Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement Programme

DCU

Peer Review Group Report

Library

Ms Caroline Williams, Director of Libraries and Research & Learning Resources, The University of Nottingham [Chair]
Mr John Cox, University Librarian, National University of Ireland, Galway [Deputy Chair]
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Date: **20th November 2015**

Introduction

This Quality review has been conducted in accordance with a framework model developed and agreed through the Irish Universities Association Quality Committee and complies with the provisions of Section 35 of the Universities Act (1997) and the 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act. The model consists of a number of basic steps.

1. An internal team in the DCU Library being reviewed completes a detailed self-assessment report (SAR). It should be noted that this document is confidential to the DCU Library as well as the Review Panel and senior officers of the University.
2. This report is sent to a team of peer assessors, the Peer Review Group (PRG) – composed of members from outside DCU and from other areas of DCU – who then visit DCU and conduct discussions with a range of relevant staff, students and other stakeholders.
3. The PRG then writes its own report. The DCU Library is given the chance to correct possible factual errors before the PRG report is finalised.
4. The DCU Library produces a draft Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) in response to the various issues and findings of the SAR and PRG reports.
5. The PRG report and the draft QuIP are considered by the Quality Promotion Committee (QPC) and University Executive.
6. The draft QuIP is discussed in a meeting between the DCU Library, members of the PRG, the Director of Quality Promotion and members of Senior Management. The University's responses are written into the draft document and the result is the finalised QuIP.
7. The PRG Report and the QuIP including the University's response is sent to the Governing Authority of the University, who approve publication in a manner that it sees fit.

   This document is the report referred to in Step 3 above.

Peer Review Group Report for the Library

1.   Introduction and Overview

<u>Location and facilities</u>

The Library building was completed in 2000 with a large space on the Lower Ground floor left unfinished. Over the years this space has been utilised as a store for the University. This space has now been designated for a major development of a Special Collections Reading Room. This proposal initiated by the previous Director and carried forward by the current Director has been identified as a strategic priority for the University in their new fund-raising campaign.

<u>Observation from the Site Visit:</u>

The building is now 15 years old. Some reconfiguration and refurbishment has been carried out; this has made a significant improvement to the student experience. It is acknowledged that this is only the beginning of a longer-term ambition to further reconfigure library space.

Facilities currently include:

- 10,700 square metres, over four floors;
- 1,100 study spaces, of which 255 are wired for PCs and 46 for laptop use;
- 18 collaborative study rooms where students can engage in group work;
- An Information Commons area which provides a cluster of PCs in a layout which allows individual or group working;
- A Mentoring Suite, located on the ground floor, which supports academic peer-tutoring programmes;
- Two fully equipped training rooms which support the Library's commitment to information literacy training;
- A Research Commons on the lower ground floor which was set up specifically to meet the information and research needs of both taught and research students;
- Three service desks, Issue Desk, Information and Reception Desks;
- Photocopying, printing and scanning services;
- The University's Maths Learning Centre and Writing Centre;
- The Lounge – social collaborative working space;
- Strong Room – climate controlled secure storage for archival materials and special collections;
- Secondary archive storage for overflow collections.

One of the most significant and service enhancing benefits of Incorporation for the DCU community will be the addition of a second and new library building to the overall DCU Library estates.

Staff

The Library staff complement is 28.5 FTE, a loss of 2.5 FTE since the last QR and below the level of benchmarked institutions.

Title	Grade	FTE
Director of Library Services		1
Collections and Systems Services - Sub-Librarian, Divisional Head - Acquisitions/Cataloguing Librarian - EResource and Serials Librarian - Systems Librarian - CSS Senior Library Assistant - MIS Senior Library Assistant - Administration Senior Library Assistant - Library Assistants	Assistant Librarian II Assistant Librarian IA Vacant Assistant Librarian IA Senior Library Assistant Senior Library Assistant Senior Library Assistant	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 5
		12
Information & Public Services - Sub-Librarian, Divisional Head - Public Services Manager - Subject Librarians - Issue Desk Supervisor - Information Desk Senior Library Assistant - Subject Support Senior Library Assistant - Library Assistants	Assistant Librarian II Assistant Librarian I Assistant Librarian I/IA Senior Library Assistant Senior Library Assistant Senior Library Assistant Library Assistant I	1 1 5.5 1 1 1 5
		15.5
Total FTE		**28.5**

Historically the Library has had to augment its staffing levels during term time through the employment of part-time Library Assistants and Library Attendants fully funded by Library income. The Research Communications Librarian is current funded by the Research Office.

Title	Grade	No
Library Shelving Team (IPS)	Library Attendant	2.56
Issue Desk Library Assistant (IPS)	Library Assistant I	1.5
Research Communications Librarian (CSS)	Assistant Librarian	1
Total FTE		**5.06**

Incorporation

In terms of context to the Review, another point worthy of note is that this QR process is taking place at a time of major change at DCU. In bringing together all linked colleges into DCU, Incorporation will see the Library transition to a dual-campus service and extend its reach to serve the needs of all incorporated students and academics. This will impact on every aspect of library activity from strategy to operations, from budget to structures. During the review visit, Incorporation was a live issue particularly the potential implications for library staff.

2. The Self-Assessment Process

The Co-ordinating Committee

Janice Hill (Chair), Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
Lisa Callaghan (Vice Chair), Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
Betty Bowden, Library Assistant, Collection & Systems Services
Ellen Breen, Sub-Librarian, Information & Public Services
Miriam Corcoran, Sub-Librarian, Collection & Systems Services
Peter Dudley, Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
Paraic Elliott, Library Assistant, Information & Public Services
Amanda Halpin, Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
Jack Hyland, Assistant Librarian, Information & Public Services
Mary Kiely, Assistant Librarian, Collection & Systems Services
Shauna McDermott, Senior Library Assistant, Information & Public Services
David Power, Senior Library Assistant, Collection & Systems Services
Christopher Pressler, Director of Library Services

Methodology adopted during process

The committee met five times between May and September 2015. The Director of Quality Promotion met with Library staff on 20 November 2014 to outline the Quality Review (QR) process. The Library QR Committee requested a subsequent meeting with the Director of Quality to discuss the QR process timeline with particular concerns around Incorporation and the new academic year and this was held on 26 May 2015. The Chair of the QR committee attended a QR training session run by Quality Promotion Office on 23 January 2015.

