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Society of College,  
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# Library services for international students

## Executive summary

It is well documented that international students face additional challenges to those faced by all new students. Difficulties experienced with academic and social aspects can adversely affect the outcome of their studies.

The recruitment of international students is of major importance to universities in the United Kingdom. International students bring cultural and intellectual diversity and, in times of decreased public funding, contribute essential income. Success in attracting large numbers of international students, in particular at postgraduate level, is also a source of prestige for universities by signalling their world class status. The quality of library facilities and services can be one of the deciding factors in students' choice of university, may influence whether they complete their studies, and will certainly contribute enormously to whether their experience of studying in the UK is positive or negative.

However, international students also bring a wide variety of needs, experience and expectations. In recent years the international student profile has become increasingly diverse, as in other developed countries, with students world-wide having a wide range of abilities and subject interests and a wider range of teaching and learning experiences. These changes are reflected in the issues faced by all libraries striving to effectively support international students. The guidelines are the result of research undertaken during 2007 by the SCONUL Access Group. The research included:

- Literature survey
- Survey of SCONUL member institutions
- Web survey of most UK library and institutional websites
- Web survey of a sample of international institutional and library websites in Australia, New Zealand and North America
- Focus groups with international students
- Surveys and interviews with international students
- Institutional visits overseas

The guidelines provide a practical and pragmatic tool for practitioners, providing them with a comprehensive overview of the issues as seen by their peers and their students, as well as a set of suggested solutions and best practice case studies.

Libraries are advised to consider an international strategy which reflects their individual institutional missions and objectives. Best practice examples of both Institutional and library strategies are listed in the appendices. The guidelines identify seventeen key concepts for consideration by strategists and practitioners. These are elaborated upon throughout the text and brought together in an appendix. Other appendices list examples of good practice on library websites, examples of glossaries and academic writing advice and other good ideas or 'special touches'.

The Working Group examined the issues surrounding the debate over exclusivity versus inclusivity which affect the provision of library services for international students. Jargon-free library publications; improved access to library facilities and good customer care do not exclusively benefit international students. Similarly information literacy embedded in study programmes and based on an understanding of different learning styles is equally relevant to both home and international students.

However, it is also important that international students realise that their needs are recognised and addressed. As social networking websites show, joining groups creates a sense of identity and encourages effective communication. International students often face greater challenges in using the library than home students and it is sometimes necessary to provide 'exclusive' services to achieve equity. Therefore it is helpful to badge certain services and facilities which help international students adapt to the host country's libraries. Information literacy sessions which have been tailored to the pace and specific needs of international students; glossaries explaining library terms and sections on library web pages are all good examples. It is important to treat all students as individuals without generalising too much; if this can be achieved successfully then a degree of exclusivity will enable all students to be included in the provision of excellent library support.

### **Key concepts in order of text citation**

- KC1:** While emphasis should be placed on positive aspects of the library service, it is important to manage student expectations by presenting clear information about library resources and services. Ensure this information is included in all recruitment publicity produced by the University.
- KC2** Engage with academic staff over reading list provision for international students to manage their expectations.
- KC3** International students are not an homogenous group; even students from the same country don't necessarily have the same cultural background.
- KC4** Use plain English and avoid jargon, not only in publications but in guiding and general library use.
- KC5** Provide glossaries of specialist terminology.
- KC6** Design information literacy sessions to cater for all levels of IT ability by building in self paced elements and providing back up resources whenever possible.
- KC7** Provide regular staff development for library staff in cross cultural awareness and diversity training.
- KC8** An awareness of varying teaching and learning styles should underpin information literacy teaching.
- KC9** Establish mechanisms for obtaining the views of international students, in order to inform future plans.
- KC10** The library should encourage the development of links with other sections of the university which support international students.
- KC11** Design information literacy programmes which challenge students to think about their information literacy ability, rather than just learning technical search skills.
- KC12** Ensure that all students, but especially international students, have easy access to information about plagiarism and how to retain their academic integrity.

- KC13** Providing information on study skills support in the library can benefit all students.
- KC14** Library web pages specifically for international students can help create a welcoming impression and manage expectations, even if many of the links point straight back to the main library web pages.
- KC15** Consider providing material in different languages, thinking about how much, which languages and whether students be involved in production.
- KC16** Where possible involve international students in staff development activities.
- KC17** Identify a named individual member of staff to be a contact point for international students and to bring together library activities.

## **Group Membership**

Karen Senior (Convener)	Head of Library, University of Bolton
Moira Bent	Faculty Liaison Librarian and National Teaching Fellow, Newcastle University
Marie Scopes	Skills for Learning Consultant and Teaching Fellow, Leeds Metropolitan University
Mamtimyn Sunuodula	Middle East and East Asia Studies Librarian, Durham University

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## **Remit**

To produce guidelines for library services for international students, to include best practice and case studies, on behalf of the SCONUL Access Group.



## **Library services for international students**

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## 1 Foreword

It is well documented that international students face additional challenges to those faced by all new students. Difficulties experienced with academic and social aspects can adversely affect the outcome of their studies.

These guidelines are the result of research undertaken during 2007 on behalf of the SCONUL Access Group. A small sub-group was set up with a remit to investigate ways in which HE libraries are supporting international students. Background research included the following:-

- Literature Survey
- Survey of SCONUL member institutions. See **Appendix 7.1**
- Web survey of most UK library and institutional websites
- Web survey of a sample of international institutional and library websites in Australia, New Zealand and North America
- Focus groups with international students
- Surveys and interviews with international students
- Institutional visits overseas.

Preliminary research results were presented at the CERLIM 'Libraries without Walls 7' conference in Lesvos, Greece in September 2007, enabling prepublication feedback from an international audience to be incorporated in the final Guidelines. This earlier version will be published in the conference proceedings later in 2008.

It is hoped that these guidelines will provide a practical and pragmatic tool for practitioners, providing them with a comprehensive overview of the issues as seen by both their peers and their students, as well as a set of suggested solutions and best practice case studies. Key concepts have been highlighted in the text and listed as **Appendix 7.9** and good ideas, or "special touches" noted during the research are listed in **Appendix 7.8**.

## **2 Introduction**

### **Background**

The recruitment of international students is of major importance to universities in the United Kingdom. International students bring cultural and intellectual diversity and, in times of decreased public funding, contribute essential income. Success in attracting large numbers of international students, in particular at postgraduate level, is also a source of prestige for universities by signalling their world class status. The quality of library facilities and services can be one of the deciding factors in students' choice of university, may influence whether they complete their studies, and will certainly contribute enormously to whether their experience of studying in the UK is positive or negative.

However, international students also bring a wide variety of needs, experience and expectations. In recent years the international student profile has become increasingly diverse, as in other developed countries, with students world-wide having a wide range of abilities and subject interests and a wider range of teaching and learning experiences. These changes are reflected in the issues faced by all libraries striving to effectively support international students.

### **Definitions**

#### **International students**

The Working Group has used the definition of international students given by Carroll and Ryan: "...we speak of international students when we mean students who have chosen to travel to another country for tertiary study ... most of their previous experience will have been of other educational systems, in cultural contexts and sometimes in a language that is different from the one in which they will now study." (Carroll & Ryan, 2005) The study was limited to students coming from overseas into the UK to study at Higher Education Institutions and did not include students who remain in their home country and are taught as distance students from the UK, except where the needs of the two groups overlap.

#### **Internationalisation**

Internationalisation is a term used increasingly by universities. Knight and de Wit define it as "the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service of an institution" (Knight & de Wit, 1995).

### **Trends**

#### **The global & UK market**

It is predicted that by 2020, global demand for higher education places will increase from 1 million to 2.6 million for the 5 major English speaking destination countries. (USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), and Asia is predicted to dominate demand. Global demand for international student places will increase from about 2.1 million in 2003 to 5.8 million by 2020. (Bohm et al. 2004).

In 2006, the UK had 318,400 international students, 44,000 of these being from the EU. Over 260,000 students paid up to £10,000 in tuition fees plus additional living and housing costs. Amongst OECD countries, the UK market share was 13.4 % against the USA's 22%. International students make up 13.4% of the total UK Higher Education Institutions (HEI) population.

The United Kingdom and the United States continue to dominate the global market in Higher Education and a recent major survey of more than 40,000 students, commissioned by the Council for Industry and Higher Education, confirmed that the UK universities are “the best in the world for teaching and supporting their international students” (Tahir, 2007). However the same survey also reported that library facilities were not considered as good as in some rival countries. Furthermore, another study, by the Higher Education Policy Institute, contradicted the previous positive conclusions by reporting that 27% of international students from outside the European Union thought that UK universities offered poor or very poor value for money (Sastry and Bekhradnia, 2007). This latter survey certainly suggests that UK universities should not be complacent about holding on to their share of the international student market.

On the positive side, a 2007 survey of students from 143 countries undertaken by i-graduate revealed that 95% rated the UK an “attractive” or “very attractive” place to study, compared with 93% for the US, so the gap may be narrowing. One of the main reasons cited was its reputation as a very safe place to study.

If UK universities are to maintain their place in the global market, they need to respond to changing needs in order to attract students from abroad. Academic libraries have an important supporting role in this. Andreas Schleicher, head of the Indicators and Analysis Division at the OECD warns that “the global educational landscape has changed fundamentally” and UK universities must face challenges from China and India, in particular, as well as from other European countries now offering degrees taught in English. He says “Success will go to those institutions and countries that are swift to adapt, slow to complain and open to change.” (Schleicher, 2007, p3)

### **Global citizenship**

Globalisation also means that universities need to equip all their graduates with the appropriate attributes for employment and citizenship in a globalised world. Universities can achieve this through the internationalisation of the curriculum and the creation of an international, multi-cultural ethos. Through providing resources, study and social space and teaching information skills, academic libraries can also help to foster an international environment in the library which enriches the experience of both home and international students.

## **3 Social and cultural issues**

### **Perceived issues**

Individual perceptions colour our world and the ways in which we respond to others. This research was undertaken against a background of perceived as well as actual issues, derived both from experience and a review of the literature. Issues from the perspectives of library staff and international students have been considered separately, in order to recognise congruencies and conflicts in approaches.

### **Library staff perceptions**

#### **Library staff perceptions of student numbers**

Numbers of international students are increasing in many countries and in the UK home student numbers are also rising. In addition, statistics show that UK student mobility has continued to decline since 1994/5 in comparison with growing figures from other European countries (Erasmus, 2007). The cumulative effect is that

libraries are dealing with increased potential demand from a wider variety of students against a background of declining or static budgets. It may be the case that whilst international students bring increased funding to the university as a whole, little extra funding devolves to the Library to pay for the higher level of support which could be needed.

