



Loughborough  
University

University Library

# Annual Report 2021-2022

[www.lboro.ac.uk/library](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/library)



# Library Annual Report 2021-2022



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## Introduction

In last year's annual report, I outlined the new Library Blueprint and this past year we have been working on moving the Library from planning and vision to tangible activity.

We have also taken the time to make sure that this plan aligns with our new University Strategy, *Creating Better Futures. Together*. We believe it does for development of the service across both the London and Loughborough campuses. We will, however, be adapting some elements to ensure that the Blueprint also reflects all aspects and language of the strategy.

Over the past year we have moved from having the physical services we offer still very much operating under COVID restrictions in October 2021 to a removal of all restrictions in the spring of 2022. However, despite a return to an apparent normality in our physical spaces many of our services and support are forever changed. The shift to more online content, accompanying services and support is having and will continue to have an impact. We are, I believe, in an interesting, albeit unnerving, liminal space, between a desire to be safe and "as it was before" and an absolute knowledge "that things will never be the same again". To that end, this year we have been taking the time to get ready for change, looking at roles and structures, processes, and activity.


I feel very positive about our direction and the plans and reviews we are making but am also mindful of the challenges that we all face. I am exceptionally proud of all my colleagues and their commitment to delivering valuable services for all of our user communities.



Emma Walton – Director of Library Services and University Librarian

Key activity, August 2021-September 2022

Outlined below and mapped against the core pillars of the Library Blueprint is the key and notable activity that has taken place in the Library Service in 2021/22.



**Stewardship**

Responsibly managing and caring for our University's content 'assets' for the benefit of all our user communities.

### ***Increasing our digital content provision***

*We will maximise our digital presence by taking a digital first approach to scholarly content provision.*

- We are reviewing our collection and where possible making things available digitally in preference to print, so have purchased serial backfiles and are moving print serials subscriptions to digital.
- To ensure that digital content is accessible and inclusive we have been reviewing the accessibility of our content, as well as exploring tools that make this easier for our users, including obtaining access to [SensusAccess](#).
- Based on needs and evidence we have purchased access to additional online resources to support our users.
- Where funds have allowed, we have looked to obtain access to resources that will support the University's agenda, for example purchasing Taylor and Francis' Sustainable Development Goals Online.
- To support research needs and the Open Research agenda we have signed up to more Read and Publish Transitional deals, including Elsevier following significant negotiations. Our aim is to only sign up to deals of this nature that have been nationally negotiated via consortia to encourage fairer pricing and transparency.
- The cost of e-textbooks is a national issue with sector bodies such as SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries), JISC and CILIP (Chartered Institute for Information and Library Professionals) aiming to influence publishers and advocate for fairer pricing. There is also a significant grassroots activity with campaign groups (#ebooksSOS) highlighting the issue. To try and maintain as much online content as we can we are trialling a range of different ways to manage access. (See Priority Areas for 2022/23 section below)

### ***Building evidence around scholarly content, to create insights and inform our decision-making***

*We will capture and use quantitative and qualitative evidence to help us assess our existing content and to inform current and future investment decisions.*

- When providing access to any type of content we are using a range of evidence to inform our decisions. To make sure we are acquiring the right content we utilise quantitative data, such as usage data and turn-away data (that is when a user has tried to access content and cannot). We also investigate all options to provide that content by purchase, lease, license, or loan. Where content is increasingly costly, we also look at utilising consortia or financial frameworks to get best value or again at the different ways to access content. We also consider qualitative data from colleagues across the institution to support us in making informed decisions on new and existing content. To facilitate this work we have reframed some of our job roles and welcomed Peter Wood as Content Provision Manager (Monographs & textbooks), Kerry O'Brien as Senior Library Assistant (Monographs & textbooks) and Gary Mclaughlin as a Library Assistant to the Content Provision team

### ***Caring for & protecting our university's heritage***

*We will curate and preserve the intellectual heritage and history of our university in order to highlight the institution's identity, past and present.*

- In the summer of 2022, we appointed a new Archivist, Camille Moret. Camille will be working with colleagues across the Library and the wider institution in a number of areas, including looking at the shift to digital for the Archive, the accommodation and facilities, as well as use and access.
- We continue to work with our colleagues in LU Arts on a range of activity. We were also delighted to work with them to install a piece by Brendan Neiland.