Each section of the SAR was allocated to committee members based on their areas of interest and expertise. A Quality Review page was set up on the Library Intranet to inform staff of the process, minutes of the meetings, Peer Review Group and SAR workflow.

The Quality Review Committee identified three major activities to be conducted in preparation for the review:

- **User survey for students and staff**
  A sub-group conducted a user survey using LibQual+.

- **Library staff survey**
  A sub-group conducted a detailed survey using Google Forms for Library staff.

- **SWOC analysis of the Library**
  Library staff attended an Away Day in the Crowne Plaza Hotel on 8 July 2015 which was facilitated by Cora Robinson from Create Express.

3.   The Peer Review Group Process

The Review Group

Ms Caroline Williams, Director of Libraries and Research & Learning Resources, The University of Nottingham [Chair]
Mr John Cox, University Librarian, National University of Ireland, Galway [Deputy Chair]
Dr Sandra Collins, Director, National Library of Ireland
Professor Gareth Jones, School of Computing, Dublin City University
Ms Michele Pringle, Faculty Manager, Engineering and Computing, Dublin City University

Methodology

The PRG was provided with the following documentation in advance of its visit:
- An indicative draft timetable for the review visit
- DCU Quality Review Process – Background and Guidelines 2015
- A framework for Quality in Irish Universities
- "Transforming Lives and Societies" The DCU Strategic Plan 2012-2017
- A notebook outlining the Quality Review Visit process
- A self-assessment report from the Library of DCU

At the first meeting, the Director of Quality Promotion explained the remit and responsibilities of the PRG and Ms Caroline Williams agreed to Chair the group. Mr John Cox, University Librarian, National University of Ireland, Galway took on the role of Deputy Chair. The Chair agreed to give the exit presentation. It was also agreed that one of the externals would return to DCU to represent the PRG in 2016 for a follow-up meeting to finalise the Quality Improvement Plan as part of the quality review process and this will be managed according to their availability.

The structure, stakeholder groupings, and question areas identified worked very well.   All participants were open, professional and positive in their interactions with the panel.

The PRG commend the thorough and comprehensive nature of the quality review process. Also commendable is the genuine and in-depth engagement with the process by DCU Library staff and external stakeholders as demonstrated in all of the meetings. The findings, commendations and recommendations contained in Section 4 are based on the discussions and meetings detailed in the Site Visit Programme Appendix A.

Schedule of Activity

The review visit was largely conducted according to the timetable provided by the Director of Quality Promotion office (Appendix A) with all members of the PRG in attendance at all of the meetings. The Site visit comprised 11 meetings all of which were excellently attended making the job of the Quality Review panel easier in terms of schedule and gathering of information. The timetable of meetings as presented was adhered to apart from changing the Library tour to the first matter on Thursday and meeting the Director of Library Services in the allocated Library Tour slot.   The Quality Review panel also had an opportunity to visit the St Patrick's Drumcondra library on the Thursday evening which was facilitated by the Director.

<u>View of the Self-Assessment Report</u>

The Self-assessment report (SAR) demonstrates a significant dedication and commitment to the process by the DCU Library staff. The analysis and preparation by the team using various methods as stated in the methodology above shows that a great deal of effort and thought has gone into the process.

It is clear from the outset that DCU Library had given a lot of time to the process, for which they should be commended particularly at this time of Incorporation and move to a multi-campus Library facility. The creation of the SWOC analysis through an all staff workshop and as such involving the majority of staff is commended. The panel also note that the SWOC proved to be an accurate reflection of other evidence presented in the SAR and gathered during the QR visit.

However, there are three minor points noted by the PRG: the panel would have liked more detail in the SWOC and found that it was necessary to probe further on elements of the SAR that lacked evidence (-evidence which often made more compelling the points raised); there was some confusion in terms of staffing numbers and creation of new roles; the SAR did on occasion underplay the success of the Library, for example in delivering excellent customer service.

The Appendices provided a useful detailed insight to the views of staff and students with regard to the DCU Library service. The surveys and the graphs proved very useful as tools in preparation for the meetings involving Library staff and students.

The SAR referred to the previous Quality Review process in 2006. Since then the priority recommendations and Quality Improvement Plan have been largely implemented. Where this has not been possible, there are compelling mitigating factors beyond the control of the Library i.e. the global recession, impact on Ireland and government funding. In terms of issues raised in 2006, this report returns to available budget for books and journals, staff resource allocation to strategic areas, and the building. We also note the extent of creativity and innovation in service improvement against the very challenging backdrop of real terms decreasing budgets.

The Peer Review Group noted the following key issues raised in the SAR upon which to base their discussions and questions of stakeholder groups.
- Budgetary difficulties impacting on the ability to support research, teaching and learning
- Opportunities and challenges arising from Incorporation
- DCU Library is embarking on its most ambitious period of change and growth

In addition, from the SAR the Peer Review Group noted further - more granular - key points to explore
- The achievements of library staff
- Staff communication and engagement
- Physical environment, including building maintenance issues
- IT provision
- Innovation and collaboration
- Balance of spending between books and journals, and benchmarking
- Supporting and setting up services for archives and special collections
- Growth in humanities teaching and research and how the library can contribute to leadership in this area
- Strategic priorities for the library and key stakeholder engagement

4. Findings of the Peer Review Group

4.1 Background, Overview, Strategy, Context

DCU Library is clearly a committed, professional and collegiate unit with a strong team ethos. It evidently delivers its services to the highest standard, beating international/UK benchmarks in the service delivery areas, and huge credit must be acknowledged for the dedication of the staff.