### **Library staff perceptions of student expectations**

International students often pay very high fees, in particular those studying for postgraduate business qualifications. Consequently they may have similarly high expectations regarding library resources and services. Unfortunately, library budgets may not be able to meet these expectations and this can lead to tensions between international students and library staff. In addition international students, like all library users, increasingly expect online information as a norm, with printed sources as a secondary choice. For example, enquiries may include such diverse queries as “Do you have a database of all Arabic manuscripts?” or “Can you tell me the web address of all Japanese theses on my subject?” UK libraries may not always be able to access overseas material to meet these expectations.

#### **Key concept 1**

While emphasis should be placed on positive aspects of the library service, it is important to manage student expectations by presenting clear information about library resources and services. Ensure this information is included in all recruitment publicity produced by the University.

#### **Case study**

“We had a situation at our university last year in which a group of Chinese students studying a Masters degree in Business felt so strongly about the poor service the university was providing in return for their fees that they returned as a group to China. One of the reasons they gave for their decision was that they had expected the library to provide each of them with copies of all the text books that they needed and they were dismayed to find they had to take turns to read a book and pay library fines as well as their high course fees”

#### **Key concept 2**

Engage with academic staff over reading list provision for international students to manage their expectations

### **Library staff perceptions of student culture & background**

Students are now travelling from a much wider range of countries as more developing nations want to educate their students elsewhere. Furthermore, it is no longer just high achievers who are funded by their governments; now opportunities are available for a wider range of abilities and ages. Library staff can feel

overwhelmed by the range of cultures they are expected to be familiar with, as well as the variety of learning styles, attitudes and cultural differences with which they are faced. It is also true that international students are not an homogeneous group; even students from the same country may have different cultural backgrounds and experiences. Sunuodula (2008) comments that “in China, the economic, educational and social disparity which exists between its costal areas and inland provinces, between the cities and the countryside can have a crucial impact on the students’ knowledge of and exposure to academic resources, English language skills and ICT skills”

### **Key concept 3**

International students are not an homogenous group; even students from the same country don't necessarily have the same cultural background.

### **Case study**

“I feel as if I have to know about all kinds of different cultures, languages and expectations and yet I've hardly ever been to another country. I've chosen to stay here. The students have chosen to come here so surely it is up to them to make some adjustments to our language and customs and to learn how we do things here. It's got to be a bit of both. We do all this awareness training for staff and don't get me wrong, I'm not knocking it, I mean, I'm not biased or anything cos I like learning all this stuff, I just think it's sometimes a bit one way – I hope we're doing it for students as well - telling them what we expect from them!”

[Library assistant]

A possible response to such views is to ask staff to imagine how they might cope studying at any level in a foreign country.

### **Library staff perceptions of different disciplines**

International students today are entering a much wider range of disciplines than in the past, when science, engineering and medicine were the most popular subjects studied. Business and management in particular, but also social sciences, arts and humanities are attracting larger numbers of students, with consequences for stock provision. For postgraduates in particular, issues arise when there is demand for in depth resources to support research based on their home country.

### **Student Perceptions**

International students face additional challenges to those faced by all new students and the ways in which the students themselves perceive and deal with these challenges can affect both the academic and social aspects of their study in the UK. (Hughes, 2001; McNamara, 1997; Carroll, 2005)

### **Student perceptions of language barriers**

In her survey of incoming international students at San Jose State University, Jackson says that "...English language proficiency is a difficulty widely documented in the literature on international students. Both librarians and students encounter verbal and written language barriers and non-verbal communications problems." (Jackson, 2005, p.199) International students may feel self-conscious about speaking English, afraid of making mistakes or not being understood and this may discourage them from approaching library staff for help. They may find it difficult to understand regional accents and colloquialisms. Reading and writing Roman script may be a problem and students may also experience difficulties in following what is happening in class, and keeping up with academic work because of constantly having to refer to dictionaries. Library staff may also experience difficulties in understanding students whose English is heavily accented and worry about how to deal with potentially embarrassing situations.

#### **Case study**

"I have a student at the moment who came to me with a tale of how she feels she is being left out of her seminar group's planning meetings because of her English (her English is good). I think staff can underestimate the effect that language confidence has."

Language Centre teacher

#### **Case study**

"As an international student from China, I have studied and lived in America for almost one year. This was also a year to grapple with the English language that got me into hot water at any time. For instance my limitations in speaking and listening created a great deal of stress for me. When conversing with native speakers, I often felt helpless because I could not speak freely what was in my mind. I often became easily lost in conversations, just due to missing a word or a sentence. The worst situation occurred when I sometimes heard only the sound of people's voices in English but knew nothing of what they were saying. Whenever this happened, the feeling of being an illiterate, struggling in a modern society, tortured me".

Taken from Li (2007)

It is also important that staff are aware that there are differences between cultures as to what constitutes polite forms of language. Polite expression may vary from the very formal to what may appear abrupt to UK ears.

### **Student perceptions: previous library experience**

"Students from other countries are accustomed to different library services and varying degrees of access to information..." (Jackson, 2005, p198). In a similar study of incoming international students at Deakin University, McSwiney (2006) also comments on the diversity of students' previous library experience. Problems include

unfamiliar classification systems and confusing library terminology – for example, the difference between a “hold”, “request” and “reservation”. Collaboration with language teaching staff over these issues will be an advantage, as materials can be written for students on preparatory courses which can take account of these issues. This will take pressure off library staff and at the same time, help language staff to prepare students effectively to use the library.

Some international students may be used to closed access libraries and to having materials brought to them by library staff. They may need more help in developing as independent learners, finding information for themselves and in using self-service systems. Books and other resources may have a Western or UK-centric perspective which international students may find difficult to relate to their own experience. Length of opening hours throughout the year, including vacations and public holidays, is important to many international students who are often more dependent than home students on the library for access to email and the internet, and as place to study.

Most international students, in particular the students from East Asia, have prior experience and a well established habit of using libraries as a place to study, though they still need to get used to the organizational differences, understanding signposts, rules and regulations and library communications, such as voice announcements [Jackson 2005]. A recent survey conducted at Durham University showed that 52% of students from Taiwan visited a library at least once a week and over 90% visited it at least once a month. It is important for libraries to create welcoming atmosphere and adjust library space to take account of the differences in learning styles, culture and language. Anxiety in an unfamiliar setting can also deter international students from entering and using the library as a study and social space.

#### **Case study**

“Chinese students have a single text book for each course and there is no need for students to search for additional books or journals in the university library or on its web pages. The students use the Library frequently as a study space partly because it provides a better environment than their place of residence and partly because it is considered a virtue to go to the Library, which will be seen as working hard on the course work by society. In most university accommodation, four students share a room which can get noisy or unsuitable for study.”

#### **Key concept 4**

Use Plain English and avoid jargon and acronyms, not only in publications, but in guiding and general library use.

#### **Key concept 5**

Provide glossaries of specialist terminology – this will help all students (and staff!).



**Student perceptions: IT literacy**

Levels of computer literacy vary amongst international students and assumptions should not be made. Some students may not be able to make full use of computers because of language difficulties. In addition, there may be issues regarding access to computer programs to enable the reading/writing of non-Roman scripts, such as Chinese, and this may also mean difficulties in communicating with relatives and friends back home. Not all students from developing countries have had good access to computers and the internet so have had fewer opportunities to become IT literate, whilst others may be very highly skilled. Library staff have to be aware that assumptions relating to IT literacy cannot be based on country of origin and that each student must be treated as an individual.

**Key concept 6**

Design information literacy sessions to cater for all levels of IT ability by building in self paced elements and providing back up resources whenever possible.

**Case study**

“In Romania, we were given a single text book to read for each course and assessed on the basis of that. The professors were very knowledgeable and we often asked them instead of using reference sources. We sometimes went to the Library and filled out the request form and handed it over to the Library staff to fetch the book for us. It took somewhere between 1 to 3 hours for the book to be fetched and if it is not the right book, the same process continued. After that we rarely used the Library for books or journals, but just as a place to study.”

**Student perceptions: culture**

International students may feel overwhelmed by differences in culture and may experience the stress often described as ‘culture shock’, the symptoms of which can include frustration, mental fatigue, loneliness, boredom, and lack of motivation as well as homesickness. Pace of life and differences in food are often highlighted by students. They may encounter well-intentioned ignorance which could cause offence.

**Case study**

An article in the Times Higher by a Japanese student [ref] described her experience while researching her PhD of a white-haired librarian on the front desk who would raise her hands in a gesture of prayer and dip her head in greeting. The student at first assumed that this was a general, if eccentric, greeting but when she realised that it was her own special welcome she commented that “it began to grate on my nerves”. Yoshino comments that “All too often, University staff seem to be left to their own devices, with little back-up or systematic information, when dealing with students from fundamentally different cultural and academic backgrounds from their own.”

(Yoshino, 2004, p.18).

Both McSwiney (2006) and Sunuodula (2006) recommend library staff development which includes cross-cultural awareness. We might also include linguistic awareness, such as polite forms of language and intonation.

### **Case study**

Some universities provide personal support for new international students by linking them with a buddy or mentor for their first few weeks at university. This mechanism is in operation e.g. at Monash University in Victoria, Australia, and at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. At the latter, International Assistants are available to help new students settle in and learn about campus life. They come from a variety of backgrounds and study across a range of subjects. International students have to register for this service. Libraries could consider contributing to these types of services by offering training in library areas to the peer groups.

### **Key concept 7**

Provide regular staff development for library staff in cross cultural awareness and diversity training.

### **Student perceptions: teaching methods**

Differences in educational culture can be a major issue for international students. They may be used to more formal teaching methods and unused to critical thinking, group work and independent learning. Tweed and Lehman explore the influence of culture on academic learning by examining the Western approach, characterised by questioning and evaluating accepted knowledge in which students are expected “to generate and express their own hypotheses” in contrast with the Eastern approach which values “effortful, respectful, and pragmatic acquisition of essential knowledge” (Tweed & Lehman, 2002). They suggest the development of a flexible approach to teaching and learning which combines the advantageous elements of both approaches.

### **Key concept 8**

An awareness of varying teaching and learning styles should inform the library's whole approach to international students from the way in which we teach information literacy to the provision of library resources, facilities and services

Another important issue is plagiarism and research has found a high incidence among international students. This issue is examined in more detail in section 5.2.

## **Case study**

Email from a librarian to his colleagues:

I just bumped into a pre-sessional Chinese student who looked slightly lost on Level 1. He had made a list of books he was interested in from the Library Catalogue and was trying to locate them in a slightly wrong section.

I helped him to find the books and explained the shelfmarks and how they are organized. Then I asked a few questions about what he found different in our Library. Here is what he told me:

The Library Catalogue, open access, and shelfmark arrangement work in a similar way although the shelfmark system was different.

