The University of Manchester Library

Strategy proposal consultation

Introduction

The University of Manchester Library (UML) is a continuing success story. It is recognised as a vital partner in the University's aspirations for world-class learning and research and is valued as a trusted University asset for its breadth and depth of scope, and service ethos.

This Strategic Plan will drive the development of the Library towards future success. It sets out a vision for the organisation we believe is needed for the future, and the things we will achieve by 2021 to meet these aspirations. Underpinned by a series of annual operational plans, the Strategy will guide our investment priorities, service, and policy development for the next three years. This is a plan to raise the bar. It will position the UML as a world-leading academic library with a crystal clear focus on its contribution to the University's strategic objectives.

The strategic objectives for the Library ensure that we can deliver in new and mission-critical areas, building services which will support the Manchester 2020 goals. We have taken account of over a century of investment in collection-building, the enormous impact of digital technologies, and the continuing importance of physical spaces for both learning and research. What matters most now is our ability to manage continuing demand for the things that once wholly defined us, while moving rapidly, and at scale, into the broader range of products, services and skills demanded by our researchers and students.

Expectations are continually shaped by new ways to learn and research, and by the ever growing pressure on students and University colleagues to achieve their potential. Our first priority, therefore, is to understand thoroughly the communities we work with. It will be vital that we face outwards from our buildings, to scan the external landscape, to analyse market data, and hold evidence-based discussions with our faculty partners. The deeper understanding of the changing needs of research and scholarship that we gain will reveal trends in learning and research behaviours that we will respond to in order to maximize the Library's contribution to University success.

Already regarded as a leader in our field, we will continue to network with our peers, both to identify best practice from within, and beyond the HE sector, and to enable co-ordinated access to global information content. We will continue to adapt for a future in which Library content and expertise are integrated into research and learning lifecycles as part of holistic and intuitive university knowledge services. We will pay particular attention to significant global and national drivers, such as the shift to more open research and the requirements of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

This Strategy is the next phase in a continual reinvention of the UML to suit changing demands and to ensure that the University of Manchester receives the very best, and most relevant, library service it can afford. While we see digital opportunities everywhere, our thinking also reflects the need for changes to our service model and a continuing, strong, presence on campus. In pursuit of success, we will attract new skills into the organisation, continue to strive for an open and unified culture which encourages innovation and review the way in which we organise ourselves. The implementation of robust methods of measuring our impact will also be key. As one of only five National Research Libraries in the UK, the UML must be every bit as world-class as the University of Manchester itself aspires to be.

Delivery of this ambitious agenda will be characterised by engagement and partnership with University staff and students, and underpinned by investment in the development of Library staff, estates and technologies. In the next three years we will see growth in our contribution to boosting research performance, developing an excellent experience for our students, and enhancing the lives of the local community.

Jan Wilkinson
University Librarian and Director of
The John Rylands Library
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Goal one: World-class research

Our vision is to:

Have a key role in enabling researchers across all disciplines to produce research with the widest **impact** at all stages of their careers. We will emphasise our roles in maximising the reach of research outputs, training early career researchers, fostering interdisciplinary research and stimulating research on our special collections.

Work with our academic colleagues to ensure our **collections** support the University's research priorities, in relation to high priority interdisciplinary research groups in all subject areas. We will invest significantly in opportunities to apply digital scholarship tools and techniques to our content, unlocking its potential.

Promote research **across discipline boundaries** by building on our relationships with the Faculties and exploring new ways to connect researchers using our systems, content and services.

Aims

We will:

- stimulate and support the University's research priorities by delivering enhanced and tailored research publishing, impact and measurement services;
- offer training and support specifically targeted at early career researchers, across the research lifecycle and tailored

to discipline/faculty-specific needs;
- provide a tailored package of advocacy and training to promote data publishing;
- lead in the development of a systems-based approach to promote collaboration between researchers, especially across disciplinary boundaries;
- develop our content and collections, stimulating new ways to exploit these resources with a focus on the University's research priorities;
- contribute to the University's Research Lifecycle Project by building data publishing services, tools and standards.
- provide content, tools and services to enable researchers to unlock the potential of digital scholarship.

Goal 2: Outstanding learning and student experience

Our vision is to:

Enrich the teaching, learning and student experience by ensuring that all our students receive a high quality, creative and innovative service.

Take an **inclusive** approach to actively supporting student retention and success, both for study on campus and through our expanding distance learner offer.

To focus on supporting the University's need to address the complex issues of differential attainment, and clearly demonstrate the unique **quality** of

its teaching and learning activity through the use of metrics and other methods of evaluating impact.

Aims

We will:

- work in partnership with the University to understand the expanding and evolving profile of distance learning so we can develop and promote a consistent and sustainable service offer, that is relevant, practical and directly supports the success of distance learning students. This will inform the enhancement of service options for all;
- support the University in its efforts to convert its offer holding students from a wide range of diverse backgrounds by developing a set of pre-entry interactions and engagement opportunities;
- establish a meaningful set of core metrics, which will feed into the creation of powerful learner analytics in support of the University's approach to improving student retention and success;

- help to address differential attainment by exploring innovative solutions to support the student groups most at risk of not achieving their full potential;
- help to improve teaching quality by offering a central forum for academics to explore and experiment with their teaching styles and learn from best practice;
- continue to take an innovative and consistent approach to ensuring the timely provision of the Library resources students need to be successful in their studies.

Goal 3: Social responsibility

Our vision is to:

Engage communities, individuals and groups with our spaces, collections and services; to enhance their lives and broaden the Library's scope for impact.

Have a positive impact on people's lives through the establishment of '**openness**' as our default.

Aims

We will:

- work in partnership with our target audiences on cultural and educational projects by engaging individuals and groups with our spaces, collections and services and developing opportunities to participate in Library activity for local residents and organisations;
- contribute to the University's Widening Participation agenda by continually creating opportunities to raise aspirations and widen participation in our local communities;
- measure the impact of our social responsibility activity, including community and public engagement, to demonstrate value and inform our future activity;
- increase the accessibility and use of University research outputs for societal benefits by supporting the dissemination and application of research and the measurement of its value and impact for non-traditional audiences;
- increase the availability and accessibility of Library content, data and services to non-traditional audiences, evolving our current practices around the acquisition, exposure and development of content, data and services to incorporate 'open principles'.

Enabling strategies

Our vision is to:

Build strong foundations to enable the Library to deliver its strategic goals, facilitating a high performing culture which will deliver service excellence.

Aims

We will:

- attract, develop and progress our people to ensure optimum performance within a culture of openness, support and trust;
- continuously review performance against agreed targets and maximise potential by giving our people the time and support to develop;
- ensure our services meet or exceed expectations, put our customers first and deliver without unnecessary friction;
- help customers to take advantage of opportunities to personalise their experience;
- ensure that Library facilities support the teaching and learning, research, academic and social needs of the University by increasing the range and quality of flexible spaces across all our spaces;
- contribute to the wider landscape of Higher Education through strategic collaboration with other academic institutions;
- ensure our financial and business planning supports our strategic direction.