The DCU Library has ambitions and an enthusiastic, can-do culture and is not short of ideas and plans – however the PRG sensed a risk of frustration at the inability to deliver new initiatives and projects as a result of severely limited resources and budgets.

We reviewed the unpublished DCU Library Services Strategy 2016-2019 and we discussed strategy with the Director as well as the strategic priorities for the Library with the Director and the Management team. We also discussed the Library's contribution to the University-wide strategic plan in the Senior Management group meeting.

Our recommendations in this area centre on taking a strategic approach to the challenge of achieving ambitions with limited resources.

The Director and management team should further develop strategic alliances within the University, investing in strong relationships built on identified win-win scenarios, where both partners contribute to achieving each other's strategic priorities.

The identification and articulation of the top strategic priorities for the DCU Library can then guide the alliances, partnerships, and communication strategy needed to achieve their priorities.

The clear articulation of the Library's ranked strategic priorities and most urgent requirements for investment is critical to campaigning to raise funding, as are an evidence-based articulation of the return on investment and value for the potential funder.

We sensed from the highest level of leadership in the University an openness to engage in strategic discussions with the Library, and the Director and management team should develop these opportunities to engage. Specific examples include a regularly scheduled meeting with the Deputy President on a 2-3 weekly basis, as well as participation in faculty fora and perhaps ex-officio participation on the COO management team.

In developing the DCU Library Strategy, attention should be given to how the strategy of the Library contributes to and enables the overall DCU Strategy, with specific targeted areas of leadership by the Library in addition to the provision of underpinning services and contribution to the student learning experience.

Areas for the Library management to reflect on include how the Library might be recognised as contributors or even leaders in the research portfolio of the University, and important emerging policy areas such as open access and research data management. This would embed the Library more visibly into the overall strategic priorities of the University. Which when advanced this would have a very positive effect for both the Library and the University. We see the ability and ambitions of the Library as being of a standard to achieve this but, given the constrained resources the key may be to prioritise a number of key areas and drive ahead to become recognised contributors / leaders in these specialities. We identified some potential areas of

leadership for the Library as Archives and Special Collections, Humanities Research, and Open Access policy, amongst others.

Incorporation is a time of flux and is a challenging process but in this challenge there lie great opportunities for the future of the Library, as indicated in subsequent sections.

4.2 Organisation and Management

The PGR reviewed the organisation chart in the SAR Appendices and met with staff at all levels within the Library.

Strong organisation and management are essential to the good functioning of the Library, and the current structures are due to be re-visited as a result of the upcoming Incorporation. The current structure delivers day-to-day operations, but the key is to establish the new structures in the best possible way to deliver on longer-term priorities, accepting the necessary disruption as a result of the Incorporation.

A critical aspect in the establishment of the new organisation and management is open and regular communication to all staff, avoiding where possible communications via 'the grapevine', and uncertainty as a result of a vacuum of information. This level of change management is of course a challenge, but must be prioritised for a successful outcome. Given the high performance of the Library as a result of staff dedication, maintaining the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff will be key, and communicating the new organisation is an important aspect of this. The risk of disaffection and frustration should be mitigated against.

Support currently being put in place by HR and the Deputy President towards improved communications should be developed and maintained for the period of transition. We also recommend a regular schedule of all-staff meetings, and this schedule should be committed to even if no new information is available at the time. The meetings should also provide the opportunity for dialogue and Q&A for the staff.

Developing cross-site functional meetings as Incorporation progresses would build stronger relationships between teams, and undoubtedly also be valuable for skills exchange and alignment of practices and processes. The project approach adopted but not yet fully embedded in management practice would also ensure continued staff engagement with the development of the Library. We recommend that the Enterprise Programme approach is reinitiated and that in doing so consideration of the following two points should be given: prioritisation of projects in line with University strategy and collaboration opportunities particularly – with other Support/Service units; those projects should be given clear aims and deliverables so that they are consistently effective and efficient in the deployment of scarce staff resources.

4.3 Staffing and Accommodation

Staffing

The established staffing complement is currently 28.5 FTE, augmented by 5.06 FTE which is at present-funded from income. Some posts have not been replaced, and these numbers represent a reduction relative to levels obtaining at the time of the last quality review in 2006. More recently, the Director of Library Services has secured the replacement of five posts and it is hoped that this signals a more positive staff resourcing climate. Incorporation will take the

established staffing FTE to 40 approximately and will provide an opportunity to review the way in which staff are organised.

Staff are currently organised into two divisions: Collections and Systems Services, and Information and Public Services. This structure appears to have been in place over a long period and there is a general recognition by the Library staff that it needs to be reviewed. That review should focus on alignment with changing user expectations, the impact and potential of technology and new modes of teaching, learning and research. Incorporation will also influence future organisation. Management structures, team remits, individual roles and grades all need to be considered and informed by a review of current services. Opportunities to enable career progression and to embed a sustained and creative approach to staff development should be taken such as lateral movement for staff, and training opportunities for potential future roles.

Accommodation

The Library building is a key asset for the University, especially in terms of the student experience and as an enabler of teaching and learning. This building opened in 2000 and has a number of attractive features. These include a deep penetration of natural light, recent adaptations to create a Lounge beside the entrance to promote social interaction and informal learning, reconfiguration to enable the hosting of Writing and Mathematics centres, and dedicated spaces for postgraduates.

The lack of a sustained, planned programme of maintenance is a significant deficit, repeatedly raised by stakeholders. This has manifested itself at the revolving front door which has repeatedly malfunctioned, as have a number of windows whose opening or closing should be temperature-controlled. Some of these issues relate to the general wear and tear of the building which has now been in heavy use for 15 years but they negatively impact both staff accommodation and user spaces, and urgent attention is needed. There is a need to review the building holistically and to plan a refurbishment alongside a re-purposing of space to meet user needs. Library staff put forward ideas for a number of improvements, endorsed by users and other service directors, which such a review could deliver. Examples are the reconfiguration of space through the removal of low-use journals to secondary storage, universal availability of electrical power and networking, and a redevelopment of the two training rooms. The Incorporation process will put over 60,000 volumes of special collections in the care of the Library, alongside significant existing or prospective archival collections. This will have important implications for the building in terms of storage and appropriate access for research and teaching. These requirements will need to be factored into future planning and are included in a proposal for a DCU Historic Collections Research Centre. All our comments refer to the Glasnevin site – but any future largescale planning needs to consider Incorporated sites and buildings.

