
New skills for academic library teams

The SCONUL 2012 winter conference, *New Teams for a New Era* (reported in Issue 57), highlighted a number of themes in the development of staff skills as academic libraries adapt to the changing higher education environment in the United Kingdom. We were interested in following up these themes and when we put out the call for articles we anticipated submissions on new technologies, research support, data management and perhaps promotion and marketing. What we had not anticipated, and were delighted to receive, were several more reflective pieces from library managers, all looking more broadly at changing structures, teams and services in their libraries to meet evolving business needs. As well as providing an overview of current trends and interesting ideas for others to think about, the articles by Oliver Pritchard, Simon Bains, Trudy Turner and Anna O'Neill help to capture a significant moment in the development of academic libraries in the United Kingdom in response to government policy, new technologies, the evolution of scholarly communication and higher student expectations. Taken together with the articles on new or refurbished library buildings in Issue 57, plus two further articles on Durham and City University in this issue, it is evident from these articles that academic library managers are seizing the opportunities provided by the institutional desire to improve the student experience and are making efforts to improve both accommodation and services, often in innovative and inspirational ways.

Supporting staff in the development of skills in new technologies is another key theme in this issue. A '23 Things' programme concentrating on mobile technologies at Glasgow University, a digital excellence programme at Edge Hill University, the implementation of the Alma library management system at Plymouth and moving services to the Cloud at Wolverhampton are all good examples of how new or emerging technologies can be used to change and enhance current services. Other libraries provided articles on working with teams to develop specific skills: Information literacy and employability at Swansea, disability awareness for front-line staff at NUI Maynooth

and the establishment of new teams at the Learning Commons, Manchester and at the University of Wolverhampton.

We have a good selection of news from member libraries this month and book reviews on digital preservation and collaboration in service provision. Normally we would carry a report of the SCONUL annual conference but unforeseen circumstances meant that no one was available from the editorial board to attend this year. The conference took place in Dublin in June, with the theme of *Adapt and Thrive: Regional and national innovation in response to change in higher education*. Highlights included Professor Malcolm Gillies discussing outsourcing in higher education, Roly Keating on links between The British Library and universities and Li Yuan on whether MOOCs will transform higher education in the UK. Delegates had the opportunity to attend a series of workshops highlighting innovation in member libraries, plus a series of "fringe" meetings from SCONUL groups and partner organisations. Many of the presentations are now available on the SCONUL web site at <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/news/conference-presentations>.