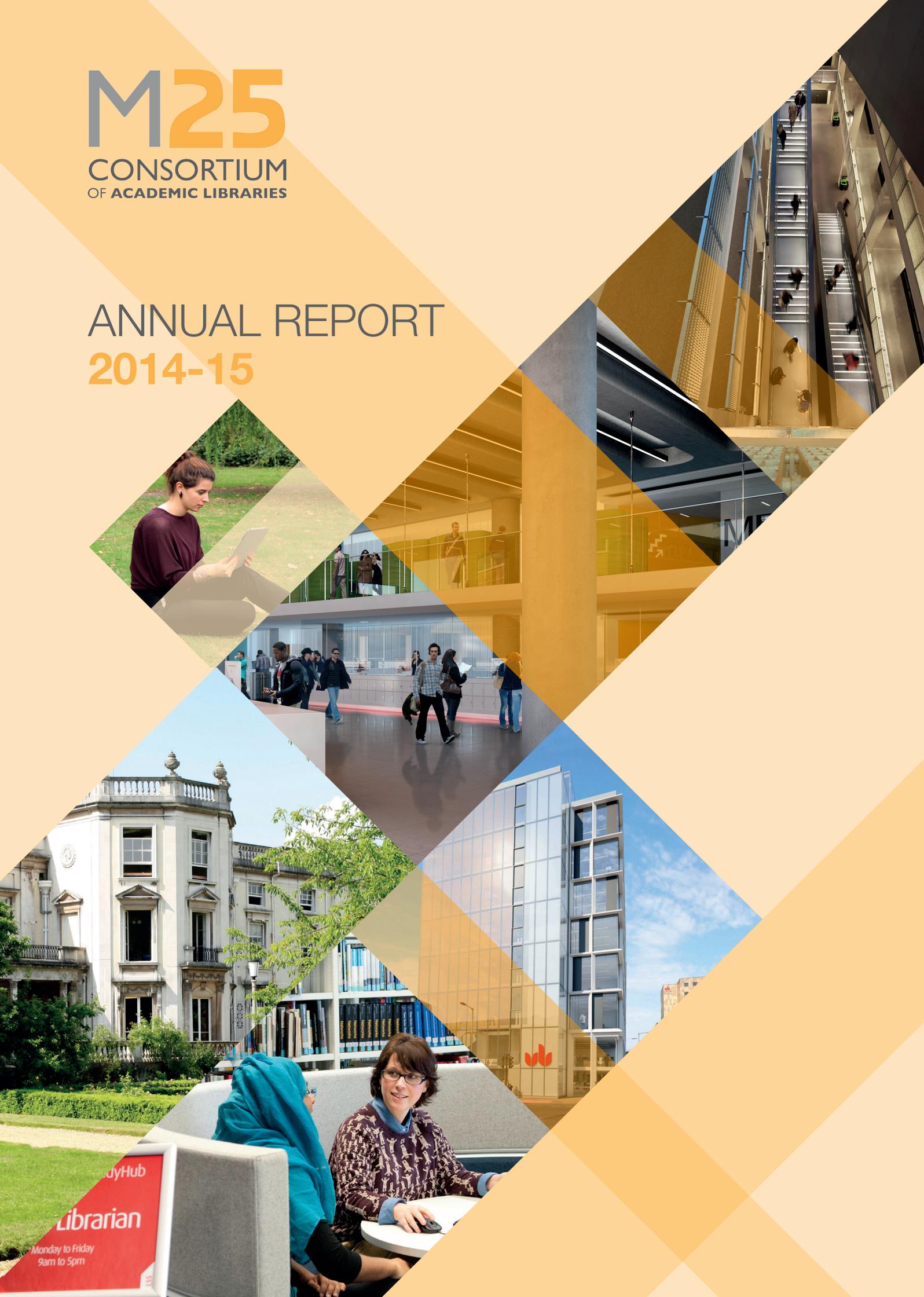


M25

CONSORTIUM
OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15



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Chair's Report

I have enjoyed my first year as Chair of the M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries and working with a group of talented and committed Officers, Steering Group members and staff continues to be a great privilege. I'd like to pay tribute to them all, and particularly to thank John Tuck, who completed his post-Chair year on the Steering Group in April, and Cathy Walsh, who left the Steering Group in June following her appointment as Librarian of the University of Essex. Simon Bevan completed his first two-year term of office on the Steering Group and was re-elected for a further term at the AGM on 28 April 2015. Kat Hubshmann (Wiener Library) has been co-opted to the Steering Group to fill the casual vacancy and brings valuable expertise from outside the HE sector to the Group. Our Executive Manager, Thomas Baldwin, has now been with the Consortium for one and a half years and is making significant progress in taking forward initiatives and in ensuring that behind-the-scenes processes run effectively and efficiently. In the latter he is ably assisted by Gianina Harvey and Jeni Smith. Thanks are also due to Claire Hackshall who left the Consortium at the end of September after five years of dedicated work for cpd25 and for M25 more generally. Perhaps the most significant initiative that was undertaken during 2014-15 was the Directors' Consultation. Thomas describes this work on page 8. Thank you again to all the Directors who found time in their busy schedules to meet with Thomas and to reflect on the role and operation of the

