UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
SENATE HOUSE LIBRARY

User Advisory Forum minutes
Wednesday 29 January 2020
Seng Tee Lee Seminar Room, 4th floor, Senate House Library

Chair: Maria Castrillo (MC)
Minutes: Lisa Miller (LM)

Staff Attending: Maria Castrillo (MC), John Tuck (JT), Richard Espley (RE), Caroline Kimbell (CK), Richard Warren (RW), Mura Ghosh (MG), Argula Rublack (AR), Lisa Miller (LM)

A list of forum members may be found on the User Advisory Forum webpage

	Minutes	Action/Outcome
1	**Welcome and Introductions** Maria welcomed the group to the second User Advisory Forum and gave an overview of the meeting and introduced Richard Espley	
2	**Developing SHL Collections** Richard Espley spoke to the group about developing the collections at SHL. Here are links to the documents mentioned in the presentation: Collection Development Strategy Collection Management Policy Collection Subject Strengths	Presentation will be distributed to forum members.
3	**Questions and answers** There was an opportunity for forum members to ask Richard Espley questions after the presentation and are recorded here: **Q1. When you decide to purchase a book when do you hope it will arrive?**	

E-books are on the catalogue in 24 hours, and most printed books which are in stock with our main suppliers should be on the shelf within a month, and many will be available sooner than that, depending on the level of processing required. If you wish to be kept informed of a new title it is always worth reserving it through the catalogue, at which point our metadata team will do everything they can to speed the process. However, aside from obvious problems like publication delays, books can take substantially longer to arrive than we would like; in the case of non-European titles, and especially those from Latin America and Africa, we are dependent on complex supply chains and it is extremely difficult to predict delivery dates. (RE)

Q2. When there is general wear and tear, are we replacing the books?

There is a standing budget to replace worn out books. We assess and usually buy as an e-book if financially feasible. There were 1800 repairs last year and 500 replacements. There is also a conservation team doing specialist work in special collections. (RE)

Q3. Will we buy an e-book if we have a physical book as well?

Due to limited budgets and a desire to hold the greatest range of research material possible, we will usually only buy an e-book duplicate if the printed copy is missing or worn out, or if there is a compelling reason to believe that it would be more useful as an e-book (e.g. some large reference works). We do try to respond to usage changes, however, and with periodical content we have recorded very steep declines in use of printed back issues, and so here we consciously seeking to replace print with e-versions. (RE)

Q4. What happens to physical books donated that we don't keep?

We tell the owner in advance and then pass unwanted items to a bookseller who donates part of their profits to literacy charities, although in the past we have also come to other arrangements at the donor's request, e.g. passing items to Oxfam or returning duplicates to the donor themselves. However, we usually don't accept donations unless we want to keep them. Large donations, we would not accept without examining the donation ourselves to avoid duplication. (RE)

	Q5. In JISC is there a way to segregate libraries geographically to screen member colleges or M25 (within London)? JISC searches libraries from all around the UK and Ireland including national, academic and specialist libraries. There is an option to select by region in the Jisc Library Hub Discover which has replaced Copac and Suncat and is built on the Jisc National Bibliographic Knowledgebase. Regarding London, the Search25 service run by the M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries provides a union catalogue approach across its member institutions in and around London. https://www.search25.ac.uk/	
4	**Group Discussion** This part of the meeting focussed on group discussions looking at how to improve knowledge and visibility of the collections by exploring the following areas: • How to make the collections more visible • How do we increase access to our collections • How do we make our collections more relevant • The Library catalogues: what works well and what can be improved	
5	**Summary of discussion** The areas of the discussions were then fed back by a representative of each group and are as follows: • **How to make the collections more visible** ▪ More clarity on where subjects are located and can be seen at a glance on arrival ▪ Improve signage and how to navigate the library (menu options that users can navigate) ▪ Greater clarity on arrival in the library and use the website to guide users ▪ Improve membership area (it's too narrow) ▪ More library inductions/introductory tours ▪ Librarians to be given a more prominent presence ▪ Regular slots with academic librarians/subject specialists ▪ Academic librarians at SHL to liaise regularly with peers in other university libraries	

- Balance between study space and where collections are located

- **How do we increase access to our collections**

  - Offer different membership categories
  - Reference access with no charge for alumni and former members of staff
  - Increase awareness of our collections to students and staff at further education colleges and adult learning institutes such as City Lit and also Birkbeck who provide flexible and part-time higher education courses for students who live or work in the London region
  - Longer opening hours, open earlier and later, similar opening hours to other libraries
  - Benchmarking SHL with similar libraries, their strategies to attract new members and how they promote their services to existing members

- **How do we make our collections more relevant**

  - SHL – Make user groups more obvious, who are we buying material for?
  - Compare other institute collections, look for similarities and highlight material not found elsewhere
  - Improve awareness of how to request books
  - Make e-books easier to use
  - Improve awareness of current collection topics

- **The Library catalogues - what works well and what can be improved**

  What works well:

  - New catalogue useful for searches and finding material
  - I like the new catalogue because it makes new titles discoverable.

  What can be improved:

  - The catalogue is difficult to navigate from the website and this is an unnecessary barrier
  - To improve granular availability for multi-volumes to show loans, when an item has been reserved for

	another reader and when each individual item is available. ▪ Floor plan and location guide would help to find material ▪ The catalogue search option has gone on the main page of the new website. The option to 'search the library' includes both the catalogue and the website **General comments:** ▪ The payment system is clunky with no option to store card details and there are repeat questions	
6	**AOB** None	
7	**Date of next meeting - Wednesday 6 May 2020, 12.00-13.30**	