Library Services 2025: Our Vision

Summary

King's College London Library Services is an essential function of the university, and is deeply intertwined with teaching, learning, research, and student support. Over the last four years we have evolved our services and staffing structures significantly to provide highly responsive, sector-leading and award-winning levels of customer service. This document looks forward to how we envisage Library Services will look in 2025, providing a number of statements of our ambitions for the Division under the themes of Collaboration, Service Users, Collections, Technology, Space and Costs.

> **Our overarching vision is for Library Services to be at the very heart of the King's community, developing partnerships, expertise, resources and spaces which will enable us to succeed in our mission to deliver outstanding research and education, commensurate with our status as one of the world's leading universities.**

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:

1. 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 discussions and decision making at the highest levels.

2. 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.

3. We will be at the heart of the debate over emergent 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 infrastructures and workflows.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. We will be continuing to couple our pedagogical expertise with deep awareness of information resources and student needs. We will be providing creative 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. We will be working to develop and expand the library 'as place', diffusing its resources and services more pervasively 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.

10. 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.

Collaboration

Our staffing models have already changed significantly to enable Library Services staff to respond flexibly to the requirements of the university, and this evolution will continue. Library Services makes connections across all faculties and professional services departments, and we will use this unique position to bring together different areas of expertise and help to coordinate university activities in an increasingly interdisciplinary environment. To achieve this, we will develop a number of different communication channels to gain in-depth understanding of the challenges being faced by academic and professional services colleagues.

1. In 2025, 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 discussions and decision making at the highest levels.

Successful collaboration requires sophisticated communication skills, flexibility and a willingness to learn continually. At King's, we have fostered a highly adaptable and agile workforce, and we will continue to support a culture where staff are empowered to take the initiative. Our Quality Service Framework, with the values "Responsive, inclusive, knowledgeable and friendly, proudly supporting the university community – every student, every colleague, every time" is now being adopted more widely in the institution.

2. In 2025 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.

Libraries continue to be at the forefront of managing a major shift in scholarly communications practice, as an increasing number of funding bodies mandate that research should be freely available via an open access route. HEFCE strengthened its Open Access policy in July 2015, stating that: "journal articles and conference proceedings must be available in an open-access form to be eligible for the next REF."[1] We will continue to work closely with all players in the scholarly information chain, including authors, publishers, funders and university managers to ensure that the academic community at King's is fully supported as this complex change works through to its conclusion.

Libraries have long held the role of custodians and preservers of information, and this is no less true in the digital world. There are major challenges to be faced in deciding what digital information produced by researchers and the day to day business of the university should be

preserved, how it should be preserved, and who should pay for this major new stream of work. Library Services has been instrumental in pushing forward policies and infrastructures for research data management and digital preservation, and will continue to lead the way for the university, particularly as funder expectations become more stringent.[2]

3. In 2025 we will be at the heart of the debate over emergent 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 infrastructures and workflows.

Service Users

We will continue to build on our highly successful initiatives to improve service user experience. These include the achievement of the Customer Service Excellence standard, with formal recognition that we lead the sector in developing customer insight, a rise in National Student Survey (NSS) scores from 83% to 89% in four years, and the further development of The Compass student support service. In future we aim to reach a 95% score in the NSS, rivalling our local competitors. To do this we will develop skills in ethnographic research and evolve our approach to customer relationship management significantly.

4. In 2025, 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.

As the distance learning offer at King's grows[3], we will ensure that all of our services and collections are equally available on and off-campus. We will collaborate with academic colleagues from the earliest stages of course and module planning to ensure that students' requirements can be met remotely. We will continue to embed inclusivity in everything that we do, building on high levels of support for disabled service users.

5. In 2025, we will be provide 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 will have a comparable experience to those studying in London.

Library Services is central to the development of skills that students and researchers require throughout their academic careers. We are building on our expertise in digital and information literacy, and developing new services to support wider academic skills including mathematics, statistics and academic writing. We will continue to develop Library Services as the central hub for co-curricular opportunities and skills development, working in partnership across the university.

Digital and Information Literacy skills are crucial to ensure that students and researchers can make the best use of the rich resources that the Library curates, as well being able to navigate successfully through the glut of information available online and effectively use technology. Bringing together academic skills with digital and information literacy "enables holistic planning and development, seamless services, connected learning resources and more authentic curriculum-embedded education. The model reinforces the Library's strategic focus on learning service innovation and active engagement in teaching and learning."[4]

King's has been sector-leading in quickly and effectively establishing a range of co-curricular learning opportunities under the banner of King's Experience, now based in Library Services. Student participation doubled in 2014-15 and will continue to rise as existing schemes are expanded and new and innovative programmes are introduced. We will fully embed co-curricular learning into Library Services, and, as well as delivering programmes ourselves, be the trusted partner across the university for these activities, wherever they occur. This reflects the position of co-curricular learning as a growth area in UK higher education[5].

6. In 2025 we will be continuing to couple our pedagogical expertise with deep awareness of information resources and student needs. We will be providing creative 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

The depth and breadth of library collections are key elements of the library's value to the university, with 44,000 ejournals and 350,000 ebooks as well as one million print volumes currently available to support teaching, learning and research. This places King's at mid-rank within the Russell Group for Library Collections, with significant strengths, but still much room for improvement in the future.

