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Introduction

The Library aims to develop and deliver a mix of services that anticipate and meet the needs of the Institute community. Our annual report records our activities during the academic year and records whether our operational objectives were achieved and how they make a positive contribution to the Institute’s strategic aims. Improving and enhancing the student experience at DkIT Library is the key driver of library strategy.

This report details how resources have been allocated and how the challenge of budgetary and other cuts have been met.

Achievements / Highlights in 2013/14:

- We introduced a Kindle loan service in October 2013
- Information Literacy Prize was launched to recognize student excellence in information skills
- Acting on student feedback we continued to enhance services and expand our customer care role
- We installed a credit/debit card payment system
- We extended our evening opening hours to 10 pm for the May exam period
Services

We aim to provide appropriate support services to the Institute community and are proactive in seeking feedback from our users to inform the enhancement of those services.

During the year our successful engagement with the students was reflected in:

Over 90 visits to the Library per FTE
7 checkouts per FTE
Over 500 logins to electronic resources per FTE

We were very happy to receive positive feedback from a student survey where a massive 97% said that the library has helped them to learn new things for their course.
During the year we purchased 4 Kindles for loan. The new service was publicized to the DkIT community and drop-in information sessions were offered to familiarize everyone with using the Kindles. A full list of the e-books available on the Kindles was uploaded to the Library catalogue and staff and students invited to suggest further titles for purchase.

Based on student feedback and observed demand, in October 2013 phone chargers were made available for loan (for use within the Library only).

Our collection of online subject guides – LibGuides – was extended over the Summer of 2013. The collection was promoted via our information skills workshops and via online channels.

Group work rooms were closed for general use and made bookable when not in high demand for shared use.

In an effort to make payments of Library charges more convenient for our readers we installed a credit/debit card payment system in late 2013. The first live transaction was processed by this new system in February 2014.

**External memberships:**

We offer both paid and free membership to a range of individuals from the local community with the majority of readers from the community joining via the 1 Card 6 Libraries. This reciprocal borrowing scheme with Louth County Library (the first of its kind in the country) has, since its launch in Autumn 2012, seen both Libraries increase their membership and footfall. This initiative has resulted in widening participation in DkIT activities with over 1,000 Louth County Library members joining DkIT Library since 1 Card 6 Libraries commenced. In addition to borrowing privileges DkIT Library offers

- Access to a large and varied collection of books, e-books, articles, DVDs and CDs
- PC/Wi Fi access
- Study/reading spaces
Membership figures below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>11/12</th>
<th>12/13</th>
<th>13/14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam invigilators</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External –individual</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates/Alumni</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth County Library</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>1075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’Fiaich PLC students</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School teachers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff - retired</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students of other colleges</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary groups</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>898</td>
<td>1281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the calendar year 2014 the number of Louth County Library members rose to 1542, of whom 101 had borrowed items from DkIT Library. Of these members 4.71% have borrowed more than one item.

Cultural development and community engagement:

The Library continues to play an active role in supporting the Institute’s commitment to the social and cultural development of the North East Region.

We provide venues for the meetings of a local reading group and host cultural events throughout the year that are open to both the DkIT and the local community.

Engagement with the Library via social media continues to increase with almost 700 likes on our Facebook page, over 450 followers on Twitter and over 20,000 hits on the Library home page.

Cultural activities organised by the Library and through the Writer in Residence programme included:

Events:

- March: Poetry reading to celebrate World Poetry Day
- June: An appeal for donations was sent via all our communications channels and we had a marvellous response with over 700 items received
  - Information Literacy Prize 2014 launched
- July: Inaugural screening of the DkIT Film Club
- October: To celebrate Open Access Week we re-launched the DkIT Institutional Research Repository with its new name - STÔR
November

To celebrate Library Ireland Week we held a Digital Photography competition “DkIT Library in a Snapshot”

Increasing Research visibility:

The Library continues to enhance the visibility of DkIT’s research output through our management and promotion of the Institute’s open access institutional research repository. Training and support workshops on how to depositing research materials into the repository were held across the campus during March 2014. The number of submissions to STÓR has not reached the expected level so advocacy by the Library is a core priority.