Consortium. Thanks also to Thomas for rising to my challenge of completing the interviews and writing the report to a very tight schedule. The outcomes of the consultation guided the Steering Group's planning day held on 14 January 2015 and will continue to be of value as we start to develop the Consortium's next three-year strategy. The evening networking event was also held on 14 January in Judge's Court at Browns in Covent Garden. This proved to be an ideal venue and the evening was a great opportunity for conversations on a range of topics with colleagues from M25 libraries. In fact the venue was felt to be so good that we are planning to return for the 2016 networking event – please put Tuesday 19 January 2016 in your diaries! The AGM and Annual Conference were held at the Royal Geographical Society in Kensington on 28 April 2015. Thanks to colleagues who put together such an interesting conference programme (see the report on pages 4 and 5), attracting attendees from well beyond the M25 region. Overall the venue worked well, although we will need to look for a slightly bigger venue for 2016 as there was a waiting list of people wishing to attend. One of the main items on the AGM agenda was to consider a subscription model based on the revised JISC bands. I'd like to thank our Treasurer, Cathy Phillpotts, for all her hard work in investigating many possible options and for presenting the version approved by Steering Group to the AGM where it was also

approved. Like many of our own institutions, resources have become even tighter in the current financial year. We were pleased to approve and welcome Regent's University London as a new member of the Consortium at the AGM.

As you will see on the next page, cpd25 has had another very successful year and I'd like to thank Michelle Wake for continuing to chair the cpd25 Steering Group and to thank all those who served on the Task Groups. Finally thanks to Susan Scorey for all her work as M25 Secretary; much of this work goes unnoticed but is essential to the smooth running of the Consortium.

Helen Workman

*Chair of M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries
Director of Learning Resources and University Librarian, Oxford Brookes University*



Treasurer's Report

As a charitable company the Consortium undergoes independent examination of its financial accounts each year. Once again we have appointed Kingston Smith for this scrutiny and their report will be made available to members at our next AGM.

For the 2014-15 financial year, income from subscriptions was anticipated to be £151,399.66. Further income from sponsorship and M25 Conference bookings brought this figure up to £163,582.21 (these figures are subject to verification by Kingston Smith).

Once again cpd25 activities have produced a financial surplus, and this continues to help the M25 Consortium's overall financial position.

Expenditure for the Consortium included:

- Support Team staffing costs
- Space and Support Team IT costs at Senate House, University of London
- Production of marketing materials including the Annual Report
- Continued provision and maintenance of the Search25 service
- Provision of cpd25 training services
- Maintenance of the M25, cpd25 and Search25 websites
- An Annual Conference and an Annual Networking Event.

For the 2015-16 year reserves of £116,000 are required in order to cover any potential risks to the Consortium.



I would like to formally thank Kingston Smith for their assistance with financial matters, and, I would like to thank the Consortium's Support Team for their invaluable help and attention to detail in relation to the Consortium's finances.

Catherine Phillpotts
London Metropolitan University

cpd25 Report

2014-15 was a year of change and development for cpd25, as we said goodbye to Claire Hackshall, who was administrator for the events programme. During the 5 years of her expert management cpd25 had flourished, and her successor Gianina Harvey was eager to continue its success.

This year saw a record number of attendees at events and visits, attracting an audience far beyond the M25 region. 702 delegates from all over the UK, from all levels of Library and Information work, flocked to the 45 events held.

Many thanks, as always, must be given to the cpd25 task group members, who work tirelessly to organise these events. Without their hard work, delivering a programme of this reputable standard would not be possible.

Last year's feedback was instrumental in shaping event topics, as well as taking the initiative to tackle hot topics in the sector.

Alongside these we continued to run popular courses, eg, the Professional Qualification Workshop series, and developed offerings in new areas – KPIs, Special Collections, Data Skills and Statistics for Librarians, and the Impact and Significance of Mental Illness, for example.

We have received an overwhelmingly positive response to the training from our delegates this year, with 88 per cent rating "very good" or "excellent" on our feedback forms.

As always we will look to build on our successes to continue to meet and anticipate member's needs.

Michelle Wake
cpd25 Chair (pictured)
Gianina Harvey
cpd25 Coordinator



M25 Annual Conference 2015:

Exploiting and Engaging Collections: Opportunities and Issues in a Digital World

In April we hosted one of our most successful annual conferences yet at the Royal Geographical Society in South Kensington. We had a beautiful day enabling us to take full advantage of the sunny terrace at lunchtime and giving delegates a real taste of summer.

The conference was fully booked this year with 100 delegates from across the M25 Consortium and beyond. We also benefited from unprecedented levels of sponsorship from a range of companies and partners ensuring the conference was self-financing.

The programme this year offered a variety of presentations and perspectives, all with the overarching theme of Exploring and Engaging Collections: Opportunities in the Digital World. It included speakers from diverse organisations including the Tate, the Horniman Museum, Reading University and Senate House. We were also very fortunate to hear from two respected experts on data management, a particularly hot topic for university librarians.

Rosemary Lynch and Jane Bramwell got the day off to an excellent start with their presentation about the Tate's Archives and Access project, which has enabled them to open up underused archive collections to help scholars and members of the public engage with art and with our cultural heritage at a deeper level. The session included a very moving film about the artist Eileen Agar, linking the insights provided by her personal papers directly to her work and demonstrating how the work of artists traditionally underrepresented in the Tate

collections can now be more widely exposed and shared using digital technologies.

Rosemary and Jane pointed out how this approach has made it possible for the Tate to open up their archives more fully to a national audience as the project has resulted in an increase in visits to the Tate's online archive catalogue of 20,000 per year and an increase in new visitors to the galleries of over 5,000.

