



Library Committee

Thursday 25 June 2020, 11.00am-1.00pm

Web-conferencing meeting via MS Teams

Minutes

Present Members:

Dr Paul Ayris (Chair for items 27-29, 31-36); Dr Simon Banks; Dr Richard Freeman; Dr Oliver Gerstenberg; Professor Diane Koenker; Ben Meunier; Martin Moyle; Professor Vivek Mudera (Chair for item 30); Jim Onyemenam; Dr Rachel Rees; Steve Ridge (for items 27-30.3); Dr John Sabapathy; Ashley Slanina-Davies.

Apologies:

Professor David Price; Dr Charles Inskip; Zak Liddell; Kate Pearce; Dr Harriet Shannon; Andy Smith; Dr Hazel Smith.

In attendance:

Angela Young, Head of Library Skills [for items 27-29].

Officer(s):

Olivia Whiteley

Part I: Preliminary Business

27. Key decision and action points Arising from 6 February 2020 meeting (3-01)

- 27.1. Library Committee (LC) received a summary of the key matters considered at its last meeting held on 6 February 2020 including arising decision and action points. The Minutes of the 6 February 2020 meeting were not currently available but would be circulated to LC in due course.
- 27.2. For the purpose of the minutes, a correction to paper 3-01 was noted in that Dr Richard Freeman had not been present at the 6 February 2020 meeting.

28. Matters Arising

- 28.1. In response to the request for an update on the matter of UCL usage and the operating budget of the Senate House Library, it was noted that no further federal board meetings had taken place, however there was a group

considering issues of equality, diversity and inclusion which had been raised with the UCL Executive Director of Human Resources.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

29. Library Skills Framework (3-02)

- 29.1. The Head of Library Skills introduced the report on recent progress in the planning and delivery of Library Skills services, including the development of a library skills framework and the accelerated move to online delivery of library skills during the COVID-19 outbreak, as well a vision and objectives for future skills teaching delivery.
- 29.2. The following key points on the Library Skills Framework were reported:
 - a. The Library Skills Framework essentially brought together three established literary frameworks, providing a single overarching strategy for UCL Library Services to support skills provision. It had been formulated through a process of mapping provision across Library Services, identifying gaps and consulting with literacy specialists at UCL.
 - b. The framework was divided into five themes, broadly corresponding to different stages of the user journey, yet intentionally fluid enough to encompass the needs of staff including NHS staff and students at all levels of study.
 - c. It was important to note that the framework, detailed in paper 3-02, underpinned the information available to users on Library skills, but was not presented to users in this format.
 - d. Moving forward, it was envisaged that the framework would be used as a tool to integrate library skills into academic programmes as a more effective offering than standalone support for each programme.
- 29.3. It was also highlighted that objectives in skills provision had been adapted, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, to provide online-only training and support for the remainder of the 2019-20 academic session and the start of the 2020-21 session. The following key points were highlighted:
 - a. Online teaching materials, covering all five of the themes of the Library Skills Framework, had been developed to replace face-to-face provision; these were asynchronous resources to account for time differences between student locations and potential technical issues, supplemented by tutorials, interactive lessons and webinars.
 - b. The approach to provision would be reviewed to meet the needs of users in future. Beyond the first term of 2020-21, it was envisaged that this would take a hybrid form combining face-to-face and online delivery.

- 29.4. Discussion and feedback was invited from LC on the Library Skills Framework and on current and future priorities for provision and the following points were raised:
- a. The report was well received; LC members were appreciative of the enthusiasm with which it was delivered and impressed by the plans set out therein.
 - b. A welcome suggestion was made to include both the Director of Education Services and Transformation and the Pro-Vice-Provost (Postgraduate Education) in future plans for the framework, in order to streamline with upcoming plans for the Student Experience Transformer (SET) and student inductions.
 - c. In response to a query related to early-starting programmes in the School of Life and Medical Sciences (SLMS), it was noted that the online resources developed for Library Skills would be available by the end of August 2020 and therefore usable for programmes with early start dates. The materials would also be adaptable for tailoring and embedding in specific programmes.
 - d. The approach taken to enable coordination of library skills at programme level, particularly in the case of postgraduate research programmes, was welcomed. In time, it was hoped that Library Skills would be integrated into programmes such that particular elements could be delivered when most needed.
 - e. Library Skills provision was distinct from the services provided by the UCL Academic Communication Centre, which was for example well placed to support academic writing. It was noted that some signposting between services may be useful.

