

What is the role of the library in a modern university? A Bourdieuian analysis

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**Thesis submitted to The University of Nottingham for
the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

October 2024

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Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the generous participation of the interviewees, I am particularly grateful for their openness and thoughtfulness. I

couldn't have asked for better supervisors than Professor Bernadette

Youens, Professor Christine Hall, Professor Sarah Speight, and Associate Professor

Susan Jones. Particularly Sarah who guided, supported, and did not give up on me. I

am also grateful to Professor David Baker, without whom I would never have started

this work, and to Professor Pat Thomson who encouraged me to turn my ideas into a

PhD study. I would also like to acknowledge The University of Queensland (UQ) for

the support provided to me and the wonderful team at UQ Library who challenge and

inspire me to be the best I can be.

Abstract

This thesis examines various perspectives on the role of the university library in contemporary Western universities, tracing its evolution and strategic development. Technological advancements and neoliberal shifts in higher education have driven significant changes; transforming spaces, collections, services, and staff. Despite positive developments, current challenges include budget constraints and a perceived decline in the library's importance.

The study situates the university library within higher education and the Information Age, considering the internal environment influenced by library traditions, staff behaviours, and external perspectives of publishers, students, academics, and university leaders. It highlights the complex dynamics between these groups and their environments. It provides a sociological response to the question, "What is the role of the library in a modern university?". The study adopts Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical and methodological approach, focusing on social systems, power dynamics, interactions, and relationships, and how these entities evolve over time. Using Bourdieu's field tools, the university library is analysed holistically, with data from interviews with senior stakeholders and practitioners, and a case study of a changing university library. This analysis is supported by an extensive literature review.

The thesis discusses the implications for practice and research, questioning the adequacy of current strategies and proposing new approaches for future changes in university libraries. It offers deeper insights into the challenges faced by those leading and working in university libraries.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Why explore the role of the university library?

For over thirty years, I have worked in and with university libraries, witnessing significant changes in library spaces, collections, staffing, and services.

Technological advancements have been pivotal, transforming how information is created, communicated, and used. Terms like the information society, Information Age, and network society have become common to describe what has emerged as new social realities (Stehr & Mast, 2012, p.18). These changes have profoundly impacted higher education and the university library.

Universities have evolved, adopting business-like practices due to neoliberal influences, which have altered organisational relationships and dynamics.

Pedagogical developments and new research practices have led to digital research and online teaching, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, university libraries have adapted to this changing environment (Cox, 2021). They are no longer the sole information providers to the university community, raising concerns about obsolescence (Education Advisory Board, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2011) and being bypassed by new technologies (Cox, 2023a; Cox, 2023b).

In response, new strategies have been implemented, redefining the library's information work, reinventing library spaces and services, and impacting staff roles and ways of working. While these strategies have been significant and effective, it remains unclear whether they adequately address the opportunities and challenges posed by the evolving higher education sector and the Information Age.

Additionally, budget constraints and tensions with the profit-driven academic

publishing industry pose challenges for scholarly communication and the provision of textbooks and learning resources. These factors affect the university library's ability to meet the expectations of students and academics.

In-depth discussion of the characteristics and dynamics between organisations and groups of people with whom the university library interacts have been scarce.

Analysis of relationships between university senior stakeholders and university library leaders — including matters of influence, understanding, and power dynamics — are superficial. In-depth interrogation of these dynamics and relationships are required to provide new insights into the position of the university library and the extent to which it is valued and funded.

Wiegand (1999) stated that librarianship was subject to tunnel vision and blind spots. To avoid these, Budd (2003) called for librarians to “become more reflective” (p. 31). Budd (2003) also pointed out that lack of reflectivity was compounded by lack of historical awareness, and the disagreements between library and information services (LIS) researchers and educators and practitioners on what should be taught and researched. In addition, Budd called for the university library to be understood from the context in which it resides, namely the evolving nature of higher education.

This PhD was initially born out of frustration with a professional dialogue absent of consideration of internal and external environments in holistic, dynamic, and relational ways. What was required was deep understanding of the dynamic forces of technological advancement and the neoliberal university, and the relational positioning of the library in the university. With this perspective and approach, this study provides new answers to the fundamental question of how to position the

university library, to plan strategically, and deploy resources (staff, space, information collections, and technical infrastructure) for the future.

Thesis aims and questions

Universities strive to be transformative agents for society and the economy, and the university library plays a crucial role in this mission. This thesis aims to inspire university librarians to look beyond reinventing current services and roles. Instead, it encourages them to take a step back and consider what university communities truly need from the library to achieve their goals. The core premise of this research is to broaden perspectives and shed light on aspects that are currently overlooked by the university library community.

