Library Services Strategic Plan
2014/15 – 2018/19
(revised summer 2017)
MISSION
To inspire Imperial’s communities of learners and researchers by connecting them to information and expertise.

VISION
We will provide first-class, user-focused services, expertise and spaces. We will enable learners and researchers to navigate the changing information landscape, working in an innovative, proactive and agile way.
Values

Our values underpin our service centric approach to delivering our mission. We will:

- Strive for integrity and transparency, respecting our colleagues and users
- Listen to our users and endeavour to understand their requirements, putting our diverse College communities at the centre of our services
- Aim for innovation using proactive work practices to deliver creative and robust services
- Strive for excellence, seeking to always be professional with our colleagues and users
- Collaborate and form partnerships within the College and with other organisations to bring benefit to our users and enhance our services
- Remain committed to our staff’s growth to optimise their talent and to learn new skills that will underpin our evolving service
- Remain committed to enabling the learning opportunities of our users and staff
Introduction

We take pride in the fact that our delivery of customer-focused services is recognised by our users. That the Library remains central to students is evidenced by the continuing rise in the use of the College’s physical Library spaces ahead of the overall rise in student numbers and despite the fact that over 90% of the Library’s resources are available online. Building on the achievements undertaken during the first two years of our 2014/15–2018/19 strategy, we will continue to be a valued partner contributing to the College’s learning and research activities and aligning services to our users’ needs. The changing higher education policy environment for both teaching and research combined with other new opportunities has resulted in a transformation of service needs. In delivering the strategy we wish to seize the opportunity to create an environment which fosters exploration and innovation.

Our strategic plan is underpinned by an operational plan and both will be reviewed annually. This version reflects revisions undertaken in May/June 2017.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. We will develop services to support all of Imperial’s communities
2. We will enhance the impact of College’s research through the development of researcher-focused services
3. We will transform our spaces so that they are inspiring for learners and researchers and remain relevant to their evolving needs
4. We will optimise our digital spaces to ensure that content and services are discoverable and accessible
5. We will embrace innovative ways of working
6. We will develop our people by creating an enabling culture
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

We will develop services to support all of Imperial’s communities

CONTEXT

• The Government’s focus on teaching excellence and its implications on the skills required for effective learning, and for evidencing learning gains
• Our communities of users are diverse, ranging from prospective students through to alumni, and including our NHS and Crick partners. Our services need to support their diverse needs
• The publication of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the implications for evolving teaching practices and learning support
• Evolving relationships with our NHS partners

KEY DELIVERABLES

1.1 We will work with our College partners to deliver and develop services to enrich the College’s distinctive education and student experience

1.2 We will work with our College partners to develop a distinct alumni service as part of their lifelong relationship with College

1.3 In collaboration with our College partners we will develop services and resources which are personalised, relevant and welcoming for our prospective and pre-sessional students

1.4 We will work with our healthcare partners to support their endeavours to translate research into practice and deliver evidence-based patient care

1.5 We will develop services to enhance the experience of taught students and will seek ways of evidencing outcomes

1.6 We will support those who teach, including through the ongoing development of our Reading Lists service
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

We will enhance the impact of College’s research through the development of researcher-focused services

CONTEXT

• Funders are taking an increasing interest in open science and are asking those who benefit from public funds to support research to publish their findings open access and to make their research data available
• The next Research Excellence Framework (REF) exercise (REF 2021) is likely to include all researchers. To be eligible for submissions, outputs must have been made available in a repository within timescales set out by the REF policy
• Open access to outputs and research data gives the opportunity to maximise access to and impact of College research
• The complex funder and publisher policy landscape and emerging publishing business models are creating complexity during the transition to open science. Opportunities exist to minimize the administrative burden during that transition

KEY DELIVERABLES

2.1 We will continue to work in partnership with the research community and other College stakeholders to develop and deliver services to support and enable a transition to open science

2.2 We will take a lead in the development of policies which support open science amongst the wider HE community in a way that maximises the retention of re-use rights

2.3 We will evaluate opportunities to develop our services and build our expertise in order to maximise the visibility and impact of College’s research output

