

Library Strategy

2009 – 2014

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Institute has long recognised the importance of a good library service in achieving its aims. The guidance of successive Library and Information Strategy Committees, the support of senior management, and the vision of individual librarians have enabled the development of exceptional collections and a tradition of excellent professional service.
- 1.2. In recent years, many of the principles on which the library operates have been documented in a range of policies ratified by the Information Strategy Committee. Key documents include the Collection Development Policy, the Library Service Provision Statement, the ICT Strategy and the Rules and Regulations.
- 1.3. At the same time, the impact of new developments in the information environment, and the ever-increasing pace of change, both in electronic information and in the wider context in which we work, has demanded increasing attention to forward planning. This strategy will form a vital part of the planning process.
- 1.4. This strategy sets out the Institute's vision for its library for the next five years, the context in which it will be achieved, and the principles on which it is based. It will outline priorities and plans for achieving that vision, and will be complemented by more detailed development plans and an annual action plan.
- 1.5. Recognising the pace of change in all aspects of the environment in which we operate, the strategy will require regular review.

2. Vision

- 2.1. The IOE will have a Library and Archives of international standard and significance, commensurate with the Institute's own standing as a world-class Institution.
- 2.2. The Library and Archives will provide a national focus for the provision of information in education, and will co-operate with other libraries, archives and resource providers in the field of education to extend the range of sources available.
- 2.3. The Library and Archives will support the Institute in achieving the aims of its Corporate Strategy, including:
 - extending global reach
 - advancing learning
 - promoting public engagement
 - exercising leadership
 - forming partnerships
- 2.4. The Library and Archives will continue to build its collections – physical and virtual – to support and enable current research teaching and learning in the fields covered by the IOE mission, and will preserve and curate those collections to enable and facilitate future research teaching and learning.
- 2.5. The Library and Archives will provide a service which understands, anticipates and is highly responsive to, the information needs of all its users, including
 - IOE researchers, teachers and learners
 - Scholars and researchers nationally and internationally
 - Other interested members of the public and the local community
- 2.6. The Library and Archives will develop its physical space to provide appropriate environments for its users, its staff and its collections, and its virtual space to support the work of all its users, inside and outside the Institute.

3. Key Principles

- 3.1. Development of the Library and Archive collections in all formats (including electronic resources, printed documents, audiovisual materials and manuscripts) should continue in line with agreed Library and Archive Collection Development Policies.
- 3.2. Acquisitions should be catalogued to international professional standards in order to provide full access to resources.
- 3.3. Materials retained for future research should be conserved and stored in appropriate conditions, conforming to BS5454 wherever possible.
- 3.4. Library and Archives are accessible to all who need to use them.
- 3.5. Library services should be focussed on the needs of users, understanding and responding to the information needs of IOE researchers, teachers and learners, and of our wider community of users in education, research and practice.
- 3.6. Library and Archive services will keep pace with developments in the information environment in providing services and resources in new formats and through new channels, and making maximum use of all appropriate and sustainable technologies.
- 3.7. Library and Archive collections will be supported by expert professional staff, providing efficient access, support and guidance to all users.
- 3.8. Library and Archives buildings should provide spaces appropriate to a wide range of users and working needs.

4. Context and Challenges

4.1. The information environment in which libraries operate has changed dramatically over the last decade. The availability of information in digital format over the internet has had an enormous impact on information and library services and the way they are delivered. Staff and students now expect most, if not all, information to be available digitally, wherever they may be; libraries are expected to provide space for both silent study and for group working over increasingly long hours; the increasingly complex information world demands greater staff support and guidance; digital information presents considerable problems for preservation and archiving, and its security and stability are not yet assured.

4.1.1. At the same time, demand for traditional materials and services has by no means disappeared; print publications continue to increase; loans and inter-library loans are still required; much older material, of significant research value, is not, and may never will be, available digitally. Recent initiatives have raised awareness of the need for higher standards in the care of archive and rare book materials.

4.1.2. Many of these developments carry with them significantly higher costs for libraries. The apparent simplicity and efficiency of providing information digitally to users disguises an increasing range and complexity of operations for the library, with both acquisitions and staffing budgets being stretched to cover an ever greater variety of sources and services.

4.2. In this context, Library and Archives face a number of challenges, some shared with other HE libraries, and others peculiar to their position as a leading specialist library.

4.2.1. Like all libraries, we must endeavour to meet the needs and expectations of our users, especially in respect to an ever-widening range of electronic information sources. This stretches staff resources for acquisition and administration.