The overarching question that directed the course of the research was:

What is the role of the library in a modern university?

In discussing the role of the university library there are two overlapping perspectives. The first perspective considers the activity it undertakes; what it does or delivers. The second perspective defines the fundamental purpose of the university library or its *raison d'être*. The latter requires consideration of where the library fits in relation to constituent parts of the university.

There were two sub-questions (developed with my supervisors) which introduced the perspective of time, influence and relationships:

- a) How do key stakeholders understand the role of university libraries?*
- b) How have university libraries changed and what are the implications of current changes for the future?*

Research location

The interviews participants were located in England, however, many of the participants drew on their experience in other countries in their responses. Also, part way through the study I moved from my role at the University of Nottingham to Australia to take on the role of University Librarian at the University of Queensland. This had two impacts; first, a pause in my research practice to accommodate the relocation, family disruptions, and pressures of work as the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and second, it provided the opportunity to include a case study of the changing role and relationships of the university library as experienced at the University of Queensland Library. It is therefore a study which is located primarily in England and Australia, with wider reference to LIS communities around the world.

It is also worth noting that the period in which this research was undertaken coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in significant technological advancement in the workplace. This advancement was later followed by the advent of generative artificial intelligence (AI) technology which is disrupting traditional methods of teaching and learning and research in universities.

Personal positioning

Before discussing the research, it is necessary to explain my personal positioning. I inhabit a researcher practitioner role and strive for objectivity whilst acknowledging that I cannot divorce myself from my professional experience. To alleviate this, the approach taken was to make my career and its formative experiences part of the thesis. I dedicated a chapter to my reflections on the changes I have experienced as a practitioner. To share these is both an empirical addition to the study and a foundational contribution to its reflexivity.

In the six years I have taken to carry out the study, I have become more aware of the impacts of colonisation and racism. As a white female member of the university community, I recognise that our practices and workforce are not where they need to be — we seek to be antiracist, diverse, equitable, accessible, inclusive and ethical. This presents a philosophical challenge to LIS practices born of white western privileged societies and their perceptions of who owns information, what is collected and how it is organised. In response, libraries are developing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategies and priorities. Particularly important in Australia is the pursuit of Reconciliation which aims to strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australia's colonial history is characterised by devastating land dispossession, violence, and racism. Reconciliation is an ongoing journey in pursuit of improved employment, health, social and economic outcomes for all.

I acknowledge these aspects of my positionality and the injustices perpetuated in the traditions of my work environment and researcher practice. I know that the critical research stance emerging in librarianship is vital to our future and that this thesis whilst recognising some fundamental inequalities inherent in the university library, it does not directly address them.

By taking the time to review the university library domain, I have tested out my assumptions, reflected on my practice, drawn on the thinking of other practitioners and researchers, and applied the theoretical framework of Bourdieu. This thesis has given me the mechanism to examine changing practice in its changing environment and then confirm and articulate new ways forward for the university library. When I

have spoken to LIS colleagues about this research, they have been encouraging and delighted that I might find a voice which brings a fresh perspective. My hope is that they find this thesis one which accurately reflects their experiences, is respectful of directions taken, and challenges them to think differently.

Theoretical positioning

The starting point for this research was a belief that the modern university library and its components are a social construct. These components cannot be understood independent of each other, the dynamics between them are an important part of this study. These dynamics are impacted by forces outside of the construct of the modern university library. In addition, the interpretation of this construct, the components and the dynamics — inside and out of the construct — can only be understood subjectively, through the values, experiences and understanding of the observer and researcher.

Budd (2003) characterises library and information science as untheorised in practice. Instead, it draws on two theoretical frames. Firstly, business and management theories and methods. Secondly, theories of information science, information behaviour and knowledge management. Neither of these theoretical frames were appropriate to this study. What was required was a sociological foundation, constructivist theoretical frame and qualitative methods.

Why Bourdieu?

Understanding the impact of the library's internal and external environments required examination of the complex interplay of dynamics between people and groups, and within and beyond the environments within which the library is situated, all of which change over time. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002)

provided the appropriate theoretical and methodological approach. Bourdieu, a social constructivist, examined social systems or entities and was concerned with power dynamics, interactions, and relationships between people, groups, or organisations. He was also concerned with how social entities came to be, how they changed, and their path forward over time — their trajectory. Alongside social dynamics and trajectory, Bourdieu also considered the impact of the environment within which the social entity was situated and how it adjusted (or not) to the changing characteristics or forces of that environment. Or as Thomson (2008) described it, Bourdieu examined “the social space in which interactions, transactions and events occurred” (p. 65). Therefore, Bourdieu’s theoretical and methodological approach provided an appropriate (albeit ambitious) framework for this study.