This first session was followed by a fascinating trio of presentations on some very different collections and projects. First Andrea Meyer Ludowisy and Steve Baker from Senate House spoke about Get GRIB! GRIB is a collaborative online gateway to German resources in the UK. This includes the Senate House collection which covers the history and development of Germanic Studies in the UK as well as German literature and literary criticism. The intention behind the Get GRIB! portal has been to open up and increase the usage of university collections around the UK and to find new ways of engaging with an existing audience.

Following Andrea and Steve, Helen Williamson from the Horniman Museum gave an inspiring talk about "The Importance of the Physical in the Digital world". The Horniman library is one of the smallest of the M25 Consortium libraries and has existed at the Museum since its founding in 1901. The library was threatened with closure in recent years and Helen talked about the strategy of new projects and a determined advocacy campaign to keep the library open, ensuring it continues to make an important contribution to this unique museum's success.

Kate Arnold-Forster and Elizabeth McCarthy of Reading University's Special Collections gave us a fascinating presentation about their work to integrate and co locate the dispersed collections of the Museum of Rural Life and other university collections, including the Samuel Beckett Archive and the archive of Mills and Boon, in their newly refurbished building. The team in the new centre now work across all the collections providing support for a wide range of enquiries and offering special activities and events to better engage with the local community. The team are also working on some exciting projects including a collaboration with University of East London, "Staging Beckett", and a Heritage Lottery funded project, "Our Country Life".

After lunch we moved into a very active and participatory session with Suzanne Wheatley of Sue Hill Recruitment, entitled "Making an Impact or How to be a Successful Networker." Energy levels were lifted by a series of exercises – including some serious tongue twisters – to improve our public speaking skills and "elevator pitches". This lively session certainly provided us with very useful techniques and highlighted some of the relatively simple things we can bear in mind to help us have more impact and develop our networks.

Later in the afternoon we were very fortunate to have Paul Ayris, Director of LS at UCL, speak to us about "The Brave New World: Implementing the LERU Roadmap for Research Data". Paul highlighted the urgent need for libraries to consider their role in a

research environment dominated by data, where technological change enables data to be open, shared and reusable, and where there is a growing expectation that it should be so. The LERU Roadmap's recommendations apply to all universities, including both research intensive universities and those where research is not currently dominant, as it affects all individual academic staff carrying out research. Paul outlined the Roadmap's 7 chapter headings and sections for discussion, including policy, advocacy, collections and curation, roles and responsibilities and skills. Up to now the librarian's involvement with the research process has been around publication but not curation, and that now has to change. LERU seeks to bring key stakeholders together and advocate for the benefits of open data.

Our final speaker, Gareth Knight, spoke about "Building sustainability: preserving research data without breaking the bank", using his

experience at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine as a case study. Gareth told us about the practical experience of implementing a data management service where limited resources are available to support a large body of researchers. Some of the challenges include the fact research data is held in a wide variety of forms and, in many cases, a historic lack of co-ordination or sustained preservation activity. Librarians need to make the case for the preservation of research data within the institution and for sustained investment in this area. He gave us some practical guidance on ways of reaching our audiences and effective arguments to help support the case as well as highlighting key questions to consider when establishing a research data management service.

The day ended with closing remarks from the Consortium's Chair, Helen Workman, who reflected on the engaging programme and inspiring speakers who ensured a lively and informative conference for 2015.

Cathy Walsh

University of East London



Networking Event 2015

It was a cold and dark evening in January when an assorted bunch of Library folk ventured out into Covent Garden for the 2015 M25 networking event. The location was Brown's Courtrooms, which was once the Westminster County Court building. Several colleagues took the opportunity to sit in the judge's chair and leaf their way through the original record of cases heard within the building. No doubt dreams of holding such power and influence entered many a head...

The wine flowed, canapés appeared (and disappeared) and conversation grew as colleagues caught up with each other and all the news. Even those members of the Steering Group who had been hard at work planning the future of the M25 all day seemed regenerated by the surroundings and the atmosphere was distinctly lively!

Such was the success of the evening, that a repeat has been proposed so please hold the date of Tuesday 19 January and we will do our best to abolish those post-Christmas blues!

Ann Cummings
Brunel University



M25 Support Team

The M25 Support Team continues to be hosted within Senate House Library, with a lease on the office space of Room 653. The three members of staff are employed by the University of London, and a secondment agreement is in place for each employee to divert their working hours to the M25 Consortium.

Following the significant changes to the Support Team's structure last year, coupled with the relocation into Senate House Library, the year 2014-15 also saw significant changes to the make-up of our team.

In September 2014 Claire Hackshall, cpd25 Administrator left in order to seek new experiences and challenges elsewhere. Claire had completed five years in post, and the role

had evolved in that time. Therefore, before recruiting began, the M25 Officers and I revised the job description to reflect the cpd25 programme's current requirements of the role. The University of London's HR department evaluated the changes and confirmed the role was now at the higher grade of "Coordinator". In addition, based on feedback received during the Directors' consultations of 2014, the Officers and I took the decision to invest further in the cpd25 programme by adding one day to the role, making it a full-time position. We were delighted to appoint Gianina Harvey as cpd25 Coordinator in November 2014.

Gianina's appointment of course left a vacancy for the M25 Administrator, a role she had occupied since May 2014. The Officers and

I also decided, partly in consideration for our decision to add to the cpd25 role, to reduce this role to 0.6 FTE. We were very fortunate to appoint Jeni Smith in February 2015. Jeni had worked in M25 intermittently as a temporary administrator over the previous couple of years, and therefore brought a good experience of the history and workings of the Consortium.

