had been declining for many years now, even prior to the pandemic, for a variety of reasons including an increasing emphasis on online resources. It seemed unlikely that there would be a significant increase in physical lending in this climate.

c. The highest rates of lending continued to be found within the Main, IOE and Science libraries as in previous years.

d. The popularity of the Student Centre was undiminished. There were some specialist libraries with lower figures for lending and occupancy, however these libraries were still valued by their communities and UCL; for example some spaces supported NHS trusts which UCL was committed to continuing to support.

e. The next focus would be to look at the impact of returning more fully to face-to-face teaching next academic year and to see how this affects Library usage. It might prove necessary to look at whether there would be scope for consolidation over the coming years.

33.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

a. The Chair noted that the statistics showed the number of loans for each library and percentage of the total, however these figures did not take into account the size of each library and specialist support provided. The Director of Services (LCCOS) reported that prior to the pandemic, there had been some consideration given to a statistical profiling system taking these factors into account. This was a complex issue but one which could be explored further.

b. It was suggested that one potentially useful set of data would be if there could be some measure of the approximate number of expected users of a given library from that specific community; this could help to establish what the potential impact on that community would be if that resource were no longer there. The Director of Services (LCCOS) agreed that this level of detail would be needed if any consolidation were to be undertaken, and alternative provision would also be needed to mitigate any impact on users.

c. It was suggested that it would be helpful if Table of Contents could also be included as standard practice as part of the Scan and Send service. The Director of Services (LCCOS) agreed that this could be a useful addition to the service and would feed back to relevant colleagues accordingly.

d. A comment was raised regarding the energy and resources required to maintain ongoing access to digital resources; consideration would need to be given to this as part of wider conversations around UCL's sustainability strategy.

(Action: Director of Services (LCCOS))

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

34.   Project bidding in UCL Library Services (3-05)

34.1. LC received the termly summary report on the Library's progress on project bidding applications.

35.   Minutes of Library Working Groups (3-06)

35.1. Since the last meeting, LC had received the following minutes of Working Groups that report to LC:
    a. Open Science and Scholarship Committee – 6 October 2021 (Confirmed updated version since the version previously circulated at the Term 1 2021-22 Library Committee meeting)
    b. Press and Publications Board – 11 November 2021
    c. Bibliometrics Working Group – 9 February 2022
    d. Press and Publications Board – 17 February 2022
    e. Open Science and Scholarship Committee – 27 April 2022 (Unconfirmed)
    f. Press and Publications Board – 5 May 2022 (Unconfirmed)
    g. Bibliometrics Working Group – 19 May 2022 (Unconfirmed)

36.   Minutes of Faculty Library Committees (3-07)

36.1. Since the last meeting, LC had received the following minutes of Faculty-level or Faculty Library Committees (FLCs) that report to LC:
    a. School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) Library Committee – 20 October 2021
    b. Faculty of Laws Library Committee – 13 December 2021
    c. Built Environment Faculty Library Committee – 10 February 2022
    d. School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) Library Committee – 23 February 2022

37.   Date of the next meeting

37.1. The next meeting would take place in term 1 2022-23 (date TBC). Following feedback from committee members, it was suggested that this meeting should take place in-person, and that the subsequent meeting in term 2 could take place online.

Freya Markwell, Library Committee Secretary
June 2022