Pilkington Library by Brendan Neiland  
On Level 3 of the Library



## Scholarship

Supporting the outcome and process of academic study

### Opening up research

*We will embrace the full potential of open research by embedding open practices and developing infrastructure to support our university's open research strategies and priorities.*

Over the past year we have continued to develop our support for Open Research,

- The creation of an Open Research Lead in the summer of 2021 allowed for a review of other posts in this area and in early 2022 we welcomed some new colleagues. Lara Skelly is our Open Research Manager (Data & Methods) and Cristina Rusu and David Campling also joined the permanent team as Senior Library Assistants (Research Repository). We have also used funds from our UKRI block grant to create a role to investigate how much we spend on open access publishing and where we are publishing. Dr Miranda Barnes has been appointed on a fixed term basis and she will also look at further investment opportunities in terms of open access infrastructures and publishers we could also be investing in to further our open research ambitions and support our UKRI funded researchers to increase the visibility of their work.
- The Research Repository continues to expand and contributes to Loughborough's outstanding global position in open research. The CWTS Leiden ranking places Loughborough in the top 25 in the world for the proportion of outputs available openly on Web of Science (23<sup>rd</sup> in 2021; 9<sup>th</sup> in 2020; 13<sup>th</sup> 2019).<sup>1</sup> Additionally, we compete well against other regional Universities.

April 2021-March 2022 – Views of Repository items (Midlands RLUK Libraries <sup>2</sup>)

1	Birmingham	1,262,319
2	Warwick	697,619
3	Nottingham	618,285
<b>4</b>	<b>Loughborough</b>	<b>550,268</b>
5	Leicester	239,100

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.leidenranking.com/ranking/2020/list> . Proportion of Open Access Publications PP(OA) for 2015-2018 based on bibliographic data from the Web of Science database

<sup>2</sup> IRUS data

As a result our repository content has a significant impact for our research communities

*I cannot put a price on having had this article open access this past few weeks. Whoever thanks the library for this money at a senior level, or if you ever need an example of the benefit of open-access for enterprise/impact pathways, then this is one: this youth charity would not have quoted my research in their own written evidence if they had not found it free online. They've since given me a call and invited me onto their advisory group about the future of citizenship education.”*  
(Senior Lecturer in Human Geography) “

- In the UKRI reporting period of April 2021 – March 2022 we reported a 94% compliance rate with the policy - the highest compliance rate we have reported since the policy was launched. This compliance rate reflects the hard work of colleagues in the Library alongside colleagues in the Research and Innovation Office. A new, stronger, UKRI OA policy has been in place since April 2022 and the Open Research Team has been working hard to ensure our processes and procedures are fit for purpose. The Open Research and Content Teams have also been working closely together to assess the numerous Read and Publish deals which are available to join (via Jisc). These deals not only include read access but also allow publishing (some, unlimited publishing) for Loughborough affiliated corresponding authors. This helps Loughborough researchers increase the reach and visibility of their work as well as aid compliance with the various funder policies.
- Last year we also received the results of the REF2021 Research Exercise. The Open Research Team worked closely with colleagues across the University (both academic and professional services) to ensure that our submission was as strong as possible. The work of the team in checking compliance, processing deposits to the Repository, and advising researchers was an essential to our outputs being compliant with the REF open access policy.
- The Library continued to be a key stakeholder in the University's open research work and led the work in recruiting our academic Open Research Leads. These leads joined the re-configured Open Research Working Group (chaired by Prof. Camilla Gilmore) which acts as part of the governance structure for the work. The Library is a key member of this group, setting the agenda (with the Chair), and contributing papers on topics such as Read and Publish negotiations and Rights Retention.
- Members of the Open Research Team continue to be part of the Research England and Arcadia funded COPIM (Community-led Open Publication Infrastructures for Monographs) project and have worked on creating an archiving network on University Repositories to help small, scholar-led, open access presses archive the monographs

they publish. This work has involved collaboration with colleagues at publishers (Open Book Publishers), the British Library, Jisc, and the Digital Preservation Coalition.