Bourdieu operationalised theory by developing methodological devices. He deployed objectifying methods to create distance between the object or subject of research and the researcher. The methodological devices applied in this study are his field tools, which provided a holistic, strategic, and multiple perspectives approach. Deploying Bourdieu’s field tools gave structure to and illuminated interactions of agents (librarians, publishers, senior leaders) and how they combine with structure (social, political, economic, technical) and culture (ways of doing things in the library tradition, and in universities).

Introducing Bourdieu’s concept of field and field tools

Throughout this study there is a preoccupation with change, relational dynamics, and external and internal forces impacting on the university library. Bourdieu’s field tools were useful as organising and structuring tools as well as analytical tools. It is therefore helpful to introduce them early in this thesis. The key tools and concepts

applied in this study are the concepts of field, capital, habitus, doxa and practice, and the field conditions of misrecognition and hysteresis.

The field

Bourdieu's concept of 'field' is foundational. Field enables definition of the boundaries of time, place, and social groups for social entities. Fields in Bourdieusian terms are constructs within which social dynamics (economic, cultural, psychological, historical) play out between individuals, institutions, and groups of people. Whilst application of the concept of field requires that boundaries are drawn, these boundaries are permeable and changeable. A field is a relatively autonomous social space which generates and shapes interactions including oppositions, and positions. Thomson (2008) used analogies of the football field and force field to animate the concept of field, in line with Bourdieu's intent.

The game on the field: capital gains and losses

There is competition within the social field; its inhabitants use various strategies and tactics to defend and advance their position. These tactics and positions change over time and trajectories relative to others are negotiated. In the game within the field, capital losses or gains are at stake. For Bourdieu there are two broad types of capital: economic and symbolic. There are different types of symbolic capital. These are set out in Table 1 with examples relevant to the university library.

Table 1 *Bourdieu's types of capital*

Economic capital	Symbolic capital			
	Cultural			Social
	Embodied	Objectified	Institutionalised	
Money, income, budget, assets	Knowledge and skills (e.g., management expertise)	For example, books, journals, digital and print, and buildings	For example, qualifications, titles, data used for promotion and audit, university rankings etc.	Who you know, networks of contacts, family, and friends.

The players or *agents* playing the game: inhabiting and forming *habitus*

In the context of the game, the players on the field are referred to as ‘agents,’ which can include individuals, groups, or organisations. These agents carry with them their past experiences and ingrained ways of thinking and acting, which Bourdieu terms ‘habitus.’ Habitus often operates subconsciously, as illustrated by Bourdieu’s famous quote: “When the habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself ‘as a fish in water’; it does not feel the weight of water and takes the world about itself for granted” (Wacquant, 1989, p. 43). Importantly, one of the key strengths of Bourdieu’s approach is his rejection of a strict dichotomy between structure and agency. Instead, he emphasises that both are composed of “bundles of relations” (Wacquant, 1992, p. 16).

Habitus determines how agents interact and experience each other. It is simultaneously created in the present and influences the future habitus of agents and the field. Habitus has much utility in research; Wacquant (2016) found that it is suited to analysing crisis and change as well as identifying cohesion. Wacquant (2016) also advised that as a research tool habitus is not “a self-sufficient mechanism” (p. 69) rather that the “dissection of dispositions” (p. 69) must be

carried out alongside consideration of “the system of positions that alternately excite, suppress, or redirect the socially constituted capacities and inclinations of the agent.” (p. 69).

Doxa

Whilst agents encounter and create habitus in ways which can be conscious or unconscious, the concept of ‘doxa’ facilitates deeper examination of the dispositions of agents. Agents embody doxa, which can be derived outside of the current field which they inhabit. Doxa refers to apparently natural beliefs and opinions which are ingrained in a person’s psyche to the extent that they are not aware that their behaviours are anything other than intuitive. Doxa interacts with habitus and field as embedded assumptions and behaviours of agents. Deer (2008) states, “Doxa refers to pre-reflective, shared but unquestioned opinions and perceptions conveyed within ... which determine ‘natural’ practice and attitudes via the internalised ‘sense of limits’ and habitus of the agents in those fields” (p. 115). As such doxa can embody the unformulated and unexpressed, and therefore unknowingly contribute to its reproduction in individuals (minds, emotions and bodies) and institutions (policies, practices, and buildings) and in organising structures and relations.

