

ISD: Library Report for Student Experience Committee – October 2015

Library online room bookings

The Library now has a new online room booking system for its 17 bookable group study rooms. This enables students to see room availability online and will hopefully reduce the number of turnaways, thereby maximising usage of the spaces. <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/library/study-space/group>

If this service is a success, the room booking software may be rolled out to cover individual study carrels as well in due course.

Reading Online

The Library's new reading list system has launched, available to students via Blackboard or via links on the Library homepage. At the time of writing there are over 650 lists in the system, with direct links to digital and physical resources.

Many lists also include digitised readings, accessible on and off campus, particularly useful for those trying to access the same readings in any given week.

The Library is keen to get further reading lists, so students are encouraged to let their lecturers know about the system and to get in touch with the Library to help make this happen. Email lib.reading@uea.ac.uk

Programme of Work 2015/16

Our programme of work for this year includes increasing our online library induction modules, including a pilot digital literacy course, a review of the interlending service, and business cases for more study spaces and toilets.

Library closure over Christmas

Unfortunately, the Library building will be completely closed from 7pm on Sunday 27 December 2015 to 12 noon on Saturday 2 January 2016 owing to essential maintenance work taking place by Estates in the building. The work involves replacing an electrical panel which serves not only the Library but other areas of the campus and means that there will be no power or lighting at all in the building, making it unsafe for both staff and Library users. The sub-station is situated in the Library Building and it is therefore technically not possible to provide a generator supply to the Library and Lecture Theatres.

Estates and ISD appreciate that this closure is likely to cause some inconvenience to our users, but hope that the timing of the work during the Christmas vacation, and this advance notice of the work, means that disruption is kept to a minimum and UEA's Library users have the opportunity to plan their visits to the Library around the building work. Further details are on the ISD News, Library News pages and Estates news web sites and there will be flyers available nearer the time.

Library activity – key statistics – 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2015

- Although footfall into the Library building in the 2014-15 academic year fell slightly by 2.24% to 1,379,820, this reduction was less than the fall in UEA's overall student numbers. In reality, the average number of visits to the Library per student has risen slightly, by 2.5%, to just under 100 visits per student.
- We anticipate that increased student numbers in 2015-16 are likely to put increased pressure on Library facilities.
- Occupancy of the new Postgraduate Research (PGR) study room has grown gradually during the year. Based on headcounts taken on sample days, the room has been busiest during the afternoons in semester 2, when there have been up to 20 people using the space. This represents occupancy of around 60% which is in line with expectations.
- Occupancy of the new PGT study room has been higher at around 70% with over 40 people using the space some afternoons on the sample headcount days. However we have received feedback about 100% usage at certain times, particularly around assignment deadlines.
- Unique Library loans, excluding renewals, for the 2014-15 academic year have fallen 17% compared with the previous year from 263,300 to 218,169. These figures must be considered in the light of greater availability and use of e-books and digitised resources which account for the vast proportion of library expenditure per annum. In addition, our recent collection development consultation provided plenty of evidence that many students preferred to consult books in the Library rather than physically taking them out of the building. The Library webpage continues to be the 2nd most visited UEA web page after the UEA webmail page, with 559,291 page views, often as the starting point for accessing our digital collections.

Approaches to food and drink

Our exam trial was a success as so we will be continuing the new system this semester. Cold snacks can now be consumed on floor 0 and floor 1. This provides a greater variety of study spaces than just floor 0. Importantly, it enables Library staff to manage "food free" floors more rigorously. We can re-direct students to the additional space when they need to snack.

The expansion of the areas where hot drinks in lidded cups can be consumed now includes all floors. This has been less successful owing to increasing numbers of coffee spills so we will have to continue to monitor this.

Ideally we would like funding for a social learning café space to accommodate these needs, drawing food and drink away from the main part of the building.

Library heating

We continue to work with Estates on consistency of heating and ventilation in the Library building and have agreed a focus on Floor 01 this year.

Postgraduate study rooms

These continue to work well. We have had some complaints about 'unissued' books being kept in the lockers and so locker users are being reminded of the need to borrow books before storing them in lockers.

Archive for Contemporary Writing

The Faculty of Arts & Humanities and the Library launched the UEA's national archive of contemporary creative writing in August 2015. Media coverage was included in The Sunday Times; The Guardian and on BBC's Front Row and attracted significant engagement via social media.

Recent acquisitions, which coincided with the launch, include the acclaimed playwright, Snoo Wilson, and the prize winning authors Tash Aw and Naomi Alderman and Amit Chaudhuri, the acclaimed author and critic and Visiting Professor at UEA. A number of other authors are also currently in discussion with UEA.

National Student Survey – Library question 16

2015 is the first year in which students paying the higher level of tuition fees completed the National Student Survey and it was uncertain how this might impact on student expectations of university services such as the Library. The cohort of UEA students completing the 2015 NSS survey were also the first group to have experienced 24/7 opening of the Library throughout all 3 years of their study. The NSS has one direct question, Q16, related to Library services "The Library resources and services are good enough for my needs". The percentage of students agreeing with this statement in 2015 has increased by one percentage point to 94%. This ranks UEA 4th out of all mainstream English HEIs behind Oxford, Cambridge, and Imperial College and on a par with Surrey and Leeds. The number of mainstream English HEIs scoring above 90% for Q16 is growing year on year. This does mean that a small drop in our Library satisfaction score could result in a considerable drop in the rankings. The planned growth in student numbers at UEA is likely to contribute to the already competing demands on the existing space within the Library and may impact on satisfaction rates in future NSS surveys.

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