2.4 Through engaging with our researchers we will continue to enhance our understanding of their needs

2.5 We will promote and support good data stewardship
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

We will transform our spaces so they are inspiring for learners and researchers and remain relevant to their evolving needs

CONTEXT

- We continue to see increased use of physical library spaces, often over and above what might be expected as a result of student growth and the increased availability of online content
- Students require a variety of working environments, from the silent to the technologically rich collaborative spaces. The provision
of such spaces in a neutral environment, alongside relevant services, remains important to them

- We will ensure that we have input to the White City master planning process to ensure that appropriate learning facilities and services are available on that growing campus
- The College Space Sharing Programme gives new opportunities for considering all learning spaces holistically
- Works are now underway to improve the environmental control at Central Library and there is an opportunity to consolidate that investment to improve the physical working spaces

KEY DELIVERABLES

3.1 We will plan the remaining elements of the Central Library project in a way which minimises the adverse impacts on students

3.2 We will continue to make the case for the full transformation of Central Library and will work with Advancement to secure the necessary funds to complete the refurbishment

3.3 We will review library research and learning space provision across the campuses to ensure that it remains relevant to evolving teaching, learning and service requirements

3.4 We will work with other services to propose an interim service model for delivering library services to those early occupants at White City

3.5 As the White City vision develops, we will determine an appropriate model for learning spaces and library services to support research and teaching on the new campus

3.6 We will regularly evaluate the user experience of all library spaces
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

We will optimise our digital spaces to ensure that content and services are discoverable and accessible

CONTEXT

- At the heart of the Learning and Teaching Strategy is a renewed focus on digital learning which recognises that online learning and digitally-enhanced teaching create opportunities for the delivery of innovative education
- The College’s education and digital strategies are being developed to be at the forefront of e-learning
- With 92% of the Library’s content budget being spent on online resources it is essential that those resources are discoverable, accessible and usable by Imperial’s communities
- New and emerging teaching methods continue to blend the online with the face to face
- The increased uptake of mobile technologies affords the opportunity to deliver new services to wider audiences

KEY DELIVERABLES

4.1 We will work with those developing the Learning and Teaching Strategy implementation plan to ensure that library services remain relevant and aligned

4.2 We will continue to work with publishers to ensure that their content is available in the most appropriate way for teaching and research use

4.3 We will continue to carry out user experience (UX) research to ensure our online services meet the needs of Imperial’s communities

4.4 We will continue to support the development of blended learning, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), teaching and student engagement

4.5 We will explore ways of delivering more support and training online making it accessible whenever and wherever it is needed
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

We will embrace innovative ways of working

CONTEXT

• The opportunities to build on previous successes by continuing to identify opportunities to streamline processes and focus on user-centered services
• The opportunities to harness the growing inter-operability between College systems e.g. Banner (student information management system)
• The opportunities presented by the increasing availability of data to support decision-making

KEY DELIVERABLES

5.1 We will seek to re-engineer our workflows across Library Services to improve efficiency, including seeking integration with College systems in order to enhance our processes and services

5.2 We will continue to make decisions based on evidence and we will develop our business intelligence and statistical analysis capabilities to inform our work and to support others

5.3 We will continue to review the impact of any proposed process or service change from our users’ perspectives including consulting or seeking feedback as appropriate

5.4 We will take advantage of the improved data available from the implementation of new College systems in order to streamline our processes to improve reading list management and library membership workflows
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

We will develop our people by creating an enabling culture

CONTEXT

• The increasingly collaborative nature of our work including cross-team and cross-department working for system and policy changes, and other work activity
• A recognition that some new areas of work require the development of new skills (e.g. analytics and bibliometrics)
• Our track record and successes using Operational Excellence (OE) and continuous improvement methodologies, and the opportunities to build on those skills to improve our day-to-day operations
• Our desire to create an enabling culture that empowers non-hierarchical decision-making

KEY DELIVERABLES

6.1 We will embed new staff induction and staff development policies

6.2 We will embed a culture of professional talent development to ensure that we have the skills to support new areas of work, and which reflect our service needs and the development needs of our staff

6.3 We will cultivate a staff organisation where all members are encouraged and supported to take ownership of and responsibility for their area of work