Application of Bourdieu

In this research, the Bourdieusian analysis gave a framework to assess the strategies and practices of the university library, past and present. In addition, it provided the tools to purposefully dissect the relationships and interactions within and outside the university library, and to reveal underpinning assumptions and beliefs. With the insights generated, it was then possible to propose strategies for the future of the university library.

Boundaries of the study

Given the study situated the university library over time in the context of the university and its community, setting boundaries around what to include and exclude was challenging. It was helpful to understand the boundaries as Bourdieusian fields and to set the primary field of analysis and name it *University Libraries*. As the university library derives its funding and overarching policy framework from the university it inhabits, the next point of orientation defined was the field of *Higher Education*.

Considered in this analysis are three other fields which impact the field of *University Libraries* and to a lesser or greater extent the field of *Higher Education*. They are the field of *Academic Publishing*, the field of *Networked Society* developed with the advancement of information and communication technologies (ICT), and the *Library and Information Services (LIS)* field from which many practices and dispositions are adopted in the field of *University Libraries*. The depth of analysis of these fields varied according to the extent of their impact on *University Libraries* and what was practicable in this study.

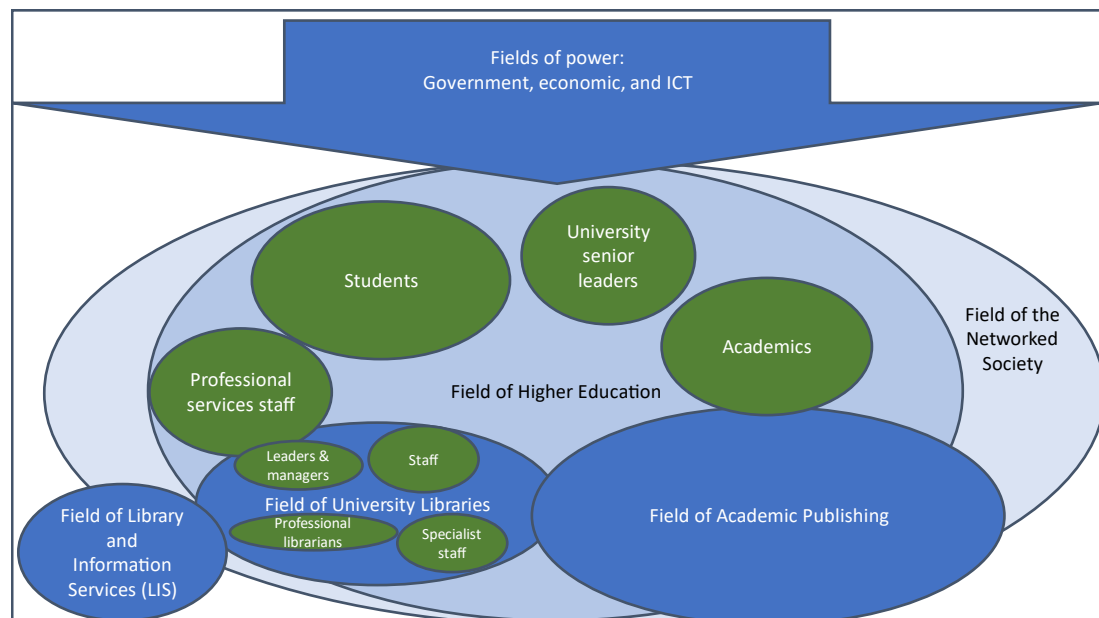
The *University Libraries*, *Higher Education*, *Networked Society*, and *LIS* fields exist within economic and government fields. Government and economic fields are defined as ‘fields of power’. Bourdieu used the term field of power to describe the social space inhabited by the most dominant groups who exert significant influence on subordinate fields. In this study, analysis suggested that the power exerted on society by Big Tech required that ICT be elevated to the field of power.

Regarding stakeholder groups, the categorisations assigned to the constituent groups of the field of *Higher Education* were university senior leaders, academics, students,

professional services staff, and university library staff and leaders. In the field of *University Libraries*, group categorisations were library leaders and managers, professional librarians, specialist staff and other staff. There are overlaps between these groups. While the views and experiences of students and academics are important to this study, those interviewed were library leaders, higher education and national library senior leaders and publishers. I relied on them and the case study to describe the perspectives and needs of the users of the university library.

Figure 1 is a representation of fields and their positions relative to each other. No attempt has been made to show proper proportions of the sizes in relation to for example, economic capital or number of agents in the fields. The figure also includes named groups of constituent stakeholders.

Figure 1 Representation of fields within which the university library is situated



Navigating this thesis

Chapter 1 and 3 together set out my intentions, and approach to this research including the Bourdieusian theoretical framework, and methods. Chapter 2 situates

this research study in the literature of the university library. The groupings of and sequence of chapters of this thesis which follow, first introduce the reader to my career and reflections on change (Chapter 4).