Thus at the end of 2014-15 the team is:

- Thomas Baldwin, Executive Manager
- Jeni Smith, M25 Administrator (0.6FTE)
- Gianina Harvey, cpd25 Coordinator

Thomas Baldwin

M25 Executive Manager

Search25

Whilst there have been no major developments in the Search25 system over the last year, but all the same the year has been a busy one with a stream of adjustments and updates needed as new member libraries join and existing members cope with organisational changes, often involving switching Library Management System (LMS) suppliers or moving from in-house to remotely hosted servers.

As a result of these changes Search25 now supports a wider range of Z39.50 servers than before, as smaller and more recently formed academic institutions have chosen LMS from outside the pool of larger suppliers. At the same time moves to outsourcing Z39.50 servers (particularly with ExLibris and SirsiDynix) have led to greater reliability, this has led to more time spent in diagnostics and communication as Library Systems Administrator roles change and direct lines of communication with Z39.50 server managers are lost.

This summer in particular has seen a flurry of LMS changes, with at least six major changes to library management systems, as well as closure and opening of new institutional libraries. Search25 has weathered the storm, and nearly all the needed changes have now been implemented. I hope we can now go on to re-integrate some of our members who have dropped out of the system, while looking forwards to adding new members.

Graham Seaman

Search25 Developer

Consultations with M25 Consortium Directors

The new Executive Manager of the M25 Consortium, Thomas Baldwin, embarked on a programme of detailed one-to-one consultations with the directors of the Consortium's member libraries. The meetings took place in the latter half of 2014, and served a dual purpose. Firstly they allowed Thomas to meet the directors, a key stakeholder group in the Consortium. Secondly, through the structured interviews, they allowed the directors to express their views on the history of the Consortium's activity thus far and their wishes for its future development.

In total 53 consultations were held, representing approximately a 95 per cent response rate to the requests for interview. This alone was a very positive sign of the interest directors have in the Consortium and their wish to be involved, and the Officers' thanks go out to all for this.

The pattern of questioning covered all of the M25 Consortium's recent activity. The Search25 service was discussed in some detail, as it is valued by the vast majority of members as an important resource for both staff and students. It was noted by some of the smaller, specialist libraries, including those from outside the university sector, that it brings added visibility to their collections. It is complemented well by the M25 Access and Borrowing Scheme (for those in our special and museum libraries), for providing physical access to most other member libraries. Suggested future improvements to Search25 were an inclusion of non-print resources, along with a more centralised administration of the M25 Access and Borrowing scheme.

In discussing how the Consortium communicates its activities and news items, it was agreed that email lists were the most effective tool for the job, but that with the passage of time some had fallen into disuse and had not been updated to reflect staff changes. A clear need was identified to build up the email lists and to ensure there are layers of communication to different levels of staff in member libraries. The look and feel of the

M25 website was noted as being in need of a refresh, and this will take place in the context of a new marketing and communications strategy for the Consortium.

Undoubtedly a highlight for all members of their involvement with the Consortium is the cpd25 programme. The access to low-cost high-quality training provided in a central location makes the cpd25 programme the current flagship service of the Consortium. The added networking opportunities for attendees at both courses and visits means directors are very willing to release their staff to attend cpd25 events. Constructive suggestions were also given for how the programme could be developed in the future, including training for new areas of library work. These have been passed onto the cpd25 Chair for the future developments.

The Consortium had undertaken work earlier in 2014 in professional development specifically for directors, with the highly successful training event delivered by Common Purpose and the Providence Row charity (reported on in detail in the last annual report). The directors who had attended expressed their hope that it would not be a one-off event and that future training tailored to their senior level would be available within the Consortium. The group also expressed a desire for a similar type of training could be provided for Associate Directors. Availability of resources will help the Steering Group to determine the best way forward here.

The annual networking event and the annual conference were described as excellent opportunities for networking, facilitating one of the key values of Consortium membership, namely the opportunity to meet and engage with professionals working in the same field in other institutions. Constructive suggestions were made for how to enhance the networking opportunities at these events whilst retaining their informal and free nature. It is important to retain the opportunities for networking in all our activities, be it at specific events or through participation in membership of task groups, etc.

The consultation interviews covered other areas of M25's activity, including its previous work on shared approaches to disaster planning, investigations into becoming a purchasing consortium, the online Directors' Room and Staff Room facilities, and the advocacy work the Consortium can carry out on behalf of its members.

A full report on the consultations was presented by Thomas to the Steering Group's planning day in January 2015, and has been invaluable in identifying required areas of work and helping in the prioritisation of investment. An executive summary was also circulated to all who took part in the consultations. The work to capture what we should aim to achieve as a Consortium in the next three years will continue as a new strategy is formed for 2016-17 to 2018-19. Although the consultations revealed that the appetite is for a large range of activities, it is good that the Consortium's strategy and overall direction is being shaped by such close engagement with its key stakeholders: the members.

Thomas Baldwin
M25 Executive Manager



M25 Steering Group members 2014-15



Helen Workman



Susan Scorey



Catherine Phillpotts



Michelle Wake



Ann Cummings



Cathy Walsh



Caroline Rock



John Tuck



Kat Hubshmann



Louise Doolan



Marcus Woolley



Matthew Lawson



Martin Scarrott



Simon Bevan



Sue David

Consortium Chair **Helen Workman**, Oxford Brookes University

M25 Secretary **Susan Scorey**, University of Roehampton

M25 Treasurer **Catherine Phillpotts**, London Metropolitan University

cpd25 Chair **Michelle Wake**, UCL School of Pharmacy

Members **Ann Cummings**, Brunel University
Cathy Walsh, University of East London
Caroline Rock, University of Surrey
John Tuck, Royal Holloway, University of London (until April 2015)

Kat Hubshmann, Wiener Library (Since June 2015)

Louise Doolan, City University London

Marcus Woolley, University of Bedfordshire

Matthew Lawson, Middlesex University

Martin Scarrott, St Mary's University, Twickenham

Simon Bevan, Cranfield University

Sue David, St George's University of London

University of Roehampton

History

The origins of Roehampton University began in the mid nineteenth century with the establishment of four teacher-training colleges for women. These pioneered and led movements in early childhood education and a shared fundamental belief in its power to transform lives and communities.

