

University of Sussex
Library Consultative Group

Notes of the 104th meeting held at 3.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 2 June, 2004
in the Library Meeting Room

Present: Prof. Tom Collett (LifeSci), Maggie Fieldhouse (Library), Lynn Gibbs (SOCCUL), Barbara Merchant (SPRU), Ley Robinson (TLDU), Prof. Geoffrey Sampson (SciTech), Ben Wynne (Library), Cath Morgan (Library), William Alexander (Library), Chris Derbyshire (MA Rep, HUMS), Julia Sutherland (Sussex Institute), Deborah Shorley, Librarian (Chair)

Apologies: Philip Barber (HUMS).

788 Chair's communications

The Librarian commented that it was particularly disappointing that there were so few representatives from Schools. She requested that attendees encourage representation from UG, PG and Faculty.

789. Ben Wynne introduced the Library's Strategic Plan and outlined the information gathering process that had informed the document. This included results from the Library user survey, visits to other libraries, idea generating meeting by all Library staff, focus groups with academic staff, students and the support services. He highlighted some key points

- Number of separate service points
- Electronic information, access and general IT support in the library
- Availability of course reading/key texts
- Balance teaching/research resources allocation and support

In response to questions

- 1) Rationalising the service points would reduce confusion amongst students on where to go for a service during different opening hours. It would enable a more effective use of staff during quiet service times.
- 2) The extent of the move away from print based to electronic resources would depend on the subject area. Archiving issues would need to be dealt with at a National, not local, level as all institutions have the same requirements.
- 3) The 50/50 split between spend on staff and resources is something that will need to be achieved in the next year as currently Sussex allocates more to staffing than other 1994 Group universities.

The Librarian commented that the Strategic Plan reflected the Mission of the University and the users needs and that it would involve a lot of work for all concerned. She thanked Ben Wynne for taking the lead in the strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan would be taken to SMG in June and would be disseminated via the University Bulletin, Library Newsletter and the website.

790. Maggie Fieldhouse presented the Library Regulations. She emphasised that the content remained; it was purely the format that had changed. The aim had been to remove as much Library terminology as possible and thus make them easier to understand.

In response to questions:

1. Contacting students via email was University policy. Individuals could request print notification if they would prefer but they would then be reliant on internal post.
2. Maggie would be circulating the Regulations to Deans and Heads of Departments after the meeting for comments prior to the paper being presented at Senate.

791. Cath Morgan stated that following a number of requests from academic staff for reminders before books were due back, rather than immediately after they became overdue, the Library hoped to implement courtesy notices in the new academic session. They would only be sent out for Long Loan items and the Library would be unable to accept responsibility for failed emails. This new service would be reviewed after a year.

Cath also commented that whilst the Library did not use fines as a method of income generation but as a method of ensuring the effective circulation of stock, the income from fines contributed to the Library budget and therefore a drop in the amount of fines collected would have an impact on resources.

792. William Alexander introduced his paper on the allocation of Library Resources. The aim is for the Library to be totally transparent in its allocation of resources.

Concern was raised over the 25/75 split of resource allocation for teaching and research. William explained that the weighting was derived partially to protect LifeSci., however the Library had also historically focussed its resources on Undergraduates rather than research. The budget was intended to redress this situation, particularly in the light of the University's mission to become an outstanding research university as well as a teaching university.

Geoffrey Sampson raised concern that there was a danger of losing interdisciplinary materials if they were purchased by a different department. William emphasised that departments were able to purchase titles in any subject they needed to support the research and teaching requirements of their staff so this need not be an issue.

Subject Liaison Librarians would also work in consultation with academics and each other before cancelling any subscriptions to periodicals.

793. Any other business

Maggie Fieldhouse reported on a paper on Reading List provision that had been presented to TEQAC. Inputting the information onto TalisList and linking to the catalogue was a time-consuming process leading to considerable backlogs, and in stock not being available when required.

Recommendations were:

- to limit the number of items on a Reading List
- to prioritise the acquisition of stock over entering on TalisList
- encourage students to purchase key texts where possible.

Copies of the report were to be distributed to Heads of Department and members of the Library Consultative Group