

LIBRARY MAIL

Changes To Delivery - October 2004

The Library has been offering the delivery of library notices (computer-generated letters) by email on an opt-in basis for a number of years now. Anyone who has not opted in is currently sent a printed library notice, either to their departmental address or to their local address (for part-time and distance learning students).

From October 2004, the Library will send the standard notices to all students by email instead of by post: we hope this change will meet with your approval and support.

Data on students' University email addresses will be downloaded into the Library management system over the summer vacation, ready for the new academic session. In effect, the service will be offered to any student where we have a University email address available. If we do not have a record of a University email account or an alternative email address, we will continue to send a paper library notice to the student's main contact address (department for full-time students)

Which library notices are included in this service?

- ◆ **1st recall notice** (i.e. the notice asking you to return an item within 7 days, for another library user)
- ◆ **2nd recall notice** (i.e. the notice reminding you that a previously recalled item is now overdue).
- ◆ **Awaiting collection notice** (i.e. the notice that there is an item that you requested, to be collected within 7 days)
- ◆ **The 1st overdue notice for short loan items.**

In addition, we will be offering a new service to students: a courtesy 'reminder' email which is sent out 2 working days before a long loan item is due for return or renewal (currently not available for interlibrary loan items or 7 day loan items). This service will not be available by post.

This is a similar service as that already offered to any member of staff who has currently opted for email notices. Unfortunately, this 'reminder' email can only be regarded as a courtesy service and must be in addition to a user keeping their own records of the dates their library items are due for return or renewal. This is in case the 'reminder' email cannot be delivered because there are problems with the internet provider, or

because the account being used is inactive or full.

- We will look at expanding the service to other overdue reminder notices in the future.
- Letters regarding item queries and lost items will continue to be sent to the student's local address (as it appears on HEMIS), as will more serious disciplinary letters regarding long overdue items.

How are we letting our users know about this change?

We are currently advertising this change to our services on the Library website (see www.port.ac.uk/library/email).

Library staff are also passing information about this to students currently using the Library, and there is information about this change on the printed letters currently being sent out and on posters being sent to the departments. Our induction processes and student guides for 2004/05 will also be amended to take this change into account, so we can advertise this to our new students as well.

What if a user wants to use this service?

If someone has previously given us a home email address, we will continue to use this. If that account becomes inactive or full, however, we will send library mail by default to the University account instead.

Students who wish to opt out of having their library notices delivered by email may do so, either in person at the Issue Desk, via the phone on 023 9284 3249, or via the website. This can be done now, in preparation for the change of service in October 2004, or anytime after the change in service has occurred.

What if the user can't wait until October 2004?

Anyone who wishes to opt in for email delivery of library mail before October 2004 can also do so now, via the website www.port.ac.uk/library/email

What about staff users?

We hope to make a similar change in service for all our staff users soon. Staff will be advised of this via an All-Staff email.

By: Kath Shakespeare, Loans Librarian.
(Ext.3245/ Kath.Shakespeare@port.ac.uk)

FREWEN EXTENSION

The current Frewen Library was built in two phases, in 1977 and in 1988, and currently suffers from the pressures of a student population of 17,000, having been designed for the needs of around 7,000 students.

The University estates plan now included an extension to be completed by the summer of 2006. This will include about 2,500m² of library space and an additional 1,000m² of seminar/ teaching rooms, which will add to the University's pool of teaching accommodation available to be booked.

As a building for learning, the new accommodation will recognise the different learning styles of students and will have zoned areas for silent study, group work, casual seating as well as formal spaces. The new library space will also include a new IT area with up to 200 PCs (an increase from the existing 72) and an arrangement that will allow for 24 hour access to this enhanced general purpose IT facility.

A RIBA competition has been held by a Panel of University staff, together with RIBA advisers. Penoyre and Prasad were selected from five presentations made at a meeting on 26 March.

The Panel members were:

John Craven, Vice Chancellor
Mike Bateman, Pro Vice Chancellor
Tod Wakefield, Head of the School of Architecture
David Ferguson, a University Governor
Andrew Cardy, Head of Estates
Ian Bonar, University Librarian
David Hills, RIBA Adviser
Paul Newman, RIBA Observer

As University Librarian I am pleased with the choice of Penoyre & Prasad. Gregory Penoyre's presentation placed particular emphasis on students and the focus of his scheme was on attempting to provide a variety of accommodation for differing study needs.

