



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

University  
Secretary's  
Office.

## The Council, 22 February 2016

### Report of the Senate

**Date:** 16 December 2015  
**Chair:** The Vice-Chancellor  
**Secretary:** Dr A West

#### 1. Vice-Chancellor's report

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report covering the following main areas:

- (a) HE Green Paper: As reported to Council on 27 November 2015, on 6 November the Government had published its Higher Education Green Paper, *Fulfilling our potential: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice*. The paper is presented as a means to address apparent flaws in the existing system but fails to recognise the excellence and high quality activity taking place across the sector, towards a range of different research and teaching outcomes. Neither does it take into account the different costs of certain activities and the consequent need for a holistic funding model that supports what is important rather than what is lucrative. Although the paper's stated aim of increasing social mobility and widening participation is laudable it is inconsistent with the replacement of student maintenance grants with loans, which is likely to have the most significant impact on under-represented groups. Members of Senate were invited to contribute their views to the University's formal response to the consultation, which closed on 15 January.
- (b) Nurse Review: As reported to Council on 27 November 2015, subject to enabling legislation, RCUK will become a new non-departmental public body, Research UK, with overall responsibility for research funding. Despite welcoming the preservation of the dual support system, the remit of Research UK will include the distribution of QR funding currently undertaken by HEFCE, which will lose its funding role following its merger with OFFA. Ultimately, the absence of a single point of contact with an overview of different activities and support requirements across the sector and the distribution of teaching grant and research funding through distinct bodies will represent a significant and challenging change. The Government has also recently announced an independent review of the REF, Chaired by the President of the British Academy, Lord Nicholas Stern.
- (c) Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) Headlines: Senate received an overview of the implications of the CSR, as reported to Council on 27 November. Although the 17% cut to the BIS budget was lower than expected, BIS faces significant staff cuts and the loss of HE expertise would be an unintended consequence that could have a potentially significant negative impact on HE in general. Changes to the repayment threshold for student loans and the replacement of maintenance grants with loans are regressive, as are the 50% cut to the Student Opportunity Fund and abolition of bursaries for the study of nursing and allied health professions

following the removal of the cap on places. Although the introduction of loans for home PGT students is an opportunity, the University-led PSS scheme has successfully demonstrated the importance of scholarship to support PGT study, particularly for students from a WP background.

Publication of the respective BIS and HEFCE grant letters in Spring 2016 will reveal the full extent of the impact of the CSR at sector and institutional level. Overall it is expected that the University will face cuts to the teaching grant and Student Opportunity Fund and will also be subject to the new apprentice levy on large employers. However, there are opportunities to grow numbers of PGT and students of nursing and allied health professions but the increased use of loans to fund these students will have long-term implications for these students in the future. The University was in a strong position to benefit from opportunities to attract increasing amounts of research funding through investment in specialist institutes and a wider commitment to the Northern Powerhouse

- (d) The University Position: In considering its institutional response to the various challenges and uncertainties facing the HE sector, the University will concentrate on how it can continue to make a positive difference locally and globally and celebrate the student body as more than just consumers of an educational product, guided by its values and the aims and objectives expressed in the new Strategic Plan. By maintaining and enhancing excellence in a holistic manner, rather than reacting to external metrics, the University can approach the future with confidence.
- (e) Teaching Excellence: As reported to Council on 27 November, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) is leading the University response to the proposed introduction of the TEF from 2016. This work will concentrate on articulating the institutional view of teaching excellence, including working with students, and is connected to the development of a new Learning and Teaching Strategy. The Students' Union had welcomed the proposed approach, in particular drawing attention to the explicit link between the TEF and institutions' ability to raise tuition fees in future and the impact that this would have on students and graduates. The University already recognises and celebrates teaching excellence, for example through the annual Senate awards and dedicated promotion routes for teaching staff. The initial TEF Level 1 will be based on a strong institutional QAA performance and the University has therefore met this requirement. There is uncertainty around the metrics that will be used to evaluate Levels 2-4 and concern at the speed with which its introduction was proposed.
- (f) Research: The University is developing increasingly ambitious and higher value proposals in a more collaborative manner. For the first time, the annual total of grant applications has exceeded £500million. In particular, new research grant and contract awards has grown by 10% and overall performance is positive despite the constrained funding environment. The value of new awards in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health has increased by 56%, which is notable given the overall concentration of funding for medical and related research. Awards for capital research equipment are also positive and there has been strong performance in EU awards during the first year of Horizon 2020.
- (g) Science Review: As reported to Council on 27 November, the University has recently committed to reviewing its portfolio of science provision in order to ensure its continuing ability to undertake significant world-class scientific activity on a long-term sustainable basis in the context of the challenging funding environment for science nationally. The Review will run alongside complementary activity at national and sector level to consider the question of sustainable funding

for science.

