IMPERIAL

Library Services

Learning and
Teaching Strategy

Introduction

This Library Learning and Teaching Strategy was written in consultation with our teams. These include the BENS (Business, Engineering and Natural Sciences) Library Liaison team, Medicine and NHS Library Liaison team and Scholarly Communications Management team.

The Strategy addresses all aspects of teaching that the library undertakes, underpinned by an Information and Digital Literacy (IDL) curriculum. IDL is "a continuum of skills, competencies, behaviours and attitudes... to help undergraduate learners to develop a high-level, reflective understanding of information contexts and issues... as a discerning scholar and, beyond the academic arena, as an informed citizen and an autonomous and lifelong learner" (ANCIL, 2011). This framework incorporates digital capabilities and skills as key components of IDL competencies.

Our IDL content is often integrated into academic courses, both undergraduate and postgraduate in partnership with course teams, producing teaching content which we often refer to as 'embedded'. It also encompasses teaching within the Early Career Research Institute (ECRI) Professional Development Programme and a series of elective workshops. We also provide support for researchers through our Scholarly Communications Management team. Our NHS offer presents IDL as it relates to workplace realities.

Our IDL offer is underpinned by the framework 'A New Curriculum for Information Literacy (ANCIL)'. This framework allows us to work toward a holistic programme encompassing recognised IDL competencies.

We apply the framework as a guide and adapt as appropriate for students across Imperial. The Strategy also addresses support for staff, including academic staff and researchers.

This work requires close engagement with stakeholders including academic staff, students, professional staff, researchers and the staff within the NHS trusts we support. Developing these partnerships is key to our success in delivering these programmes.

This strategy has seven broad areas. It is part of the Library Services operational plan and has been developed to align with the Library Strategy as well as Imperial's Learning and Teaching Strategy. It will be reviewed annually.
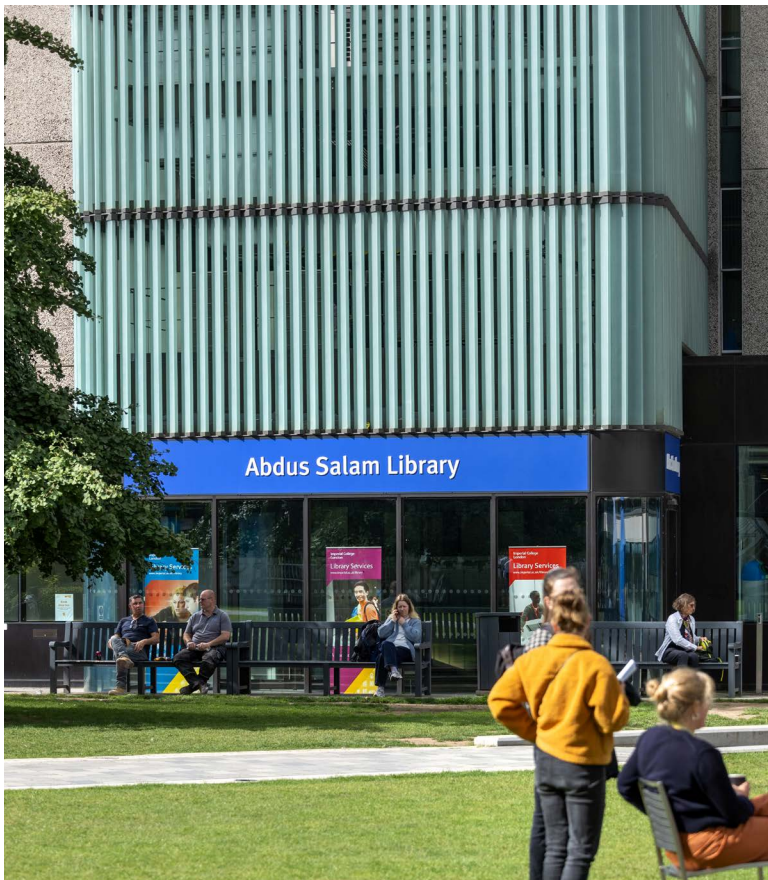
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Strategic area 1

We will deliver an integrated Information and Digital Literacy programme to support the taught curriculum across Imperial.

Our liaison model means that each taught programme across the university has a formal connection to the library. We value our relationships with departments and aim to develop our IDL programme collaboratively, for instance, we contributed towards the university-wide curriculum review done from 2018–20.

We aim for our teaching to be designed accessibly and inclusively, whether it is delivered on campus or online via synchronous or asynchronous methods.

Activities:

- We will continue to work closely with academic departments to develop a strategic and holistic IDL offer

- We will endeavour to integrate our IDL programme with the curriculum of academic programmes, ideally as part of learners' timetables

- We will ensure that our teaching materials are produced to meet accessibility standards, whether online or in traditional formats. Accessibility also relates to the examples we use, including language and images

- We will expand our course-integrated offer to encompass Copyright Literacy, a Decolonised Curriculum appropriate for our context, and Critical Pedagogy

Strategic area 2

We will deliver appropriate and flexible technology-enhanced learning.

In keeping with Imperial's learning and teaching strategic priorities, we will continue to develop our understanding of, and capability for, technology-enhanced learning. This includes developing staff capability by engaging with the Imperial Educational Development Unit (EDU) and relevant library professional associations. We aim to develop our understanding of tools and platforms in use across the university in collaboration with partners including Faculty EdTech teams and the Interdisciplinary EdTech Lab (IETL). We will provide support and guidance for the use of generative AI tools in alignment with university and departmental policy.