Much detailed work on the internal layout remains to be done with the architect. Library staff have conducted another survey specifically on Phase 3 issues (see the '2004 Library Survey' article in this issue). This has enabled us to gauge student and staff opinion, which will inform the design process. Faculties have formally been invited to provide further feedback and I welcome anyone's ideas and views.

By: Ian Bonar, University Librarian.
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2004 Library Survey

What you told us

As we want to take the views of library users into account throughout the planning process for the forthcoming library extension, this year's library survey asked which facilities you would give priority to in an extended library building. The survey was made available on the library website and student recruits administered a paper version, both within the Library and also in a variety of catering outlets around the University in the week of 22-28 March. Altogether we managed to collect 2135 replies – 91% from students and 7% from staff. Thank you!

The table opposite shows which facilities emerged as your highest priorities amongst the 14 listed.

It should be reasonably straightforward to implement some of these requests once we have a larger building. For example, because there will be more study areas within the enlarged building, we can introduce group study rooms, designate some rooms as 'absolutely silent', and have other rooms where you are free to chat and work, thus catering for a variety of learning styles. However, some requests, such as 24 hour opening, have budgetary implications beyond the money allocated for building the extension so will need to be debated elsewhere within the University if we are to take them forward.

Rank	Service/Facility	'Very Important' Responses	% of all replies
1	More PCs	1624	76%
2	Silent study areas	1517	71%
3	More desks	1471	69%
4	24 hour access to PCs	1417	66%
5	24 hour access to whole Library	1389	65%
6	More space for books	1320	62%
7	Better reprographics service	1315	61.5%
8	Walk-in short loan collection	1272	60%
9	Group study rooms	1193	56%
10	Room to watch videos/DVDs as a group	1062	50%
11	More loanable laptops	943	44%
12	Wider aisles between the shelves	847	40%
13	Cybercafé	769	36%
14	Lockers	742	35%

Your Likes And Dislikes Regarding The Current Library

We also asked you to list up to three things that you liked about the Library and three things that would improve the Library for you. Free comments such as these are invaluable for the Library when planning for the future. The following tables show the top 10 issues which emerged.

It is gratifying to see that the Library staff themselves emerge as the feature which the highest number of users mention as a positive aspect. We aim to continue to provide a good service and to improve on what we offer where possible.

Although we are normally on the receiving end of complaints about too much noise, it is also good to see that almost 10% of you mention that you like the peace and quiet within the Library, with a further 4.8% mentioning that the atmosphere within the Library makes it a good place to work.

Things Which Would Improve The Library

We are pleased to report that work will be carried out on the toilets this coming summer (in fact, this has been scheduled for well over a year now), so this should address the problems experienced there.

With regard to requests for more books, we recognise that until there are enough copies of reading list books to supply every student who comes looking for a book, we are never going to have 'enough' books for everyone. What we can do in this area though is to encourage lecturers to supply us with reading lists as long before students receive them as possible (so that we can move books into the Short Loan Collection and possibly order extra copies) and encourage students to let Enquiry Desk staff know about problems getting hold of particular books. We also encourage you to make use of the online reservation facility, which is available on the Library Catalogue, if all copies of the book you need have been taken out. We did receive special textbook supplements of over £80K in this year's Library budget, money that has been targeted at buying extra copies of reading list material. Hopefully this will also make it that bit easier for more of you to get the book you need the first time you look.

By: Anne Worden, Languages/Social Sciences Librarian. (Ext.3243/ anne.worden@port.ac.uk)

Rank	Good Feature	No. of mentions	%	Sample Comments
1	Staff helpful/friendly	466	21.8%	"Excellent staff – always helpful and knowledgeable" "Friendly and efficient staff"
2	Range of books available	345	16%	"The great choice of books" "wide source of contemporary and older titles to browse"
3	Long opening hours	213	10%	"Being open up to midnight during term time" "weekend opening"
4	Peace and quiet	210	9.8%	"Quiet areas upstairs" "quiet journal rooms"
5	Good PC access	124	5.8%	"Lots of PCs" "computer facilities good"
6	Location	106	5%	"Central location" "near to Union"
7	Atmosphere	102	4.8%	"Good place to work" "friendly working environment" "relaxed atmosphere"
8	Well organised	101	4.7%	"Very well set out" "Good layout" "easy to find your way around"
9	Journal collection	93	4.3%	"Good run of old journals" "large journal collection"
10=	Coffee shop	59	2.7%	"Good coffee shop" "the canteen is conveniently close"
10=	Free Internet access	59	2.7%	"Chance to use Internet"

