

**Library Services  
Operational Plan 2020-21**

**I. Student experience**

<b>Strategic area</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Continue to adapt our front-facing services in response to the pandemic.	Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison); User Support Manager.	We drew a roadmap and carried out risk assessments to plan our physical services throughout the pandemic, which led to a full reopening of our services on 6 September 2021.
Measure our front-facing services against a national customer services standard by seeking accreditation.	Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison); User Support Manager.	The Library CSE working group met regularly throughout the year and presented a portfolio of c. 300 pieces of evidence to the assessment body. The Library was assessed on 17 September and got accredited with the Customer Service Excellence standard in October 2021.
Explore ways to continue working directly with students within the new online environment.	User Support Manager; Library's student-library partnership working group.	Two well-attended online Student-Library Partnership meetings took place in the past year.

Explore the idea of combining the Library front desk with the IT help desk to provide a more joined up enquiry service for students.	Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison); User Support Manager.	With the new refurbishment plans linked to the College's agile working agenda, a separate IT desk should be created and installed in the Library in spring 2022.
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## 2. Student success

Strategic area	Lead	Progress
Develop our information resources so that just as teaching is primarily delivered online during the pandemic, students can access most reading materials electronically. Work with departments and academic staff to ensure that all key and recommended readings are ones that are available online.	Director of Library Services; Subject Librarian team; Assistant Director (Digital Services, Systems and Collections); Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison); Digital Services Team; A & M Team.	Subscriptions to Kortext, BibliU and Academic Complete UK in September 2020 increased our ebook holdings to over 200,000 titles. Our Digitisation Team processed scans of over 2000 new book chapters and journal articles for Birkbeck courses in time for the start of the autumn term.  A new structure for Birkbeck reading lists was agreed by the Education Strategy Group in May 2021.
Review the way we communicate and deliver the concept of 'the Library'	Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison), Subject Librarian team; User	A programme of 'bitesize' online training sessions was delivered during the first two weeks of February and repeated in May. A new Communications and

<p>in the context of online teaching delivery, particularly to new students. This will include developing the range of our online support and guidance and reflecting upon where best to place support material in virtual learning environments.</p>	<p>Support Manager; Library Communications and Marketing Group.</p>	<p>Marketing Strategy was agreed which will form the basis of our communications going forward.</p>
<p>Support Birkbeck's anti-racism agenda and efforts to decolonise the curriculum.</p>	<p>All.</p>	<p>See below.</p>
<p>The 'Proof of Concept: what's on your reading list?' project which is reviewing data from our digitised readings (2018-19).</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Digital Services, Systems and Collections), Digital Services Team.</p>	<p>The project examined the gender and nationality/ethnicity of authors of requested key digitised readings. The findings were presented to Library Management Team, and relevant reports were shared with Subject Librarians and Departments along with the Birkbeck Inclusive Checklist from the Education Committee. Reports were also shared with the Assistant Deans for Education and Equality with follow-up meetings to discuss origins and findings. Findings were well-received and were presented by Assistant Deans to Executive Deans.</p>

<p>“What’s on your reading list?” project reviewing data from our digitised readings (2020-21)</p>	<p>Assistant Director (Digital Services, Systems and Collections), Digital Services Team and User Support Team.</p>	<p>In response to positive feedback, a new exercise examining the gender and nationality/ethnicity of authors of requested key digitised readings (2020-21) is underway.</p>
<p>Work with Procurement/Finance to create a tender for the renewal of subscriptions to e-textbook and e-book packages, using evidence of usage in 2020-21 and student satisfaction as a basis for this.</p>	<p>Director of Library Services, Assistant Director (Digital Services, Systems and Collections), Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison), Subject Librarian team, Digital Services Team, A &amp; M Team.</p>	<p>We worked with the Procurement team to review expenditure, usage, value for money and existing HE contract frameworks. A report was submitted to Finance Director, with recommendation that a renewal of our subscriptions take place in 2021/22 without need for full tender process. This was accepted.</p>

### 3. Attracting students and celebrating Birkbeck’s unique mission

<b>Strategic area</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<p>Develop a partnership with the Access and Engagement team and participate in widening access and student engagement activities.</p>	<p>User Support Manager; Library’s Access and Engagement Group.</p>	<p>Although during the pandemic work of the Library’s Access and Engagement working group ceased, the Library organised this year’s induction of the Compass project students which took place in the Library in September 2021.</p>