4.4 Management of Financial and other Resources

DCU as a whole underwent a change in terms of their budgeting and planning process in the current financial year. This included the DCU Library Services. Expert advice was provided by the University's finance department in drawing up these projections.

There are significant budget constraints although this is common across the sector. As the pay budget is fixed in terms of staffing there is no flexibility in this area, but the non-pay budget needs to be given serious consideration in terms of an increase. There are projects that require urgent attention and an increase in the non-pay budget would go some way to addressing this.

The key priorities are:

1. Library building maintenance including replacement of student PCs (see 4.3 and 4.5)
2. Library building development including reconfiguration of PC training rooms, removal of print journals and redesign of space for e.g. social or group learning, and provision of special collections store and reading room facilities (see 4.3 and 4.5);
3. Information resources budget increase to meet the needs of teaching, learning and research in line with comparator universities (see 4.5);
4. Improving access to books across the two Libraries post Incorporation through investment in RFID technology (see 4.5).

Evidence shows that the DCU Library has worked effectively in terms of managing to deliver its services on reduced budgets in recent years but in light of Incorporation resources need to be reviewed as part of the development and expansion to a multi-campus Library.

4.5 Functions, Activities and Processes

Core functions, activities and processes of the Library fall into three groups:
- collections management and circulation including liaison with the academic community so that collections match teaching and research priorities;
- provision of help and support for students including information literacy training;
- provision and management of environments for students to study and learn.

Collections

Current market inflation for periodicals is c.5.5% and books c.3.5%, and this is compounded by VAT charged on digital collections (not applied to print) and fluctuations in the euro exchange rate. A stand-still budget makes it impossible to maintain service levels in terms of information provision. For DCU this issue has become even more critical as it aims both to equip students to flourish in the 21st Century information society and to be recognised internationally as a leading University of enterprise with an increasing number of research-active staff.

The table below (from the SAR p.22 Library Budget Management) shows the impact of market inflation over a six year period in terms of purchasing power. It illustrates the widening gap and growing risk.

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Pay	€1,408,810	€1,474,712	€1,407,950	€1,377,764	€1,434,169	€1,464,000
Non Pay	€1,126,390	€916,738	€898,715	€882,008	€882,890	€858,014
Total	€2,535,200	€2,391,450	€2,306,665	€2,259,772	€2,317,059	€2,322,014
Income[1]	€125,000	€110,115	€95,000	€90,000	€91,196	€80,000

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[1] Income comprises till receipts and fines

Budget allocation comparators were presented as follows:

Budget Allocation 2014/2015					
	UL	NUIG	MU	UCD	DCU
Pay	€2,000,000	€3,839,871	€2,265,891	€5,000,000	€1,464,000
Non-Pay	€2,000,000	€2,352,791	€998,100	€2,730,000	€858,014
Total	€4,000.000	€6,192,662	€3,263,990	€7,730,000	€2,322,014

Other identified benchmarks (Heriot-Watt University and the University of Strathclyde) reinforced the current level of information budget as a significant concern.

	Heriot-Watt U.	Strathclyde U	DCU
FTE students	9,357	16,216	11,000
Total information expenditure	c. €2.1m	c. €4.9	c. €1m
Information provision per FTE student	€224	€302	€90

Source: Sconul Annual Library Statistics 2013-14, conversion from British Pound Sterling to Euro at rate of 1.42

The balance between book and periodicals spending was also considered. The split of 80% journals and 20% books is considered appropriate for a research-led university. The issue is the total information budget available, rather than its allocation to different formats. The Library has successfully piloted innovative forms of collection building, eg: Patron Driven Acquisition (PDA) but has been unable to sustain investment. Library staff are also active in engaging with schools to ensure best use of the information budget. One idea arising from the academic stakeholder meeting was to link Coursebuilder to the Library, so that library staff are automatically alerted to recommended readings. It is also significant that in the PRG meeting with students they expressed the need for more books and journals, and academics stated how much they value IReL – the Irish Research eLibrary national purchasing consortium - and need more e-journals to support research (see 4.6).

Without uplifting the library materials budget to accommodate book and periodical market inflation in future years, the University will be exposed to risks in relation to important strategic objectives.

Managing the circulation of the collection in the context of Incorporation presents another issue. The books of St Patrick's College have been tagged using the modern Radio-frequency identification (RFID) system. To ensure ease of use of both libraries and movements of collections across the new DCU the Library plans to undertake a RFID project which as yet is unfunded (estimated cost €120k).

Help and support for students

Without exception academic staff, colleagues in Support/Service units and students commend Library staff for their customer service and support for students. The evidence presented in the SAR LibQual+ survey goes further by validating that this level of service has improved since 2010 and is above the Sconul average.   This is really noteworthy given the reduced budgets and headcount, and something the library and DCU should be proud of.

Environments for students to study and learn

Accommodation has been considered in 4.3. Notwithstanding the maintenance issues and development needs raised, it is worthy of note that the building provides a light, airy environment of a high quality which has great potential for encouraging learning and scholarship in the DCU community. Recent initiatives in reconfiguring space on the ground floor demonstrate the success of the Library as a learning environment evident in the growing use and popularity of the library by the student community.

4.6 Customer/Supplier Perspective

Students

In Appendix A, meeting 7 the PRG met a broad group of student representatives' including all years, postgraduate, international and good gender mix. They presented themselves as very coherent, articulate and forthcoming. The opinions expressed by the students were overwhelmingly positive in support of the library services and staff.