Rank	Concern	No. of mentions	%	Sample Comments
1	More books	542	25%	"Not enough core texts for course work" "more copies of 'hot' books" "some books are too old"
2	More computers	362	17%	"Improve crowding around computers" "more PCs with more workspace around them"
3	Longer hours/24hr access	161	7.5%	"Should be open 24 hours with all services and facilities"
4	Silent study areas	148	7%	"More rigorous insistence on silence in Library" "more discipline for noisy people" "people chat too much"
5	Improve the coffee shop	134	6.3%	"Coffee shop should be bigger" "better café with proper food"
6	More study spaces	129	6%	"Much more space for study" "wider selection of study areas"
7	Group study rooms	100	4.7%	"Group areas would reduce talking in quiet areas"
8	Improve the toilets	74	3.5%	"Toilets smell very bad"
9	More journals	66	3.1%	"A wider selection of journals that are actually relevant to the courses taught at the university"
10	Issue Desk should be open longer	52	2.4%	Requests to open the Issue Desk earlier in the mornings and for longer at weekends

A BRUSH WITH THE LAW...

After eighteen months as First Floor Manager at the Frewen Library I returned after the Christmas break to a new role as Law Librarian. This isn't simply a new role for me. It is also a new post for the University Library. Fortunately, I started with a clear job description and some key tasks to complete over the following year. However, there have been a few pitfalls to avoid along the way, ones that I thought I might usefully share here.

I am not a lawyer. I am instead an experienced information professional with teaching qualifications, who is working with lawyers, law students and law resources. This is not a confusion that arises within the academic community, but it is one of the dangers inherent in working in law and health libraries. Members of the public often view the collections and staff as a viable alternative to consulting a professional. I have to be quite clear exactly what the library's role as a reference service to the public is and direct them to appropriate legal advisors.

I am not a curator. Books do furnish a room, but the Law Collection that I am tasked with building must be a vibrant, relevant source of information and not just the best set of leather tomes I can find to fill the shelves. This means I must spend time with staff and students exploring the full range of their information needs- from a two-page pamphlet explaining the passage of a bill through parliament to an expensive and complex full text database. One of the most exciting things about this new post is the opportunity to build a coherent, focused collection, drawing on existing stock and new resources. This requires putting in place the necessary stringent stock revision procedures, to ensure that that the collection keeps up with new developments, whilst not discarding classic texts. As I am by training a historian, and by nature a hoarder, I do have to remind myself at intervals that all stock needs to be examined on a regular basis with a critical eye.

I am not a reference librarian, or rather, I am not only a reference librarian. All my library colleagues will recognise the burning desire to answer the query quickly and efficiently. I need to remember that what is just as important in an academic setting is to enable the enquirer to find and interpret information for themselves. Law students are lucky in some respects in that they have

research skills incorporated as a taught unit in their course, but the sources they are dealing with tend to be complex and require extra care in their use e.g. in distinguishing statutes actually in force. In addition, law students are expected to acquire the skills for locating their primary sources in both print and electronic media and need to learn appropriate strategies for selecting from these. Crucially, they need to acquire skills in using both free and priced sources to deliver best value results. My role in the library or classroom is to reinforce the teaching of reference skills and ensure students are at ease with using all their key resources.

I am not a superhero. No matter how impatient I am the Law Collection will not appear fully formed overnight. It will evolve over a period of years. I cannot sense by psychic power from an office in the library how it should evolve. I need to have an ongoing relationship with the academic law group and with successive cohorts of students to ensure that what is bought is relevant and appropriate. I can, however, change in the space of minutes from scrabbling through dusty boxes of donations and withdrawals into a suited and booted Law Librarian, ready to present a case on resources for a course accreditation. I only wish my colleagues compliments on this transformation, albeit without the superwoman twirl, hadn't left me wondering if my everyday dress sense isn't just a little lacking!

So those are some of the pitfalls I've been trying to avoid, and I'm sure those with whom I have been working could point out a few more into which I've blindly fallen. Certainly over the past few months I have learnt how much help, advice and support I, as a Subject Librarian, can call upon. Library staff have helped with endless checking, chasing and tidying and also with advice and guidance. Academic staff have welcomed me into their committees, boards, classrooms and even WebCT courses. This means I have been able to plan purchases and I have had the chance to meet and talk to students in preparation for next year's induction sessions. I would invite anyone interested enough to have read this far to visit the Library and see how much has been achieved so far in the law areas due to all this support. But do please remember this is work in progress!

