

University Library: Strategy for Supporting International Students 2012-2014

Introduction

Anglia Ruskin University Library's vision is of "a university community empowered by accessible, innovative, responsive library services and supported by an excellent range of high quality resources and committed staff."

<http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/policiesplans/mission.htm>

Our University community is diverse, inclusive and international. Our students come to the UK from over 100 countries and Anglia Ruskin programmes are delivered worldwide through partnerships in the Caribbean, Malaysia, India, Africa and Europe.

This University Library strategy (2nd edition) has been updated to ensure that our services continue to empower this multi-cultural and geographically wide-spread community. It is informed by the SCONUL guidelines for good practice "Library services for international students", 2008

http://www.sconul.ac.uk/groups/access/papers/international_students.pdf

and the QAA Guidance notes on International students studying in the UK (draft for consultation August 2011)

http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/International_students_consultation.aspx

The context of this strategy is our University's commitment to sustain and expand the number of international students studying with Anglia Ruskin both in this country and through worldwide partnerships. Our University's vision states that we "want to be viewed in the UK and internationally as exceptional."

Specific targets in Anglia Ruskin's Corporate Plan 2012-2014 are that

- 3,200 international students will study with us in the UK by 2014
- 20% of our campus-based students will come from outside the EU
- 10,300 students will study with us off-site or through distance learning by 2014

Aims of this Strategy

- To ensure that the University Library plays a full part in supporting the international vision and targets of our University
- To ensure that our library is responsive to the needs of all our international users
- To ensure that off-site international users of our library receive an equivalent high quality service to users on-site in the UK
- To maintain awareness amongst library staff of the particular needs of international library users

Our definition of “international students” for this strategy

Our definition of “international students” includes both those coming from around the world to Anglia Ruskin in the UK to study - and those studying on Anglia Ruskin programmes with partner colleges outside the UK. We recognise that the support needs of these 2 groups of customers may differ.

Section 1 – Access to resources

1a. The key role of our University Library is to provide access to high quality resources for the whole Anglia Ruskin community. Our Digital Library at <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk> is the mechanism through which we ensure that all our users have equal access to resources.

1b. IT issues

We recognise that easy access to our web resources off-site is important for all our users and particularly for those outside the UK. Login to the Digital Library is now through the standard Anglia Ruskin username and password.

- The University Library offers a dedicated point of contact for queries about library login at <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/authen/library-login.htm>
- Other IT issues will be dealt with by the IT Help Desk team at their on-site library helpdesks or online at <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/ithelppages/itinduction.html>. This is now a 24 hour service.

1c. Plain English

The University Library recognises that students whose first language is not English may have problems understanding library jargon. We will therefore try to use as little jargon as possible in our library and on our web pages and offer further help with navigation on designated web pages for international students. Within our website we will offer a glossary function to explain complex library terms.

1d. Access to books

On-site students have full access to all our book collections. All students can access our substantial e-book collection through the Digital Library.

1e. Access to journals and specialist resources

As the University Library increasingly subscribes to online journals and databases the whole University community benefits from easy access to these resources via the Digital Library.

1f. Access to library study space and computers

The University Library recognises that international students in the UK cannot always return home in vacations. We will continue to be responsive to on-site international students' needs by providing long opening hours.

Within the Virtual Learning Environment the University Library will be proactive and maintain a strong presence. We will work with academic staff to embed relevant library resources in modules.

1g. Internationalisation of resources and knowledge

In order to support our growing number of international students, the University Library will seek to internationalise its resources. When decisions are being made about purchasing new resources, librarians will consider how well the resource meets the needs of international research and study. In addition, on-site and online we will endeavour to provide access to international news sources.

As Anglia Ruskin continues to increase its activity in the international research arena, library professionals will work to develop their knowledge of appropriate resources in order to support our University's Research Institutes and Faculty researchers.

Section 2 – Support and advice

2a. Recruitment

The University Library will play its part in recruiting international students, both to the UK and worldwide, through promoting its services via our Library website. Information on our web pages will make clear what level of service students can expect from us. This information will also be provided to the International Office and International Student Support for use in recruitment literature.