Specific issues they raised include:
- Enhanced student experience
- Collaboration rooms for study groups,
- Enabling distance learning and part-time students
- Support for collaborative teamwork
- Welcoming and spacious facilities
- More books
- More PCs
- More workspaces with sockets
- Positive comments on the DORAS open access repository
- Development of the Academic Writing Centre has been excellent
- Maths Learning Centre – very impressive
- Postgraduates expressed satisfaction with the online journals
- Extended hours are excellent.

Recommendations for improvement
- Postgraduate rooms to stay open longer, suggested in line with general Library Opening hours
- Request for Sunday and bank holiday opening
- Increased open space areas
- More books, e-book and online journals
- Refurbished IT equipment

The students concluded by emphasising a very positive experience with the DCU Library staff.

Academics

Academic users of the library service in general expressed a high degree of satisfaction with engagement with Library staff. They also expressed strong satisfaction with resources provided by the library (although acknowledging that library staff have to chase academics to provide reading lists). However, they expressed some concerns regarding the lack of flexibility on how

available resources could be spent e.g. purchase of journals instead of books, and purchase of print books rather than ebooks. There was some concern expressed about the usability of ebooks and inadequacy of budget to support information purchases for teaching.

The information budget managed by the Library was deemed insufficient to support some key professional journal subscriptions, particularly for the schools of Maths and Nursing, and where the IReL model led to cancellation of key resources.

There was general satisfaction with the DORAS service, in particular the e-theses. The point was made that linking this with other search tools or service would enable greater use of open access publications. It was also suggested that Coursebuilder be linked to the Library, so that feeds would trigger library purchase of materials. Finally, there was some enthusiastic support for the Library to be closely involved in DCU developments in digital learning.

Service Heads and Directors, and Administrative staff

The Library is one of a number of units that provide services to the DCU community. It has collaborations with Information Systems and Services (ISS), the Teaching Enhancement Unit, and Student Support and Development. All of these Units indicated a high level of satisfaction with engagement with library staff and their commitment to working together to deliver University objectives, especially in supporting students. The Library appears to have lesser engagement with the Research Support Unit than might be expected, however we found no evidence of either Research Support or researchers at DCU being unhappy with the services and support the library is providing to them. Rather it is an opportunity for future closer collaboration on policy issues such as open access and research data.

The current innovation in terms of distributed and online learning means that if the University is to provide a fully integrated student experience, then the activities of the relevant centres have to be fully coordinated. While the Directors of the service/support centres are in regular communication and working well together, the University can take steps to ensure full representation and expertise. For example in designing the social learning environment of the new Student Centre the Library could have a key role to play.

Similarly all the stakeholder units should work together seamlessly in reconfiguration of spaces and IT provision to support social learning and new pedagogies across campus and reconfiguration of library space.

Senior Management Group

The DCU Senior Management Group were very much aware of the practice, potential and challenges of the Library at the current time. The PRG was particularly aware of their understanding and concerns of issues raised elsewhere with respect to the Incorporation process, they expressed their intention to address these and we felt confident that this would be done in a timely fashion. The Library was regarded as key to enabling students to succeed in their studies and it is important to ensure that the coming together of the libraries is a key element of the Incorporation process. The Senior Management Group were committed to making this work, recognising this will impact on all levels of the library, including the Senior Management Group.

4.7 Staff Perspective

Library staff engaged very openly and positively with the PRG. Their commitment to the Library, the University and all of their user communities was consistently evident. The PRG was struck by a strong spirit of teamwork and mutual support, coupled with an appetite for active contribution, innovation and skills development.

Some concerns were also repeatedly articulated and the erosion of goodwill is a risk if these are not addressed. While there is a positive view overall of the opportunities offered by Incorporation, a lack of information and communication was instanced and this has caused anxiety. Staff value regular communication and the opportunity to contribute their views on the development of the Library in general. Career progression is important to staff and the lack of opportunities emerged as a concern. This relates to a desire to work in other areas of the Library and to collaborate on projects across teams. The current staff structure is viewed as dated also, and there is enthusiasm for a review.

At present staff are challenged simply to deliver within the immediate confines of their own roles and are missing out on skills development, reflection, creativity and wider contribution. Budget reductions have inhibited new initiatives, compromised the building and made it very difficult to deliver a quality service. There is a concern that the Library is falling behind due to lack of investment. Staff also perceived a lack of recognition for their goodwill in working beyond their grade. Non-replacement of, or delayed recruitment to, vacated posts has had negative consequences for service delivery and should be avoided. Staff morale has been compromised by the range of concerns noted here. This, allied to reductions in public service pay and conditions of work, has had consequences in terms of work culture which is seen as having suffered over recent years.

4.8 Overall Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Concerns

Building on and developing the SWOC in the SAR the PRG concurs that there are a number of achievements worthy of note and areas of concern and strategic need. We agree that many of the issues around quality of service are shared by other academic libraries in Ireland and internationally but that even given the constrained circumstances that the Library succeeds on a daily basis.

We do verify and acknowledge that there are significant challenges some of which are pressing, not least in the processes of expansion through Incorporation and also in meeting the changing and growing demands of both research and teaching required of modern libraries. A revised and full SWOC is presented in Appendix C. This SWOC presents a summary of findings and informs the recommendations of the report. In addition, and as well as the depth of engagement of Library staff with the Review process, here we present the following key commendations.

1. Library staff are committed to delivering excellent customer service and equipping students to flourish in 21st Century society.
2. The Library has a strong service orientated focus and is responsive to needs, particularly of students.
3. There is a willingness of library staff to work with other units including academic units and develop relationships across the University. Staff are open to innovation and open to working in partnership.

4. Library staff are enthusiastic, committed and dedicated to delivering service excellence and improvement.
5. The Library has an excellent team ethos which enables it to deliver satisfaction levels beyond its resource constraints.
6. The Library delivers outstanding services to the University community.

5. Recommendations

We have identified four broad areas of recommendation. They are: developing a strategic approach to the challenge of achieving ambitions with limited resources; building the organisation and staffing fit for the future; addressing budget challenges; and maximising the library building.