- (h) Sustainability Strategy: The University is playing a leading role in devising a strategic approach to the issue of sustainability, in particular the question of food security through the Grantham Centre for Sustainable Futures and its collaboration with the Students' Union. More broadly, the University sent a delegation to the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris for the first time, during which they shared knowledge and expertise on matters such as carbon capture and nuclear energy. Senate's attention was also drawn to the joint statement between the Vice-Chancellor and President of the Students' Union about the institutional investment strategy that was reported to Council in November.

## **2. Report of the Council**

Senate received a report on the meeting of Council held on 6 July 2015.

## **3. Reports of committees**

### **3.1 Committees of Senate**

Senate approved the reports of the following committees:

- (a) Learning and Teaching Committee  
(Meeting held on 25 November 2015)
  - (i) Teaching Excellence: Senate endorsed a proposed approach to articulating an institutional vision of teaching excellence in response to the recent HE Green paper.
  - (ii) Consultation on the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2016-2021: Work has commenced to develop a new Learning and Teaching Strategy for the period 2016-2021. Consultation events will cover each of the three key themes of flexibility, excellence and outward facing curricula. Staff can submit comments via a dedicated website.
  - (iii) National Student Survey 2015: Senate endorsed the proposed response to the results of the NSS. In particular, a working group has been convened to consider assessment and feedback in greater detail, this having been identified previously as an institutional strategic target.
  - (iv) University Library Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Senate endorsed the Library's Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2020. This is available as Appendix 1 via the BoardPad Reading Room.
  - (v) Amendments to the General Regulations for Higher Degrees: Senate approved amendments to the General Regulations for Higher Degrees relating to research away from the University and PhD degrees undertaken in an EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training.
  - (vi) Renewal of Existing Collaborative Arrangements: Senate approved the renewal of collaborative partnerships with the Nuclear Science and Technology Consortium and the College of the Resurrection and Yorkshire Ministry Course at Mirfield.
  - (vii) Proposed New Degree Award Titles: Senate approved two new award titles for Integrated Masters programmes in the Department of Geography and a new award title for a Double Masters in the faculties of Engineering and Social Sciences, for introduction from September 2016.

- (viii) Criteria for Senate Awards: Senate approved an amendment to the eligibility criteria of category four for a Senate award that will make the awards more inclusive and representative, in response to feedback received.
- (ix) Terms of reference and membership of Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and sub-committees: Senate approved the terms of reference and membership for LTC and its sub-committees, subject to the inclusion of the Students' Union International Officer on LTC.
- (b) Research Ethics Committee  
(Meeting held on 11 November 2015)
- (c) Research and Innovation Committee  
(Meeting held on 18 November 2015)
- (d) Senate Budget Committee  
(Meetings held on 19 November 2015)

### **3.2 Other committees**

Senate received for information the reports of the Finance Committee (meeting held on 19 October), Estates Committee (meeting held on 08 September 2015) and Health and Safety Committee (meeting held on 13 October 2015), which were approved by Council at its meeting on 6 July 2015. Senate also received and noted the report of the Honorary Degrees Committee and the 2014-15 annual reports of: the Appeals Committee relating to progress of students; the Discipline Committee and Disciplinary Appeals Committee; and the Military Education Committee

### **4. Other Annual Reports 2014-15**

Senate received and noted the Library annual report and the annual report of cases reviewed externally by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.



The  
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The  
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Library.



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# The University of Sheffield Library Strategic Plan

*Our Library. Our Information Future.*

# introduction

**O**ur new Strategic Plan bravely projects a model of the University of Sheffield Library in 2020; our services, content and collections, spaces and digital capabilities. The primary purpose and enduring value of a research library is to enable intellectual discovery. It is difficult to predict the far horizon and what will take place in an increasingly digital and complex information universe. Uncertainty and change have become the constants in our global higher education and information environments. It is reassuring when looking to the Library's previous plan, *Library Everywhere*, to see the successful outcomes from the strategic directions set five years ago.

*Our Library. Our Information Future* has been selected as the title of the Library's next Strategic Plan. The six strategic themes present a view of a world-class research library for the next five years that advances the University of Sheffield's Mission, Vision and Identity and will be realised through achieving the high level objectives outlined.