In China, the students are given a text book for each module and most students don't even manage to finish reading the text book. They were examined on the basis of what was in that text book at the end of the module and many students skimmed through the text book just before the exams. There were about 12-14 modules in each year (students were given 12-14 books for the year) and they study for four years at university.

Most undergraduate students borrowed novels and other literary books from the Library for entertainment, but not for their subject study. The Library had other books and journals but they were for people who wanted to do additional studying.

It took a little while to explain a few of the terms we often use to the Student, such as Course or module, Shelfmark, Reference books, Periodicals, Open access, Text book, Reading list.

The student had graduated from one of the top universities in his own country and worked for 3 years before coming to this university.

## **4 Institutional and library policy**

### **Institutional strategies**

Many universities world-wide have international strategies in place, whilst others are in the process of articulating them. From the SCONUL survey results, it would appear that at Institutional level, UK universities are embracing the concept. 72% of respondents had University level International strategies. Top level policy, support, and linkage to university objectives are crucial elements in any practical implementation at local level, be it from the Library, Student Services, Language Service or any other department.

### **Library strategies**

In the survey, only 8% of libraries had either an international library strategy or Action Plan in place. Possible elements for inclusion in library strategies are detailed below and many are elaborated in the Service Provision section of the guidelines. See **Appendix 7.2** for two examples of UK University Library strategies.

### **Information on and feedback from international students**

Every university is unique in its make up of international students. The library will need to consider how they will acquire relevant information about their students, from ethnicity to the level and type of subjects covered. They will also need to employ a variety of different feedback mechanisms in order to gain a meaningful perspective on the needs and opinions of international students. Methods to consider include:-

- Focus groups
- Questionnaires
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Informal “tea and sympathy” sessions with, for example, specific groups with their subject librarians.

Another helpful planning tool, the International Student barometer (ISB) study produced by i-graduate, is an external subscription service which measures international student satisfaction across the whole university. The service also enables libraries to assess performance against benchmark universities, and to share good practice.

### **Key concept 9**

Establish mechanisms for obtaining the views of international students in order to inform future plans.

### **Designated staff support**

Just over 25% of survey respondents had a designated member of staff within the library supporting international students and delivering services to them, but only 1 was working full-time in the post. In the UK, existing posts tend to be combined with other responsibilities such as those of a subject librarian. See **Appendix 7.6** for examples of relevant job descriptions, one full-time, and one combining roles.

### **Staff Development and Training for library staff**

Staff development should address international student issues and services. Areas for consideration include:-

- General awareness raising about international students
- Cultural awareness
- Customer care skills
- Language and other communication problems
- Staff communication skills
- Problem solving strategies
- Learning styles
- Information seeking patterns.

### **Liaison With other university departments**

The majority of libraries collaborate with other university departments in the support of international students. These include:-

- Academic Departments
- International Offices

- Language Centres
- International Student Associations
- Student Unions
- Academic Committees
- Departmental Committees
- Faculties or Colleges

Consider taking the lead in organising staff development seminars for academic and professional university staff which bring together these aspects of support for international students. This can lead to a greater understanding of support as a whole, as well as flagging up gaps in provision, together with new ideas for services, which could be taken forward collaboratively.

### **Case Study**

#### **Liaison with the Middle Eastern Students' Society**

One UK university library realised that students from some countries that are or were recently under international sanctions lacked the necessary IT skills to use the library's online resources, because the sanctions have not allowed computers to be imported. The Library's direct attempt to engage with the students was not very successful. The Library then approached the head of the Middle Eastern Students' Society, who was also a member of the University's staff. He was ready to help and a library induction session was set up in conjunction with the Middle Eastern Students' Society. It attracted most of the students that it was intended for and many more than the earlier session the Library organized independently. These students then in turn spread the word to other students with similar needs.

### **Key concept 10**

The library should encourage the development of links with other sections of the university which support international students.

### **Library web pages**

As detailed in section 5.5, only a small number of libraries currently have explicit library web pages aimed at international students. The library strategy should clearly state whether specialist web pages are felt to be appropriate and what form they should take.

### **Other services**

The library strategy should outline other services which perhaps need to be highlighted or have a different focus for international students. The most common of these are:-

- Induction
- Information Skills
- Study Skills
- Group or one-to-one consultations
- Provision of non-English newspapers and magazines.
- Computing support for non-English Students.

## 5 Service delivery

This section considers specific elements of service delivery which are felt to be particularly relevant to international students. Examples of good ideas, or “special touches” which were discovered during the project are listed in **Appendix 7.8**.

### Internationalisation ethos

David Coyne, the Director of Education for the European Commission emphasises the importance of an international ethos in higher education by commenting that “higher education in Europe, if it wants to retain both the reputation and the reality of excellence in its teaching provision and its research, must open itself up to the wider world. It must internationalise. Opening up is a difficult business – it starts in the head but has to finish in the heart. If universities cannot manage that adaptation and transition, if they cannot open their hearts to the outside world, then they have lost what they should be about.” (Coyne, 2003) Academic libraries have an important role to play in integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, learning and research of the institution. They can do this in a number of ways:

- by providing appropriate resources, in close liaison with academic staff, which underpin the internationalisation of the curriculum
- by teaching information skills informed by an awareness of different educational cultures and teaching and learning styles
- by providing a library environment where diversity is respected and all students are welcomed
- by providing imaginative study and social space which meets the needs of international and home students
- by engaging with wider university initiatives which have an international perspective, celebrate cultural diversity and bring together home and international students

Internationalisation of the library is not just about improving the library for international students; it is also about appreciating cultural diversity and creating an international, multi-cultural ethos which will help prepare all students for life in a globalised world.

#### Case study

A university library has developed an International Film Festival now in its third successful year. This is a collaborative venture between the Library, the School of Film, Television & Performing Arts and the International Faculty which presents a series of international films from around the world including China, India, Thailand, Germany, Norway and South Korea. All the films are from the Library collection of foreign films. Each film is introduced by a student or member of academic staff from the Film School and the film is followed by a discussion in which international students join with home students in commenting on the film’s background and themes.

## **Information literacy**

An information literate person demonstrates an attitude to their learning in which they are explicitly thinking about how they “use, manage, synthesise and create information, in a wise and ethical manner, to the benefit of society”, as part of their learning life. Information literacy is central to learning and is about changing people’s learning attitudes and habits so that they understand how information fits into their learning life (Bent et al 2008).

We have already mentioned that international students may be more comfortable with formalised rote learning and be unfamiliar with the critical thinking approach which underpins this understanding of information literacy. For this reason, any information literacy programmes designed with international students in mind need to span the whole range of information skills and attitudes. It can be a fine balance, as we cannot make assumptions about prior knowledge, but nor do we want to alienate students by patronising them.

### **Key concept 11**

Design information literacy programmes which challenge students to think about their information literacy ability, rather than just learning technical search skills.

One key element of information literacy is plagiarism and research has found a high incidence among international students. Swain suggests that this may be due to language, stress and different cultural traditions or simply because more international students are actually caught plagiarising (Swain, 2004, p.23). There is also a view that the concept of plagiarism is a Western academic value (Jackson 2005, p.198), although many home students also plagiarise. Developing information literate students must involve changing attitudes to, and understanding of, the moral and ethical issues surrounding plagiarism.

### **Key concept 12**

Ensure that all students, but especially international students, have easy access to information about plagiarism and how to retain their academic integrity.

## **Examples of information literacy activities**

Libraries in the survey were offering the following range of information literacy related activities

- Library induction for international students
  - Special tours
  - Transcripts of tours
  - Audio tours (podcasts) in a variety of languages which can be downloaded from the library website or picked up in the library
  - Introductory leaflets explaining how library systems work

- Measuring competencies in information literacy
  - Information literacy self assessment activities in library workshops
  - Online quizzes and assessments
- Subject specific information skills delivered at an appropriate time in the curriculum
  - Workshops reinforced with online tutorials and printed worksheets
  - Opportunities for students to stay behind and ask questions
- One-to-one tutorials geared to the needs of individual students
- Workshops focused on understanding scholarly communication issues
  - Ethical use of information, copyright and plagiarism issues
  - Responsibilities as consumers and producers of information
- Continuing support mechanisms which students understand and find easy to access.

### Study skills

Academic success is dependent on good study skills or key skills, by which we mean the attainment of an appropriate level of literacy, numeracy and IT skills. Students who do not have good skills in these areas are more likely to withdraw from their studies or not realise their full potential. Such skills are also crucial in terms of employability and lifelong learning. Consequently many higher education institutions have developed study skills services and resources in order to support students in the transition to higher education, improve student retention and raise the level of academic achievement. In some instances study skills support has been established within the library service as there is a link with the teaching of information literacy skills and the provision of study skills resources.

The provision of additional study skills support is often of great relevance and importance to international students. The teaching of academic literacy will benefit those who lack proficiency in the English language, but will also help international students to adjust to differences in educational culture. This may affect their written and verbal communication skills, as well as their understanding of what constitutes plagiarism. Classes and one-to-one support in academic literacy frequently include oral presentations, critical thinking, reflective writing, note-making and reading strategies as well as specific advice on essay and report writing. International students who have previously experienced limited access to computers and the internet will also appreciate the chance to improve their IT skills through appropriate learning materials, workshops and one-to-one tuition.

#### Key concept 13

Providing information on study skills support in the library can benefit all students.

Study skills support benefits all students, in particular, mature students and those from non-traditional backgrounds. Many home students find being thrown into academic study at university something of a culture shock and in recent years widespread concerns have been expressed nationally by academics in higher education regarding the variable standard of students' literacy skills. **Appendix 7.5** gives examples of websites providing academic writing skills support.



### **Case study**

One UK university has a unit within the library which provides web-based study skills resources as well as a university-wide programme of free, drop-in workshops in academic communication, maths, and IT skills during term-time. Academic staff can also liaise with the academic tutors who deliver the workshops to arrange tailored sessions for particular groups of students. In addition, students can arrange one-to-one tutorials directly with the academic tutors throughout the academic year. The academic tutors were recruited on the basis of their subject knowledge and experience of teaching academic writing, maths or IT skills and are not necessarily from a library background.

The study skills website has been established for ten years and, as well as providing materials which support academic communication, maths and IT, also provides a wide range of learning objects which include enterprise, reflection, group skills, cross-cultural capability, personal development and research.

### **Promotion, marketing and outreach**

#### **Identifying the market**

“Marketing” in this context is about ensuring that international students are aware of what the library offers and understand how it can help them with their studies. The first step in any marketing campaign is to identify the target group and this can be particularly difficult with “international students”. There is a tendency in the academic literature to over generalisation and over simplification of international students as a group [Song 2006; Mu 2007] but a one-size-fits-all approach can not serve the needs of such a complex user entity as “international students”. For a successful outreach campaign, therefore, it is necessary to analyse the needs, characteristics and behaviour of each nationality or sub-group and devise approaches which take into account similarities and differences.