29.5. Library Committee:

- a. Received the report on the Library Skills Framework;
- b. Thanked the Head of Library Skills for her work in developing the Framework.

30. Confidential: Opening hours in UCL Library Services (3-05)

30.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

30.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

30.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

30.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

31. Report from the Pro-Vice-Provost (UCL Library Services) (3-03)

31.1. The Pro-Vice-Provost (UCL Library Services) presented the paper which focused in particular on changes to, and the impact on, the Library's service

model in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. The following key points were highlighted:

- a. A Gold-Silver-Bronze crisis management structure had been put into place at UCL in March 2020, at the time of the COVID-19 outbreak. This was replaced on 8 June 2020 with a new structure focused on service delivery for the new academic year, of which two committees were key to Library Services and making progress at pace – the Education and Operations Delivery Group and the Research and External Engagement Delivery Group. The Pro-Vice-Provost was a member of both.
- b. The coronavirus crisis had led to the closure of library sites, beginning on 17 March 2020, which Library Services staff had successfully managed in as straightforward and painless a way as possible. Relaxations to lockdown on 3 June 2020 had allowed UCL to re-open the Student Centre, but with strict conditions for health and safety and social distancing.
- c. To support online teaching and remote learning in Term 1 of 2020-21, the Library had submitted a successful bid to UCL for extra investment in electronic textbooks, initially with a bid of £1.38m for 2020-21. Costs were significant due to current financial publishing models. A ReadingLists@UCL enhancement project was also underway to ensure that, as a minimum, all Term 1 modules would be supported by an online reading list. The Provost and Library Services were keen to achieve 100% coverage across modules.
- d. UCL Press had established a public platform to bring together and share all UCL research publications on COVID-19 in an Open Access megajournal environment. The platform was remarkable for the sector globally and had even attracted the attention of the incoming UCL President and Provost, who had written to the Vice-Provost (Research) in praise of the initiative.

31.2. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- a. The UCL Press platform for COVID-19 research was widely praised and Library Services staff congratulated for working at pace to make this possible and for their responsiveness and engagement dealing with student demand for e-resources.
- b. In response to a query on the timeframe for reopening libraries and extending access to print copy resources, it was noted that the Education and Operations Delivery Group had requested the reopening of libraries at the start of the academic year. A reopening of physical spaces and resources was planned, notwithstanding some constraints in academic departments. A click-and-collect service had been launched on 15 June 2020 for materials in the Main and Science Libraries, which was receiving around 50 requests per day and managed locally by staff volunteers. To address reopening in the longer-term, a group had been established, co-chaired by the Directors of Operations and Services (Library Services), to

consider and feed back to the Education and Operations Delivery Group on provision with social distancing measures in force.

- c. There were queries as to whether the reopening of spaces, as was being piloted in the Student Centre on a limited basis for staff and Postgraduate Research (PGR) students, would be extended to include Postgraduate Taught (PGT) students who would currently be working on dissertations. A general steer was awaited from UCL on extending access to PGT students, however it was hoped to be in a position to provide enhanced access to PGT students by mid-September 2020. Stress-testing data gathered from the pilot would help to inform decisions on reopening space in the Student Centre for PGT students in the near term.

31.3. Library Committee:

- a. Received the report from the Pro-Vice-Provost (UCL Library Services);
- b. Endorsed the actions taken by the Library to safeguard staff and students while continuing service provision during lockdown and in planning to support teaching and learning in the first term of 2020-21.