The Library will continue to be at the centre of student learning. At the start of this new Plan, we have heard that the Library has again been rated highly by our students in the *Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey*. We recognise that student expectations of library services and spaces will be influenced by the new ways they choose to learn and research, and their transformational experiences in their time at the University of Sheffield. Changes to government policy and the pressures individual students may face will also influence their life at University and the services we offer.

The Library content and collections strategy will be strengthened by a collaborative networking approach to extend access to research collections in the UK. A comprehensive content strategy will support the discovery, access and integration of scholarly works and media-rich content into learning activities and the research process.

The opening of The Diamond building in September 2015 provides opportunities for the Library to review its service models, how our spaces contribute to student success, and how students use information and communicate with their peers in many ways and through many devices. The Diamond showcases the latest developments in formal and informal learning spaces with services provided by the University Library and CICS (Corporate Information and Computing Services).

The Library's systems and educative and advisory services are also expanding to support research, in particular addressing open access publishing, open data and digital preservation. Continual scanning and understanding of the UK research environment is critical as the requirements of funders and government under the research excellence framework are open to change. Building the necessary knowledge base and developing the systems and workforce to respond effectively will be an ongoing challenge.

Finally, the Library is proud of its engagement with communities through exhibitions and events, opening up the Library's Special Collections, the National Fairground Archive and University's Heritage Collections to visitors coming into the University or connecting to our virtual exhibitions.

Underpinning the Library's promise to the University will be investment in our people, partnerships with our academic and professional colleagues, and investment in technologies and our estates necessary for the University's future success.



**ANNE HORN**  
Director of Library  
Services & University  
Librarian

## *mission:*

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*We enable our University to access and use the information universe for the creation, application and communication of knowledge.*

## *vision:*

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*The University of Sheffield Library is a world class, dynamic research library inspiring intellectual discovery and learning, and the creation of new knowledge within the complex information universe. We offer engaging experiences with people and content that enrich the University's learning and research communities in both physical and digital spaces. We connect with the city and the region, and through our networks, advance global scholarship.*



## Student Learning and Success

The Library's place is at the centre of the student learning experience. Library services, systems, content and collections open up a world of possibilities to students in an increasingly complex information environment. New approaches to learning and pathways to higher education continue to be developed. The University promotes and supports the value of research-led teaching for all students. The Library's contribution is to prepare students with the research skills and the information and digital literacy skills they need to be at the cutting edge in their discipline and influential digital citizens. The Library is a key contributor to the University's Learning and Teaching Plan. We are engaging with students in ambitious new ways, embracing opportunities to transform our services, spaces and the presentation of content in our libraries and through our digital channels. Through our partnerships with our academic colleagues and students, the Library delivers an approach to continuous improvement that is informed, agile and adaptable.

- Engage students in working with scholarly information and media-rich content opening new channels of discovery.
- Deliver spaces that inspire students to explore and embrace new ways of creating, sharing and applying knowledge.
- Develop greater flexibility in service models to reach all students, recognising diversity, changing pathways and the differences in how students choose to learn.
- Equip students with the research skills and the information and digital literacy skills they need to be at the cutting edge in their discipline and influential digital citizens.



## Research Excellence and Impact

The University's research has a global reputation which is strengthened by a world class research library that continues to be more distributed and well connected. The Library's role as a collaborative partner is growing and increasingly valued in the dynamic research environment. Our researchers are working within a global context to solve some of the most challenging problems facing society, collaborating with international and local partners to make a difference. The societal and economic benefits of research and contributions to the advancement of science are being communicated in new ways. Research libraries globally are advocating for new publishing models as the scholarly communication process continues to be transformed. Government policy and funding bodies support the transition to open access for the outputs of research as well as the research data, requiring new systems for curation, dissemination and preservation. The Library is fully engaged in realising the research priorities of the University through developing new educative and advisory services, systems and processes that advance the impact of our research.

- Build a cohesive offering of library research services, systems and workflows that enable engagement with researchers at critical points in the research life cycle and provide linkages with other professional services.
- Work in partnership with the research community to transition to new models of scholarly communication, supporting open access publishing and digital scholarship.
- Influence the shaping of research data management policy and practice, which is informed by the infrastructure and service capacity required to deliver outcomes.
- Secure digital assets for the future by establishing the University's preservation service for both born digital and digital surrogate material, including the National Fairground Archive and our unique special collections.