#### **Debating point**

The practicality of segmenting international students based on their nationality and cultural characteristics for the purpose of providing targeted support can be complex and indeed may not always be desired by the target population. It can also be difficult to ascertain what all the groups are and to decide which, and how many, key groups to target separately. Might this level of support add an unnecessary level of complexity to student support, or should it be regarded as an essential component of good practice?

#### **Effective marketing and outreach**

Library induction events targeted specifically at international students from those countries whose educational and cultural traditions are substantially different from that of UK can be more effective in addressing the perceived gap and help these students feel more confident and comfortable in using the library. But to achieve

maximum impact, the library induction needs to be part of the overall academic goal that the students are trying to achieve and needs to be targeted at specific issues and groups. A collaborative approach with other sections of the institution, such as the Language Centre, academic departments and individual academic staff, will be necessary to achieve consistency between what the students learn from the library and what they are required to learn in order to achieve their academic goal.

Library material which has an international focus is also likely to attract international students and library displays with an international element at university induction events can be very effective.

The institutional web site is the most important source of information for international students in deciding the choice of a university closely followed by recommendations from friends [ISB, 2007]. A simple, friendly and informative library web site which takes into consideration the differences among the different nationalities and ethnic and cultural groupings can be an essential marketing tool for attracting international students.

### **Case study**

One Library has developed a series of podcasts in a variety of languages as a way of helping international students learn about the library, what it can do and how it works. The podcasts are available on the library website so that they can be downloaded and listened to by potential students and their families while they are still at home. Library staff hope this friendly approach will be a factor in encouraging students to choose their university.

### **Library web pages**

In the data returned from the survey, only 4 UK libraries had specific library web pages aimed at international students and when the project group accessed all the other UK library websites, only a small number were found to have easily accessible, explicit web pages for international students. The project group assessed library web pages, where they existed, for ease of access, evidence of good linking to and from the pages, content and “wow factor”. In terms of linking from the main university pages for international students to library web pages, examples were hard to find, though libraries which do have their own international pages almost all link back to the university international pages. Elsewhere in the world, there is similarly only a small amount of evidence of specifically targeted, good quality web pages which are easy to find. The group looked at a sample of library websites across Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA, confining the search to countries in which English is the first language.

Several libraries expressed the view that all the information on their web pages was relevant for all students and felt there was little benefit in providing specialist web pages. However, it is clear from the web pages which do exist that they provide a “value added” service for international students. **Appendix 7.3** gives details of library websites which demonstrate novel ideas and general good practice.

The kinds of services listed include: welcome messages in different languages, international students’ orientation programmes, introductory library guides and audio tours in different languages, targeted information skills sessions, resources sections detailing foreign language newspapers, books and other media, links to dictionaries,

translating services and other writing skills materials and glossaries of library terminology. Some examples of glossaries can be found in Appendix 4. Some websites also have short, clear explanations of how the library systems work, what students can expect in terms of service and what is expected of students in return. Singer (2005) comments that websites can go a long way towards managing pre-arrival student expectations: "I felt strongly that the support structures should be clearly visible on the website in order to 'sell' the facilities and also to enhance the student experience before arrival."

#### **Key concept 14**

Library web pages specifically for international students can help create a welcoming impression and manage expectations, even if many of the links point straight back to the main library web pages.

The marketing aspect of having clearly labelled web pages for international students is an important consideration. It can demonstrate to other sections of the university what the library can offer and is appreciated as an addition to their portfolio by academics and staff from international offices who are working to attract overseas students. Developing such web pages is also an excellent opportunity to build up relationships with other university sections and to collaborate on developing services.

#### **Provision of materials other than in English**

##### **Survey results**

The SCOUNL Survey results revealed that only 7 UK libraries provided library sourced publications aimed specifically at international students, and of these, only 4 supplied them in other languages.

#### **Debating point**

The expectation that international students were enrolled on courses taught in English and that they were therefore deemed to have reached a certain level of proficiency was cited as a reason for non production of publications in other languages. However, some universities are acknowledging that particularly at the beginning of their studies, language skills may need updating, and that provision of some resources in other languages, especially general library guides, can help in the earlier and more effective use of the library.

In addition to general library guides, some libraries do produce other resources, such as multilingual audio tours, in other languages. For example, as already stated, the University of Birmingham provides an audio tour in English, French, Arabic and Mandarin.

### **Key concept 15**

Consider providing material in different languages, considering how much, which languages and whether students can be involved in its production.

### **Resources in other languages**

Many libraries provide both resources and electronic links to resources in languages other than in English. Examples include provision of dictionaries, glossaries, newspapers, magazines, travel guides, and language resources. The University of Bath recently set up a project where international students recommended books from their own countries for inclusion in the library (Robinson, 2008). The catalogue entries are linked to web pages giving reviews of why they were chosen. In California, The University of San Jose's Martin Luther King library, which is the largest joint University/Public library in the world, has a huge stock of both fiction and non-fiction in 58 different languages, inherited from the rich public library collection for ethnic minorities.

### **Case study**

In Australia, the University of Technology in Sydney has an International and Cultural News Centre (ICNC) hosted in the main city campus library. The ICNC is a partnership between the library, Insearch Institute of Commerce, Insearch Language Centre, Institute of International Studies, and International Programs, UTS. The informal seating and working area provides access to:

- Newspapers, Magazines and Travel Guides in print in the ICNC.
- Newspapers and Magazines on the Internet.
- Language Resources.
- Travel Guides on the Web.
- Other Interesting Sites.

### **Case study**

"It should not be assumed that the international students studying a particular subject are only interested in information resources in that subject. A quick check in our Library system on borrowing figures for a popular Chinese language Kong Fu fiction by Jin Yong is almost on par with that of Philip Kotler's *Principles of marketing*. While there are 96 students (from many different nationalities) currently enrolled on the Business studies module which includes Kotler's book as one of a very of few essential readings, there is no undergraduate or postgraduate course in Chinese literature currently on offer in our institution."

## **Staff development and training**

### **Research results**

Helpful staff was the top library priority identified by international students who took part in a focus group at one university in 2006. It is therefore encouraging to note that 70% [35] of respondents to the survey have provided staff development for library staff in international student issues and services. These are sometimes included in diversity awareness, customer care, communications, study skills, or other relevant training programmes. The main areas covered in the survey results were:

- Cultural awareness
- Customer care skills
- Language problems
- Staff communication skills
- Strategies dealing with problem solving
- Learning styles.

Results from this and other areas of research, including the students own views, reveal that library use can be a huge challenge for international students because of differing cultural, linguistic, and previous academic environments. It is possible to identify the following issues as those for which there is the most perceived need for staff development:

- Cross cultural awareness in regular 'customer care' training for all library staff
- Training in using clear communication techniques and jargon-free English for library publications including web pages (It is worth considering using the Plain English Campaign's Crystal Mark)
- Familiarisation with different learning styles
- Encouraging library staff to learn a language or brush up existing language skills. Many university Language departments offer short courses for university staff. Make known these competencies to students
- Encouraging participation in university initiatives on diversity and international themes (supporting staff to join International Societies, committee work, events, seminars).

### **Case study**

One university offers the following workshops to all staff but tailored sessions of the second workshop have also been provided for library staff:

#### **Cross-Cultural Capability - Global Perspectives**

An interactive workshop exploring the meaning of Global Perspectives and how these might be incorporated into a student's programme of study. Participants will look at the work of the Development Education Association in relation to Global Perspectives in Higher Education and consider case studies from other UK universities as the background for reflecting on their own work and considering how this might contribute to global citizenship.

## Cross-Cultural Capability - Intercultural Communication

An interactive workshop exploring some of the complexities of communicating across cultures. The session will repeat a little of the work of the first workshop in this series, and will look at different aspects of culture(s) and how haptics (touching behaviour in humans), proxemics (personal and social distance) and differing concepts of time, for example, can play havoc with effectively conveying your message, and your identity/personality. Participants will also consider how native speakers of English can be the worst inter-cultural communicators in the world.

## Case study

One university library organised a staff development seminar involving presentations from all areas of the university on support provision for international students. Areas covered were the International Office, Language Service, Student Service, Library, Chaplaincy, Disability Service, International Society, and The Students Union. The 2 hour lunch time session was targeted at Principal Lecturers responsible for Learning and Teaching, Student Support Officers based in Schools, and relevant support staff, including the Library. The intention was to raise awareness amongst key staff working with international students of the many support mechanisms open to international students.

There are discrete areas of staffing where development is necessarily more focused, for example, at the enquiry desk where frontline staff and information librarians should be:

- proactive in helping international students to use library resources.
- skilled in interpreting enquiries.
- aware of different learning styles.

Training library staff effectively in understanding the needs of international students will improve services to all library users, and it can have other benefits as well. As Li says “these special customers have offered librarians challenges and opportunities in exploring and addressing information needs of people from other cultural backgrounds...The knowledge and skills gained from helping this customer group will not only benefit the library’s clientele, but will also advance the librarian’s professional development”. (Li, 2006, p.3)

## Key concept 16

Where possible involve international students in staff development activities.

### **Training providers**

General training on diversity is catered for by a wide range of external providers working in the higher education arena. Amongst these are:

- UKOSA
- Grass Roots Group
- Thinking People.

Methods employed include 'theatre in' type of training, which is interactive, workbooks, online tutorials, and focussed away days, perhaps with other departments. **Appendix 7.7** lists examples of training providers.

### **Case Study**

Library consortia e.g. The North West Academic Libraries Consortium (NoWAL), often have discrete diversity groups and web pages dedicated to diversity. NoWAL has an online Diversity Web page where attention is drawn to various issues including new Induction guidelines for international students and students with a disability.

### **Designation of staff**

Although providing appropriate library support for international students should involve all library staff, the appointment of a designated member of library staff with special responsibility for international students can be a way of ensuring close liaison with relevant sections of the University, other stakeholders and the international students themselves. An 'international librarian' can also provide extra support to international students in induction sessions and teaching information skills. Designated staff can have two aspects to their role: that of educating library staff or university staff and that of educating international students. The role can encompass:

- developing good practice in library services for international students
- improving the experience of international students
- Developing evaluation methods
- Raising awareness of the diversity of library resources
- Promoting staff development opportunities and identifying gaps in training.

### **Key concept 17**

Identify a named individual member of staff to be a contact point for international students and to bring together library activities.

### **Discussion Point**

If the designated member of library staff is a junior member of staff then there may be issues with lack of power and seniority which would result in potential difficulties in liaison with more senior university staff and also make it difficult for the post holder to initiate and implement change.