Next, the empirical data and analysis chapters are presented. They are the interview study, the case study, and the Bourdieusian field analysis. In Chapter 5, the scene is set for the interview study by introducing the interviewees and timeline to illustrate the changes to which they refer. The interview study is presented in Chapter 6, noting that the interviews took place before my move to Australia and before the COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter 7 presents the changing role and relationships of the university library: a case study of the University of Queensland Library. This includes consideration of its history and evolution, and experience of the pandemic. The case adds to and triangulates the findings of the interview study. The Bourdieusian field study follows in Chapter 8 utilising the data of Chapter 2, and Chapters 4–7.

The appendices support this thesis with definitions, interview questions, an example transcript, and case study consent. Also included are extracts and summaries of empirical data collected which underpin the analysis. Finally, Chapter 9 discusses the findings, Chapter 10 sets out the implications for university library practice and research, and concludes the thesis.

Terminology, acronyms, and definitions

The LIS and higher education (HE) domains abound with jargon and acronyms. For clarity and consistency in this study I take position on some key points and phrases described below and also include common definitions in Appendix 1. The discipline or area of activity within which the university library is situated is generally referred

to as the Library and Information Services (LIS) domain, although there are variations in the use of Services which include Science and Studies. There are also phrases, reports, bodies, initiatives which have meaning that is well understood for LIS researchers and practitioners. The level of detail to which LIS practices are described was limited to what is required for the understanding of the reader. Several terms are used repeatedly throughout this thesis that require some clarification and definition. It is important to note early on the use of ‘collections’ to represent learning, research, or information resources gathered by the library including monographs, textbooks, and journals.

Influenced by business management theories and practice, the LIS community widely uses ‘environment’ ‘wider environment’, ‘internal environment’, and ‘operating environment’ to describe the context in which the library exists. In this thesis ‘environment’ is used loosely to refer to the political, economic, technological, social space internal and external to the university library. Business and management theories use ‘organisational culture’ or ‘culture’ to describe how things are done in different organisations. In Bourdieusian terms culture is defined in relation to knowledge, taste, aesthetics and often referred to in relation to cultural capital. Culture is also used in reference to ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society. I refer to culture in all these ways as appropriate, making clear my intent as I do.

Throughout this thesis, I refer to the ‘field’ and ‘domain’. The field, in Bourdieusian terms, was defined earlier; here I note that it has a more general meaning namely an area of activity or knowledge. I restrict use of ‘field’ to the Bourdieu meaning. When

referring to a specific area of knowledge or expertise or activity, I refer to the ‘domain’.

Business and management, LIS literature, and sociology have different ways of describing groups of people. Groups of people who interact with an organisation are stakeholders, vendors, suppliers, clients, customers, and those who engage with libraries are readers, patrons and users, and can also be known as clients and customers. University key constituent groups are academics (including professors, associate professors, lecturers, principal investigators), senior management (including Vice-Chancellors, Deans, and Heads of School), and students (including part-time, full-time, domestic, international, undergraduate, and post-graduate) and professional staff. Sociologists refer to groups and individuals as agents or actors. The preferred terms for this thesis are grounded in common practice for LIS. When referring to those who impact on and/or are part of the university library ‘stakeholders’ is deployed, and for those who use the library ‘users’. Distinctions are made within student and academic groups only when relevant. In the Bourdieusian analysis, ‘agents’ are used to describe distinct groups of people or individuals.

Chapter 2: Literature review

The literature review supports a holistic understanding of changes in the university library and perspectives on its future. The surveyed literature is extensive, encompassing broad views of the university library as well as specific aspects explored by practitioners, professional bodies, researchers, and consultants. It includes opinion pieces, surveys, histories, and descriptive case studies. Mindful of the Bourdieusian field study, of particular focus was the literature which situated the workings of the university library within the dynamics of higher education (HE), academic publishing, economic conditions, and technological advancement.

The aim of this literature review is to integrate these diverse bodies of literature to support the thesis's arguments on the evolution of library collections, spaces, services, staff, leadership, and strategies in response to the changing HE environment and the context of technological advancement and the Information Age.

The review first considers Library and Information Services (LIS) histories, then the technical evolution of the university library including the impact of artificial intelligence (AI), and the network society. Second, it brings together commentary on library collections and scholarly communication, followed by consideration of the university library support for students including the transformation of library spaces. Third, the literature of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on LIS is reviewed. Fourth, the people within the university library are considered. Fifth, the literature which provides insight into how the university library is perceived by senior stakeholders in universities, and students and academic is reviewed. Finally, there are two further sections, one is focused on the literature of the library of the future and the other on the relevant body of Bourdieusian scholarship.