By: Linda Jones, Law Librarian. (Ext.3241/
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GOODBYE GOLDSMITH

On Friday February 6th, late in the afternoon, the Goldsmith Library closed its doors for the last time. Although most of the Business School had already moved to the new Richmond Building, the Learning Resources Centre including the Library section stayed open right until the last minute on the Milton Campus for the benefit of students taking exams there.

The next day about a hundred packing crates of books arrived at the Frewen Library. By Monday, the start of the new semester, they were all unpacked and ready to be borrowed. Staff armed with correcting fluid and tape for altering book labels set to work and by the middle of the first week all the Goldsmith books were fully integrated into Frewen stock. We hope that Business School students will enjoy having their books and journals in one place, available 7 days a week in term-time.

For the Goldsmith Library staff too, the move has meant new surroundings and new work roles. Corrine Tilford and Margaret Taylor can now be found at the Frewen Issue Desk. Senior Library Assistant, Cela Tluszcz, is set to join the First Floor Social Sciences team – thus continuing her association with the Business School books. Lyn Stelling is now working behind the scenes in the Library Technical Services section, helping to speed the arrival of new titles onto the shelves.

By: Judith Stamenkovic, Business Librarian. (Ext.3238/ judith.stamenkovic@port.ac.uk)

SCONUL RESEARCH EXTRA (SRX)

SCONUL Research Extra is a scheme to allow borrowing from other libraries, for higher education researchers in the UK and Ireland.

The University of Portsmouth is a member of this scheme, which means that the following categories of library user can apply to the Frewen Library for a SCONUL Research Extra card:

- ◆ academic staff on open or fixed term contracts
- ◆ postgraduate research students registered for a PhD, MPhil or similar qualification awarded purely by research

The card allows them to borrow from other participating institutions. There is no charge to use this scheme, but please note that IT facilities / electronic library services are not normally included within SCONUL Research Extra and the availability of some collections for external borrowing may be limited.

Full details and an online version of the SCONUL Research Extra application form are available on the SCONUL website http://www.sconul.ac.uk/use_lib/srx/

Completed application forms should be sent to Kath Shakespeare, Assistant Librarian (Loans), or to Ian Bonar, University Librarian, in the Frewen Library. If you are eligible for the scheme, you will then be sent a SCONUL Research Extra card.

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EXAM PAPERS DATABASE

This is just a gentle reminder that back in 1997 the Library began mounting University exam papers on a searchable database available through the Library's Web site. This allows them to be viewed using the Adobe Acrobat portable document format (PDF) software. The database now contains nearly 4,500 papers. It is possible to search the database by course or title keywords, and limit the search by course or academic year, semester and faculty. The simplest and perhaps best search strategy is, however, just to look for keywords from the title of the exam paper.

With upwards of 100,000 exam paper PDF's being viewed annually it is one of the most heavily used parts of the Library's Web site. Access to the exam papers is restricted to on-campus access only, although if you reconfigure your home PC's Web browser using the Webcache service they are accessible from home as well. Any departments wishing to add their papers to the database should send them, preferably as Word documents, on floppy or zip disc or as email attachments, to Paul Egan, Ground Floor Manager, Frewen Library.

By: Paul Egan, Ground Floor Manager.
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SURVEY ON ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SERVICES

Use of EIS

During the autumn term the Library undertook an online survey of University staff with a view to gathering information about how our users access and use the Electronic Information Services (EIS) that we offer. Responses were received from 230 staff, of which 103 were from academic staff, 102 from support staff, and 25 from research staff and others. Perhaps not surprisingly, relatively few support staff made regular use of the services, with 82% saying they used them less than once a month or never. Amongst academic staff, 19% used EIS daily and a further 46% at least once a week and 27% used the services once or twice a month. However, 18% stated that they used the services less than once a month or never.

Reasons for non-use

Looking at reasons for non-use, the most frequently stated reason was lack of time. Three academic staff felt they had no need to use electronic services and there were some reports of network and other difficulties, plus other assorted reasons such as having only recently joined the University. A number of comments centred on not knowing the services existed or how to use them, although some of these would have been from support staff whose need to use them was less. However, this does suggest there is room for the library to think about how we might better promote what we have to offer.