The four colleges (Whitelands, Southlands, Digby Stuart and Froebel) came together in 1975 to found the Roehampton Institute of Higher Education. Whitelands is one of the oldest providers in the country. The Institution became part of the federal University of Surrey in 2000 and a University in its own right in 2004. During its first decade as a fully-fledged University, Roehampton has developed a distinctive and successful reputation, whilst remaining faithful to the traditions, values and ambitions on which it was founded.

The University has a commitment to great teaching as evidenced by our ten National Teaching Fellows and an established reputation in research. As well as being the most research intensive modern University in the country according to the 2014 (most recent) Research Excellence Framework review Roehampton has been ranked Best Modern University in London by The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2015 The Guardian University Guide 2016 and Complete University Guide 2016.

Students

Over 10,000 students, from 140 different nationalities, study on campus. A further 3,500 study online. Over 50 per cent are among the first generation in their family to attend university; 95 per cent are from state schools or colleges (national average 89 per cent); 38 per cent are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds (19 per cent) and 72 per cent are women.

Campus Development

The University has one of the most beautiful and green campuses in London, located between Putney, Barnes and Richmond and only 30 minutes from central London. It is clustered around a group of listed eighteenth century buildings, set in 60 acres of woodlands and lakes.

One of Roehampton's primary goals is to deliver a campus environment that is a stimulating and inspiring place in which to learn, study and work. Students deserve the best facilities and access to learning in order to develop their full potential.

An £80m campus development master plan will transform core elements of the campus and services to ensure that the University continues to improve the quality of experience to students and meet their needs in the future. The construction of 570 study bedrooms is underway as well as a conference centre and a new library.





New Library

Preparatory works have just started on a two-year programme, which will see the creation of the first purpose-built library at the University.

All academic libraries should engage and inspire users to achieve their full potential, but growing pressures on space; lack of collaborative study facilities and an ageing building are no longer providing the best environment.

The intention is to create a state-of-the-art library building, which will highlight the central importance of learning and study to completing a degree, as well as providing flexibility for future changes to how learning is carried out.

The new building will increase the number of study spaces from 700 in the current library to more than 960. It will provide a wider variety of styles of study area, catering for both individual students and group collaboration.

The ground floor will be the busy entrance hub, providing a first point of call for enquiries, including an exhibition and event space, as well as the usual circulation activities, some book and journal collections and a variety of study spaces, not forgetting a café which will provide a more relaxed study area as well as comfortable sofas for staff “meetings”!

As students move upwards through the four floors of the building, study areas will become smaller and for quieter study. On the top (fourth) floor, individual study spaces will be provided, some with stunning views of Richmond Park, which borders the University. The building will also house Archive and Special Collections and the aim is to make use of some of our artefacts, in displays throughout the building.

The Future

Other universities have said that footfall doubles when a new academic library is opened. The building will therefore be as flexible as possible to allow for the changing needs of the University and Library Services: whether more or less shelving; study spaces and training rooms or to change the purpose of different areas.

All the evidence shows that students and staff will need libraries for many years to come, whether to find and use resources or to study in an inspirational environment. The aim at Roehampton is that the Library is and remains, at the heart of the academic community.

Susan Scorey

University of Roehampton



University of Bedfordshire

Thirty years on

Tim Stone, Director of Learning Resources and Student Services retired on 22nd May 2015 after over 30 years at Bedfordshire. Tim joined the institution when it was Luton College of Higher Education and became University Librarian when the College became the University of Luton in 1993. Following the merger between the University of Luton and De Montfort University's Bedford campus, the University of Bedfordshire was established in August 2006. Tim has overseen the development of the University libraries and student support services over the University's 6 campuses in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire which now serves a student population of over 24,000 from all over the world. University staff joined together to give Tim a memorable Bedfordshire farewell.

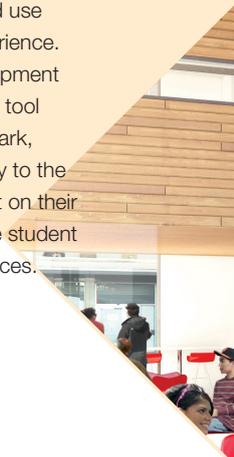
New Library developments

The construction of the new £46 million Library building at the University's Luton campus is progressing. Due to open in 2016, it will provide 7,400 sq metres of space over 9 levels and the extensive, panoramic windows will make the most of the building's scale and offer great views from the top floors. Students will have the benefit of 30 per cent extra study spaces, 30 per cent extra book stock, state of the art IT and AV equipment and café. The dedicated "Study Hub" on the mezzanine floor will offer students a professional specialist help and advice service on a range of academic study skills, finding and using relevant and reliable information sources and support on the use of Microsoft Office software for assignments, presentations, dissertations and other study needs.

The University Campus Milton Keynes (UCMK) is being further developed in the city centre. The development includes much improved library facilities. UCMK is a partnership between the University of Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes Council and the expansion, planned for September 2015, will see student numbers at UCMK grow as additional courses relevant to business, education and health, the needs of the Milton Keynes knowledge economy and local and national businesses are added to the portfolio.