32. Open Science (3-04)

32.1. The Pro-Vice-Provost (UCL Library Services) introduced the paper informing colleagues about recent policy developments in Open Science and their impacts on UCL. The following key points and questions, on which input from LC members was invited, were raised:

- a. UCL had issued a statement on the importance of Open Science in April 2020 embracing which embraced the principles of openness in sharing research and cooperating with publishers and which made clear that Open Science was the direction of travel for research moving out of the pandemic.
- b. A number of recent events contrary to the spirit of Open Science raised concerns for existing practices, among them the retraction by the Lancet of a published paper concerning COVID-19 patients, retracted due to errors detected post-publication in the underlying data, which had not been made available during the peer review process. This raised questions as to how to reform the peer review process to avoid such occurrences in the current period of international emergency and in the longer-term. It was noted that UCL Press had adopted an Open peer review model, in which the review itself was visible and sharable, for its new journal platform, UCL Open: Environment.
- c. Another pertinent question was that of how to evaluate quality in line with the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), signed by UCL, which acknowledged the weaknesses of metrics such as the Journal Impact Factor (JIF) in measuring quality. The new UCL Bibliometrics Policy, agreed by Academic Committee earlier in 2020, was intended to support the evaluation of academic excellence in an Open environment; however it was noted that this would entail a process of culture change. To support

this, UCL would be organising online training sessions on next generation metrics. UCL was notably ahead of other institutions in adopting an Open Science approach.

32.2. The following points were addressed during discussion:

- a. It was highlighted that some research data was necessarily confidential due to its sensitive nature and could not be made open, though it may be possible to share an anonymised form in some cases. In response to a query on dealing with confidential data, it was noted that neither UCL nor research funders mandated Open Data and that this was up to the judgement of the Principal Investigator (PI) or researcher. In the case of the recently retracted Lancet article, sensitivity of data was not given as a reason for non-disclosure; the issue that it had highlighted concerned existing peer review practices.
- b. Increasingly, time pressure for turnaround was a concern in peer review practices, with potential negative impacts on standards and integrity. It was suggested that a model in which a pre-print article (identifiable as pre-print via metadata) was made available weeks ahead of the peer-reviewed version might relieve time pressures, though there were some concerns raised about the status of articles subsequently rejected following peer review. Pre-prints were noted to be more common in some disciplines than others.
- c. It was highlighted that, while a good quality peer review would take into account the underlying data, vast datasets would need time and/or code for thorough analysis. Exposing weaknesses in the peer review process such as this could help to illuminate limitations in the practice.
- d. It was questioned whether a model for peer review could be developed and tailored for different disciplines.

32.3. Library Committee:

- a. Received the report on Open Science;
- b. Noted that feedback from LC members given during discussion would be relayed to the Open Science Platform for consideration.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

33. Project bidding in UCL Library Services (3-06)

- 33.1. Library Committee received the latest termly summary of the Library's progress in project bidding applications.

34. Reports from Working Groups (3-07)

- 34.1. Since its last meeting, LC had received the following minutes from Library Committee Working Groups:

- a. Bibliometrics Working Group – 15 October 2019 and 22 January 2020;
- b. Open Science Platform – 13 February 2019, 3 June 2019 and 14 November 2019;
- c. Press and Publications Board – 20 January 2019 and 28 November 2019;
- d. Publications Board – 11 March 2019 and 3 July 2019.

35. Reports from Faculty Library Committees (3-08)

- 35.1. Since its last meeting, LC had received the following minutes from the following Faculty Library Committees (FLCs) or Faculty-level committees that consider library matters:
- a. Arts and Humanities and Social and Historical Sciences Joint FLC – 6 March 2019 and 5 June 2019;
 - b. Built Environment FLC (unconfirmed) – 28 May 2020;
 - c. Mathematical and Physical Sciences FLC – 2 July 2019 and 16 December 2019;
 - d. Medical Sciences Faculty Teaching Committee – 13 November 2019 and 4 February 2020.

36. Dates of 2020-21 meetings

- 36.1. The schedule of LC meetings for 2020-21 had yet to be confirmed.

Olivia Whiteley, LC Secretary
July 2020