**Appendix 7.6** gives examples of job descriptions for international support librarians.

## **6 Conclusion**

The Working Group examined the issues surrounding the debate over exclusivity versus inclusivity which affect the provision of library services for international students. Jargon-free library publications; improved access to library facilities and good customer care do not exclusively benefit international students. Similarly information literacy skills which are embedded in study programmes, and based on an understanding of different learning styles, are equally relevant to both home and international students.

However, it is also important that international students realise that their needs are recognised and addressed. As social networking websites show, joining groups creates a sense of identity and encourages effective communication. International students often face greater challenges in using the library than home students and it is sometimes necessary to provide 'exclusive' services to achieve equity. Therefore it is helpful to badge certain services and facilities which help international students adapt to the host country's libraries. Information skills sessions which have been tailored to the pace and specific needs of international students; glossaries explaining library terms, and sections on library webpages are all good examples of these. It is important to treat all students as individuals without generalising too much; if we can do this successfully then a degree of exclusivity will enable all students to be included in the provision of excellent library support.













## 7 Appendices

### 7.1 SCONUL Access international student support survey & results

Individual comments and personal data have been omitted from the results below

Survey overview			
<b>Number of respondents:</b> 83 <b>Expected number of respondents:</b> 200 <b>Response rate:</b> 41.5% <b>Launch date:</b> 08 Jan 2007 <b>Close date:</b> 31 May 2007			
Section 1:			
1. Does the University have an International Strategy/Policy?			
Yes:		72.5%	37
No:		27.5%	14
2. Does the Library have an international strategy/action plan? (If "No", please go to Question 3)			
Yes:		7.8%	4
No:		92.2%	47
2.a. How is it articulated?			
3. If not already covered in a library policy, how does the library interact with other university departments/units/committees in the support of international students?			
Academic Departments:		n/a	41
International Office:		n/a	41
Language Centre:		n/a	16
International Students Associations:		n/a	7
Students Union:		n/a	21
Cross-Departmental Committees:		n/a	23
Faculties or Colleges:		n/a	15
Other ( <i>please specify</i> ):		n/a	9
4. Is there a designated member of staff or unit within the library supporting international students and delivering services to them? (If "No", please go to Question 5)			
Yes:		25.0%	13
No:		75.0%	39
4.a. Are you able to estimate the % of time involved?			
0-25%:		76.9%	10
25-50%:		7.7%	1
50-75%:		0.0%	0

75-100%:		7.7%	1
Other (please specify):		7.7%	1
<b>5. Do you have staff development for library staff surrounding international student issues and services? (If "No", please go to Question 6)</b>			
Yes:		68.6%	35
No:		31.4%	16
<b>5.a. Please select if the staff development is provided</b>			
In-house:		42.9%	15
Brought-in:		8.6%	3
Mix of both:		48.6%	17
<b>5.b. What areas do you cover in the staff development training?</b>			
Cultural awareness:		n/a	32
Language problems:		n/a	20
Learning styles:		n/a	15
Strategies to deal with problems:		n/a	19
Staff communication skills:		n/a	20
Customer care skills:		n/a	27
Other (please specify):		n/a	6
<b>6. Do you have specific library web pages for international students?</b>			
Yes:		7.8%	4
No:		92.2%	47
<b>6.a. Please provide the URL of the main web page in the box below</b>			
<b>7. Do you have any publications aimed specifically at international students? (If No, please go to Question 8)</b>			
Yes:		15.4%	8
No:		84.6%	44
<b>7.a. Do you provide these publications in languages other than English?</b>			
Yes:		50.0%	4
No:		50.0%	4
<b>7.a.i. In which languages do you provide the publications?</b>			
Arabic:		n/a	0
Chinese:		n/a	1
German:		n/a	0
French:		n/a	0
Japanese:		n/a	0
Russian:		n/a	0

Spanish:		n/a	2
Other ( <i>please specify</i> ):		n/a	1
<b>7.b. Will you be willing to share a copy (or copies) with us?</b>			
Yes:		75.0%	6
No:		25.0%	2
<b>7.b.i. Please leave a contact address below if you are willing to provide us with sample copies.</b>			
<b>8. What services do you provide for international students?</b>			
Induction:		n/a	46
Information Skills:		n/a	38
One to one consultations:		n/a	37
Non-English Newspapers and Magazines:		n/a	26
Computing support for non-English languages:		n/a	12
Other ( <i>please specify</i> ):		n/a	14
<b>9. Do you have any other comments with regard to providing library support for international students?</b>			

## 7.2 Library Strategy Documents: Examples

### Example 1: Leeds Metropolitan University

#### Internationalisation Strategy 2004-2008

Internationalisation is... 'the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service of an institution.'<sup>1</sup>

Over the next few decades, higher education in Europe, if it wants to retain both the reputation and the reality of excellence in its teaching provision and its research, must open itself up to the wider world. It must internationalise. Opening up is a difficult business – starts in the head but has to finish in the heart. If universities cannot manage that adaptation and transition, if they cannot open their hearts to the outside world, then they have lost what they should be about.<sup>2</sup>

#### Leeds Met Values

Diversity requires not only opening up access to classrooms and computers but to one another, to our languages, our cultures and ourselves.

Professor Simon Lee, Vice Chancellor<sup>3</sup>

- 1 Commitment to internationalisation is evident in our intention to be a world-class regional university with world-wide horizons, using all our talents to the full. The ethos and values of Leeds Metropolitan University in respect of internationalisation have been articulated through the website by the Vice Chancellor in VC Reflects and through International Reflections. Such values include:
  - i. A commitment to the continuous development of an environment in which diversity is respected as well as the individual, where people from all over the world are made welcome.
  - ii. An international education as a voyage of discovery - gaining knowledge, understanding and skills which can turn the student experience into a satisfying and rewarding equalising opportunity - levelling up for all.
  - iii. The strong emphasis on quality in the delivery of our products and services is enhanced by international perspectives which contribute to the skills and knowledge of our graduates

<sup>1</sup> Knight, J. & de Wit, H. 1995, 'Strategies for internationalisation of higher education: historical and conceptual perspectives' in de Wit (ed). *Strategies for internationalisation of higher education*, EAIE, Amsterdam

<sup>2</sup> David Coyne Director for Education, The European Commission. Malmö, 26 April 2003 Internationalisation at Home and the Changing Landscape

<sup>3</sup> Vice-Chancellor Reflects, Thursday 16 October 2003  
<http://www.lmu.ac.uk/vco/reflect/oct03/16oct.htm>

- iv. Extending our contacts and networking to other parts of the globe enable us to fill any gaps and take a more balanced view, both geographically and culturally, of many of the important issues facing UK Higher Education
- v. International experience of staff and students enables the curriculum to be informed by global issues and perspectives

## Context

- 2 Internationalisation is one of the key strategic aims of Leeds Metropolitan University, specifically, '*to develop students' international opportunities and global perspectives, ensuring that an international, multi-cultural ethos pervades the university*'.<sup>4</sup> To achieve this aim, our focus has become much wider than simple concentration on international recruitment and encompasses six inter-related areas:
  - i. Internationalising learning, teaching and research
  - ii. Enhancing the international student experience
  - iii. Enhancing the international experience of home students
    - i. Developing and fostering international partnerships and alliances
  - iv. Developing staff capability for internationalisation
  - v. Effectively recruiting international students
- 3 This strategy considers each area in turn, identifies how the strategy will be monitored and reviewed and how risk will be managed.

## Internationalising learning, teaching and research

Education begins with knowledge of another culture<sup>5</sup>

- 4 To meet 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges it is clear that an international perspective is fundamental to the skills, knowledge and experience of all our graduates. Such a perspective can only be achieved through internationalising learning, teaching and research, for which a rich and welcoming environment for international students and an inclusive international environment for home students are pre-requisites. To achieve these requires:
  - ii. An environment supportive of internationalisation
  - iii. An international experience for all students as part of the curriculum
  - iv. The integration of international students in the life of the University
  - v. Internationalisation of the curriculum across the University
  - vi. Experience of visiting lecturers
  - vii. Staff with international experience
  - viii. The opportunity to engage in exchange programmes
  - ix. Access to foreign language learning
  - x. Cross-cultural capability<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Corporate Plan Draft 9

<sup>5</sup> Professor Lord Acton (1834 – 1902)

<sup>6</sup> See *Guidelines on Cross-Cultural Capability in the Curriculum* presented at the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee during the 2003-2004 academic year

## Enhancing the international student experience

The process of globalization...though representing a challenge for cultural diversity, creates the conditions for renewed dialogue among cultures and civilizations.<sup>7</sup>

- 5 The student experience begins at the first point of contact with the University or its staff and continues beyond graduation to alumni relations. Enhancing this entails continuous review and renewal of many aspects of our work including:
  - i. Effective publicity and communication with existing and prospective students, including online as well as paper-based materials, and through our agents, staff, and representatives overseas
  - ii. Accessibility of communications for those who do not speak English as their first language
  - iii. Helpful enquiry service with knowledgeable, proactive staff
  - iv. Effective and timely pre-arrival information and advice
  - v. Helpful and effective accommodation service
  - vi. 'Meet and greet' programme
  - vii. Induction programme
  - viii. Welfare and personal support and advice
  - ix. English language support
  - x. Careers and educational guidance
  - xi. Religious observance and guidance
  - xii. Social events and activities
  - xiii. Effective feedback mechanisms
  - xiv. Link with student societies and the Student Union
  - xv. Opportunities for integration/ experience beyond the University
  - xvi. Valuing international perspectives in learning and research
  - xvii. Alumni relations

## Enhancing the international experience of home students

Effective internationalisation is now considered to include student mobility in the wider context of intercultural learning at home by making use of both foreign exchange students and people from other cultural backgrounds in our society...<sup>8</sup>

Enhancing the understanding of domestic students and of the community generally of other cultures, languages and learning approaches.... entails providing opportunities for international and local students and community to develop respectful and mutually beneficial relationships in academic and non-academic settings.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, November 2001

<sup>8</sup> Hanneke Teekens 2003: *The Requirement to Develop Specific Skills for Teaching in an Intercultural Setting* Journal of Studies in International Education 7:1 p109

<sup>9</sup> Higher Education Review Submission 191 Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association (ANZSSA) - 28 June 2002

- 6 In addition to developing an international learning, teaching and research context, it is important to offer home students broader opportunities to develop an international ethos and perspective. This can be achieved through:
- i. An expanded international student exchange programme
  - ii. The opportunity for all students to take part in international study or work placements, however short, as part of their programme of study
  - iii. The integration of home students in the international life of the University
  - iv. Opportunities for international and/or intercultural volunteering
  - v. Participation in foreign language learning as additional curriculum
  - vi. The development of cross-cultural capability skills<sup>10</sup>