Continued investment in books

In direct response to student feedback the University continues to make extra investment in print book stock. An additional £100k investment in print stock supports the aims of the Learning Resources Academic Reading and Resource Strategy (ARRS) as does extension of the successful "ebooks on demand" project. The ARRS is designed to provide a coordinated approach to resource identification, allocation and use in order to support the learning experience. This, together with the further development and embedding of the "Readinglists" tool which allows users to locate, bookmark, track usage and click through directly to the ebooks, ejournals and online content on their course reading list, has improved the student experience of using Learning Resources.



Departmental changes reflect University internal realignment

A number of departmental re-alignments seem to be the order of the day and the Registry is not an exception. These changes will result in a new Department of Learning Resources and Service Excellence. The department will play a key role in managing all student service points and University receptions. It will work within Registry departments to help introduce consistency and a systemised approach to dealing with all student enquiries. These projects are likely to be exciting and challenging as a bottom up approach will be taken to ensure the change process takes the realities of the work flow into account.

Study Hub developments

The Professional and Academic Development team, Academic Librarians and Computer Skills team continue to enhance their integrated services to students. The success of targeted initiatives has been well received by students, staff and management. Plans for this coming year include a particular focus on expanding targeted maths and ICT teaching along with the introduction of a university wide "maths week". Efforts have also been made to ensure that best practice is being consistently adopted in terms of designing inclusive teaching and learning materials.

Marcus Woolley
University of Bedfordshire





Middlesex University

Middlesex University is a modern university, set in the leafy suburbs of Barnet at the far end of the Northern line. In addition to London, there are three international campuses in Dubai, Mauritius and most recently in Malta.

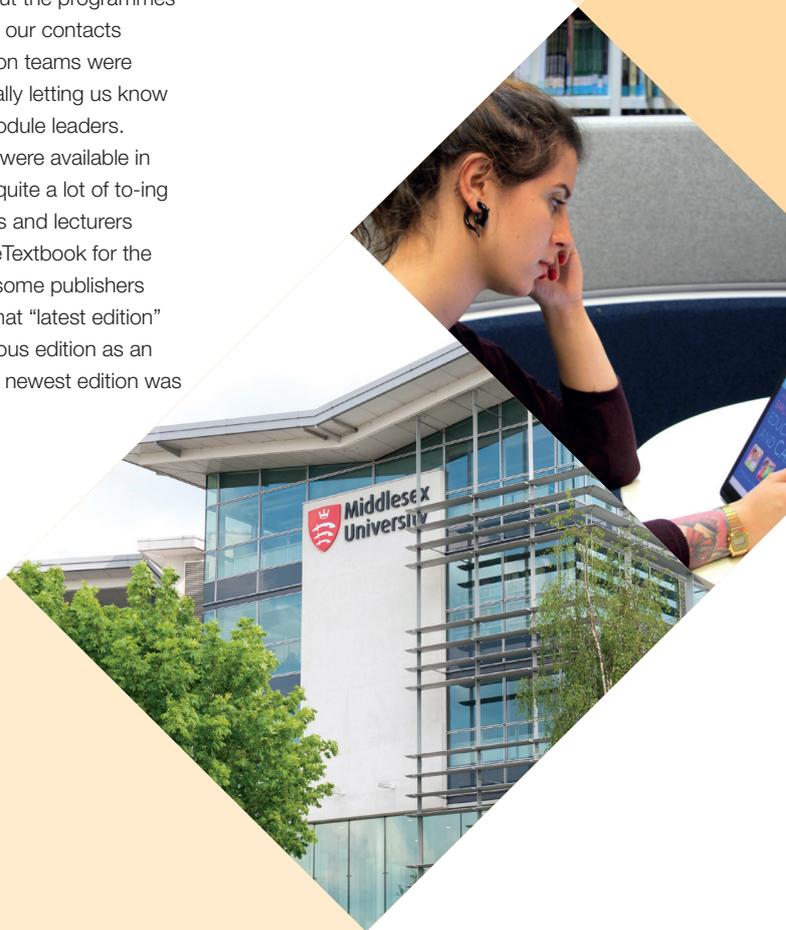
Operating in an ever more competitive marketplace and with students expecting value for their fees the challenge is to offer enhanced services to our 18,000 students in the UK (30,000 worldwide). During the past year the Library Service has introduced several new offerings to students which we hope will make Middlesex stand out from the crowd!

A personal eTextbook for every student

In September 2014 the University launched a pilot eTextbook project for students in the Business and Law Schools, with our project partners, Kortext and JS group booksellers. This was a complicated project for the Library to manage with three main work streams-confirming which programmes and modules would be running the following year; contacting the module leaders and asking them to recommend a book that would be useful to their students; integrating the scheme into the Moodle VLE so that students could access their personal eTextbooks without needing additional account details.

We faced numerous challenges in carrying out the project. It was much more time consuming than we had originally envisaged gathering information about the programmes which would be running – our contacts in the School administration teams were invaluable for this, especially letting us know last minute changes of module leaders. Not all recommendations were available in digital form so there was quite a lot of to-ing and fro-ing with publishers and lecturers to get the best match of eTextbook for the students. We also found some publishers had an unusual idea of what “latest edition” meant, offering us a previous edition as an eTextbook even when the newest edition was available in hard copy!

So far we have given the 5,000+ eligible students over 15,000 free eTextbooks, with a take-up rate of over 90 per cent.



