

Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement
Internal Quality Review Programme
2015-2016



Quality Improvement Plan

University Library
Dublin City University
March 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

The DCU University Library has approached the 2015 QR process at a particularly complex period in its development. There are many external financial pressures associated principally with exchange rate fluctuations. However, externally the Library has contributed beyond its size to national and international initiatives, not least by producing the CONUL Strategy 2016-2019 that is the strategy for all research libraries on the island of Ireland. DCU continues to support the IReL e-content programmes. Internally, it is noted that the Library is one of DCU's existing units most impacted by Incorporation. Our approach to this challenge was to turn it into an opportunity, whereby many of the key priorities in the draft Library Strategy could themselves be incorporated into the change management process across the wider University.

The University Library has been confirmed as offering exceptional levels of quality in terms of customer service. It has also been challenged to work with the University to improve its financial position. The unit's previous QR strongly recommended an uplift in library materials budgets in particular, since when there has been a 24% decrease. We are keen to continue working with all parts of the University to ensure the Library's important contribution to the DCU student experience and DCU research environment is both valued and developed.

The University Library established a staff working group to steer the internal journey of the Library through QR. This was viewed as collaborative and successful. Library senior management would like to record their thanks to all staff involved and also to the PRG for their extensive time and effort throughout the process.

2. RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PEER REVIEW GROUP REPORT

- Please see below

The following notation is used in the recommendations for improvement.

P1: A recommendation that is important *and* requires urgent action.

P2: A recommendation that is important, but can (or perhaps must) be addressed on a more extended time scale.

P3: A recommendation which merits serious consideration but which is not considered to be critical to the quality of the ongoing activities in the Area.

Additionally, the PRG indicate the level(s) of the University where action is required: A: Area under review U: University Senior Management

Recommendation Number	Addressee	Priority	PRG Recommendation	Library Response	University Response
Strategic Planning and Management of Financial and other Resources					
1	P1	A	<p>Identify and articulate the top strategic priorities for DCU Library</p> <p>These may then guide alliances and partnerships, and shape a senior stakeholder communication strategy needed to achieve Library priorities.</p>	<p>The strategic plan submitted as part of the SAR identified the following three top priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Managing budgetary challenges 2) Delivering multi-campus library provision in a post-Incorporation DCU 3) Growing the Library with the Institution 	<p>The university recognises the considerable commitment to the DCU Incorporation Programme by the Library staff and management team. A successful multi-campus Library provision, and a strong strategy for its future develop is core to the learning and research experience in a Post-Incorporation DCU.</p>
2	P1	A	<p>To address the challenge of achieving ambitions and delivering strategy with limited resources, the Director and management team should further develop strategic alliances within the University, investing in strong relationships built on identified win-win scenarios, where both partners contribute into achieving each other's strategic priorities.</p>	<p>The Library is strategically placed across the entire University. We will benefit from this by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ensuring status on key committees 2) Continuing to develop and deepen existing strong partnerships 3) Agreeing critical success factors with key partners <p>The library believes that a post-Incorporation delivery of library provision will open new opportunities for collaboration across three campuses.</p>	<p>DCU welcomes this recommendation, and recognises the success that the Library have had in collaborating with other units on the Maths Learning Centre, and Academic Writing Centre.</p>

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3	P1	A	<p>Shape and align Library's top strategic priorities and most urgent requirements with University strategy and build on evidence-based cases including return on investment and value for money potential.</p>	<p>The Library notes that its current strategic priorities,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Experience • Scholarship and Research • Collections Development • Community Engagement • Partnership Development 	<p>We welcome this recommendation and encourage strong alignment with the Transforming Lives and Societies. Further we look forward to engaging with the Library as part of ongoing consultation in the development of its next strategic plan in late 2016</p>
4	P2	A/ U	<p>In developing the DCU Library Strategy, attention should be given to how the strategy of the Library contributes to, and enables the overall DCU Strategy, highlighting specific targeted areas of leadership for the Library (e.g. Archives and Special Collections, Humanities Research, and Open Access policy), and contribution to the student learning experience</p>	<p>reflect and support a number of areas of the university's strategic plan, Transforming Lives and Societies.</p> <p>Within the new operational structure, in a post-Incorporation environment, the DCU Library will build on this strategy, and develop an implementation plan, in line with revised structures and within the context of multi-campus provision. With regard to Special Collections and since the PRG visit, the Library has developed a new and comprehensive Collection Development Policy.</p> <p>In Year 1 we plan to engage with sector specific advisors on a range of strategic benchmarking initiatives which will further focus our strategic ambitions. We look forward to positively contributing to the development of the new DCU strategic plan in late 2016 and early 2017.</p>	