### **Developing and fostering international partnerships and alliances**

A good education means an ability to achieve an excellent level of 'cultural arithmetic', but an international education leads on to 'cultural calculus'.<sup>11</sup>

- 7 The University has a number of partner institutions and organisations around the world. Some are long-standing and well-developed, others need to be fostered or broadened to enable greater benefit for each partner. In certain countries where we might be expected to have existing partnerships, these are yet to be established. The purpose and benefits of each partnership will be clearly identified and may include:
- i. Staff exchange - academic and non-academic
  - ii. Joint research opportunities
  - iii. Student exchange programmes
  - iv. Incoming Study Abroad students
  - v. Sharing of good practice
  - vi. Benchmarking opportunities
  - vii. Joint access to donor agency funding
  - viii. Development of collaborative programmes
  - ix. Innovative curriculum design and renewal
  - x. Consultancy and knowledge transfer

### **Developing staff capability for internationalisation**

Even though increasing cultural diversity poses a challenge for Universities and staff, it is an opportunity for Leeds Met to demonstrate commitment to the continuous development of an environment in which such diversity is respected and people from all over the world are made welcome.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See footnote 6

<sup>11</sup> Developing an Internationalisation Strategy Plan for the University of Western Australia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. October 1999  
<http://www.artsmmc.uwa.edu.au/hostsites/internationalisation/paper.html>

<sup>12</sup> George Lodoros, Leeds Business School. International Reflections, Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2003 <http://www.lmu.ac.uk/internat/reflects/oct03/21oct.htm>

- 8 Staff capability is a key element in the delivery of the strategy and is vital to sustaining a welcoming and supportive culture and building the ethos and the mechanisms of internationalisation. Many aspects are linked to staff capability for other University strategies such as Diversity and Widening Participation, and include:
- i. Cross-cultural capability<sup>13</sup>
  - ii. Foreign language learning
  - iii. Valuing diversity
  - iv. Opportunities to visit and learn from international partner institutions
  - v. International conference participation
  - vi. Collaborative international research
  - vii. Monitoring of international developments
  - viii. Continuous curriculum refreshment to meet demands of existing and new markets
  - ix. Opportunity for the delivery of offshore programmes
  - x. Knowledge of marketing and business development

### **Effectively recruiting international students**

- 9 Recent research by IDP Education Australia suggests that in 2025 the global demand for international higher education will be four times higher than it was in 2000. Two thirds of this demand will arise from Asia, and five of today's leading markets will not by then be in the top ten.<sup>14</sup> To continue growing as an international university we will need creativity, fresh approaches, sound ideas, and new products for the global marketplace. This includes a greater recognition of the value of European students, including those from accession and pre-accession states, to the development of an international University.
- 10 Recruitment is facilitated through effective marketing and promotion and will be articulated as part of the Country/Regional plans. Common to all of these will be:
- i. Branding and image recognition and enhancement
  - ii. Use of Plain English in promotional materials
  - iii. Use of foreign languages where appropriate, such as for parents and other decision makers
  - iv. Strategic and effective use of representatives/overseas offices and alumni
  - v. Development and fostering of partner and agent relations
  - vi. Monitoring of changing patterns of recruitment and demand for courses
  - vii. Scholarship opportunities
- 11 Recruitment is also facilitated through curriculum 'portals', both within the University and through partner organisations, including:
- i. Opportunities for participation through short courses
  - ii. Strong English language programmes to provide entry routes and on-course support
  - iii. Progression agreements, including opportunities for 'top up' programmes

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<sup>13</sup> See footnote 5

<sup>14</sup> See <http://www.idp.com/>



12 For students recruited to courses in the UK, we will aim to:

- i. Attract international students to courses across the portfolio
- ii. Recruit students from a wide range of source countries
- iii. Attract an international student population of between 10% and 15% of our total student body<sup>15</sup>

13 We also aim to develop the number of 'offshore' programmes which will

- i. enable widening of participation and enhance opportunities for progression to courses in the UK
- ii. spread the risk in financial terms through market diversification
- iii. offer international experience for staff involved in delivery and a greater understanding of the educational context for international students.

14 These will include:

- i. Delivery outside the UK
- ii. International consultancies and collaborative research
- iii. Development and technical assistance
- iv. Knowledge transfer and training
- v. Staff exchange and secondment opportunities
- vi. International volunteering for staff and students

### **Delivering this Strategy**

15 In order to achieve the objectives outlined here it will be crucial to ensure a stable financial environment for the internationalisation process. Some degree of financial reward will encourage an understanding of the educational benefits of international student recruitment.

16 This strategic plan is supported and reinforced by country/regional plans for key markets which focus on the development of these markets and regions, including academic development and partnership enhancement.

17 It is founded on excellent communication between faculties, the Office for International Programmes and the International Office, and is facilitated through the Leslie Silver International Faculty. The Faculty will strive to maximise potential between international initiatives and to help in identifying opportunities for new developments.

### **Risk Management**

18 Some potential risks in implementing this strategy appear in the table below against the key elements of this strategy.

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<sup>15</sup> Current percentage is approximately 12% of students at Higher Education level but only 8% if all students of the University are included

<b>Key elements of strategy</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Management of high risk</b>
Internationalising learning, teaching and research	Anglocentrism	Narrow curriculum focus	Low	
Enhancing the international student experience	Failure to continue recruiting international students	Poor experience at any stage in the process from initial enquiry through to alumni relations can lead to negative reporting or publicity	High	Match growth in numbers with adequate support, services and staff development
Enhancing the international experience of home students	UK graduates with limited horizons	Failure to offer students international perspectives	Low to Medium	
Developing and fostering international partnerships and alliances	Inability to exploit learning potential and other opportunities offered by partnerships	Failure to support and nurture partnerships	Low	
Developing staff capability for internationalisation	Inability to deliver the key elements of this strategy	Staff who are unaware of the benefits of internationalisation or unable to deliver on objectives	High	Ensure a strategic approach to staff development and awareness-raising
Effectively recruiting international students	Loss of income through market failure  Reputation of the University	External factors eg war, terrorism etc  Poor management and control of representatives	Low to medium  High	  Ensure effective selection, training and monitoring of representatives

### **Monitoring and evaluation of progress towards achievement of strategic objectives**

19 An annual report will be made to Academic Board identifying progress against this Strategy and Regional Plans.

Elsbeth Jones  
Dean, Leslie Silver International Faculty  
May 2004

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## **Example 2: An anonymous UK University Library**

*“XX” University Library International student support strategy 2007-2010*

### **Introduction**

In revising this international student support strategy, consideration has been given to: activities already undertaken by the library; activities undertaken elsewhere in the University (including XX's *International Strategy, 2006 – 2008*); feedback from a library staff focus group; feedback from international students (both here and from elsewhere); and developments at a national level. An investigation was also carried out into the type and levels of support offered in other Higher Education Institutions, in particular by those in our identified benchmark group.

In developing this strategy, "international student" has been defined as being a student with an overseas fee status and covers those studying on both undergraduate and postgraduate courses, as well as research students.

### **The national perspective**

Library support for international students is a current priority for UK British universities. Some reasons for this are:

- A targeted increase in the number of international students, predicted by The British Council<sup>16</sup> which estimates the numbers of international students will triple to 870,000 by 2020
- Increasing competition for international students from other countries
- Supporting large number of international students can present cultural, communication and integration problems.

### **The local perspective**

At a university level, it is recognised that more needs be done to support international students, especially to underpin the increased activity in this area as suggested in the *International Strategy 2006 – 2008*:

- International student numbers to be increased from 5% to 10% of the total student population by 2011/12
- Recruitment and increased resources targeted at, primarily, India and China.
- Providing effective support to achieve appropriate student progression rates for international students
- Providing a central, high profile 'one-stop-shop' for international students on campus

The organisation of the first XX International Students' Forum (April 2007) is also indicative of the importance given to international students and of the desire 'to embed a culture of internalization across XX'.

The Department of Library Services has, for a long time, been mindful of the needs of international students and taken these into consideration when planning services, e.g.

- Special induction sessions are routinely arranged for new students who join the university early in order to take English Language courses

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<sup>16</sup> British Council (2004) *Vision 2020: forecasting international student mobility*.

- The Department has had a presence at the International Student Fair since 2005

## **1. Targeted support mechanisms**

The social as well as the learning role of the library is important to this group and the Learning Zone should greatly facilitate this.

### **1.1. Opening hours**

International students, both at XX and elsewhere, have highlighted the fact that long periods of closure at traditional British holiday times have a serious impact on their academic and cultural needs.

XX international students are very positive about the 24/5 opening hours in X

The recognition that holiday times are also an important time for them (and other user groups) to use the libraries has already led to:

- An extension of summer vacation opening from 2007 (until 19.30 on two evenings a week)
- A return to term time opening before the end of the Christmas and Easter vacations

Reference to international student needs should also be highlighted in bids for extended opening of X, especially availability around periods when other university services are unavailable.

### **1.2. Keeping up to date**

International students would appreciate the opportunity to keep up to date with news from their home countries through access to print or electronic newspapers. It is recommended that:

- The library plays a more active role in promoting use of other local libraries which may have these materials.
- Develop library web pages for international students with links to foreign electronic newspapers/sites

### **1.3. Use of IT**

Greater attention could be given to the needs of international students for using information technology (I.T.). Any improvement measures would benefit all students, such as:

- In line with the Library e-strategy, use the IT Training (newly added to the Library's portfolio) to offer additional services such as a "drop in" service and basic IT training
- Standardization of user names and passwords via Shibboleth is planned for 2008. In the meantime, the provision of a short guide sheet is needed.
- Ensure smooth and seamless access to the library computers and to email on students' arrival.

### **1.4. Study skills**

International students can struggle with very different teaching styles and modes of assessment and have traditionally been the 'heaviest' users of the library drop in sessions.

As CLaSS is now part of Academic Services, it is recommended that:

- Subject librarians offer drop in sessions in conjunction with CLaSS staff, giving guidance on essay writing... as well as on how to use information resources.

## **2. Staffing and staff development**

A named contact has been identified within the Academic Services team, with the specific responsibility to liaise with the rest of the university on international issues and to co-ordinate services and publicity on behalf of the rest of Library Services.

It is recommended that the named contact be involved in:

- Attending and feeding back on training /events/visits pertaining to the international students experience e.g. the International Students Forum.
- Organizing (in conjunction with the Staffing and Quality Manager) staff development sessions to raise awareness of the needs of international students and to provide training, e.g. on cultural differences and use of language.
- Harnessing staff' skills by drawing up a list of multi-lingual library staff who are willing to be identified as such and who can be called upon if necessary via the named contact.
- Producing guidelines for library staff on supporting international students, to enhance existing Customer Service guides.
- The 'Guide to producing library publications and notices' be amended to remind staff to be aware of the need to avoid jargon.