#### 4. Supporting research

Strategic area	Lead	Progress
Develop our support for research students and early career researchers and continue to deliver workshops through the Birkbeck Graduate Research School.	Subject Librarian team: Research Data Support Manager; Senior Assistant Librarian (Repository and Digital Media Management).	Library staff delivered sessions via Blackboard as part of the BGRS programme throughout the academic year.
Develop our support for research staff by working more collaboratively with colleagues in the Research Office.	Library scholarly communications group: Subject Librarian; Research Data Support Manager; Senior Assistant Librarian (Repository and Digital Media Management).	The group held an initial meeting in February with Liz Francis, Head of the Research Office, to talk through how we can work more collaboratively. The group is also discussing the possibility of reaching out to Schools' Impact Officers for the same purpose.
Find a long-term solution to the preservation and accessibility issues relating to the College Archive and contribute to the planning for Birkbeck's 2023 bicentenary celebrations.	Director of Library Services; Subject Librarian for Science.	A new space to keep the Bohm, Crick and College archives will be created on Level 2 as part of the PSW project and will open in February 2022. It will include a new reading area.

<p>Raise awareness of the importance of open access amongst the academic community and expand the range of advice we offer about open access and publishing.</p>	<p>Subject Librarian team; Senior Assistant Librarian (Repository and Digital Media Management); Research Data Support Manager.</p>	<p><a href="#">A series of blog posts were published during Open Access Week.</a></p> <p>Content from ORBIT (our old thesis repository) was added to our main institutional repository, BIROn, with 527 PhD theses uploaded in 2020–2021. The repository now contains over 25,000 items, of which 41% have full-text files attached, with 34% completely open access. BIROn has registered 3.3 million downloads since its inception in late 2007. We have begun outputting publications metadata to staff profiles and the information is refreshed daily. #</p> <p>Our Research Data Support Manager helped Birkbeck researchers with 28 Data Management Plans in 2020–2021. An additional 20 data collections were deposited in BiRD, our data repository – the highest annual number so far.</p>
<p>Where affordable, move to transformative subscriptions for journals.</p>	<p>Director of Library Services; Subject Librarian team; Assistant Director (Digital Services, Systems and Collections), Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison).</p>	<p>The revised Cambridge University Press Read and Publish deal was taken up, replacing individual subscriptions. This deal provides a 20% discount on APCs. We are currently unable to afford any transformative agreements and we are looking at how we might find funding to do so.</p>

Participate in preparations for the REF, ensuring the REF submission system works with BIROn, and organising the purchase and transit of hard copy materials to REF panels.	Senior Assistant Librarian (Repository and Digital Media Management); Acquisitions and Metadata Manager.	The REF Support plugin training was completed over Teams in March 2021, the sessions were recorded and made available to the REF Support Group. Due to Covid 19 and lockdown, the final REF submission was re-scheduled for 31 March 2021. The process went smoothly and it was submitted on time.
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## 5. Working efficiently and effectively

Strategic area	Lead	Progress
Continue the process of identifying and purchasing a new Library Management System (LMS).	Technology Innovation Manager; All.	The LMS business case needs to be updated to include a section on 'vision' to take to a meeting of the Strategic Estates and Infrastructure Committee in 2021-22.
Conduct a review of the way we allocate and spend our information resources budget. The review will look at how we can maintain a digital first purchasing policy after the pandemic is over; examine the issues around transformative agreements and the balance of	Director of Library Services; Subject Librarian team; Assistant Director (Digital Services, Systems and Collections); Assistant Director (User Support, Academic Liaison).	The decision was made to centralise all journal and database expenditure from 2021-22. During 2021-22 we will be looking at our expenditure in information resources as a whole and deciding how to prioritise our expenditure.

<p>expenditure on teaching and research; and assess the value for money of our Senate House Library subscription.</p>		
<p>Continue to develop our internal communication within the Library team when most of our staff are working from home. Ensure that staff are kept informed of developments within the Library and the university, that they feel supported, and that they can contribute to the positive development of our services.</p>	<p>Senior Management team; line managers; Library's Staff Development Group.</p>	<p>The Director of Library Services emails all staff on a weekly basis with the notes of management team meetings. Various teams use Microsoft Teams to send updates that are relevant to all staff when they deal with students online and in person. Library teams have regular meetings, both as a team and in one-to-ones. Staff working on frontline services have met fortnightly throughout the year to discuss and implement our modified services during the pandemic.</p>