The shift to digital content and new forms of curation will continue, and new challenges such as the management of apps for academic purposes will be met. Selected special collections and archives will be digitized to make them more widely accessible. The hybrid physical-virtual information environment is likely to persist for many years to come. Although we have already freed up over five kilometers of shelf-space by withdrawing print journals which are now available online, there are emerging signs that "long-form" textual resources such as books and textbooks will continue to have value in physical formats for the foreseeable future.

Students in arts, humanities and social science disciplines at King's continue to express a wish for access to print texts which shows few signs of declining, even though they are fully engaged with digital technologies in other aspects of their lives and studies. Durant and Horava (2015) note that "[library holdings] should be rooted firmly in the realization that print and digital are distinct yet complementary formats, each serving a different type of user need"[6]. Meanwhile, a recent article in the New York Times reports on a distinct slow-down in demand for consumer ebooks[7].

Collaborative collection development will continue to be critically important, specifically in relation to Senate House University of London (SHUL). We will continue to regard the SHUL collection as an essential element of the King's library collection, into which we have already invested very substantial financial resources, and which we do not seek to replicate locally. On a broader canvas, continued pressure on library spaces will be a driver for libraries to move towards shared storage and access solutions for lesser-used printed materials: for example the UK's National Monograph Strategy Roadmap articulates a vision that within five years "UK researchers and students will have unparalleled access to a distributed national research collection enabled by an open collaborative national infrastructure."[8]

As a recent report by Research Libraries UK (RLUK) points out, universities such as King's are more fully recognizing the value for teaching and research of "unique and distinctive collections"[9], including special collections and archives. These collections will continue to be a phenomenal draw for researchers from other institutions, for high profile visitors to King's and for the general public. We will play an important role in preserving these unique resources for future generations.

7. In 2025 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

The dramatic shifts in technology facilitated by the internet have had a profound effect on libraries, and despite the very real competition for information retrieval represented by Google, libraries are taking an active part in shaping the future, using the latest technology to optimize services.

Over the last four years we have pursued a clear strategy of providing self-service options wherever possible, including borrowing and returning items, making room reservations, borrowing laptops, selecting ebooks for purchase and accessing subject-specific support online. This has increased satisfaction as service users are enabled to carry out routine transactions quickly and at non-staffed times of day. At the same time, library staff time has been freed up and their enquiry skills significantly improved so that they can truly understand and meet the more complex requirements of users, driving up the quality of these interactions and enhancing learning outcomes.

However, the library now needs to integrate with *users'* workflows rather than the other way around. Web-based functionalities, and the use of mobile and tablet devices are the expected norm for services by many people, as they increasingly carry out their everyday tasks in the digital environment.[10] Library Services will seek to employ its rich understanding of users' needs to work in partnership with IT, developing digital resources and services which will delight our service users and significantly enhance their experience of learning and research at King's.

8. In 2025 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

Library space has a significant premium value. In a recent survey of students, the Association of University Directors of Estates (2015) found that "the library is the most used university facility for 64% of UK students" with IT facilities, often located in the library, coming in second for 48% of students[11]. With an emerging market in higher education, high quality buildings such as libraries will become even more important in attracting students. Ernst and Young (2012) emphasize the importance of good learning space for institutional success in the

future: "Campuses will still exist as places of teaching and learning, research, community engagement, and varied forms of student experience — assuming universities can deliver a rich, on-campus experience." [12]

Students use libraries for a range of purposes, both academic and social, and they are seen as welcoming neutral spaces which students can "own". This is of particular relevance to our Central London location, which has few other indoor spaces which are not tied to commercial concerns or specific activities such as lectures or laboratory work. Borrego and Newswander argue that as a social phenomenon, learning requires active participation and engagement in communities of practice, and academic libraries, as neutral spaces, can contribute hugely to community engagement.[13] Recent feedback from the NSS and student experience workshops suggest that community feeling is lacking at King's, and there is an opportunity for our physical library spaces to become the glue which brings together interdisciplinary communities of scholars who need places to learn, collaborate, innovate and socialize.

However, our six libraries were designed for significantly smaller student populations and are now severely overcrowded at times, despite the removal of printed journals from the health sites, ongoing efforts to consolidate office space to release it for student use, and efforts to extend opening hours. User dissatisfaction is particularly acute at the Guy's campus where a large new programme has started and the Waterloo campus where large group teaching is taking place.

The landmark Maughan Library, a jewel in the crown of King's, is currently not arranged optimally for our service users. As well as taking steps to make better use of internal spaces and reduce printed stock where we can, we intend to assess the feasibility of extending this unique building to provide high quality storage, exhibition, and learning spaces into which our special collections and archives could be co-located, taking our inspiration from the sympathetic development of Grade 1 listed buildings such as the John Rylands Library in Manchester[14], and providing facilities which go substantially beyond those of other academic libraries in London.