## Content and collections

Our students, staff and researchers learn and work, innovate and create within the complex information universe. The Library's collections and content are rich in new media, digital works, texts and research materials. The Library's knowledge of how data for collections are interwoven in a network environment informs the ongoing development of our discovery systems and services. We enable students and researchers to explore the world of knowledge, and provide access to our own collections and the collections we share through UK and international networks. New ways of presenting content through visualisation and related technologies provide more engaging experiences for learners and extend discovery and research. The Library continues to support the creation and dissemination of scholarly information. Our content strategy is built on the Library's engagement with academic colleagues and students, and our knowledge of the University's learning and teaching activities and research imperatives.

- Develop a comprehensive content strategy to support the discovery, access and integration of scholarly works and new media-rich digital content into learning activities and the research process.
- Evaluate and implement technologies that allow discovery on a global scale and maximise human to computer interactions.
- Embrace a collaborative network approach to extending access to research collections in partnerships with Research Libraries UK (RLUK), the British Library and other key agencies.
- Join with research libraries globally in campaigning for an ethical market for commercially produced scholarly content.



## The Open Library

The Library embodies the essence of a civic university, with a long-held tradition of sharing expertise and building relationships with people and engaging with the wider community. The University Library's offer to local communities is around the experience. The National Fairground Archive and the Library's Special Collections are at the heart of this engagement through exhibitions, consultancies and events. The Library stewards the safe keeping of the University's heritage collections making it possible to share our treasures with the public. Communities, including our valued Alumni, benefit from the Library's expertise in content and collections, the curation and care of material, and knowledge of how the information landscape is transforming in an increasingly digital world. The Library is a leader in advocating for open access to and the rights to use information. The Library's identity as a trusted place welcoming discovery, scholarship and communities coming together is enduring.

- Develop high-quality exhibitions of our distinctive collections that are accessible to all and benefit the city and the wider community.
- Employ digitisation and digital dissemination, including social media, to provide information about, and the virtual experience of, our unique collections.
- Welcome students from local schools encouraging them to see the University Library as a place for them to learn and discover.
- Offer our Alumni an enduring connection with the University through targeted services and exhibitions.



## Strategic Partners

Effective and authentic collaboration through partnerships is fundamental to the Library's success. We live in a globally connected information landscape, yet encounter challenges that constrain the genuine and open sharing of knowledge. Information access for industrial, research and international partners means different business relationships and systems are necessary to bring mutual benefit. The Library embraces the opportunity to strengthen the University's connections with key strategic partners, locally and globally, including the White Rose consortium, N8 and NHS partnerships. As a leading research library we are accomplished in interacting with traditional forms of scholarly communications and are influential in advancing open publishing models. The Library actively seeks beneficial relationships within our own sector, forming partnerships with the potential to accelerate the transformation of our services, while influencing government policy and the development of new business models.

- Engage with the AMRC to establish a sustainable service delivery model for research partners and for students pursuing non-traditional pathways.
- Leverage our professional collaborations, locally and globally, to influence new models of information access that support international and industry partnerships with the University.
- Develop and implement a new service agreement with NHS organisations in Sheffield that recognises the different information landscape that exists in a digital world.
- Partner with faculties and professional services to ensure agreements with strategic partners to make content accessible are supported by our systems and networks, and meet contractual and legislative obligations.



## The Future Organisation

The University of Sheffield Library, its people and culture embrace the University's vision and identity. We recognise that our aspirations for excellence will be achieved through creating environments that nurture talent, empower staff to learn from each other, allow innovation and the translation of ideas into benefits for students, staff and researchers. The Library's capacity to adapt quickly to local and global competition in higher education, changing student behaviours and preferences, and a dynamic information ecosystem is critical to our success. Our workforce is increasingly specialised, sharing expertise and making a contribution to student learning and success, and research excellence. Our systems are cloud-based and our services are everywhere. Our libraries and learning spaces are integral to the unique student experience. The Library's partnerships with academic and professional departments are based on trust and sustained through collaborative and productive working relationships with students, and academic and professional colleagues.

- Create new, inspirational spaces that will allow students to push the boundaries of their learning experience, allow researchers to engage in new ways with the global knowledge base, and encourage community collaboration.
- Develop a Library technology roadmap in collaboration with Corporate Information and Computing Services that ensures library services and resources reach students, researchers and partners where they are and through many devices.
- Capitalise on the growth and development of cloud-based networks, applications and services in delivering information and discovery services, and research services.
- Develop workforce planning as a process of continual review, building opportunities to attract and grow talent and strengthen innovative teams able to realise the Library's vision.
- Provide staff development that strengthens the capability of the Library and its staff to individually and collectively deliver strategic outcomes.