The STÓR repository went live in the RIAN national repository portal in October 2013. We celebrated this milestone as part of Open Access Week with a re-launch of the repository under its new name, an acronym of Stór Taighde Orighialla. Daithí Kearney, Lecturer in the Department of Music, was presented with a prize as winner of the competition to find suitable name of the research repository.

All DkIT research output deposited in STÓR is now conveniently discoverable through RIAN in addition to being searchable via Google Scholar.

During December 2013 we were given the opportunity to curate The History of Religious & Cultural Integration in Drogheda (HORCID) database when it was donated to us by The Drogheda Civic Trust.
As always the Library was involved in the student induction / orientation activities providing tours of the Library space and facilities initially. More in-depth information sessions on researching, evaluating and using information ethically were delivered throughout the year with peak demand in Semester 1.

During the 13/14 academic year 356 bookings for Information Skills sessions were made and over 2,500 students attended at least one tour or tutorial. 53% of incoming First Years participated in at least one Information Skills session.

We delivered a total of 255 contact hours across all Schools and all levels over the course of the year. In addition to using the Library Information Skills Training Room many sessions were also delivered in classrooms and computer laboratories throughout the campus.

During the year we scheduled regular Drop-In sessions on Inter Library Loans, Harvard Referencing, Kindles and Finding Information for your Assignment. We also held 16 Pop-Up Libraries across the campus.

**Threshold concepts**

During the Summer of 2014 we overhauled our popular and increasingly in-demand Information Skills instruction classes to incorporate “threshold concepts”. These concepts are designed to be “transformative, irreversible, integrative, bounded and troublesome” (American College and Research Libraries - ACRL) for the student and move away from simple demonstration of library databases and search portals towards challenging students to reflect on the nature of the research process and information usage.

The 7 Threshold Concepts in Information Skills that we have identified are:

- **Metadata = findability**
- **Scholarship is a conversation**
- **Good searches use database structure**
- **Format as process**
- **Authority is constructed and contextual**
- **Information has value**
- **Research as Inquiry**
These principles have informed our planning in relation to Information Skills classes using practical demos, discussions and other interactive group work. The sessions are, as was the case with previous tutorials tailored to the particular programme and level of study of the attendees.

From the beginning of the new academic year (2014/15), our Information Skills classes will incorporate the pedagogical principles of Threshold Concepts as developed for libraries by the ACRL and tailored for our own student body.

Over summer 2014 we worked intensively on developing content and reusable learning objects, (RLOs), which could be used within a classroom setting to augment the chosen threshold concepts for our students. We then set about blending these concepts into our classes. We coupled traditional information instruction with more challenging concepts for the students so that students would not only take away the traditional skills of information discovery and retrieval, but also have an understanding about the nature of information. We sought to introduce students to concepts such as placing information in context, how it is constructed and how authority is constructed. They would also be introduced to the ideas of metadata, scholarship, how value is understood in information terms and that the process of document production is more important that what format a document is presented in.

These reusable learning objects were incorporated into new and enhanced content in our suite of Lib Guides.

This transformation of our content in Information Skills Instruction has been very challenging for the staff and is seen as an ongoing process for us. We are continually developing content and practices for our classes and will engage on a reflection and re-appraisal process in the 2014/15 academic year.

Information Desk

The Information Desk was relocated during the previous year to make it more convenient for readers to consult with Library staff. The new location, beside the main Library Desk, proved popular with our readers and was a factor in the increased use of the service from less than 200 queries in 2012/13 to over 1,000 in 2013/14.

Aware of the need to have a designated space available for longer consultations with individuals or small groups of readers a bookable consultation space was made available during October 2013. As the designated space is collocated within a staff office it appropriateness is under review.

Following on from the success of the Information Literacy Competition held in 2012 a second competition was launched in 2013. This year we had two distinct categories: one for 1st Year students and one for 3rd & 4th Years.
The role of the Library in DkIT is to encourage, facilitate and enable learning, teaching and research. We support academic and intellectual freedom and endeavour to demonstrate this in our collection through multiple viewpoints. We aim to hold on site as much essential material as may be required in either print – currently over 50,000 items - or in digital format. We support 24/7 virtual access to electronic resources via our web pages. Subscriptions to online journal databases, individual electronic journals and e-books represent the largest portion of our spend on resources.

Library services have continued to experience a contraction of available resources over several years.