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Organisation and Staffing					
5	P1	A	<p>Review the DCU Library structures in conjunction with the incorporated institutes. Any restructure should take into account service development needs, reflect best practice in modern library provision, and seek opportunities for career enhancement. Enhancement may be both through formal promotion and opportunities for development (which may lead to promotion) through changing responsibilities and sideways moves to alternative positions.</p>	<p>The DCU library recognises that the Incorporation Programme offers an opportunity for the DCU Library to review its structures to support the needs of multi-campus library provision. Since the PRG visit, the Library has presented a new structure to the staff which seeks to expand and enhance, where possible, the provision of services, and create a supportive working environment for all staff</p>	<p>The university welcomes progress to date on this recommendation</p>
6	P2	A/ U	<p>Develop further opportunities to embed a sustained and creative approach to staff development and training. Staff development and progression in the present day and in the context of incorporation is key to maintaining agility and morale.</p>	<p>The new organisational structure will support the implementation of further development in this area, including a named lead on staff development from September 2016. A priority for this role will be the design and implementation of a programme of professional development and training opportunities for all library staff.</p> <p>In its Prioritised Resource Requirements, DCU Library will seek funding for a facilitated training needs analysis programme in support of the planning of a comprehensive staff training and development policy.</p>	<p>The university welcomes this proposal, and looks forward to working with DCU Library through the HR Training and Development Unit to progress this recommendation</p>

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Functions, Activities and Processes					
7	P1	A/ U	Enhance mechanisms for communication and engagement with all library staff. This will require a commitment from HR as well as dedicated time by Library senior management.	The DCU Library will work over the next twelve months to develop an approach appropriate to the revised structures post-Incorporation. The challenge in creating effective communication channels across multiple campuses is recognised.	The university welcomes this proposal, and looks forward to supporting the Library in the implementation of this recommendation.
Budget					
8	P1	U	Increase recurrent funding for information resources to meet the needs of teaching, learning and research in line with comparator universities. Overall resourcing of the library is below par with comparisons with institutions nationally and internationally.	<p>The Library can provide clear sources for benchmarks and comparators nationally and internationally. Data provided on p.22 of the SAR is accurate and demonstrates this recommendation by the PRG.</p> <p>DCU library remains concerned at the comparably low levels of funding for information resources and collections when compared to national and internationally comparable university libraries.</p> <p>To this end, DCU Library proposes seeking funding to support an externally led, independent review which will identify appropriate benchmark institutions for the DCU Library. This analysis and review will benchmark current funding levels across comparable institutions on a per FTE basis, examine the methodologies applies for budget allocation to libraries within the HE sector and examine strategic options for DCU Library, e.g.</p>	<p>In the Government funding environment which has existed in recent years all departments across the university have seen their funding significantly reduced. Notwithstanding these significant funding reductions, the University has been and is still required to maintain a balanced budget. In that context the University has looked to all faculties and departments to grow their non-exchequer sources of revenue.</p> <p>The University has to manage budget allocations in the context of the overall funding available to the University. In the current financial year the University increased the Library budget by €195k (7%). It is hoped that with the improvement in the</p>

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				<p>approach to Open Access, acquisition strategies, digital resources etc.</p>	<p>economy the funding to the sector will increase giving the University flexibility to further increase the funding to faculties and units.</p> <p>The university notes that budgetary modelling varies across the university sector, and considers that it may be useful for any future benchmarking to include details on all elements of funding, including purchasing budgets.</p>
9	P2	A	<p>Develop and present evidence-based and return on investment cases on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. improving access to books across two incorporated Libraries through investment in RFID technology ii. developing special collections and associated spaces iii. Extending the opening hours of the post-graduate reading room 	<p>Since the PRG visit, the Library has submitted a proposal to university SMG in relation to these projects. In summary,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) RFID is a planned project in the Library Operational Plan – pending University investment 2) Special Collections is a key strategic priority and is part of the DCU Campaign. Storage is the enabling aspect of this project and a proposal is currently with SMG. 3) All Library hours are under review as part of Incorporation on both campuses. 	<p>The university welcomes progress in relation to this recommendation</p>