4.2.2. The increasing cost of resources, especially electronic journals, not only places an obvious strain on the acquisitions budget, but can change the balance of spending within it, and the profile of materials.

4.2.3. Our internal arrangement is now over 15 years old, and no longer meets the demands of students for space for silent study and for group and co-operative work, over increasingly long hours.

4.2.4. Student and visitor diversity and varied experience of accessing and using resources, combined with the increasing range of sources, requires increased staff support and information literacy teaching.

4.2.5. Experienced and knowledgeable professional staff have played an important role in developing libraries and information services over recent years, but as a whole generation approaches retirement, there is an increasing need for succession planning and professional development for tomorrow's leaders.

4.3. As a leading specialist library, with a national and international role in line with the Institute's own world class standing, the Library and Archives has additional challenges to meet.

4.3.1. A full range of resources must be catalogued and indexed to a high standard to maintain our claims as a centre of excellence supporting research, learning and teaching.

4.3.2. All aspects of our work and especially our collections need to reflect the Institute's position as a player on the international stage.

4.3.3. In addition to supporting our own staff and students, we recognise the need to support the wider research community, including scholars and visitors from all over the world. This includes the provision of excellent enquiry services, as well as developing Information Literacy teaching.

4.3.4. As a research library and archive with significant holdings, we need to provide space and appropriate conditions for storage of older materials, and to recognise that these holdings will increase over time.

4.3.5. The broadening of the range of IOE interests and a widening definition of 'education' as a subject area is increasing the range of materials regarded as 'core collections'.

5. Key Objectives

5.1. Services

To build on our existing user focus to provide appropriate, innovative, flexible and accessible services for all our users.

5.2. Staff

To develop our team of expert librarians and archivists to provide high quality advice and guidance in support of all our users and services

5.3. Collections

To build collections which directly support as much current IOE research teaching and learning as possible and which build a sure foundation for enabling and facilitating future research in the fields of the IOE mission.

5.4. Institute research output

To extend the existing commitment to collect and provide access to all IOE staff monograph publications, and to include all research outputs - including journal articles, research papers, working papers etc.

5.5. Information delivery

To find the right balance between print and electronic delivery both for current use and for future preservation of both library and archival material.

5.6. Preservation

To preserve that which is unique , such as archives, or which is of central importance to future IOE work .

5.7. Navigation and discovery services

To provide navigation and discovery services in order to ensure optimum information use by all researchers, teachers and learners.

5.8. Library spaces

To provide appropriate spaces for library users and for storage and preservation of library and archive materials.

6. The Plan

6.1. **Services: to build on our existing user focus to provide appropriate, innovative flexible and accessible services for all our users**

- 6.1.1. We will improve our liaison with faculties, courses and research teams.
- 6.1.2. We will attempt to gain greater knowledge and understanding of their library/information and archive use and behaviour through the analysis of electronic resource use and other data from borrowing and on-site use, and from surveys and focus groups. This work is being done elsewhere by eg the Research Information Network and other researchers. We need to know what is special about our users and their information needs and behaviours.
- 6.1.3. Informed by our greater knowledge of IOE information behaviour and use, we will provide innovative services which aim to anticipate the needs of IOE researchers teachers and learners. We will also provide enhanced information literacy guidance and teaching to ensure that the benefits of resource use are maximised.
- 6.1.4. We will provide self service options wherever possible.
- 6.1.5. We will simplify access to electronic resources - removing barriers by exploiting the technology and where necessary by negotiation with publishers and suppliers.
- 6.1.6. We will use web 2.0 and other related technologies and approaches to enable group/collaborative use of library resources by staff and students.

6.2. **Staff: to develop our team of expert librarians and archivists to provide high quality advice and guidance in support of all our users and services**

In order to provide high quality services, advice and guidance, we must have expert user focussed librarians and archivists. They must be flexible, service oriented, highly skilled, knowledgeable and able to engage with IOE staff and students and with all other users of the IOE library. They need to engage in dialogue to discover and develop the specialist services that library and information professionals can provide to the IOE community and to have a two way sharing of skills and expertise with researchers teachers and learners.

6.3. **Collections: to build collections which directly support as much current IOE research teaching and learning as possible and which build a sure foundation for enabling and facilitating future research in the fields of the IOE mission.**

- 6.3.1. Our aim is to satisfy the highest possible proportion of information needs from owned or licensed resources to the extent that this is financially sustainable.
- 6.3.2. We will continue to build coherent collections which directly support as much current IOE research teaching and learning as possible and which build a sure foundation for enabling and facilitating future research in the fields of the IOE mission.
- 6.3.3. We will ensure that international coverage of the collection is enhanced wherever possible, in order to support the international strategy to the full.