2b. Induction

Library induction is crucial for all students and particularly for international students. On-site the University Library will work with International Student Support to provide orientation and induction to all international students.

Online induction to library services will be offered at <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/induction/induction.htm> . Further advice will be offered on our designated international web pages.

2c. Advice and help

The University Library prides itself on its friendliness and attention to customer service. On-site our service points provide answers to student questions during our staffed hours. Appointments can also be made with Academic Services staff via our "BookaLibrarian" service for help with assignments. International researchers will be encouraged to make contact with their Faculty Liaison Librarian for detailed assistance delivered either face-to-face or by email.

The University Library maintains an online help service "AskUs" <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/askus/index.htm> which provides equivalent off-site support to students. During staffed hours this includes a live Chat service through which students can chat online to a librarian. Students outside the UK are encouraged to use this online support service. Academic Services librarians may also be emailed for research assistance.

A Faculty Liaison Librarian will be designated as "International Support Librarian" and will take responsibility for championing and co-ordinating library services to international students. This librarian will also act as a contact point within the library for international support issues and queries.

2d. Guides to resources

Librarians will maintain simple, up-to-date guides to University Library resources and services. These will be made available on our website in a variety of formats (written, audio, video) for all students.

2e. Information and research skills

Librarians work closely with academic staff to embed information skills sessions into on-site modules. International students are particularly encouraged to attend all library support sessions. Library staff will endeavour to maintain awareness of different learning styles as they deliver these sessions. Issues such as correct referencing and the avoidance of plagiarism are regularly covered.

Additional drop-in classes are provided through our Skills@Uni sessions <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/helpdesk/train.htm>

Information literacy, the ability to handle information effectively and ethically, is a key skill required by students. Our online tutorial PILOT <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/pilot/> provides support in this area for off-site students. Our internationally recognised guide to Harvard referencing is also online at <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>

Librarians will continue to work with academic staff and seek to provide targeted information and research skills support within the Virtual Learning Environment.

Section 3 - Communication and feedback

3a. The University Library recognises the importance of maintaining clear communication with all our users. We will always seek to communicate in simple, straightforward language and style.

3b. International web pages

We will maintain designated web pages for international students through which we will offer additional support and advice. <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/induction/international/index.php>

These pages will include links to relevant information sources which will enable our on-site international students to keep in touch with news at home.

3c. Library news

Students are kept up-to-date with library news through our Notice Board feature on the website at <http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/>. Any access issues or new resources will be highlighted here. RSS feeds may be set up from this. The University Library also has a presence on Facebook *Anglia-Ruskin-University-Library* and Twitter <http://twitter.com/#!/ARULibrary>.

3d. Feedback

It is important for the University Library to gather feedback on its services from its users. To enable this, a feedback link is provided on our website <http://angliaruskinuniversitylibrary.wordpress.com/>

In particular we wish to know what our international students feel about the library. We will take note of the library ratings and comments in the International Student Barometer survey. We will also ensure that international students are included in our on-site focus groups and that their responses are noted.

Section 4 - Library staff development

4a. In order to ensure that the University Library maintains responsiveness to the needs of international students it will be necessary to provide all library staff with appropriate staff development opportunities. This may be achieved through the following:

- Learning Hours on cultural awareness, off-site services, learning styles, online support, plain English etc.
- Attendance at relevant internal University and external library sector training events
- Contact with international students at enquiry points and through online services

Section 5 – Liaison within our University

5a. The designated International Support Librarian will act as a contact point within the University Library for international support issues. Liaison with the following partners in our University will be necessary in order to maintain quality services to our international users.

- International and Development Office
- International Student Advice Service
- Student Services
- Student Advisers
- Student Union
- I-Centre
- Language Centres
- CRIC

Conclusion

This Strategy for Supporting International Students seeks to clarify the ways in which the University Library will support the international vision and targets of Anglia Ruskin. We recognise that the achievement of high standards of support and service to our international students depends on the dedication and motivation of library staff, and our ability to work in effective partnerships with academic staff and other support units within our University.