No.	Priority	Level	Recommendation
			Strategic Approach (Addressed in <u>4.1 Background, Overview, Strategy, Context</u>)
1	P1	A	**Identify and articulate the top strategic priorities for DCU Library.** These may then guide alliances and partnerships, and shape a senior stakeholder communication strategy needed to achieve Library priorities.
2	P1	A	To address the challenge of achieving ambitions and delivering strategy with limited resources, the Director and management team should **further develop strategic alliances within the University**, investing in strong relationships built on identified win-win scenarios, where both partners contribute into achieving each other's strategic priorities.
3	P1	A	**Shape and align Library's top strategic priorities and most urgent requirements with University strategy** and build evidence-based cases including return on investment and value for money potential.
4	P2	A/U	**In developing the DCU Library Strategy, attention should be given to how the strategy of the Library contributes to and enables the overall DCU Strategy,** highlighting specific targeted areas of leadership for the Library (e.g. Archives and Special Collections, Humanities Research, and Open Access policy), and contribution to the student learning experience.
			Organisation and Staffing
5	P1	A	**Review of the DCU Library structures** in conjunction with the Incorporated Institutes. Any restructure should take into account service development needs, reflect best practice in modern library provision, and seek opportunities for career enhancement. Enhancement may be both through formal promotion and opportunities for development (which may lead to promotion),

			through changing responsibilities and sideways moves to alternative positions. (Addressed in 4.3 Staffing and Accommodation, Staffing)
6	P2	A/U	**Develop further opportunities to embed a sustained and creative approach to staff development and training**. Staff development and progression in the present day and in the context of Incorporation is key to maintaining agility and morale - life after with the newly incorporated DCU will be different and staff will need to feel empowered to grow in their roles. This is particularly important because staff commitment is such a central part of the high level of customer satisfaction with library services. (Addressed in 4.3 Staffing and Accommodation, Staffing)
7	P1	A/U	**Enhance mechanisms for communication and engagement with all Library staff.** This will require a commitment from HR as well as dedicated time by Library senior management.

A critical aspect in the establishment of the new incorporated organisation and management is open and regular communication with all staff. Supports currently being put in place by HR and the Deputy President towards improved communications should be developed and maintained for the period of transition. (Addressed in detail in 4.2 Organisation and Management)

As the new structure emerges, we also recommend developing cross-site functional meetings to build stronger relationships between teams and that the Enterprise Programme approach is reinitiated. (Addressed in 4.2 Organisation and Management) |
			Budget
8	P1	U	**Increase recurrent funding for information resources to meet the needs of teaching, learning and research in line with comparator universities.** Overall resourcing of the library is below par with comparisons with institutions nationally and internationally. The direct impact of this is that - once ongoing subscriptions to valuable national resources such as IReL have been spent - there are few funds to purchase resources regarded as locally vital by the research community and other resources such as book and e-books are inadequate. This poses a major risk as competitors are gaining advantage at a time when DCU is striving to deliver an excellent student experience and research excellence. (Addressed in detail in Section 4.5 Functions, Activities and Processes, Collections)
9	P2	A	Library senior management should **develop and present evidence-based and return on investment cases** (in line with

			recommendations 1-4) as follows for:
			
			   i. improving access to books across two incorporated Libraries through investment in RFID technology (addressed in <u>4.5 Functions, Activities and Processes and 4.4 Management of Financial and other Resources</u>)
			
			   ii. developing special collections and associated spaces <u>(addressed in 4.3 Staffing and Accommodation</u> and <u>4.4 Management of Financial and other Resources</u>)
			
			   iii. extending the opening hours of the post-graduate reading room <u>(raised in 4.6 Customer/Supplier Perspective</u>)

			Accommodation/Library Building
10	P1	U	**Develop a prioritised plan for sustained maintenance of the Library building**. The PRG has concerns with regard to attention given to building maintenance by the University. There have been long term issues relating to doors and staff accommodation and whilst many of these issues relate to the general wear and tear of the building which has now been in heavy use of 15 years, some are now high priority. (Addressed in Section 4.3 <u>Staffing and Accommodation</u>)
11	P2	A	**Review the library building holistically and develop a refurbishment plan alongside a re-purposing of space to meet user needs.** Library staff put forward ideas for a number of improvements, endorsed by users and other service directors, which such a review could deliver. Examples are the reconfiguration of space through the removal of low-use journals to secondary storage, universal availability of electrical power and networking, and a redevelopment of the two training rooms. (Addressed in <u>4.3 Staffing and Accommodation,</u> Accommodation) Any proposals for development arising from the review should consider multi-site implications of Incorporation and be prioritised. Funding sought in line with recommendations 1-4.

LIBRARY QUALITY REVIEW - Timetable for Peer Review Group (PRG) Visit
18th – 20th November 2015

Day	Time	Peer Review Group (PRG) Activity/Meeting	Venue	Meeting No.
Wed 18 November	12.30-14.00	Lunch with Director of Quality Promotion and available PRG members	1838 DCU	Arranged by QPO
	14.00-15.00	Briefing by Director of Quality Promotion; Guidelines provided to assist PRG during the visit and in developing its report.	A204	Arranged by QPO
	15.00-15.45	PRG selects Chair. Discussion of main areas of interest and/or concern arising from the Self-Assessment Report (SAR).	A204	Arranged by QPO
	15.45-16.00	*Coffee*	A204	Arranged by QPO
	16.00-17.15	Consideration of SAR with Area Head & members of quality review committee. Short presentation by Area followed by discussion of SAR. *(Director of Quality Promotion in attendance)*	A204	Arranged by QPO
	17:15-17.55	PRG Private meeting	A204	
	18.00-19.00	Informal Reception – PRG, Director of Library, Members of Quality Review Committee, Director of Quality Promotion	1838 DCU	Arranged by QPO
	19.00-20.30	PRG Private dinner	1838 DCU	Arranged by QPO
Thurs 19 November	08.45–09.00	PRG Private meeting	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	09.00-09.25	Library Tour	Mentoring Suite, Library	1
	09.30-09.55	Library Leadership Team	Mentoring Suite, Library	2
	10.00-10.40	Library Staff	Mentoring Suite, Library	3A
	10.40-11.10	*Coffee*	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	11.10-11.40	Mr Chris Pressler, Director of Library Services	Library	
	12.00-12.55	Heads or Senior staff in Support / Service Offices	Mentoring Suite, Library	4
	13.00-13:45	*Lunch*	Mentoring Suite, Library	