How has the university library changed?

The development of university libraries paralleled the rise of universities in Europe during the twelfth century (Budd, 2018). A pivotal moment came with the invention of the Gutenberg printing press in 1455, which enabled mass book production (Naughton, 2012). This innovation allowed university libraries to scale up collecting books for scholarly purposes (Budd, 2018; Hoare, 2006; Moodie, 2016), a role that has evolved significantly over time.

In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, university libraries were marked by a scarcity of scholarly books and a heavy reliance on benefactors who donated their personal collections (Jensen, 2006; Lovatt, 2006; Pettegree, 2015; Sargent, 2006).

The rarity and value of books led to a distinctive feature of early university libraries: securing volumes to desks with chains (Campbell & Pryce, 2013). By the early seventeenth century, librarians began engaging with booksellers and publishers across Europe, though these relationships were often fraught with difficulties from the outset; relations with publishers were “vexed” (Jensen, 2006, p. 362).

Growing print collections and demands on space

Bennett (2009) described the “explosion” (p. 185) of book publication in the nineteenth century. Johnson (1970) described the situation at Harvard University Library; the volume of books went from 225,000 in 1875 to four million in 1940. In response, collections were housed across multiple departmental libraries and later off-site storage facilities were built (Campbell & Pryce, 2013; Carr, 2007; Jensen, 2006; Johnson, 1970). For many university libraries, space for collections in library buildings was made available at the expense of space for study.

Libraries as symbols of culture and learning, and organic beings

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the role of the university library was seen to be that of information custodian. As research publication grew, the university library managed them (Atkins, 1991). Collections were “gloated over and admired” (Freshwater, 2006, p. 358). To be the custodian of collections was to be respected and celebrated.

Library buildings themselves assumed the revered status of the books they housed. They became symbols of reading and learning, to the extent that Campbell and Pryce (2013) describe them as “emblems of culture” for individuals, institutions and “even a whole nation” (p. 19). Sargent (2006) recounted how university libraries were sometimes built as showpieces featuring book displays and decorated ceilings and windows, to demonstrate the wealth and generosity of benefactors. Gyure (2008) in his history of the academic library in the US described it as an architectural symbol of American HE. Between 1890 and the 1940s libraries were prominently positioned architectural icons which symbolised the “heart of the university” (Gyure, 2008, p. 107), although after World War II, as HE expanded and modernist architecture developed, library building design shifted to emphasise function over “monumentality” (p. 107). The same pattern was seen in Britain; Mowat (2006) commented on the “lack of monumentality in most of the libraries erected since the 1960s” in favour of “efficiency of use” (p. 377).

As symbols of national and cultural identity, libraries and their collections have been exposed to political and societal challenges and opportunities. Ovenden (2020) considered political and violent acts, including those of war (for example the Nazi book burnings of 1933 in Berlin), and technological advancement. Similarly, Battles

(2003) in his 'unquiet history' considered that the library amalgamations of books "take on lives and histories of their own, not as texts but as physical objects in the world" (p. 10). Crawford (2015) went further and painted a picture of libraries as organic animate beings, in tune with their environment and constantly adapting.

Higher education policy and funding

Mowat (2006) reviewed the evolution of academic libraries in the UK from the 1960s with consideration of government policy and intervention. He described how the Robbins Report (Committee on Higher Education, 1963) triggered the expansion of HE and increased government involvement in the sector. He explained that the Parry Committee (University Grants Committee, 1967) set up by the University Grants Committee (UGC), assessed the impact of increased student numbers on the university library, specifically growing print collections and space pressures. What followed was UGC-funded library building redevelopments and the formation of a working party that reviewed collection storage. The working party was chaired by Professor R.J.C. Atkinson. Amongst its recommendations was the concept of library collection self-renewal, "a library of limited size in which beyond a certain point material should be reduced at a rate related to the rate of acquisitions" (Atkinson report, University Grants Committee (1976) in Loveday, 1977, p. 21).

Nevertheless by 1993, the academic library system in the UK was deemed to be in crisis and in need of a comprehensive review. Mowat (2006) reported on the Joint Funding Councils' Libraries Review Group, chaired by Sir Brian Follett. The resulting Follett Report (Joint Funding Councils' Libraries Review Group, 1993) was a pivotal document that secured government funding to implement its

recommendations. It identified three main areas for action: automation, buildings, and collections.

