

University Libraries: their contribution to the Academic Enterprise and Future Challenges

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Justification for a University 1490s



‘that both clerics and laymen would readily apply themselves to literary studies and acquire the precious pearl of knowledge in such fashion that the ignorant would become informed and the uneducated learned’

Source: Aberdeen Supplication to the Vatican, MacFarlane, William Elphinstone and the Kingdom of Scotland

Roles of a Twenty-First Century University



- educate the highly skilled workforce of the future;
- produce research which is truly addressing exciting new problems and undertaking this research to the highest methodological and ethical standards;
- where appropriate, ensure that the research has an impact both on the people who paid for this research and further beyond;
- seek to drive its local socio-economy and act as the cultural DNA of its local region.

Implications of Current Funding Environment



- Changing contract between student and university
- Students more demanding of degree offering; want their 'investment' to pay off
- Research will involve more multidisciplinary partnerships between institutions and sectors
- Impact central to the enterprise
- Involvement of local communities highly necessary

Role of Libraries I



- A Central Service without which none of the four components of a University can happen
- Central part of the Dual Support System
- BUT
- What is a library?
- Should a University have a library or libraries?

Role of Libraries II



Cannell (2007) SCONUL Focus 40 provides an excellent framework

- An intellectual hub for the university
 - *Supporting learning in a research environment*
 - *Welcoming and inspiring innovation, creativity and scholarship*
 - *Providing books, e-books, journals, e-journals, manuscripts, images and other objects for use in and out of the building*
 - *Supporting interdisciplinarity*
 - *Celebrating the past and present achievements of the university*
- The focus for a wide range of activities in learning and research
- More Open and Accessible than it is now
- A place where learners and researchers can engage and converse with each other and with information specialists
- Flexible to accommodate changes in the future

Implications for Libraries



Constrained Financial Environment

- Sharing of services
 - Boston Spa
 - Scottish Higher Education Digital Library
- Availability in a 21st Century timescale
- One hub or many

An Intellectual Hub (for the University)



- Learning should be conducted in a research environment
- Treat all students as researchers → access to all materials
- Encourage students to access wide variety of material
- Enable innovation (in all its forms)

An Intellectual Hub Access to Material



1. Books, journals etc.
2. Special Collections
3. Grey Literature
4. Data
5. Visual and Creative Arts

Books and Journals



- Providing Books – need quick/early access to desk wherever that desk happens to be at time x
- Providing e-books
 - Need availability
 - Increasingly there is a need for a quality control eg University Libraries as Publishers (Roueche)
- Providing Journals
 - Cost and Access → Purchasing consortia
- Providing e-journals
 - Quality Control
- Providing All the above
 - → Open Access

Open Access



- Note that use RCUK as an exemplar
- Value for money and generating impact:
 - RC's fund research which needs to be communicated and exploited through e.g. publications
 - Tracking outputs to inform impact studies
- Ensuring the health of the science base, which includes high-quality infrastructure to support research with no major access barriers
- Exploiting the potential of technological developments, such as e-science
- Stakeholder expectations and activities of other research funders

For the slides on RCUK Open Access
I am indebted to Drs Astrid
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RCUK open access principles



- Ideas and knowledge derived from publicly-funded research must be made **available and accessible** for public use, interrogation and scrutiny as widely, rapidly and effectively as practicable
- Effective mechanisms must be in place to ensure that published research outputs are subject to rigorous **quality assurance**, through peer review
- The models and mechanisms for publication and access to research results must be both **efficient and cost-effective** in the use of public funds
- The outputs from current and future research must be **preserved** and remain accessible not only for the next few years but for future generations

RCUK (2009) Report on OA



- Significant shift in favour of OA in last decade
- Knowledge and awareness of key features of OA remain limited and engagement with OA varies by subject area
- Too early to assess impact of RCUK's policies, but some role in awareness raising and influencing policies

Overview Findings II



- Drivers to use OA:
 - Speed of dissemination
 - Principle of free access for all
 - Availability to researchers with limited access to subscription journals
 - Possibility of increased citations
 - Very few listed mandates as a reason

RCUK 2010



- In response to the study, the UK Research Councils will support increased open access, by:
 - extending their support for publishing in open access journals, including through the pay-to-publish model.
 - building on their mandates on grant-holders to deposit research papers in suitable repositories within an agreed time period, and;
- RCUK is now beginning this implementation process through a number of cross-Research Council working groups

Challenges



- Maintain over-riding principle of 'quality plus accessibility'
- Need to maintain academic freedom by allowing grant holders to publish in their journal of choice, but these may not have an open access or self-deposit option → work with publishers
- Need agreed embargo period
- Need to agree most appropriate funding mechanism

Challenges II



- Depends on the existence of suitable repositories; this varies between disciplines (and HEIs)
- Need to ensure that it is the final, accepted, version that is deposited into repositories
- How can ensure that all papers acknowledge source of funding?
- Communication: how can improve communication with grant holders on the process they should follow?
- How can we monitor compliance?

2. Ensuring Access to Special Collections



- Eg Aberdeen has >4000 collections of manuscripts and archives, from antiquity to 21st Century, in 25 languages
- Need both digital and physical access
- Library needs to facilitate this → laboratory
- But Access to browse or to read – and access for whom?



3. Grey Literature



- (Increasingly) critical source for many researchers – opportunity to eliminate serendipity and to provide access
- Surely needs sharing of services – or at least catalogues
- Quality Control?

Data



- Many initiatives around research integrity demand data sharing
- Specialist area – experts include EDINA, ESDS : curation, preservation and utilisation
- Potential for sharing expertise and services

Visual and Creative Arts



- Need imaginative use of space to be both contemporary and reflective

Encouraging Interdisciplinarity



- The Library as a place for discussion
- Note many buildings in recent years eg Newcastle
- Interdisciplinarity should mean collaboration
- These need flexible spaces and imagination



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More Open and Accessible



- Facilitating the Intelligent Laity
- A focus for public engagement with research
- A resource for the citizen researcher
- Open to all and providing a space which 'all' see as important

Peopled by ?



- Libraries Central to Research Enterprise

BUT

- Staffed by professionals with both general and specific skills
 - Examples of specific skills
 - Subject specialisations
 - Digital specialisations
 - Data

Summary



- Are libraries central to the academic enterprise?
- Has the physical library had its day?
- Is the physical library the only space?

- What is a library?