Access to e-journals and the structure of the Subject Directory

Users are encouraged to access electronic journals either via the library catalogue – where they can find both electronic and print holdings listed – or from the Subject Directory area of the Library website, where we group resources by subject. It was pleasing, therefore, to see that users of our electronic journals mostly use either of these two routes of access - 53% via the catalogue and 21% from the Library catalogue. We plan a review of the Subject Directory and took the opportunity of this survey to ask for views on how the resources should be organised. A substantial majority of respondents (78%) were in favour of retaining the current subject arrangement, though comments suggested that a review of the actual headings would be welcome, with more specific subjects listed. Following further exploration of these and

other issues, through a series of focus groups, a review of the structure is now in progress with a view to a revised version being in place for next session.

The Resource Discovery Network

The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) has devoted a great deal of time and effort to developing a collection of resources for use by the higher education community. Respondents to our survey showed that these resources are currently being somewhat overlooked, since 93% of respondents said they had never heard of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN) whilst only 4% were very aware of it. Even amongst academic staff the figures were 69% and 2% respectively. Possibly this is in part our fault for not promoting awareness of this resource, though opinions of its value differ amongst subject librarians. If you would like to take a look at what the RDN has to offer, type 'Resource Discovery Network' into the Subject Directory's search engine or go to www.rdn.ac.uk. We would be pleased to hear your views and in particular to hear of ways in which staff may be using specific elements of the RDN within their teaching programmes.

Links to e-learning materials

We should like to engage in debate with the academic community about how EIS should support e-learning. To this end we asked some questions about the level of engagement of staff with e-learning and the extent to which they were already linking to e-resources. We were a little surprised to find that the majority of respondents had little or no engagement with e-learning, either via WebCT or otherwise, as the figures below show:

Involvement of academic staff with e-learning (% of respondents)			
Via WebCT		By other means	
Little or no engagement	Slightly or very active	Little or no engagement	Slightly or very active
59	14	55	7

Of those who were producing e-learning materials, 19 had provided links to EIS and 43 had not. Most commonly these were links to the Library catalogue or to e-journal sites, though 10 of the 19 were also providing 'deep links' direct to individual journal articles and 6 to individual

items in the Library catalogue. We would be pleased to hear more about your practises and your views in this area.

E-books

Electronic books have yet to make a major impact on the UK higher education sector, for a number of reasons. Our survey showed that most staff were unaware of e-books available in their subject area. This could be addressed relatively easily, for example through a Library initiative to raise awareness. There is evidence, however, of resistance to the idea of diverting resources to electronic books. When asked how far they would be in favour an increased proportion of expenditure going to e-books rather than printed, a majority of staff were neutral but more staff (40%) were opposed or strongly opposed than were in favour (27%). We hope to learn more about attitudes to this resource next session when the library hopes to run an e-book pilot as part of a project that will look at impact of staff attitudes on student use of books.

How important is browsing?

It is sometimes suggested that Library users, influenced by Yahoo and Google, do all their searching by means of keywords in the catalogue. This raised the question of whether browsing is dead. Our survey suggests that this is not the case. Asked how important browsing was to them when visiting the Library, 56% of respondents said it was important or very important, against 19% who said the opposite.

Our thanks to all staff who responded to the survey – your views continue to be important

and will be taken fully into account when planning Library services.

By: Ian Mayfield, Sub-Librarian
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SHORT URLS

The move of the Library's website into the University's Content Management System (CMS) has highlighted the importance of stable Uniform Resource Locators - URLs.

There are two issues which surround the URLs generated by the CMS. Firstly, the URLs are very long, sometimes taking up two lines in documentation – this makes them longwinded to type into a browser and can look clumsy in official printed documentation. Secondly, if a page title is altered, or the page moved to a different location within the website structure, the URL relating to that page will change.

In order to address these problems, we have created a number of 'Short URLs' which redirect the user to the correct webpage. The benefit of these URLs are that they are easy to remember and quote over the telephone or

in emails to users. Also, if a page title is altered, or the page moved, the short URL will remain the same – but is adjusted to point users to the updated webpage.

The Library has created a number of short URLs and we have produced a webpage listing details of these URLs for anyone wishing to use Library webpage addresses in their documentation.

<http://www.port.ac.uk/library/shorturl>

Happy linking!!

By: Sylvia Wood, Library Web & Systems Developer,
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