Activities:

- We will develop appropriate online, blended and hybrid learning as a key part of our IDL programme, aligned with university imperatives

- We will create systematic and planned support for the online learning we offer, in consultation with relevant Imperial stakeholders. We will also provide support to staff who are delivering online learning, for example, with reading lists and Copyright Literacy

- We will identify tools and systems to support the development and maintenance of our online learning offer and to support the library staff who teach in taking consistent approaches

- We will adhere to standards for accessibility and inclusivity in the e-learning tools we use as well as in the delivery of online learning

- We will consider and implement best practice for how we track, update and manage files for all the library's e-learning content

Strategic area 3

We will continue to pursue opportunities for partnerships and collaboration.

Our Information and Digital Literacy offer cannot be fully realised without collaboration with other university constituents. These include academic and teaching staff, professional services staff, students and researchers. We will also pursue partnerships with external colleagues.

Our liaison model means that we continuously develop our advocacy efforts with regular communication with academic course teams. We will pursue opportunities to collaborate further with other units across Imperial, including the Centre for Academic English, ECRI, the Disability Advisory Service, Student Union and others.

Activities:

- We will explore the synergies between teaching and research within our context, including university research activities, educational research and IDL research

- We will participate in the Student Shapers programme to formally engage with students as partners

- We will further our existing collaboration with academic departments to develop our embedded IDL programme

- We will continue to pursue meaningful collaboration with a range of appropriate university partners including our NHS partners. An example is the development of VLE-based plagiarism awareness courses offered throughout taught programmes

Strategic area 4

We are committed to staff development in the sphere of teaching.

Our staff are keen to develop their pedagogical knowledge, strategies for advocacy and current thinking around technology-enhanced learning. A number of library staff have chosen to undertake formal courses offered by the Educational Development Unit (EDU) as well as other parts of their offer. We have successfully begun an internal Library Community of Practice for library staff who teach or are interested in teaching.

Activities:

- We will convene regular internal teaching Community of Practice events for our teams, with the aim of sharing best practice and providing opportunities for knowledge sharing and reflection

- We will explore how our development relates to the profile of library staff as teachers within the university and within the library profession

- We will support and encourage staff who choose to undertake formal teaching and learning professional qualifications internally and externally. Internal opportunities include the Educational Development Unit's MEd programme, as well as different levels of HEA fellowships supported by the Imperial STAR Framework. External routes include, but are not limited to, CILIP, the Association for Learning Technology and other national professional associations

- We will support staff to attend regional and national conferences, including those who choose to give presentations to showcase practice and share experience with the wider IDL and HE communities

- We will prioritise staff development in emerging areas, including generative AI tools and data science

Strategic area 5

We will explore connections between Information and Digital Literacy and Scholarly Communications.

The connection between Information and Digital Literacy and Scholarly Communications has been professionally recognised and is part of IDL frameworks. The student IDL journey develops from undergraduate study to graduate research and professional learning in the workplace. We will aim to provide IDL teaching underpinned with scholarly communication principles which support and connect taught programmes and research. There is also an opportunity to explore ways to support awareness of open research principles and practice and Copyright Literacy.

Activities:

- We will build on our relationships with Imperial groups outside of taught courses, including researchers and postdocs, in the interest of exploring appropriate provision we may offer

- We will expand and formalise our Open Research offer as a specific theme within the ECRI Professional Development Programme

- We will further develop Copyright Literacy within the existing Creating and Communicating Information IDL competency, expanding this for appropriate audiences

- We will explore how library staff can become involved in research both to develop the IDL teaching offered, as part of engagement with academic departments and to further knowledge and innovation in IDL learning and teaching

Strategic area 6

We will explore Decolonising the Curriculum within the context of our IDL programme.

Following the first internal Decolonise the Library forum held for library staff in March 2021, we will continue to engage library staff in conversations to discover interests and share perspectives on how this theme relates to our remit across library teams. This work will include benchmarking and collaborating with other HE libraries to develop our thinking in this area.

Activities:

- We will explore how Decolonising practice fits into our IDL framework, for example, as it relates to authority and bias within the Evaluating Information competency

- We will partner with other Imperial stakeholders in the development of Decolonising IDL in alignment with university initiatives. We will look to external partners and the current picture of Decolonising practices in UK HE and UK HE libraries

- We will pursue ways to consider Decolonising practice within our embedded teaching offer

- We will explore how Critical Pedagogy relates to our IDL offer overall

Strategic area 7

We will measure and evaluate our success.

The evaluation cycle is key to the success of the library's teaching programmes. In keeping with Imperial's Learning and Teaching Strategy's evidence-based approach, we currently use quantitative measures to compare our activity year on year. We collect student feedback to use as evidence to inform improvements to our programmes.

Activities:

- We will evaluate our programmes in evidence-based ways in line with assessable objectives

- We will build evaluation into our programmes at session level and programme level. We will examine where one to one appointments sit within our overall provision

- We will explore appropriate qualitative ways to measure and understand stakeholder perspectives

- We will make the evaluation cycle visible to our constituents, engaging with them in our efforts to maintain standards and excellence. We will share practice with the Centre for Academic English and ECRI, and maintain an awareness of their quality assurance procedures

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