During the year the Librarian and Subject Liaison teams compiled collection profiles for each academic department and met with the Heads of Schools & Departments to review these reports and plan for resourcing / funding the coming year. The reports detailed expenditure on and use of both print and electronic resources in specific disciplines (see Appendix 7 for details).

Summary of Acquisitions 2014

The figures in this section refer to financial year January to December 2014.

The overall spend per full time equivalent (FTE) was €42.15, a 4.13% decrease on spend per FTE last year.

Print Books

This year has seen a drop of 14.6% in the number of titles ordered by the Library. 1642 items were added to the Library; of these 45.43% were donated items. The average price paid for a book was €58.35, a 27.9% increase on the average price paid last year. The average delivery time was 1.12 weeks. The book spend per FTE was €8.76. Books accounted for 18.53% of the total spend on materials. A total of 2241 items were withdrawn from the collection this year. The YBP Annual Book Price update reported an overall increase of 3% in the average list price of books profiled by YBP (YBP Library Services, 2014). A national book tender involving both institute of technology and university libraries got underway in 2014, the tender will cover the supply of both print and e-books to libraries involved and is likely to be in place by midyear 2015.
E-books

169 e-books were added to the collection during 2014; this includes 49 Kindle titles. In 2014, the Library ceased its annual subscription to the Ebrary Academic Complete collection and moved over to the Ebrary Short Term Loan Collection. Loans are triggered by patron browsing of titles and by copying and printing pages from titles. This type of acquisition model is known as patron driven acquisition or demand driven acquisition. A total of 282 loans were activated by users during 2014. The short term loan model has proved more cost effective for the Library than an annual subscription to a collection such as Academic Complete. There have however been a number of price increases in the cost of short term loans from some publishers during this time which have resulted in the Library removing some publisher’s titles from the Ebrary Short Term Loan Collection. YBP Library Services (2014) predict that UK and USA e-book prices will increase 3-4% in FY15.

Periodicals

Periodicals accounted for 0.59% of the total materials spend in 2014. The periodical spend was €0.52 per FTE. Spend figures for 2014 are low as SWETS, subscription agent for the supply of periodicals to Irish universities and a number of Institute of Technology libraries, went into administration forcing the Library to reorganise supply of periodicals, this meant a delay in processing journal renewals this year. A total of 10 titles were cancelled in 2014 due to low usage and budget constraints. No new titles were subscribed to in 2014. The EBSCO Serial Price Projection for 2015 forecasts price rises between 5-7% for 2015 (EBSCO, 2015).

Databases

Databases accounted for 69.52% of the total materials spend in 2014. The database spend was €32.86 per FTE. Database subscriptions remained static in 2014 with no cancellations or new additions.

References:


**Interlibrary Loans**

The Library supplements its print and online collections through the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service. Requests can be for either: books and other loans, such as e-books, theses; or for journal articles and copies of chapters. Demand for articles/copies was slightly higher than for books/loans this year.

4% of our student population used the ILL service during the year.

The number of items supplied by each library type reflects this higher demand for articles. The Subito Library Service is chiefly used for article requests, and so it accounted for the majority of material supplied to us again this year. In keeping with past years, the British Library was also a key supplier of material.
The School of Health and Science made the majority (54%) of successful requests this year. The number of requests made by the School of Business and Humanities and School of Health and Science were largely the same as last year. This year, however, saw a slight drop in requests from the School of Engineering and an 8% increase in the number of requests made by those in the School of Informatics and Creative Arts.

Beginning in March 2014, most new ILL requests from students were passed on to the relevant Subject Liaison for review. In most cases the Subject Liaison then contacted the student directly before the ILL request was processed. The reason for this was twofold:
1. It created a dialogue between the student and the Subject Liaison whereby the Subject Liaison could provide guidance on how to search our print and online collections for relevant information. The Subject Liaison could also recommend additional material that may be of benefit.

2. The Subject Liaison could recommend suitable alternative material already available in our print and online collections, thus providing a cost saving to the Library and a time saving to the student.

With the exception of other Institutes of Technology, libraries that supply ILLs to us charge a fee per item. To increase the cost effectiveness of the ILL service this year the purchase price of an item was taken into consideration. As a result, some books were bought rather than borrowed. This included e-book editions that were downloaded onto the Library’s Kindles.

