

Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin

Library and Information Policy Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 22 November 2021 at 14:30 – MS Teams.

Present: Chair (Dr Daniel Faas), Librarian and College Archivist (Helen Shenton), Director of IT Services (Patrick Magee), College Secretary (John Coman), Academic Secretary (Patricia Callaghan), Interim Chief Operating Officer (Orla Cunningham), Dean of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (Gail McElroy), Head of School (David Hevey), Head of School (Henry Rice), Dean of Research Representative (Immo Warntjes), Elected Board Member (David Grouse), Mairead Owens (Dublin City Librarian), Students' Union Education Officer (Bev Genockey).

Apologies: Deputy Librarian (Jessie Kurtz), Graduate Students' Union President (Gisèle Scanlon), Ronan Byrne (CEO HEAnet).

In attendance: Head of Management Services (Helen O'Hara) for item LIPC:21/22.13; Head of Academic Services, Innovation & Digital Platforms (Geoff Bradley) for item LIPC: 21/22.14; Sub Librarian for Teaching, Research and User Experience (Arlene Healy) for item LIPC: 21/22.15; Celine Egan (Minute-taker).

SECTION A

LIPC: 21/22.10 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of Monday 27 September 2021 were approved.

LIPC: 21/22.11 Matters arising from minutes of 27 September 2021

21.02.11 Unsustainability of e-Textbooks update:

The Librarian reported that the issues surrounding the unsustainability of e-Textbooks has been brought to the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission by the Library Association of Ireland and other bodies in Ireland; and is being raised at European level at LERU INFO Group. LERU will be reviewing the issue at an institutional sectoral level in the spring. It was noted that it would be beneficial if academics were also involved in the campaign.

LIPC: 21/22.12 Coronavirus Update

The Library: The Librarian reported that ahead of Reading Week approximately 3,000 spaces were reintroduced in the Library and opening hours extended in selected study spaces to midnight, including over the weekends. The booking system was wound down for all spaces except the 1937 Postgraduate Reading Room and the Joint Research Collections Reading Room. Social distancing has been suspended but mask wearing continues to be mandatory in all spaces. A procedure was agreed with the Junior Dean to deal with any instances of non-compliance.

IT Services: The Director of IT Services noted that IT Services continues to be challenged by the pandemic and related factors. Slides were presented comparing the service desk activity over past years. Activity records were broken in September and October 2021 with 7,200 recorded contacts in September 2021, compared to 4,800 in 2019. Unusually high numbers also continued past November Reading Week, possibly due to an increase of on-campus activity from the 1st November 2021. The on-site service desk continues to operate on an appointment basis with teams working in pods. Staff were able to meet the demand for appointments even when pods had to isolate or restrict movements. There was a large increase in WiFi and network usage in November 2021 with student WiFi and internet traffic back to pre-March 2020 levels. 31,000 devices were connected by more than 18,500 students, and in fact, the highest concurrent number of students on the campus network

in September and October 2021 was approximately twice that of the same period in 2020, at around 37% of the student population, while less than 20% of staff were connected to campus WiFi at that time. There has been a significant drop in Zoom meetings (down 25%) and Panopto recordings (down 45%) as face-to-face teaching returns. Microsoft Teams has seen some reduction during the same period but less than 20%. Demand for Blackboard remains strong with over 21,000 active users, reflecting the higher number of students and staff at Trinity this year. The Director of IT Services confirmed that the usage graphs reflected on-site users only.

LIPC: 21/22.13 Cloud Based Systems – Procurement, Risks & Governance

The Head of Management Services presented Cloud Based Systems – Procurement, Risks & Governance, noting that the Cloud Computing Policy of 2014 is currently being reviewed. Any amendments will be brought to this group for approval. There has been an increase in the use of cloud-based solutions and applications across the University due to the relative convenience and flexibility that these services offer in terms of implementation. However, this has led to policies being bypassed, including the Cloud Computing Policy of 2014 and the General Data Protection Regulation of 2018 which raises concerns over data protection and a potential increased risk of a cyber-attack. Cloud applications can be of mixed usage, sometimes integrating with other systems, requesting user account logins and personal data. Policy states that all cloud applications require a security and data protection compliance review before signing a contract. Subscribers must take responsibility for ensuring that the application is and continues to be secure and GDPR compliant. The Director of IT Services confirmed that services can be shut down if policies and guidelines have not been adhered to. IT Services and the Trinity Procurement Office are reviewing the current policies and working on a more user-friendly format.