6.3.4. We will provide negotiated and/or subscription based access to other library collections in order to supplement the library collections in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

6.3.5. We will improve document delivery services – enabling digital delivery via British Library – or at least, in the short term, postal delivery of photocopies to home addresses

6.4. Institute Publications: to extend the existing commitment to collect and provide access to all IOE staff monograph publications, and to include all research outputs - including journal articles, research papers, working papers etc.

6.4.1. We will extend the existing commitment to collect and provide access to all IOE staff monograph publications, and include all research outputs - including journal articles, research papers, working papers etc. This will be done by providing a fully functional Institutional Repository. Research teams, departments, faculties or individuals will be enabled to provide, themselves, the necessary metadata and full text as appropriate. The possibility of importing data from external sources will be investigated. A significant part of the process will be to assist staff to comply with the copyright restrictions they have accepted from their publishers.

6.5. Information delivery: to find the right balance between print and electronic delivery both for current use and for future preservation of both library and archival material.

6.5.1. Digital delivery of library material is highly efficient, it can be cost effective, and is greatly valued by users. All library users, particularly those who are remote and those who need or who prefer to work at home or in their office, benefit from the enhanced availability and speed of access to digital materials. We will aim to increase digital delivery of all library materials wherever possible.

6.5.2. There is as yet no certainty of permanent digital preservation by publishers or by any national infrastructure. The library will need to continue to purchase print and other physical resources and to acquire physical archives, providing electronic access to some of those same physical resources while at the same time acquiring new born-digital material. This is likely to be a volatile area and in some areas external developments could well have major impacts very quickly - the further development of the Google range of services is one obvious example.

6.6. Preservation: to preserve that which is unique , such as archives, or which is of central importance to future IOE work

6.6.1. Various national initiatives (eg UK Research Reserve) are underway to ensure preservation of a limited number of print copies of “little used material” and thereby to enable libraries to dispose of their own copies. It is not yet clear if a specialist, subject focused institution should entirely rely on its subject being preserved in this way, simply by national ventures.

6.6.2. Preservation will be by a mixture of simple preservation, active conservation of print and other physical formats and of digital preservation . Digital preservation

and conservation will include both born-digital material and material digitised in house. Both are expensive – long term digital preservation is not yet fully tried and tested.

6.7. Navigation and discovery services: to provide navigation and discovery services in order to ensure optimum information use by all researchers, teachers and learners

- 6.7.1. These services will be generic search engines, specialist article level subscription databases, the library catalogue and the archive catalogue.
- 6.7.2. We will enable users to search these diverse discovery services in ways which suit their needs and current abilities, by enabling single /cross/federated search wherever possible. Closer collaboration with some key services eg British Education Index, will be highly desirable.
- 6.7.3. The Library's own catalogue will continue to be of key importance. Of particular significance and cost here is the added value given to the library metadata/catalogue record by being indexed using a vocabulary which can deal with the subject content of items using appropriate terminology and at the required level of detail, rather than relying on generic subject metadata supplied by other sources of catalogue data. To ensure 100% coverage of all library owned/licensed materials (including all material which is still only listed in the card catalogue and also all the current backlog of semi-catalogued material) will require significant additional funding in the short to medium term. The archive catalogue is an equally important resource and needs similar investment in order to reach 100% coverage of archive collections.

6.8. Library spaces: to provide appropriate spaces for library users and for storage and preservation of library and archive materials

- 6.8.1. We need to provide a range of appropriately equipped and furnished physical library spaces to provide the various environments needed to support all forms of library use by researchers teachers and learners. There is, for instance, a need to remodel and rearrange much current library space to enable collaborative group work while also preserving areas suitable for individual silent study. Investigations will be made to discover what space can be saved by disposing of materials which are either available nearby or are available in affordable electronic form or both. Where outright disposal is not appropriate, lesser used materials, or materials currently available electronically can be relegated to closed access store either on or off-site. These space saving/reallocation solutions will require a robust disposal and relegation policy – an extension of that which is currently included in the Collection Development Policy.
- 6.8.2. We need to have library spaces in which valuable material can be preserved for future long term use. This means providing correct temperature and humidity control for physical materials and having procedures in place to ensure that use does not lead to damage, loss etc. Digital preservation will require different forms of space different technologies and different procedures to ensure long term accessibility.

7. Priorities

- 7.1. A range of actions to further the Library strategy are listed in this document and will be further detailed in an associated action plan which will be agreed annually by the Information Strategy Committee following careful consideration of the need to progress the strategy within the context of changing Institute priorities and budgetary allocations.