Feedback from the pilot has been positive with students especially liking the free access to key teaching material and not having to carry around heavy textbooks:

“Having one free core text for my course has been incredibly helpful, especially financially. It’s easy to access and being able to download it to my desktop means that I can access the reading needed wherever or whenever I need!”

The scheme is now being rolled out across the University for all Schools and modules based at the Hendon campus for the 2015-16 academic year. Each student will receive one free eTextbook for every module they study.

Laptop loan cabinets

Campus consolidation over the past few years means study space is at a premium. Rather than limit space usage with desktop PCs we have invested in self-service laptop cabinets. These operate on the student’s library card and can be borrowed for 24 hours at a time and used wherever a student wishes to study. They need to be returned to the cabinet and charging before they are removed from the student’s library account.

Laptops for loan have proved very popular with students since they were first introduced and over the past year we have increased numbers to 280 in the library, in other buildings across the campus and at the library at the Whittington Hospital for nursing placement students.

StudyHub

We have several teams providing support for student study needs – from developing skills in searching resources, to referencing, and academic writing and presentations. Feedback has told us that it can be confusing for students to navigate through team structures and hierarchies to access the help they need. The introduction of the StudyHub this academic year aims to bring this diverse support together in one place and provide a collaborative learning space where students can get immediate help, or book a future appointment or onto a workshop for more in depth support.

Several teams staff the StudyHub including librarians, IT support staff, Academic Writing staff and Student Learning Assistants (SLAs). SLAs are a team of over 250 experienced students who assist on modules that they did well in previously while developing skills which will stand them in good stead once they have left the University. Numbers of study enquiries have never been higher and the new StudyHub service model is also encouraging better communication between teams.

Employability

The notion of providing students not just with skills to help them succeed in their studies but that will help them after they leave is becoming increasingly important. The library has been running a scheme for the Business School over the past year which is yielding tangible results for the students who participate.

The Financial Markets Lab in the Library provides students and staff with access to the Bloomberg and Datastream databases and plays an important role in bridging the gap between financial theory and the practices of the real business world.

We offer certification courses for both databases and run **The Bloomberg Assessment Test (BAT)**. This is a useful developmental tool for students and provides an insight into which areas of finance may suit them best. The BAT also allows students the opportunity to gain exposure to financial employers worldwide as part of a database of BAT performance.

This practical experience has had an impact on opportunities for our students: “I have just been offered a job as a junior analyst because of having done the BAT”.

Matthew Lawson

University of Middlesex



Greenwich University: Stockwell Street Library

The Greenwich Campus of the University of Greenwich occupies magnificent historical buildings within the Old Royal Naval College. In 2009 the University acquired a site in the middle of Greenwich; a designated World Heritage Site and planned to create a new home for our architecture, landscape, creative professions and digital arts disciplines and a new campus library. The library at the time occupied the former Seamen's Hospital "The Dreadnought", a building that had maintained its large hospital corridors, and individual wards so the Dewey-arranged books were in five different rooms over two floors, linked by six different staircases, various study and PC areas.

This required a navigational aid: one side of the building had green carpet (starboard) the other red (port). And the floor creaked like a galleon in full sail! Fond as we were of the old tub, we were desperate to get a library fit for the 21st century that would inspire our students, enhance their learning and encourage us to work in different ways. The university launched a competition to choose a design for the proposed new building. The panel of judges, led by architect Lord Rogers, chose Heneghan Peng, a Dublin-based firm, with a track record of working in sensitive locations. Their challenge was to produce a vibrant, sustainable building that would be accepted as an addition to the World Heritage Site, which would integrate with the community and enhance the experience of members of the University.

Staff from Information and Library Services worked with the project manager from the beginning. We met the architects and they listened to us about our vision for the library, what we wanted and how we envisaged the space being used. We were consulted throughout the process. Student focus groups were held at the beginning of the process and we were able to visit the building site as it grew; we learnt to turn up to site visits early, to stand a chance of getting a pair of safety boots that didn't either cripple you or swamp you.

Mindful of the changes in how libraries are being used, and how usage of different resources, such as books, PCs and e-resources will change over the years to come, we wanted a building that was flexible. We wanted to give students space they could make their own, and allow us in Library Services to work in innovative ways. We wanted to get rid of "counters" that always seemed to act more as a barrier than a help point; to encourage self-service; and to allow students to find their way around easily and find a space they were comfortable in.

We opened our doors on 14 September 2014. Despite delays to the handing over of the building, through a huge team effort we were up and running and ready for business. First year and returning students alike seemed to love the building and we have had great positive feedback, although we know there are changes we have still to make.



For me, the comment “if you build it, he will come”¹ rings true: the new building has increased footfall and created high user expectations. We really are stretched and already looking at how we can add PC and study spaces without compromising the design and feeling of space in the library.

The new building gives us a purpose built archive space, training rooms, ten bookable group study spaces, card access turnstiles, an open plan office, a spacious workroom, nine bin returns machines and book displays. Vitra sofas and organic armchairs in red, yellow and orange positively glow in the window recesses. Vitra alcove seating and study cubes give small intimate study spaces for groups and pairs in the cavernous ground floor space which is dedicated to social and collaborative learning. We have PCs, laptops and Macs. MFDs and plotters deal with the print demands of the thriving architecture and design department in the other part of the building, “next door”. The building has been designed with sustainability at the top of the agenda and has a total of 14 landscape roofs, including some dedicated for use by the landscape students, and bee hives on one of the library roofs!

