Libraries at the Crossroads
Resolving Identities
From Support Service to Co-Creator: Transforming the identity of Library Services at King’s College London

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Where we are today…
How we got there…
And some lessons learned!
One University
5 Campuses: 3 Hospital Trusts
28,000 students: 7,000 staff
8 Libraries: 1 Archive
2.5 million visitors in person
9.6 million downloads online
Library Services Today

• 170 staff across 5 departments
• *Inward facing*: One service with shared values and a common purpose
• *Outward facing*: Partners, co-creators, and leaders at the very heart of our university
Our Values – the Quality Service Commitment

“Responsive, inclusive, knowledgeable and friendly. Proudly supporting the university community – every student, every colleague, every time”
Our Culture

- Customer focus
- Consistent service delivery
- Cross-departmental collaboration
- Freedom within a framework
- Accountability & responsibility
- High expectations of performance
## Our Structure

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Our Strategy

- 10 year Vision (2015-2025)
- 3 year strategy (2016-2019)
- Annual operational plan (2016-17)
- Individual objectives and personal development plans
By 2025...

We will have advanced from our role as supporters to become collaborators and co-creators, and will be understood as a combination of collections, content, services and expertise accessible at the point of need. We will be providing leadership in a number of key areas:

**Collaboration**

01. The substantial expertise of Library Services staff in information management, customer engagement, the development and management of informal learning spaces, the provision of student support, and the understanding of scholarly communications will be highly sought after, and we will be participating fully in policy discussion and decision making at the highest levels.

02. We will be challenging our staff to continually develop their skills and expertise, enabling them to work successfully in partnership with colleagues across the university as well as providing professional leadership outside King’s.

03. We will be at the heart of the debate over emerging models for scholarly publishing, ensuring value for money and fair access to information which our community has a key role in creating. We will be leading on research data management and digital preservation for the university, working in partnership with academic and professional services colleagues to create and embed sector-leading infrastructure and workflows.

04. Having moved beyond providing consistently excellent customer service, we will have gained deep insight into the needs of our diverse community of students, academics and researchers, and will be working alongside them in creative partnerships, enabling the delivery of individualised library resources and services.

05. We will be providing parity of access to our collections, services and support for all King’s students, staff and other service users. We will be working flexibly and maximising our use of technology to ensure that everything we offer is inclusive, and that off-campus, international and distance students have a comparable experience to those studying in London.

06. We will be continuing to enable our pedagogical expertise with deep awareness of information resources and student needs. We will be providing innovative solutions to challenges from the mass provision of skills support to all new students, to more tailored approaches for specific needs at different levels of study, assisting with student progression and retention. We will be leading on co-curricular learning for the university and be providing or coordinating a range of expanding opportunities for our students to develop experience and skills.
**Collections**

We will be investing strongly in our collections in both digital and physical formats, enabling King’s to compete at the global level. We will be participating in collaborative collection development and management initiatives at both local and national levels to make best use of our space and financial resources. We will be developing, preserving and making best use of our special collections and archives for teaching and research, for the education and enjoyment of the general public, and for the benefit of future generations.

**Technology**

We will be tracking trends and anticipating needs, enabling the provision of a technology-rich environment for our service users which mirrors the way in which technology pervades other aspects of their lives. We will be working with a range of partners to develop and apply new technologies to enhance access to our content and services, ensuring that our delivery methods are fully integrated and automated where appropriate.

**Space**

We will be working to develop and expand the Library ‘as place’, directing its resources and services more proactively throughout the academic setting, and providing the glue that brings our diverse communities together virtually and physically. We will have set ourselves apart from our competitors with an updated Maughan Library, bringing together our special collections and archives alongside world-class facilities for public engagement.

**Costs**

We will be continually innovating, developing new models and strategies for managing our services, enabling us to make valuable content and services available to more people with less effort. Our collections, spaces, infrastructure and staffing will be sufficiently well-resourced to meet the needs of both an ambitious, world-class university, and a wide variety of service users with increased expectations and demands.
Support becomes Co-creation

- Library Champions
- Opening Hours & Improving Access working groups
- Deep dive into academic reading lists
- Developing meaningful impact measures
- Ethnographic approaches to the user experience
How we got there

2011
Information Services & Systems splits and Library Services is born

2013
Quality Service Commitment is created by staff

2014
Customer Service Excellence Award is attained

2015
New Library Services Vision is agreed

2016
“One Library” operational planning approach starts
Lessons Learned
1. All library staff must transform their own sense of professional identity
Changing professional identities

- Senior staff roles have diversified
- Library staff at all levels have major contributions to make
- Flexibility, resilience, and ethical values are fundamental
- Technical and transferable skills are teachable
2. Library identities are multilayered
Adding new identities to old

- Rediscovering the value of the physical collection
- Reaching further back into the information supply chain
- Reworking existing buildings for today’s technology
- Revisiting information skills to prepare students for global and digital citizenship
3. Transforming identities takes time and relentless effort
Embedding new identities

- Have faith in the change
- Work from the top, from the bottom and side-to-side
- Get the language right
- Bring new people into the culture from the start
- Be prepared to fail and to learn from failure
- Highlight and build on what is going well
- Avoid complacency
Thank you for listening!

Kate Price

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