The Interlibrary Loan service now administers access to other libraries through Letters of Introduction, the MusicPAL agreement and the Institutes of Technology Partners agreement.
Environment

How Library space it is curated and used plays a significant role in providing a campus environment that is conducive to research and learning. Given the demand for group work areas and the diversity of learning needs we regularly review the space in order to repurpose it to meet changing demands. This is particularly challenging as the Library was originally designed to cater for a student population of 3,000 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) students, with student numbers now over c. 4,000 FTE the Library is over capacity and can no longer adequately cater for the diverse needs of our student population.

The Library is open as a fully staffed facility 64.5 hours per week during Term Time. Our student to seat ratio of c. 11:1 is an indication of the inadequacy of the current space to meet the needs of the student population. All the Library rooms are made available to students at times of peak demand: approaching assignment deadlines and examination times.

Health and safety in the Library is managed through the institute’s OHSAS (Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series) 18001 safety management system. This system ensures that safety management is on-going and that compliance can be demonstrated. Awareness of health and safety is promoted amongst Library staff and users. We undertake regular risk assessments so that we can mitigate risks where possible. Staff are trained in manual handling, several staff are also trained in first aid. Our Emergency Evacuation Procedure is reviewed regularly and we all participate in evacuation drills.

In addition to risk assessments we also conduct periodic dilapidations reviews to document areas that need repair and / or redecoration. This ensures that the space is maintained to as high a standard as budgetary constraints allow.
Quality Assurance

In November 2013 we moved from using the ISO 9001: 2008 Quality Assurance to a DkIT Quality Management System based on ISO. The initial area to be included in the new system and prepared for audit was the Readers Services function. See Appendix 5 for details of goals and Key Performance Indicators.

Funding

Figures in this section refer to the financial year January 2014 to December 2014.

The Library’s main source of funding comes from the HEA allocated institute budget. In the current challenging funding situation we continue to secure discounts from suppliers whenever possible, promote cost effectiveness and seek alternative income streams.

The amount allocated to the Library from the institute budget for 2014 was €200,000 – a reduction of over 9% on the 2013 allocation...

In addition to this amount the Library also received funding from; Library fines and memberships; an allocation of 15% of taught Level 9 fees (after capitation); 5% of Level 10 research programme fees. Some electronic resource subscriptions are funded by the Research Office and the Department of Maths & Computing.

Online resources accounted for 70% of expenditure, print books 17% and journals, both print and electronic, 13%.

DkIT Library continues to face challenges in obtaining sufficient funding to maintain an appropriate level of resourcing to support teaching, learning and research with increasing student demands and decreasing budgets.
Changes in staffing during the year were:

- In March 2014 Raquel Ruiz replaced Gemma Callen as Library Assistant.
- In July 2014 Nicola Hanlon, who was on career break and working in New Zealand, resigned her post. Her post was backfilled on a temporary basis.

During summer 2014, Fiona Lacey, a graduate of NUI Maynooth worked with us on a voluntary basis for 6 weeks in preparation for undertaking the Masters in Library and Information Studies programme in UCD.

In September / October 2013 Christine Larkin, a recent graduate in Cultural Studies, volunteered with us, helping to demonstrate the self-service loan system to new students.

Staff training and Development

We recognise centrality of staff to the success of any Library service and are aware that the development and maintenance of our skills and competencies is integral to delivering a responsive, high quality services to our users.

We take a proactive approach to staff training and development and avail of opportunities for peer-to-peer, Institute and externally provided training in order to keep our skills current and relevant. This can be challenging in a constantly changing environment.

Staff participated in a range of training and continuing personal and professional development activities throughout the year. See Appendix 6 for details.
Technology and Systems

The services offered by the Library are heavily dependent on the Institute’s computer hardware and networks functioning effectively and with minimum down time. We continuously explore and develop technology solutions to support Library users.

The wireless connectivity in the Library space was upgraded during Summer 2014 by the relocation of existing Wi-Fi hubs to optimise the range and strength of their signals and the installation of additional hubs.

The student PCs in the Library are nearing end of life and will need to be replaced with appropriate devices and a more flexible configuration in the near future. We continue to collaborate with Computer Services (CS) on finding a resolution to this problem.

While we have support for computing and print services during the standard working week no printing support is available during late evening and Saturday opening hours. We have also lobbied for Computer Services support for evenings and Saturdays over several years. We do now have phone contact details for both services available to us at these times.