LIPC: 21/22.14 Blackboard Usage and VLE Review for 2022

The Head of Academic Services, Innovation & Digital Platforms presented Blackboard usage statistics and a review of VLE for 2022 as circulated to the Committee. The current VLE, is an integrated environment of Blackboard Learn, Blackboard Collaborate Ultra (Virtual classroom), Turnitin (Originality checking), TurningPoint, Responsewre (audit voting), GradesJourney (transfer of grades to SITS), and the student lecture timetable. The current environment was implemented in 2017 and 2018. The presented statistics illustrate a steady growth of usage of the VLE with approximately 25,000 users of Blackboard Learn, increasing significantly during the Covid pandemic. The VLE is not just accessed for module material but is heavily used to deliver online lectures in Panopto (with over 14,000 users) and Collaborate. The presented statistics show hugely increased requests for support during the Covid pandemic. Dr Bradley advised the Committee that the University must commence planning to replace or upgrade the current VLE. He highlighted the processes used prior to the selection of the current VLE and recommended that the University commence a review of its requirements. This review was discussed in terms of a strategic context, following points from the Strategic Plan for next generation teaching and learning. Results of the Student Campaign run by the IUA Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning (EDTL) project in May 2021 outline the preference students have for a blended learning experience. The University's current VLE is setup based on modules with an academic mindset however QQI note the importance of orientating learning towards the institution, programme, and individual learner, rather than modules. The INDEx survey from 2019 was noted as a baseline of student attitudes prior to the Covid pandemic. New support technologies and an enhanced learning management system are part of the overall digital infrastructure to be implemented by 2023. The Head of Academic Services, Innovation & Digital Platforms concluded that the 2022 VLE review will take these points into consideration and include topics such as

lecture recording, virtual classrooms, blended & online learning, online assessment, and learning analytics. He expects the outcome of the review will have an impact on some existing policies. Dr Bradley proposed to follow the same process as endorsed in 2015/16, with the proposal going to Planning Group / EOG for approval.

In relation to student accessibility, economic fairness and equality, the Committee noted that efforts have been made nationally to improve broadband connectivity in public spaces and the Government did provide grants to the HEA and phone companies for laptops and devices. More options are being explored with uncapped data access.

The Committee discussed the link between the proposal to review the VLE and the Digital Learning Strategy. It was agreed that further discussion was necessary before the proposal for a VLE review should proceed to Planning Group however it was acknowledged that stalling may not be beneficial. The Head of Academic Services, Innovation & Digital Platforms indicated that he would be consulting broadly, including engaging through additional College committees, to seek input prior to submitting a proposal to Planning Group.

LIPC: 21/22.15 Library Booking System Upgrade – External Reader Accounts

The Sub Librarian (Teaching, Research and User Experience) presented the Library Access Control and Booking System Upgrade Project, a joint submission from the Library, IT Services and Estates & Facilities to upgrade the system. There is now a requirement for the booking component to be made available to external users, which include members of the public, alumni and other HEI staff; these users are currently managed locally in the Library Management System.

Enhancement and upgrade of the existing centralised Azure Active Directory based identity solution would be the most desirable and secure approach, however it is not feasible to implement this within the required timeframe. Two suppliers were evaluated in line with University policy. Unfortunately, the preferred solution, Planon, is only accessible

with Active Directory credentials. Approval is now sought to create and manage IT accounts for library external users locally within the Planon Cloud system until such time as a centralised identity solution for cohorts of external users becomes available. It was acknowledged that while University policy is to use Azure AD with two factor authentication for cloud-based solutions, there is currently no capability to do this for external users. This project has a delivery target date of August 2022. The Head of Academic Services, Innovation & Digital Platforms explained that using centrally provisioned accounts would stop account sprawl and adhere to policy and best practice. It was noted that the University should be managing visitors centrally where they require access to multiple services. This needs to be looked at in more detail and there are potentially additional costs arising in licencing and life cycle operational management.

Regarding the possibility of recouping any costs, the Librarian noted that a shared access scheme operates for all universities in Ireland and charging Alumni would raise policy issues that could lead to wider implications including access control systems. The Sub Librarian (Teaching, Research and User Experience) confirmed that visitors have very specific access, and that life cycle management is included in the periodic review.

The Chair approved the proposal.

LIPC: 21/22.16 AOB

The Director of IT Services noted a few points regarding the cyber-attack on NUI Galway. They had a very near miss, noticing the attack before any damage however their administration is still being recovered, no graduations have taken place, and all the servers had to be rebuilt. A combination of factors led to the attack including a compromised user account through phishing, and software not securely patched. The attack was identified by staff through the general course of administration. The Director of IT Services confirmed that the University's cloud base is up to

date and key systems have been patched. He noted the importance of each area in the University being aware of all their systems. The University must be vigilant 24/7 365 although sufficient resources are unavailable to accommodate this type of cover.

LIPC: 21/22.17 Date of next meeting

Monday 14 February 2021 at 14:30 by MS Teams.

SECTION B

IT Services User Group meeting minutes noted