	13.45-14.25	Library Staff	Mentoring Suite, Library	3B
	14.30-15.05	Administrative Staff from Schools, Support / Services Offices	Mentoring Suite, Library	5
	15:10-15:45	Representatives from varying levels of academic staff	Mentoring Suite, Library	6
	15.50-16.30	Representatives of students from various academic programmes.	Mentoring Suite, Library	7
	16:30-16:50	*Coffee*	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	16.50-17.15	Open forum for any member of Library staff	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	17.15-17.20	Mr Chris Pressler (update and clarifications if required)	Mentoring Suite, Library	8
	17.30-18.30	Tour of Library, St. Patrick's Campus, Drumcondra	St. Patrick's Library	
	19.30	PRG private dinner	Crowne Plaza Hotel	
Friday 20 November	08.45–09.00	PRG Private meeting	TBA	**Meeting No.**
	09.00-09.55	DCU Senior Management Group (SMG) *(Director of Quality Promotion in attendance)*	AG01	9
	10.00–10.25	Area Reporting Head – Deputy President	AG01	10
	10.30-11.00	*Coffee*	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	11.00-13.00	PRG private meeting time	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	13.00-14:00	*Working Lunch* Clarification of outstanding issues for PRG if required	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	14.00-16.25	PRG Prepare Exit Presentation *(Coffee provided at 16.00)*	Mentoring Suite, Library	
	16.30-17.00	Exit Presentation – by PRG to Library Head and library staff *(Director of Quality Promotion in attendance)*	Maths Learning Centre, Library	11

Meetings with Peer Review Group

Meeting	Name(s)	Position
1	Mr Chris Pressler	Director of Library Services
2	Mr Chris Pressler	Director of Library Services
	Ms Miriam Corcoran	Head of Collections & Systems Services
	Ms Ellen Breen	Head of Information & Public Services
3A	**Library Staff**	
	Ms Frances Burke	Library Attendant, IPS
	Ms Lisa Callaghan	Assistant Librarian, IPS
	Mr Peter Dudley	Assistant Librarian, IPS
	Ms Michelle Ennis	Library Attendant, IPS
	Mr Tony Griffin	Senior Library Assistant, CSS
	Ms Janice Hill	Assistant Librarian, IPS
	Ms Mary Kerr Maher	Library Assistant, CSS
	Ms Mary Kiely	Assistant Librarian, CSS
	Ms Rita Kiernan	Library Attendant, IPS
	Ms Ramune Kuzminiene	Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Shauna McDermott	Senior Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Michelle Rolston	Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Sharon Ryan	Library Assistant, IPS
	Mr Daniel Seery	Library Assistant, CSS
	Ms Deborah Smith	Library Attendant, IPS
3B	**Library Staff**	
	Ms Betty Bowden	Library Assistant CSS
	Ms Jean Bryne	Library Attendant, IPS
	Mr Fran Callaghan	Assistant Librarian, CSS
	Ms Marie Doyle	Senior Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Siobhan Dunne	Assistant Librarian, IPS
	Ms Amanda Halpin	Assistant Librarian, IPS
	Mr Jack Hyland	Assistant Librarian, IPS
	Ms Mags Lehane	Senior Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Mary McDonnell	Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Claire Mason	Library Assistant, CSS
	Ms Aoife Murphy	Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Grace O'Connor	Library Assistant, IPS/CSS
	Mr David Power	Senior Library Assistant, CSS
	Ms Anna Rooney	Library Assistant, IPS
	Ms Samantha Seery	Senior Library Assistant, CSS
	Ms Julie Whyte	Library Assistant, IPS

4	**Heads or Senior staff in Support / Service Offices**	
	Dr Claire Bohan	Director, Student Support & Development
	Ms Barbara McConalogue	Director, Information Systems Services
	Ms Deirdre Wynter	Communications & Marketing
	Dr Ana Terres	Director, Research Support
	Ms Eileen Tully	Health & Safety Officer
5	**Administrative Staff from Schools, Support / Services Offices**	
	Ms Fiona Brennan	Senior Research Officer, Research Support
	Ms Karina Curley	Student Learning, Student Support & Development
	Ms Goretti Daughton	Faculty Manager, Humanities & Social Sciences
	Mr Justin Doyle	Information Systems Services
	Dr Pip Ferguson	Teaching Enhancement Unit
	Ms Siobhan Fitzgerald	Management & Financial Planning, Finance
	Ms Rachel Keegan	Graduate Studies Office
	Ms Fiona Kelly	Human Resources
	Ms Yvonne McLoughlin	Careers Service, Student Support & Development
	Ms Maree Ralph	Open Education Unit
	Mr Michael Woods	Mechanical & Engineering Officer, Estates
6	**Representatives from varying levels of academic staff**	
	Dr Maura Conway	School of Law & Government
	Dr Ciaran Fagan	School of Biotechnology
	Mr Colum Foley	Open Education Unit
	Mr Liam Hourihane	DCU Business School
	Ms Anne Kirwan	School of Nursing & Human Sciences
	Dr Ciarán Mac Murchaidh	Head of Fiontar
	Dr Olaf Menkens	School of Mathematical Sciences
	Dr Ronan Murphy	School of Health and Human Performance
	Dr Minako O'Hagan	School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies
	Prof Anthony Staines	School of Nursing & Human Sciences
	Ms Blánaid White	School of Chemical Sciences
7	**Representatives of students from various academic programmes**	
	Ivan Hynes	BSc Applied Chemistry, Year4
	Yann Dacunha	BSc Aviation management, Year 2
	Sinead Hayes	MA in Sexuality Studies, Year 2
	Robert Kavanagh	MA in E-Commerce, Year 1
	Isa Yu	BSc Environmental Science & Health, Year 3
	Declan Morland	BSc Chemical & Pharmaceutical Science, Year 2
	Abel Ferroro	BSc Business Studies, Year 4
	Alba Usuallan	BSc Business Studies, Year 3
	Bevan McQuillan	MA Finance, Year 1
	Sinead Hatt	BSc Aviation management, Year 2
	Patrick Hunt	MA Finance, Year 1
	Peter James McGee	MA in E-Commerce, Year 1