## **3. Induction**

Induction is a crucial activity in the support and retention of all students but it is also an area where extra attention needs to be given to the needs of international students. Whilst there are some international students who arrive earlier in the summer, for English Language courses, there are still many who may miss induction due to the late supply of visas. Much work has been done recently to improve induction activities (e.g. the introduction of the audio tour and of the LibLearn module) providing guidance and instruction in a variety of media formats many of which can be accessed in the students' own time.

Further enhancement to these services could include:

- A review of library activities for the pre-session English Language with the intention of making them scripted and more interactive
- A subtitled version of the Library Services promotional DVD
- Follow-up workshops targeted at international students.

## **4. Liaison within the university**

The process of developing this strategy has already led to improved communication between Library Services and the International Team regarding the support of international students. It is recognised that more specific liaison with faculties and the Centre for English Language Learning (CELL) could improve services further.

It is recommended that:

- The member of the Academic Services team, responsible for international students, establishes liaison mechanisms with both the International Office and faculties to ensure that accurate information on Library Services is provided to international students pre-enrolment
- Library Services maintains and improves its presence at the International Student Fair
- Library Services liaises with the Centre for English Language Learning on support for international students to answer some common enquiries, e.g. assistance with the English Language for assignments and dissertations.

## **5. Effective publicity and communication**

It is recognised that many international students are unfamiliar with the workings of a British academic library, e.g. open access libraries are not common in some parts of the world. All Library Services' publications should take into account the needs of international students. It is recommended that:

- A basic introduction to Library Services be produced with a glossary to explain terms and that this is 'road-tested' on some international students, as well as being widely publicised to these students
- In any reviews of signage, the greater use of international symbols and images should be considered
- A specific section of the library web pages be devoted to international students, similar to those for Research and Distance Learners, with links to international news feeds and local sources of cultural information
- In any reviews of the web pages and printed publications, every effort should be made to minimise the use of jargon, conforming to the Plain English Campaign recommendations

## **6. Conclusion**

In order to continue improving library support offered to international students, it is essential to get regular feedback from students. In this, the International Student Barometer (ISB) study produced by i-graduate should become an invaluable tool, allowing the library to assess its performance against benchmark universities and share good practice. XX has recently subscribed to the ISB which measures international student satisfaction across the whole spectrum of university-related services, and our students will be first surveyed in Autumn 07. The study should become an invaluable yearly landmark which will help assess the Library's performance and facilitate planning.

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## 7.3 Examples of “Good Practice” Library websites

### Queensland University of Technology, Australia

<http://www.library.qut.edu.au/services/internationals/>

- Has a “welcome” message from the Library Director
- “Links with home” links to newspapers, TV, embassies, world weather and currency converters
- Links to translating services, such as Babelfish, Google, Worldlingo, dictionaries:
- Links to local information, tourist info and QUT international pages
- Many links back into main library website

### University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

[http://www.lib.uts.edu.au/services/international\\_students](http://www.lib.uts.edu.au/services/international_students)

- Has Chinese language version of web pages
- Has a pdf downloadable bookmark which summarises services – this is also available in the libraries.
- “ International Students Orientation Programme” for information literacy
- Specialist Chinese, Korean and Japanese software on library PCs
- “ International Cultural and News Centre” is a collection overseas newspapers, magazines, travel guides and cultural books .
- Named international librarian
- “My language” website provided by Australian government provides links to search engines etc in over 60 different languages

### Exeter University Library UK

<http://www.library.ex.ac.uk/international/>

- Detailed pages specifically written for international students
- Links to glossaries in variety of languages
- Targeted information literacy sessions
- Named international librarian
- Instant click on “translate this page” via babelfish
- Uses photos of students

### University of East London, UK

<http://www.uel.ac.uk/lss/internationalstudents.htm>

- Uses very simple language (eg how can I borrow something I have borrowed for longer)
- Lists library staff who speak another language with level of proficiency
- Organises links to resources by country

### Durham University, UK

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/library/international/>

- Has named international librarian
- Has Welcome in different languages at the top of the page
- Includes quotes from current students

**Leeds Metropolitan University, UK**

[http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk:8082/lco/php/support.php/internat\\_students/](http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk:8082/lco/php/support.php/internat_students/)

- Use simple language
- Foreign language resources listed include films and foreign TV news programmes recorded each day
- Has self study section for learning English as a foreign language
- Links to information on language labs
- Has named international librarian

**Glasgow School of Art, UK**

[http://www2.gsa.ac.uk/library/support/support\\_intl.html](http://www2.gsa.ac.uk/library/support/support_intl.html)

- Lists dictionaries and English grammar resources
- Links to other local libraries with material in other languages eg Goethe Institute
- Links to INTUTE guides for ESOL and Google language tools

**Rutgers, USA**

[http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib\\_servs/intl\\_students.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_servs/intl_students.shtml)

- Explains “American library systems”
- Has guide to Library terminology

**San Jose State University Library**

<http://www.sjlibrary.org/gateways/academic/international.htm>

- Extensive list of services
- Orientation tour activity
- Extensive International languages collection – major languages emphasis on Chinese, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- Entertainment videos in 40 languages
- ALA/ACRL Library Vocabulary multilingual glossary table

This is not an exhaustive list of all the library websites which include information for international students; it aims to highlight some examples of useful ideas which these websites demonstrate.



## 7.4 Glossaries of Library terms – some examples

- ACRL Multilingual Glossary [USA]  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrlbucket/is/publicationsacrl/multilingual.cfm>  
<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrlbucket/is/publicationsacrl/multilingualglossarydefinitions.cfm>
- Cornell University : Glossary of Library Terms [USA]  
<http://www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/glossary.html>
- Curtin University of Technology : Library Language [Australia]  
[http://library.curtin.edu.au/help/library\\_language.html](http://library.curtin.edu.au/help/library_language.html)
- Oxford Brookes University : A-Z of Library Jargon [UK]  
<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/jargon.html>
- Rutgers University Libraries: Library Terminology, a guide for international students [USA]  
[http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib\\_servs/intl\\_students\\_terms.shtml](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_servs/intl_students_terms.shtml)
- Swansea University: Library Jargon explained [UK]  
<http://www.swan.ac.uk/lis/HelpAndGuides/LibraryJargon/GlossaryA-L/>
- University of Reading : Library Jargon Buster [UK]  
<http://www.reading.ac.uk/library/using/lib-jargon.asp>
- University of Tasmania Library [Australia]  
<http://www.utas.edu.au/library/etutor/main/webzglos.htm>
- University of Westminster : Understanding Library jargon [UK]  
<http://www.wmin.ac.uk/page-7884>

See also: **Library terms that users understand** – a website giving advice on words which library users commonly struggle with <http://www.ikup.net/terms.html>

## 7.5 Academic Writing Skills: example of websites

The sites below have been recommended by a language teacher in a Higher Education Institution in the UK

- **Using English for Academic Purposes:** a guide for students in higher education [www.uefap.com](http://www.uefap.com) Includes materials on writing, vocabulary, reading, speaking and many other aspects of academic English, with links to courses, quizzes and supplementary reading
- **The British National Corpus** <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>  
This website allows students to quickly and easily search the 100 million word [British National Corpus](#) by [exact word or phrase, wildcard or part of speech, or combinations of these](#), as well as easily compare between [synonyms and other semantically-related words](#). One simple search, for example, compares the most frequent nouns that appear with sheer, complete, or utter (sheer nonsense, complete account, utter dismay). The interface also allows students to input information from [WordNet](#) (a semantically-organized lexicon of English) directly into the search form. This allows them to find the frequency and distribution of words with [similar, more general, or more specific meanings](#).
- **The Compleat Lexical Tutor** [www.lextutor.ca](http://www.lextutor.ca) This is a large site, but the Vocabprofile is a particularly useful tool which allows students to paste their texts and analyse how many words from the academic word list are contained in their writing.
- **Academic Word List.** The AWL was primarily made so that it could be used by teachers as part of a programme preparing learners for tertiary level study or used by students working alone to learn the words most needed to study at tertiary institutions. <http://language.massey.ac.nz/staff/awl/awlinfo.shtml> <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~alzsh3/acvocab/index.htm>; the latter has exercises for learning AWL and a function which allows students to highlight academic words in any text they paste in <http://web.uvic.ca/~gluton/awl/> has lots of practice exercises on the AWL.
- **Academic Phrasebank** <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/index.htm> has a large collection of phrases for use in academic writing, especially research based writing.

## 7.6 Job descriptions for International Support Librarians: examples

### Example 1

Established job description - University of Canterbury at Christchurch, New Zealand

#### POSITION DESCRIPTION

<b>Position</b>	International Student Information Librarian
<b>Department/Section</b>	Information Services, Central Library
<b>Responsible To</b>	Central Library Manager through the Central Library Information Services Librarian
<b>Functional Relationships With</b>	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>University students</li> <li>University staff</li> <li>All library staff</li> <li>English Language Centre staff and students</li> <li>Foundation studies staff and students</li> <li>English Language Support Programme (WASS)</li> <li>International Student Centre</li> <li>International Office (Registry)</li> <li>Centre for Continuing Education</li> <li>International Students' Association (International Student Coordinator &amp; Advisors)</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of the public</li> </ul>
<b>Salary Range</b>	Band 5
<b>Educational Qualifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A University degree</li> <li>A professional library qualification preferred</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge And Skills Required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaching experience and knowledge of learning theory</li> <li>Reference experience and skills in information retrieval</li> <li>General IT skills</li> <li>Customer services training</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge And Skills Preferred</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of adult teaching theory and practice</li> <li>Bicultural awareness and sensitivity to different cultures</li> <li>Web authoring skills, Excel, Word, Powerpoint, Internet</li> <li>Experience in a library position, preferably in a tertiary or research library</li> <li>Experience of a different ethnic background</li> <li>Fluent in written and oral English</li> <li>Fluent in written and oral foreign language or languages</li> </ul>
<b>Required Qualities for all Library Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexibility and Adaptability</li> <li>Commitment to Continuous Improvement</li> <li>Excellent Customer Service Skills</li> <li>Effective Communication Skills</li> <li>Maintains Effective Working Relationships</li> <li>Accountability and Dependability</li> <li>Effective Analytical Skills, Problem Solving, and Decision Making Ability</li> </ul>
<b>Special role requirements</b>	Although based in the Central Library, the position will be required to work in other locations in the University Library on a regular basis.
<b>Main Purpose Of The Position</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide information services and support to students with an international background, in particular those associated with the Foundation Studies programme and the English Language Centre</li> <li>To promote effective use of the library and teach the skills required for users to become information literate. Enhance access to the library's resources and contribute to building a high quality collection</li> </ul>