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Accommodation / Library Building					
10	P1	U	<p>Develop a prioritised plan for sustained maintenance of the Library building. The PRG has concerns with regard to attention given to building maintenance by the University.</p>	<p>DCU Library propose that in the longer term, a review of our funding levels and approach to the allocation of recurrent budget will provide an opportunity to consider how the future ongoing maintenance of the libraries will be sustained.</p>	<p>In the context of a constrained University funding environment, buildings maintenance and refurbishment resources are insufficient across the University. The University's Planned Preventive Maintenance (PPM) programme ensures core building systems and infrastructure (lighting, heating, HVAC, Fire safety, Water supply etc are fit-for-purpose. Refurbishment of buildings on campus is carried out on a prioritised basis as funding is made available.</p>
11	P2	A	<p>Review the library building holistically and develop a refurbishment plan alongside a re-purposing of space to meet user needs</p>	<p>We contextualise the Library building in the Strategy as intrinsically linked to collection development, collection management, customer services and staff environments. We welcome the opportunity to reengineer the building and have shown how this can have very significant impact on the student experience in projects such as 'The Lounge'. Further developments are contingent on budgetary decisions, for example, increased storage capacity in the long term will enable research depth and teaching collections flexibility with a lower impact on materials expenditure.</p>	<p>In the context of a multi-campus University, DCU welcomes the review of the library building and the development of a re-purposing plan, on a phased basis, to meet used needs. The University will work with the Library staff to try and identify resources to enable the plan to be implemented.</p>

3. SUMMARY OF THE ONE-YEAR PLAN

There are a number of existing projects in the Operational Plan which are intended to ensure the delivery of the Library post-Incorporation. We are working in a very fluid environment until that process is complete but are determined to maintain focus on the student experience and in ensuring an appropriate research environment is delivered by the Library. We also note that at the time of writing we have no projected 2016/2017 budget.

Our prioritised activities for implementation in the next 12 months include,

1. The development of an implementation plan for the current DCU Library Strategy, focusing on how the revised, post-Incorporation structures can be used to deliver on our currently stated goals
2. Deliver revised operational structures for the DCU library within the post-Incorporation DCU, placing a particular emphasis on the development of a comprehensive communications plan for a multi-campus library
3. Complete an independently led review, aiming to benchmark the operations and funding model for DCU Library with those of identified benchmark institutions.
4. Completion of Training Needs Analysis within the Library to facilitate the development of a comprehensive staff training and development policy..

4. SUMMARY OF THE THREE-YEAR PLAN

Driven by the University Library and University Strategies we have been clear in our intended prioritisation of services. However, a three-year plan would be enabled by the successful achievement of the Library's strategic priorities and we welcome the support for those by the PRG.

Our prioritised goals for 2019/2020, reflective of the recommendations made by the PRG include the following:

1. The expanded and enhanced DCU post-incorporation will have a richer and **deeper research base** in the Humanities and this will be reflected in our Libraries
2. **Open Access** will be a collaborative effort at DCU and the Library will lead on Research Communication Services in support of DCU's international positioning
3. **Digital collections** are the single largest and most used field and will continue to be developed in terms of rich content, cutting edge technology and UX design
4. **Storage** is a priority and the Library will develop an interlinked strategy for closed-access collection care and digitisation policies
5. The **student voice** is critical to the success of our services and this will be constantly listened to and monitored formally and informally

6. Our services will contribute **content and expertise** to the University's online environments and its teaching modes and curricula
7. Technology is at the heart of many **students' library experience** and we aim to be at the leading edge of content, devices and tools through our services
8. Our spaces will be welcoming, **fit-for-purpose and innovative** to suit multiple learning styles and will be places that enrich DCU's environment

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Quality Committee (for the Self-Assessment Report)

- Janice Hill (Chair), Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Lisa Callaghan (Vice Chair), Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Betty Bowden, Library Assistant, Collection & Systems Services
- Ellen Breen, Sub-Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Miriam Corcoran, Sub-Librarian, Collection & Systems Services
- Peter Dudley, Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Paraic Elliott, Library Assistant, Information & Public Services
- Amanda Halpin, Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Jack Hyland, Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Mary Kiely, Assistant Librarian, Collection & Systems Services
- Shauna McDermott, Senior Library Assistant, Information & Public Services
- David Power, Senior Library Assistant, Collection & Systems Services
- Christopher Pressler, Director of Library Services

5.2 Peer Review Group members

- Ms Caroline Williams, Director of Libraries and Research & Learning Resources, The University of Nottingham [Chair]
- Mr John Cox, University Librarian, National University of Ireland, Galway [Deputy Chair]
- Dr Sandra Collins, Director, National Library of Ireland
- Professor Gareth Jones, School of Computing, Dublin City University
- Ms Michele Pringle, Faculty Manager, Engineering and Computing, Dublin City University

5.3 Quality Committee (for the Quality Improvement Plan)

- Christopher Pressler, Director of Library Services
- Ellen Breen, Sub-Librarian, Information & Public Services
- Miriam Corcoran, Sub-Librarian, Collection & Systems Services

5.4 Prioritised Resource Requirements

Project #	Project Title	Cost Estimate
1	Independently led benchmarking review	15,000
2	Realignment of Glasnevin Library space to enhance student study space services, in line with strategic priorities on Student Experience	20,000
3	Conduct a facilitated Training Needs Analysis	5,000