### ***Enhancing interaction with scholarly content***

*We will facilitate the use of tools and techniques to assist our user communities to discover and interact with scholarly content, supporting emerging research methods and expectations.*

- We are keen to increase the amount and type of open scholarship available via our repository and work during the past year in this area includes working with academics to test the capabilities of the Research Repository to help link different, but related, outputs. In addition, we have been investigating different tools and solutions which will enable researchers and academics to increase the visibility of their work and interact with other, like-minded, researchers. We have also been identifying aggregators and infrastructures we could invest in to enable our researchers to increase their interaction with open material (and to increase the possibility of external researchers interacting with Loughborough's outputs). Members of the Open Research team have also been identifying how research methods could be deposited in the Repository and how this could also increase the engagement with our more "traditional" outputs

### ***Supporting pedagogy***

*We will seek to make significant contributions to the pedagogical approach at our university.*

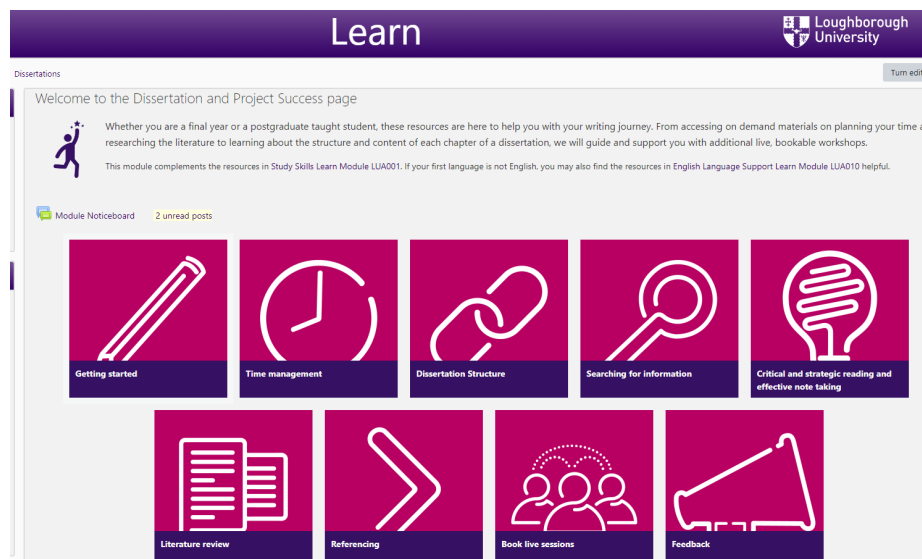
We are committed to the provision of a high-quality teaching and training offer for all and work across our university to deliver robust teaching sessions and develop a supportive and complementary skills offer.

- Our Academic Librarians responded to the changes in teaching delivery for the academic year 2021-22, with a significant return to in-person delivery, while also undertaking dual delivery and fully online sessions as required. **227** live in-curricular and extra-curricular lectures and workshops were delivered and on demand material was once again made available to support the live sessions.
- Following a review of content, sessions to support the Veritate element of the Personal Best programme were for the most part delivered live online to Part A students, while a revised on-demand version of the session was also made available.
- The Library has continued to work closely in partnership with the Academic Language Support Service and this year also collaborated with the new Student Success team, to



develop a suite of online materials and complementary stand-alone workshops to support students undertaking dissertations and final year projects. In February 2022 a new Learn module, “Dissertation and Project success” was launched on [Learn](https://learn.lboro.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=23649) (<https://learn.lboro.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=23649>). Workshops and drop-ins for final year students were held during March and live workshops aimed at postgraduate taught course students undertaking dissertations were delivered in May. Two successful dissertation retreat events, hosted by staff from the three services, were also held at the Link Hotel for final year students in SSH.4

- In London our Librarian, Laura Newman continued to develop the Library offer to support students and academic colleagues participating in projects related to Academic integrity and preparing for new programmes such as the ABCE MArch programme which will be taught in London.
- The Library returned to an in-person programme of Doctoral Researcher training while continuing to offer the suite of on-demand resources created during the previous academic year. **17** in-person workshops were delivered to **181** Doctoral researchers from all Schools on a range of topics, while a further **182** individuals engaged with the on-demand resources and completed the associated assessments. Further support was made available to staff and researchers at the University’s research conference and Doctoral College Summer showcase.



**Dissertation and Project Success Learn Module (Library and ALSS)**



## Connection

Encouraging engagement and interaction with our user communities

### ***Developing a human-centred approach to our library environment***

*We will take a human-centred approach to our digital and physical environments*

- An aspect of our commitment to this approach, is to seek, review and respond to feedback. In light of COVID restrictions we held fewer formal feedback interventions. However, we have reviewed our results in national surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS) and Post Graduate Taught experience survey (PTES).