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES	KEY TASKS	KEY RESULT AREAS
<b>Coordinate and develop library services for international students and academic staff working with international students</b>	Liaise with international student programmes and groups within the university concerning library resources and services	International students' concerns and/or ideas are represented to Library management and built into planning and developments
	Coordinate information literacy programmes to international students, in partnership with ELC, Foundation Studies and other organizations as appropriate	Library tutorials offered are timely and relevant to international students' course work. The flexible delivery of tutorials is developed as appropriate
	Provide training for library staff in multicultural issues	Library staff are aware of cultural needs of the international community served
	Develop and update access through relevant portals and documentation Provide guidance in the use of current awareness services to teaching staff Facilitate multilingual access where possible	Documentation and guides are current and reflect the resources available to users.  Teaching staff have access to current awareness services
	Keep up to date with major developments and trends in the area of ESOL teaching and services for international students	International Librarian is able to respond readily to new initiatives as required
<b>Participate in collection development for ESOL areas, including print, electronic and AV.</b>	Select material, print, electronic and AV, to support ESOL programmes and international students within the University	Library collection supports international students teaching programmes within the University
<b>Contribute to the development of InformEd, the library's information literacy programme, with specific attention to the needs of Central Library participants</b>	Contribute to the production of lesson plans and teach and teach generic tutorials as required throughout the year  Contribute feedback about subject specific information literacy learning into the ongoing planning for InformEd  Keep up to date with developments in teaching and learning	Information literacy programmes are an integral part of the University's academic programme  Library tutorials are offered that are timely and relevant to student's coursework. The flexible delivery of tutorials is developed as appropriate.  Library teaching reflects current adult learning theory and practice

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES	KEY TASKS	KEY RESULT AREAS
<p><b>Provide an information service via the Central Library Help Desk and on line reference services</b></p>	<p>Work on the Help Desk for a specified number of shifts per week and extra as required</p> <p>Keep up to date with general reference resources and basic information about library and university services</p> <p>Work on AskLive for a specified number of shifts per week and extra as required</p>	<p>Direct contact with library users is maintained, as is an up to date knowledge of Help Desk practices and policies</p> <p>Queries are answered promptly and accurately or referred to the appropriate staff member. User satisfaction is evident.</p>

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## Example 2

### Support for International Students – a job advertisement

We would like a Learning Adviser to take a formal lead on providing support for international students. This would involve a number of activities, including the implementation of some of the recommendations which came out of last year's Internationalisation Quality Improvement Project, for example:

- Organisation and delivery of international student inductions
- Liaison with the International Office and other University sections/faculties, as appropriate
- Liaison with other Library staff, especially frontline staff, on issues regarding international students
- A review of existing provision for international students – e.g. news sources, dictionaries etc.
- Sharing of good practice both internally and externally; identification of good practice in other universities, including perhaps benchmarking opportunities
- Responsibility for the International Students section on Library Online
- Production of an English glossary of library terms for international students and staff
- With other Learning Advisers, to develop and co-ordinate shared teaching materials specifically aimed at international students
- Provision of extra support – e.g. one-to-one inductions/tutorials on using Library resources
- Collection and co-ordination of feedback from surveys, course committees, International Office, student groups/societies etc. including, perhaps the setting up of focus groups.

## 7.7 Companies offering staff training on international issues

### **Communicaid**

<http://www.communicaid.com/cross-cultural-training/culture-for-public-sector/cross-cultural-awareness-for-higher-education/index.php>

Communicaid is a culture and communication skills consultancy offering both tailored and public courses. “Communicaid’s Cultural Awareness for Higher Education Staff courses are specifically tailored to the requirements of HE staff who find themselves at the “front line” of contact with international students, providing understanding of different ‘ways of doing things’ and the appropriate ‘cultural tools’ to facilitate the adaptation and integration process of this important target group.”

Courses are available at their training centre in London or can be delivered in-house.

### **Culture Smart! Consulting**

<http://www.culturesmartconsulting.com/>

CultureSmart!Consulting was formed in association with Kuperard, publishers of the Culture Smart! guides.

“We create and deliver tailor-made seminars and consultancy programs for corporate and public sector organisations dealing with intercultural and diversity issues. Our bespoke seminars are held in the clients' chosen location or at selected seminar facilities.”

### **Grass Roots Group**

<http://www.grassroots.uk.com/Services/Diversity>

The Grass Roots Group is a performance improvement company which offers flexible services including diversity and awareness training.

“Grass Roots has considerable experience in assisting clients on matters of diversity compliance by increasing levels of knowledge and awareness on the subject. Our distance learning programmes on diversity and disability measure participation, competence and achievement; they are available as workbooks or online.”

### **Higher Education Academy: Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies**

<http://www.llas.ac.uk/events/llasevents.aspx>

The Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies within the Higher Education Academy provides UK-wide support and services for higher education in Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies. It organises a programme of workshops, meetings, seminars and conferences which includes staff development on supporting international students. They keep an archive of all past events along with associated materials. Events take place in university venues throughout the UK.

### **IH Cultural Training**

[http://www.ihlondon.com/culture/courses/Managing\\_Diversity.asp](http://www.ihlondon.com/culture/courses/Managing_Diversity.asp)

IH Cultural Training is the cross-cultural and communications training arm of International House, one of the largest language and cultural training organisations in the world. It offers cross cultural training for the public sector and includes a course

in Managing International Diversity. They are based in London Covent Garden but send out trainers and consultants to deliver in-house training throughout the UK.

### **Impact Training Consultancy**

<http://www.impact-training-consultancy.co.uk/courses/open-courses>

“Impact Training Consultancy Ltd. is a major provider of training and consultancy services to a range of organisations within the UK. The Company specialises in the provision of lively, non-threatening training, development and consultancy in the area of Diversity & Equality.”

Their open training courses include ‘Cultural Awareness in the Workplace’ and ‘Equality and Diversity Awareness’ and these take place at both their London and Manchester training centres.

### **thinkingpeople**

[http://www.thinking-people.co.uk/cross\\_cultural\\_skills/introduction.html](http://www.thinking-people.co.uk/cross_cultural_skills/introduction.html)

“thinkingpeople is an innovative and dynamic consultancy which specialises in learning solutions in cross-cultural competence, valuing diversity and global awareness. We work together with clients from the voluntary, public and corporate sectors to provide high quality learning interventions.”

They offer tailored in-house sessions and open courses in cross cultural skills in university venues throughout the UK.

### **UK Council for International Student Affairs**

<http://www.ukcosa.org.uk/training/index.php>

The UK Council for International Student Affairs provides advice and information to international students studying in the UK and to staff who work with them.

Their training programme includes courses on cultural awareness, cross cultural competence and teaching international students and events take place at university venues throughout the UK.

### **Welcome International**

<http://www.welcometoexcellence.co.uk/trainingprogrammes/welcomeinternational.asp>

“Welcome International helps participants to communicate successfully and provide an exceptional customer service to international visitors and UK residents from different ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.” Although their course is aimed at the tourist industry it is easy to adapt to a library perspective. They offer both open courses at a range of locations throughout the UK or in-house training.

### **PearnKandola**

<http://www.pearnkandola.com/>

This company has a diversity training team

### **My HR People**

<http://www.myhrpeople.com/default.aspx>

My HR People provides HR advice, HR training and HR support to organisations and their people all over the UK, but particularly in the North East.

## 7.8 Good ideas or “Special Touches”

The good ideas or “special touches” listed below have been garnered from a variety of sources: visits to libraries, reading the literature, suggestions sent to the task group. They are presented in no particular order:

- A set of wall clocks displaying the time around the world can be displayed in the library entrance/ reception area
- A “Watching Wall” of TVs showing international news stations with headphones and comfortable seating allows students to sit together and watch different programmes
- Printed newspapers from India, China and the Middle East, daily or weekly editions, can enhance an international or general newspaper area
- Compass signs around the library to allow students to determine direction of prayer are appreciated
- Recognition of international holidays and festivals on the library plasma screens or notices is welcoming
- “Welcome to the library messages” can be displayed in multiple languages on signs/ plasma screens/ web pages
- Information on local services for families of international students is easy to keep at information points
- Information on local English language courses and activities outside the university can be kept at information points and linked to on web pages
- A library multi-cultural event may bring together home and international students
- A list of multi-lingual library staff and how to contact them can be helpful to both staff and students
- A collection of books from around the world, recommended or even donated by international students makes the library seem more friendly
- A comprehensive range of multi lingual dictionaries and links to online dictionaries and translating services is helpful
- Make use of international symbols and images on Library posters and signage where appropriate instead of words.
- Promote and display international materials for home students, for example, collections of world film and literature.
- Where possible use pictures of people from different nationalities in library publications and posters.
- Encourage librarians to purchase books and other materials with an international, or non UK-centric perspective, where possible and appropriate.
- Hold extra information skills sessions aimed at international students during the vacations when they are frequently still on campus.
- Subtitle library induction videos to help international students whose English reading skills may be better than their listening skills.
- The library can employ international student buddies, current students who help new international students get used to the library
- Offer to run information sessions for academic staff to explain what the library is doing to help international students
- Links to websites on academic writing skills can be a useful addition to web pages



## 7.9 Key Concepts Checklist

- KC1:** While emphasis should be placed on positive aspects of the library service, it is important to manage student expectations by presenting clear information about library resources and services. Ensure this information is included in all recruitment publicity produced by the University.
- KC2** Engage with academic staff over reading list provision for international students to manage their expectations.
- KC3** International students are not an homogenous group; even students from the same country don't necessarily have the same cultural background.
- KC4** Use plain English and avoid jargon, not only in publications but in guiding and general library use.
- KC5** Provide glossaries of specialist terminology.
- KC6** Design information literacy sessions to cater for all levels of IT ability by building in self paced elements and providing back up resources whenever possible.
- KC7** Provide regular staff development for library staff in cross cultural awareness and diversity training.
- KC8** An awareness of varying teaching and learning styles should underpin information literacy teaching.
- KC9** Establish mechanisms for obtaining the views of international students, in order to inform future plans.
- KC10** The library should encourage the development of links with other sections of the university which support international students.
- KC11** Design information literacy programmes which challenge students to think about their information literacy ability, rather than just learning technical search skills.
- KC12** Ensure that all students, but especially international students, have easy access to information about plagiarism and how to retain their academic integrity.
- KC13** Providing information on study skills support in the library can benefit all students.
- KC14** Library web pages specifically for international students can help create a welcoming impression and manage expectations, even if many of the links point straight back to the main library web pages.
- KC15** Consider providing material in different languages, thinking about how much, which languages and whether students be involved in production.
- KC16** Where possible involve international students in staff development activities.
- KC17** Identify a named individual member of staff to be a contact point for international students and to bring together library activities.

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