Development work on the Strand Campus, including the Quad and Aldwych Quarter, presents an opportunity for Library Services to move beyond the boundaries of the existing Library buildings, to provide a presence across a number of informal learning spaces, bringing to bear our expertise in facilitating informal learning and aiding in our ambition to diffuse our learning services successfully.

9. In 2025 we will be working to develop and expand the library 'as place', diffusing its resources and services more pervasively throughout the academic setting, and providing the glue that brings our diverse communities together. 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

Academic libraries provide exemplary economies of scale by purchasing, managing and disseminating information for shared use across an entire institution. As Lewis (2007) says, "libraries are the mechanism for providing the subsidy that is required if information is to be used efficiently in communities and organizations. An economic case can be made that without such a subsidy information will be underused and communities and organizations will be less successful than they should be[15]."

We already negotiate hard to ensure value for money for King's, both on our own behalf and via intermediaries such as Jisc and SUPC (Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium), and collect a range of data to inform management decisions. However, we can go further, and a key activity for the future will be better interrogation of data trends to anticipate user requirements and drive efficiencies. As Dempsey (2014) says, "…data will be used to trigger acquisitions, collection balancing between institutions, digitization, consolidation in shared print environments, disposal and so on. Analytics have become central, and the connections between usage, management, and purchasing/licensing decisions will become firmer as intelligent workflows are connected to networks of shared data about resources, usage and people"[16].

Although we may be able to bear down on routine collection and administration costs through negotiation and efficiency, there will be increased costs involved in extending library activities to enhance community engagement across King's, extend our building footprint to support additional student numbers, support the provision of skills and co-curricular activities across the university, underwrite the costs of the transition to open access for research outputs not funded by research councils, and provide support for research data management and digital preservation. We intend to work with professional services colleagues to understand these costs and make strong cases for additional funding where necessary.

10. In 2025 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.

[1] Higher Education Funding Council for England (2015). *Open access research.* Available: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy/ [accessed 28 September 2015]

[2] Research Councils UK (2011, rev. 2015) *RCUK common principles on data policy.* Available: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/datapolicy/ [accessed 28 September 2015]

[3] King's College London (2015). *King's Futures: distance learning.* Available: https://internal.kcl.ac.uk/principal/futures/education/distancelearning.aspx [Accessed 29 September 2015]

[4] Peacock, J. A. (2011) Integrated literacies : every online player wins a prize. In *Proceedings of 15th Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Information Online Conference, ALIA, Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Sydney, NSW.* Available: http://eprints.qut.edu.au/41370/2/41370.pdf [accessed 28 September 2015]

[5] Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2013). *Recognising achievement beyond the curriculum Survey of sector practice - summary report.* Available: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Recognising-achievement-beyond-the-curriculum-survey-13.pdf [accessed 28 September 2015]

[6] Durant, D. M. and Horava, T. (2015). The future of reading and academic libraries. *Libraries and the Academy* **15** (1): 5-27 Available: https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/32056/1/The%20Future%20of%20Reading%20and%20Academic%20Libraries.pdf [Accessed 28 September 2015]

[7] Alter, A. (2015). *The plot twist: e-book sales slip, and print is far from dead.* [Online] The New York Times. Available: http://nyti.ms/1OPYEly [accessed 28 September 2015]

[8] Jisc (2014). A national monograph strategy roadmap. Available: https://www.jisc.ac.uk/reports/a-national-monograph-strategy-roadmap [accessed 28 September 2015]

[9] Research Libraries UK (2014). *Unique and Distinctive Collections: Opportunities for Research Libraries.* Available: http://www.rluk.ac.uk/work/rlukudc/ [accessed 28 September 2015]

[10] Connaway, L.S et al (2013). Visitors and residents: What motivates engagement with the digital information environment? *Information Research.* **18**(1). Available: http://informationr.net/ir/18-1/paper556.html#.Ug0ZTZI4tMg [accessed 28 September 2015]

[11] AUDE (Association of University Directors of Estates) (2015). *Facilities a key factor in choosing university.* Available: http://www.aude.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/facilities-a-key-factor-in-choosing-university/ [accessed 28 September 2015]

[12] Ernst & Young (2012) *University of the future. A thousand year old industry on the cusp of profound change.* Available: http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/University_of_the_future/$FILE/University_of_the_future_2012.pdf [accessed 28 September 2015]

[13] Boden, D., Borrego, M. and Newswander, L.K. (2011). Student socialization in interdisciplinary doctoral education. *Higher Education*, **62**(6): 741-755. Available: http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10734-011-9415-1 [accessed 28 September 2015]

[14] The University of Manchester Library (no date). *The building.* Available: http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/our-history/the-building/ [accessed 28 September 2015]

[15] Lewis, D. W. (2007) A Strategy for Academic Libraries in the First Quarter of the 21st Century. *College & Research Libraries* **68**(5):418-434. Available: http://crl.acrl.org/content/68/5/418 [accessed 28 September 2015]

[16] Lorcan, D., Malpas, C. and Lavoie, B. (2014), Collection Directions: Some Reflections on the Future of Library Collections and Collecting. *portal: Libraries and the Academy* **14** (3), Available: http:/www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2014/oclcresearch-collection-directions-preprint-2014.pdf [accessed 28 September 2015]