Question 19. of the **NSS** relates to Library services and resources - *the library resources (e.g. books, online services and learning spaces) have supported my learning well* and is in the Learning Resources section. In the 2022 survey we received 87.36% satisfaction, which put us 10th in England and 12th in the UK. It is important to note that other institutions gained higher scores than 87% but these are small and/or specialist institution.

Table (below) demonstrates that in 2022 Loughborough both outperformed the % agree rating for England and remained in the top-quartile for this question, despite a drop in the overall ranking.

Q19	Year	Lboro	England	Top Quartile
	2019	91.2	86.9	89.1
	2020	91.8	87.2	88.1
	2021	85.5	75.5	83.2
	2022	87.4	83.5	83.2

Reviewing the qualitative comments can provide valuable insight to improve or adapt services, this past year 31 comments mentioned the Library. Of those 14 were positive (facilities, resources and support) and 11 were negative (space, COVID restrictions and resources). We also received 6 Library related comments in the “one thing you would change” free comment option, with most of these about the size and space in the Library.

There are three questions related to the Library and learning resources in the **PTES** and we scored above 80% in all of these categories.

- There is appropriate access to physical library resources and facilities (88%)
- There is appropriate access to online library resources (89%)
- The support for using IT and accessing resources meets my needs (for example, support with accessing online journals and e-books, using digital learning tools/apps) (84%)

We are pleased with these scores particularly as our services remained subject to COVID restrictions until the spring of 2021. There were some lower scores against the support question in some Schools and we will be looking at actions to improve these scores,

### ***Facilitating interaction and partnerships***

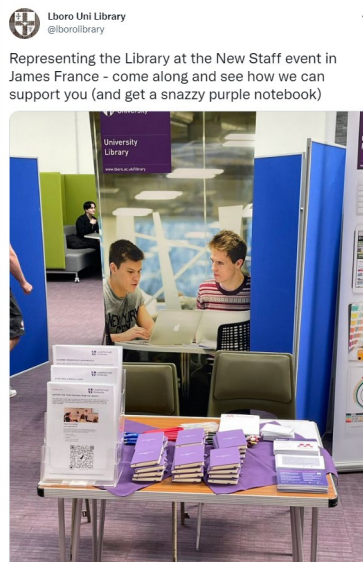
*We will build upon existing interaction models to engage with our communities; to inform our service offerings and make contributions to wider university life.*

- We engage with our users through a variety of communication methods, with one of the key ways being through our enquiry mechanisms.  
In terms of enquiries in the Pilkington Library (minus barrier entry) we received 18,240 enquiries (a decrease on the previous year due to book collection service ending)  
Enquiries received via [library@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:library@lboro.ac.uk) for the year were 5,109 (a decrease on the previous year due to book collection service ending)

On review of our enquiry statistics we can say that we have a first line resolution rate of 97%.

- As previously mentioned above, we didn't initiate any additional feedback interventions, focus groups or similar in 2021-22 but we did look for other opportunities to engage with our user communities, through attendance at SSLCs, University's research conference, the Doctoral College Summer showcase and with our student employees.
- We participated in the new staff event, giving us the opportunity to meet staff from a range of areas and highlight our services.
- Following the helpful use of the Student Ambassador scheme to support our extended opening hours during 2020-21 we looked for ways to enable our students to work with us in the evening and during weekends. Having students working with us enabled us to have another point of view on processes and practices and supported the staffing to be more representative of our range of users.
- Following this activity we employed four students to work with us, with three remaining on with us as staff as we move into the new academic year.

- We also looked for more light-hearted ways to engage with our users and in December 2021 held another successful Jolabokafloð, an Icelandic Christmas book-giving celebration. We asked for donations of books and then gave them away to those who wanted them.
- The University returned to in-person Open Days in June and September and we were delighted to host a range of services and be a hub for our visitors. We also continued to support the online open days.



Our Foundations – underpinning all we do and are Sustainability, Library staff and Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity

These are areas that are of great significance for us as a Library service, in terms of sustainability and Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity they reflect our wider institutional focus and the wider world. Our commitment to them runs throughout the entire Blueprint and each of its elements. Library staff are also included, as without my colleagues we would not be able to achieve our and the wider University's goals.