A significant outcome of the report was the establishment of the electronic library programme (eLib) under the Joint Information Services Committee (JISC) of the Higher Education Funding Councils. The eLib projects produced practical outputs and fundamentally “changed the whole mind-set of a generation of librarians” (Mowat, 2006, p. 384).

Funding the university library

Economic conditions affect higher education (HE) and university libraries, but these impacts vary across different institutions. Patton and Keogh (2023) noted that additional factors contribute to this variability, with some libraries experiencing a decline in their share of university expenditure in recent decades. In his survey of the status of academic libraries in the US from their inception in 1638, Atkins (1991) found that investment in libraries has also been inconsistent. Beyond the effects of economic downturns, Atkins highlighted the period from 1945 to 1990 as one marked by significant concerns about costs, especially regarding investment in new technology.

Technical evolution of the university library

Extensive literature exists on the adoption and evolution of technology in university libraries (Arms, 2012; Baker & Evans, 2013; Baker & Evans, 2016; Buehler, 2013; Carr, 2007; Dempsey & Malpas, 2018; Elguindi & Schmidt, 2012; Mizruchi, 2021; Mowat, 2006; Sapp & Gilmour, 2002; Sapp & Gilmour, 2003; Williams, 2024b).

This body of work details the history of automation, digitisation, and the adoption of the Internet and AI. Even before the advent of computers, libraries were early

adopters of technology, utilising tools such as typewriters, punch cards, and microfilm (Arms, 2012; Black, 2007). Baker and Evans (2016, 2017) argued that the adoption of technology has always been a familiar and evolving challenge for university libraries, rather than a new one.

Early technological visions and developments

Sapp and Gilmour (2003) point to the seminal work of F.W. Lancaster (1978a) “one of the early predictors and enthusiasts of ‘paperless information systems’” (p. 13).

Lancaster (1978b) identified a key moment in 1945 when the US Director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development, Dr. Vannevar Bush indicated ways in which existing photographic and electronic techniques might be applied to recording and retrieving research results. Bush (1945) published a paper in the Atlantic ‘As we may think’, which proposed, “a future device for individual use, which is a sort of mechanized private file and library ... an enlarged intimate supplement to his memory” (p. 106). He recognised that machines were essential for enhancing people’s mental capabilities in searching for and using information. Later, Horn (1958) advocated for change in academic libraries, envisioning a computerised future. Similarly, Licklider (1965) acknowledged the necessity of automated systems for storing, organising, and retrieving information.

Computer driven developments in libraries were not universally supported. For example, Mason (1971) was disparaging and stated that computerising library operations was financially “irresponsible and “managerially incompetent” (p. 193). Nevertheless, technological developments were embraced in the university library. By the 1980s, Veaner (1985a, 1985b) recognised that the future of academic libraries whilst shaped by technological advancement also required different staff mindsets

and capabilities. He believed that for effective implementation of technology, staff needed expertise in process review and skills to develop partnerships with colleagues across universities.

Automation of library process and practices were traced back to the 1960s. Mowat (2006) noted university library “experiments in automation” by in-house teams rather than commercial suppliers who were “still finding their way” (p. 386). Mowat (2006) reported that by the 1980s automated systems were widely adopted in the university library. Elguindi and Schmidt (2012) described the evolution of library systems and the growth of electronic resources. They specifically mentioned the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), Library Management Systems (LMS), and the introduction of Electronic Resource Management (ERM). Buehler (2013) described the development of institutional, national and international repository infrastructure (1990–2010), which facilitated open access to research publications and management of university research publications and data.

A feature of the thirty years of automation from the 1960s was collaboration between libraries. One notable example was the Birmingham Libraries Cooperative Mechanisation Project (BLCMP). BLCMP created a shared cataloguing database and grew to offer a LMS system which was widely adopted by the university library (Mowat, 2006). Sapp and Gilmour (2002) report similar initiatives in the US aided by adopting bibliographic Machine-Readable Cataloguing (MARC) standards which made exchanging records between systems easy. Sapp and Gilmour (2002) noted the creation of the Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) in 1971, which facilitated group cataloguing and resource sharing across the US.

Electronic information and the Internet

As the university library moved to the next phase of technology adoption there was increased focus on digitisation and management of digital collections, first on CD-ROM, and then on the Internet. Publishers converted back runs of journals to digital formats (Arms, 2012) and took the opportunity to “tighten their hold on the market” by licensing rather than selling online content (Mowat, 2006, p. 393). University collaboration continued, there were many avenues to explore and concerns to address. Shores (2018) described how technology facilitated regional and national resource sharing and the use of data to inform book acquisitions in the 1970s. Shores (2018) also noted concern over costs of online searching and the disruptive impact of automation on library staff “leaving many feeling unprepared to succeed in their jobs” (p. 8).

