

Upskilling library staff

A brief overview of the Information Services Team's response to a rapidly changing Higher Education and Research environment at the Glucksman Library, University of Limerick.

Donna Ó Doibhlin
Librarian, Education & Health Sciences
University of Limerick

Agenda

- Background to project
- Overview of information services
- Challenges of changes in library and information services in UL
- Opportunities to learn new skills
- SDTLS – projects 1 and 2
- Benefits of upskilling

Increased demands from library members

- Technological
- Immediacy
- Space
- Teaching and research support
- Self-service



*. . . as compared to the days when libraries were mostly involved in lending books, organising storage of books, and showing people where to find the documents they needed.
- if in fact they ever they existed.*

Information Services @ the Glucksman Library, University of Limerick

- Supporting faculty, research PGs and students in the 4 faculties and the University Hospital Library
- 1 x Head of Information Services
- 5 x Faculty librarians
- 1 x Digital Initiatives and research librarian
- 1 x University hospital librarian

Information Services duties:

- Support academics and students.
- Develop IL/research skills modules and teach on these programmes.
- Manage QuestionPoint and Chat.
- Librarian on duty – fire evacuation duties. ☹️
- Collect reading lists, select and order stock.
- Support the newly amalgamated service desk – LOD with mobile phone.



Why do we need a staff development/training programme?

- Rapid increase in the demand for research support and information literacy classes
- Increase in complexity of library queries
- Introduction of self-issue system and security



Specialist Diploma (PG) in Teaching, Learning and Scholarship

- Big increase in demand for research support and IL, therefore teaching larger groups
- Increased demand for training for academics and researchers
- Need to ensure quality of all classes
- Experienced librarians – but few with formal teacher training –Are we any good? Have we feedback?



SDTLS Project 1

- **Develop formal information literacy modules (with a view to accreditation)**
- **Module called: Finding research information and keeping up-to-date, developed and delivered.**
- **This main module was developed further by other IS librarians and we finalised a programme called Realising your research Value – this is currently being delivered to researchers in UL**

Realising Your Research Value:

- 1. Finding research and keeping up-to-date
- 2. Reference management
- 3. Getting published and maximising your research impact

SDTLS Project 2

- Front of house staff training
- IS librarian held focus groups with desk staff to ascertain their satisfaction with new arrangement
- Where dissatisfaction was related to lack of confidence in knowledge/skills base, training was provided
- All IS librarians delivered subject/faculty specific training

Front of house staff training

Keys to success:

- During regular working hours.
- Always attended by IS librarian coordinating the project
- Staff surveyed following training to gauge levels of satisfaction
- Some in-house training
- Some external consultant training
- Opportunities for further training



Benefits of training

- Librarians more confident in teaching delivery
- Academics viewing librarians as colleagues
- A deeper understanding among Librarians of the procedures relating to developing and accrediting academic courses/modules
- More understanding between front of house staff and librarians
- A closer working relationship between desk staff and information services librarians.
- A more efficient service desk

So, were our endeavours successful?



. . . mostly, yes.



The feeling of elation at completing the first set of service desk training was shared among all the desk staff
... almost 😊
(Pic is representative of service desk staff – not actual)



. . . as for the Information Services Librarians who completed/are doing the Teaching Diploma . . . we always knew we could do it . . . and we just proved it!



Thanks for listening.

Questions?

Donna

donna.odoibhlin@ul.ie