### **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity**

Over the past year we have initiated a range of initiatives to embed EDI principles and practice into the Library service. We have

- Formed an EDI Group made up of interested staff within the Library Service
- Rolled out Anti-racism training for all staff
- Colleagues have looked at ways to diversify our leisure reading collection
- Carried out considerable work looking at accessibility, with one of the outcomes being obtaining SensusAccess, a tool that individuals can use to make resources more accessible by converting documents into a range of alternate media
- Made roles suitable for students more accessible and have recruited students into those roles

### **Library Staff**

Without my colleagues we would be unable to deliver the services and support to our users. I am incredibly proud of my colleagues and how they adapted during and post Covid. It was wonderful to see our front-line team shortlisted for a Vice Chancellor's Award for all of their efforts during the last few years.

Whilst the pandemic saw many of our services necessarily shift to online, much of the technology being used was unknown to some of our staff, including Teams. Some of our staff were very accustomed to Teams because of the nature of their role, but others were not and so during the past year we have introduced a range of activity and training on aspects of Teams. Colleagues have delivered sessions on different elements of the software, e.g filesharing,

delivered in-person workshops showing their tips and hints, as well as providing video clips and other on-demand information to aid learning.

Colleagues have also shared experiences and knowledge with colleagues through our Exchange series, including information on auto-renewals, the reference tool Mendeley and electronic resources.

Following Ben Veasey's departure (he moved to Derby to be their Director of Library Services) and with his role of Assistant Director (Research, Content and Discovery) vacant we looked at our team structures and introduced the role of Deputy Director of Library Services. I am delighted that we appointed Helen Young into that role from her previous role as job-share Academic Services Manager. Helen will work with me to enhance and develop opportunities for collaboration and partnership with Professional Service units, academic colleagues, our students, researchers, and other user communities to review and strengthen our offer as appropriate. To progress our intentions as outlined in our Blueprint, Helen will be working with colleagues across the Library service on the development of digital services through some specific responsibilities for systems and content. Last year we introduced two new service lead roles, an Open Research Development and Discovery Lead and Content Provision and Access Lead, held by Gareth Cole and Jane Bramley respectively. We will be converting the two existing Manager roles (Academic Services Manager and User Services Manager) into Service Leads shortly. The service leads are responsible for the delivery of key services in their areas and will work together on development and service improvement across the Library service.

## Priority areas for 2022-23

### **Stewardship – we will**

- continue to work with colleagues across our institution and the wider sector to manage the increasing costs of content,
- continue to work with the University and within the sector on negotiations for scholarly content. This includes the transition from "pay to read" arrangements towards "pay to publish" agreements, as well as provision for e-textbooks and ebooks more generally. This is a challenging time for content provision, and we will work within our sector and with our academic schools and professional services colleagues on the best ways to meet the conflicts between demand and budget,
- review the role of our Archive and its content
- We will review the Library's systems and tooling to ensure they are fit for the future.

### **Scholarship – we will**

- continue to look at ways to support Open Research and our ambitious research goals,
- will recommend options for a Rights Retention policy,
- work with colleagues across the University to further develop our teaching and skills offer,
- work with colleagues on issues relating to academic integrity,
- look at how the Library can participate and contribute to the Research and Innovation, Education and Student Experience and International Core plans,
- work with colleagues in IT Services, with our Finance colleagues and with our user communities to procure and implement a new online Reading List system for the University.

#### **Connection – we will**

- look to work more closely with the Students Union and other student and staff groups to enhance and adapt services,
- continue to develop our offer to prospective students and school groups,
- work closely with other units across campus, including LU Arts and Marketing and Advancement, to explore further community outreach initiatives,
- update and develop our website and other communication mechanisms, involving our users in this work

In rolling out our Blueprint we will also continue to develop activity related to EDI, particularly an action plan for our EDI group that will align with and complement the Core plan in this area.

To support staff with change we have developed a staff development programme that will work with and alongside the offer from Organisational Development and within our sector.

We will also update our Blueprint to ensure it reflects our new University Strategy.

These outlined priorities are not an exhaustive list of our activity but do present some indicative areas that represent our service. We are committed to supporting our University in its aims through the development of our services, support and spaces in Loughborough and London.

