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Library and Academic Support Strategy 2016–22 Progress Report Year 1 2016–17

The Library and Academic Support Strategy brings together the work of Library Services, Academic Support and the International Student Experience, including Language Development, to enable and enhance teaching, learning and research, and to improve the student experience. It is aligned with the University Strategy.

2016/17 was the first year of the Strategy. Achievements were immense so I would like to thank staff across the various teams for their professional commitment and dedicated hard work that contributed to an outstanding year. This progress report highlights some of these achievements and references related success indicators.

Looking ahead, Simon Ofield-Kerr, the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) announced in June 2017 that we would explore bringing together the elements of 'student services' into a single directorate, and also consider if there would be benefit in developing a closer and structural relationship between Student Services and Libraries and Academic Support.

This proposal builds on the aspirations of our Strategy, and provides new opportunities to create an inter-connected and holistic offer. Consequently, it is great endorsement of our work and sets the context for the next phase of our development, 2017/18 onwards.

Pat Christie,
Director of Library and Student Support Services
(previously Director of Libraries and Academic Support Services)

transformative education

Aim

To enable and empower students to fulfil their academic potential through the use of collaborative, innovative and inclusive practices that support learning and creativity, and improve retention and attainment.

Key developments

- Re-accreditations of the Language Centre and Library Services.
- Project initiated to review pre-enrolment support. This has produced enhancements to the Presessional and Bridging programmes.
- RAS2 (Retain Achieve Succeed) Research Project on library collections and diversity completed and recommendations are being progressed.
- Mature Students Network, Reading Collections and Cultures of Study Academic Support events and resources initiated.
- 11 collaborative projects across UAL supported by the new "Enquiry and Innovation through Archives and Special Collections" Fund.

Success indicators

- High levels of student satisfaction: Library Services with 91% satisfaction in NSS and 90% satisfaction in the FE Survey; Academic Support with 100% satisfaction for University-wide events, and college offers with positive feedback; Language Development with 99% satisfaction.
- Good engagement with pre-enrolment offers: 681 students attended Presessional (up by 25%); 172 students attended Bridging (up by 26%).
- Positive correlations with attainment (UG 2.1/1st) for all students who attended Academic Support, and compared with 2015/16, notable differences for International, BAME, SEC 4–7 and First Generation groups were evidenced via UCPU dashboards.

world-leading research and enterprise

Aim

To act as an advocate and platform for research and enterprise activities through our services and collections, and to contribute through our staff expertise to the University's research environment and culture.

Key developments

- Interface improvements made to UAL Research Online, the University's open access repository of research outputs.
- New approach initiated for Library, Academic Support and Language Development inputs to the RNUAL Programme for PhD students.
- Successful UAL seminar "Into the Archive: re-viewing Kubrick" held in Mexico City to accompany the Stanley Kubrick Exhibition. This was fully booked.
- HEFCE award of £40k pa for 5 years to the University Archives and Special Collections Centre in recognition of our contribution to research and scholarship in the UK and internationally.
- LAS staff presented papers and led workshops at several internal and external conferences and published articles in key journals.

Success indicators

- Number of items in UAL Research Online increased by 20% to 5,819.
- 100% attendees who responded found RNUAL input from LAS staff either Excellent or Good.
- 1,805 visits to the University's archives and special collections by researchers (913 internal and 892 external).

communication & collaboration

Aim

To act as a gateway into the University and to connect people within and across academic programmes and colleges through their access to information sources, learning environments and academic support.

Key developments

- Institutional Memory Archive and website launched to showcase the University's history since the creation of the London Institute to the present day.
- Launch of "Into the Archive" blog.
- New online LibGuide showcasing high quality online information resources for UAL's alumni.
- "ISE Pack" to inform staff of support for both students and colleagues working in UAL's multi-national context.
- Many collaborations initiated with SU Arts, including the Liberate My Curriculum Campaign to diversify library collections; Academic Support pop-ups in Mental Health Week; International Student Guide and Welcome Event; Intercultural Communications session for students.

Success indicators

- Guide for alumni viewed 2,611 times.
- Over 300 staff attended intercultural communications training delivered by the Language Centre in 2016/17 (up by 100%).
- 24 events organised for international students as part of the Social Programme with attendance totalling 2,692.
- Visits to our libraries by external users including alumni increased to 2,550 (up by 18%).

an inspirational environment

Aim

To bring together high quality collections, services, facilities, academic and language support activities in environments that inspire and support learning and creativity as well as stimulating a strong sense of community.

Key developments

- Overnight library opening at CSM increased from 15 to 20 weeks; weekend hours at Camberwell and Wimbledon were made permanent.
- Self-service laptop loans introduced at LCC and CSM.
- Auto-renewals for library loans launched, reducing fines for students.
- 12 Academic Support Online functionalities completed, creating college landing pages and piloting bookings and reporting.
- Successful procurement of a digital preservation system for archives and special collections.
- "Collaborating Collections" launched, with displays of archives and special collections across the University reaching new audiences.

Success indicators

- Overall library opening hours increased to 22,001 (up by 17%).
- 17,076 active borrowers (94% of all UAL students); 320,001 loans (down by 4%); 997,915 e-book requests (up by 47%); 55,811 laptop loans (up by 34%).
- 1,521,011 visits to our libraries (up by 11%) and 8,210 visits to our archives and special collections.
- c. 10,000 users of Academic Support Online (up by 14%) and 112,724 page views (up by 20%).
- 2,483 bookings for UAL-wide Academic Support face to face events (up by 55%).