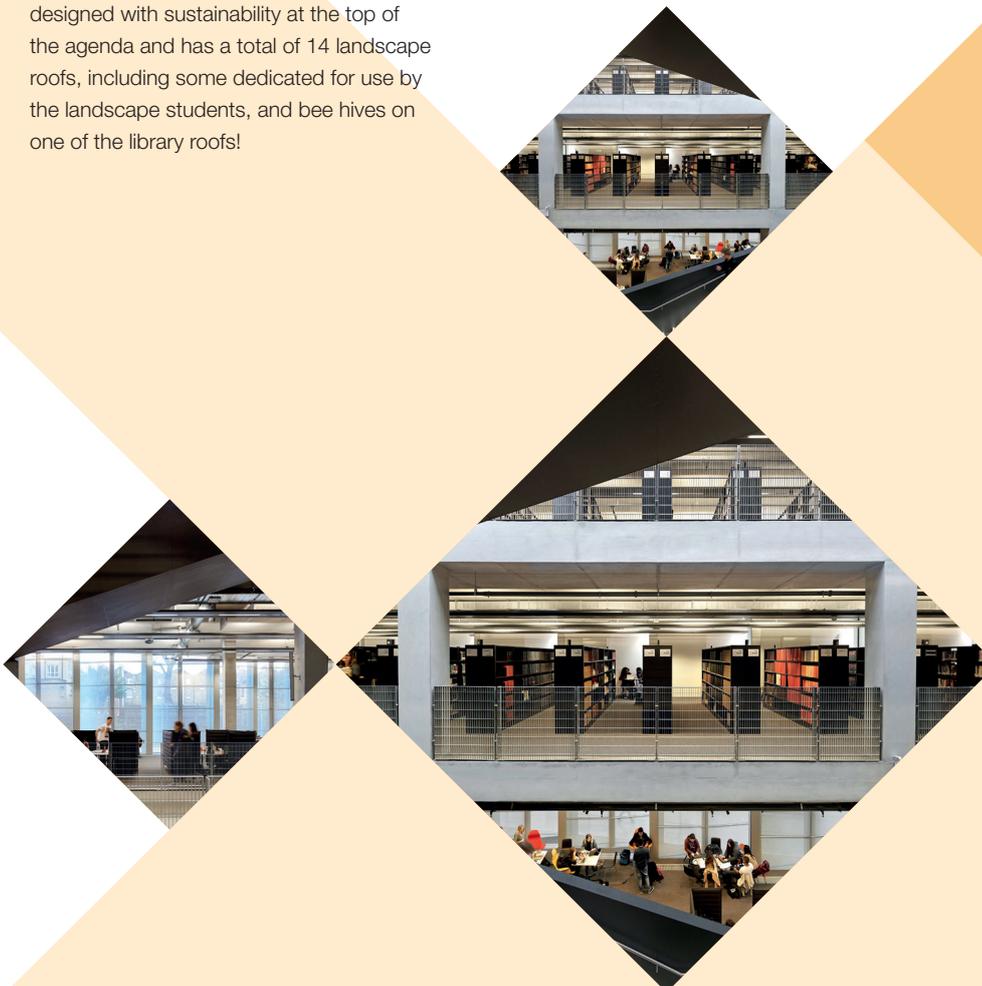
Arranged over five floors, the main feature of the building is the huge steel central staircase offering fabulous views from different angles. Huge picture windows give views over Greenwich, Hawkmoor’s St Alfege Church, the tea clipper Cutty Sark and Canary Wharf. The railway cutting below has trains bound for London or Kent rumbling past; although their horns are audible as they go underground, most of the traffic noise cannot be heard, due to excellent sound proofing. A new path runs along the outside of the social learning space, offering tantalising views into the building. Passers-by can see students working together, on laptops or PCs, the ever present cup of coffee in their hand. The windows are arranged as angled fins that manage to give privacy and yet invite the world to look and wonder at how learning and studying has changed and what fun it looks!

The main entrance to the Stockwell Street building welcomes public access and includes a café, exhibition and gallery spaces. Open view architectural model workshops help put the life of the university into context and show how universities can engage with the wider community.

We are thrilled to have reached the shortlist for both the Stirling Prize and the British Construction Industry Awards, having also won a RIBA London Regional Award and the award for best London Town Centre project in the London Planning awards

Virginia Malone

*Head of Library Services
Greenwich University*



¹ *Field of Dreams* (1989) Directed by Phil Alden Robinson [Film]. Place of distribution: United States Distribution Company. Universal Pictures

List of Member Libraries

2014-2015

Anglia Ruskin University • Birkbeck, University of London • The British Library
The British Museum • Brunel University • Buckinghamshire New University
Canterbury Christ Church University • City University (London)
Courtauld Institute of Art • Cranfield University • Goldsmiths, University of London
Heythrop College, University of London • Horniman Museum
Imperial College London • Imperial War Museum • Institute of Development Studies
Institute of Education • King's College London • Kingston University
Lambeth Palace Library • London Metropolitan University
The London School of Economics and Political Science
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine • London South Bank University
Middlesex University • The Open University in London • Oxford Brookes University
Queen Mary, University of London • Ravensbourne • Regent's University London
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London
Royal College of Art • Royal Holloway, University of London
Royal Society of Chemistry • Royal Veterinary College • The Science Museum
School of Oriental & African Studies • Senate House Library
St George's, University of London • St Mary's University, Twickenham
University College London • University for the Creative Arts
University of Bedfordshire • University of Brighton • University of East London
University of Greenwich • University of Kent • University of Reading
University of Roehampton • University of Surrey • University of Sussex
University of the Arts, London • University of West London • University of Westminster
Victoria & Albert Museum • The Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide

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