8	Mr Chris Pressler	Director of Library Services
9	Professor Brian MacCraith Dr Daire Keogh Professor Eithne Guilfoyle Dr Declan Raftery Professor John Costello Professor Barry McMullin Ms Marian Burns Mr Ciaran Mc Givern Ms Aisling McKenna	DCU President Deputy President Vice-President Academic Affairs (Registrar) Chief Operations Officer Dean of Faculty of Science & Health Dean of Faculty of Engineering & Computing Director of Human Resources Director of Finance Director of Quality Promotions office (in Attendance)
10	Dr Daire Keogh	Deputy President
11		All Library staff invited

Strengths	*Weaknesses*
1. Staff committed to delivering **excellent customer service** and equipping students to flourish in 21st Century society. 2. **Service orientated** focus and responsiveness to needs, particularly of students, for example in the training and orientation to the library provided. 3. There is a **willingness of library staff to work with other Units** including academic units and develop relationships across the University. Staff are open to innovation and open to working in partnership. 4. **Library staff are enthusiastic**, committed and dedicated to delivering service excellence and improvement. 5. The Library has an **excellent team ethos** which enables it to deliver satisfaction levels beyond its resource constraints. 6. The Library delivers **outstanding services** to the University community. 7. **Learning spaces in the library building**. The building provides a light, airy environment of a high quality which has great potential for encouraging learning and scholarship in the DCU community, not all of which is currently realised. 8. **Development of the library as a neutral learning space** as seen in the Maths Learning Centre and the Academic Writing Centre developments. Both add incentive to enter the library space and join with the community of learning. 9. Initiatives in collecting **open access** outputs of the university specifically doctoral thesis and other published outputs. DORAS usage is also significant and valued by the academic community. There is great potential for further initiatives and investment in this area. 10. Membership of the national **IReL** initiative is greatly valued by researchers across the University. 11. **Special collections**. Recent acquisitions, growth in activity associated with donations of archives and other collections will become part of the overall library provision post Incorporation.	1. **Maintenance and development of the Library building:** the PRG has concerns with regard to attention given to its maintenance by the University. There have been long term issues relating to doors and staff accommodation and whilst many of these issues relate to the general wear and tear of the building which has now been in heavy use of 15 years, some are now high priority. 2. **Staff morale:** Staff show strong commitment to their jobs and delivery of an outstanding service however there are issues with workloads and failure to recruit quickly to vacancies. 3. **Staff are concerned about lack of opportunities for career progression** both through formal promotion and opportunities for development (which may lead to promotion), through changing responsibilities and sideways moves to alternative positions. 4. **Recurrent funding for information resources:** overall resourcing of the Library is lower than nationally with informal comparisons with institutions nationally and internationally. The direct impact of this is that once ongoing subscriptions to valuable resources such as IReL have been spent there are few funds to purchase resources regarded as vital by the research community and other resources such as books and e-books are inadequate.

Opportunities	*Challenges*
1. Incorporation: The Incorporation between DCU and the linked colleges and the coming together of the libraries as part of the process provides an opportunity to rethink the structure within the Library and so revisit and develop both short term and medium term strategy for development.	1. **Ongoing lack of resources to:** • purchase information resources, • maintain the building and therefore the study environment for students, • extend core services e.g. opening hours.
2. Strategy development and strategic initiatives: As the University approaches a new cycle of strategic development, and including the Heritage strand of Campaign for DCU, some consideration should go towards the following opportunities:	2. **Aging building and lack of financial resources:** to plan appropriately for expansion in terms of services offered, storage of special collections and development of spaces e.g. move of print periodicals.
2.1 Staff: The customer service ethos and the willingness to form part of the development of the multi-campus DCU Library was evident throughout. This can be built upon to maximise both the strengths of staff and the growth in the library function in DCU.	**3. Falling behind competitors:** in support of research, education and the student experience - resource limitations mean that - DCU is falling behind its competitors (e.g. UCD, TCD, DIT and others) in library service and information provision.
2. 2 Additional Funding: The Campaign for DCU and other funding schemes should be investigated with a view to providing additional funding for staff, services and infrastructure.	4. **Managing Incorporation so that Library provision is equitable across campuses, including:** • Book stock circulation through RFID, • services offered, • quality of study environment, • housing and exploiting special collections.
2.3 Engagement / Partnership: The PRG identified huge opportunities on building and growing existing relationships. Separately the multi-campus DCU Library can grow to become one of the leading competitors and selling points for DCU.	
2.4 Special Collections plus expertise: provide a distinctive opportunity for research development, public outreach, and national and international University reputational gain. They support University strategic objectives and are potentially a highly visible commitment to preserving and sharing heritage assets.	
2.5 New Student Centre: presents an opportunity to expand social learning spaces beyond the Library. The success of the Library lounge demonstrates student demand for group social learning space.	
2.6 Media rich learning spaces and enhanced learning centre: The PC training rooms and other PC provision of the Library have the potential to be completely redesigned and modernised to reflect current pedagogies and the rising expectations of the students.	
2.7 Management of change: presents opportunities to engage with staff so that they are reenergised and inspired. The potential to improve skills sets, agility and motivation, through career development should not be missed.	