The widespread adoption of Internet search engines changed the practice of LIS. Focusing on public libraries, Waller (2009) noted that while some librarians supported Google’s search function, others were concerned about the academic quality of the information retrieved. A decade later, Google was accepted as part of the information landscape. Further, it was regarded as a valuable addition. Bruce and McGregor (2013) reported that the aim for librarians was to ensure access to knowledge, and that search engines (and the rise of the Internet) brought the “ability to have access to resources anytime and anywhere” (p. 106). By 2020, Hayes et al. (2021) reported that 79% of faculty and 74% of students began their information searches outside the university library (p. 28) and recommended indexing of library catalogues by Google. Lorcan Dempsey (2020), a prominent library commentator, made the point that libraries worked in a diversified system of information sources, where users discovered information outside of libraries. Given this, he recommended

that libraries insert services and collections into the workflows of students and academics.

Others commented on the impact of technological advancement, namely the decline of visibility of the library (e.g., Battin, 1987). By way of response, Woodsworth et al., (1989) recommended that librarians partner with academics in the creation, publishing and management of information, and Hendrick (1986) advocated for librarians with PhDs and for bold initiatives, to regain reputation and power. Hendrick recommended developing information systems, creating programmes of scholars in residence and research fellowships, establishing library institutes and centres of excellence, developing off-campus offerings for external constituents, and that the chief librarian position be made equal to a dean.

Mowat (2006) stated that one consequence of adoption of ICT was the closer relations between libraries and university computing centres, to the extent that universities combined their libraries and computing centres into ‘converged’ information services units (p. 387). Partnerships with technology companies were also reported. Pettegree and der Weduwen (2022) discussed the relationship between libraries and Google, particularly the Google Book project. They reported that Google in partnership with university libraries digitised 20 million print books, before the project stalled in 2005 due to a class action from authors on the grounds of copyright infringement. Cox (2023a) stated that Google and commercial publishers could be regarded as competitors to rather than partners of the university library.

AI and the university library

AI is a broad term encompassing a variety of theories, strategies, systems, and techniques in computer science and related disciplines which aim to give machines

the ability to mimic human intelligence. AI is not simply automation. Different AI technologies do different things, and different approaches are used. In recent years there has been a surge in interest in AI, particularly generative AI. Generative AI came to prominence with the release of OpenAI's ChatGPT in late 2022. The history of AI in research libraries dates back almost fifty years when links were made between AI and information search and retrieval (Smith, 1975). Smith linked the work of Vannevar Bush (1945) who championed the use of machines in information storage and retrieval (as discussed in Chapter 2: Literature review-Technical evolution and the university library-Early technological visions and developments), to the work of A. M. Turing, who considered the opportunities for machines to develop cognitive capabilities. Turing (1950) specifically addressed the question, 'Can machines think?'. He set out a vision for a library of computer programs able to respond to human interrogation in a coherent and meaningful way. Turing emphasised natural language as a medium of interrogation, and inspired research on computer processing of natural language which we experience when we use ChatGPT today.

The literature demonstrates the extent to which the library community has embraced the capabilities of AI (Cox, et al., 2019; Hervieux & Wheatley, 2022). The capabilities of AI apply to many library functions and offer new opportunities for libraries to support university colleagues. The literature on the impact of AI on academic institutions is growing. In 2023, Russell Group universities developed principles on the use of AI in education. The principles recognised the risks and opportunities of generative AI and committed Russell Group universities to helping staff and students become leaders in an AI-enabled world. It is clear that the university library can play an important part in this.

Cox et al. (2019) reported the role of the university library in AI as: procuring or creating content for AI services; procuring or designing AI tools; performing data curation, quality control, and analysis; designing data infrastructure; teaching critical data literacy; serving as navigators to the new information environment; and writing AI algorithms. Pirgova-Morgan (2023), in a library-led survey of University of Leeds students and staff found that “by leveraging AI technologies libraries can improve the user experience, streamline their operations and provide relevant resources to their patrons” (p. 96). Pirgova-Morgan also pointed out that responsible and ethical use of AI was a concern which aligned with the “library’s mission and values” (p. 96). Cox and Mazumdar (2022) identified five areas where AI could be deployed by libraries use cases: back-end processes (administrative and manual tasks), services (collection management, systematic review, and reference queries), data science community building and participation, data and AI literacy, and user management (utilising analytics).

Lorcan Dempsey, in his blog posts (2023a, 2023b, 2023c, 2023d) situated AI in libraries in areas of practical, commercial, technical and philosophical concern. He stated that while AI technology presented many exciting opportunities, concerns about misinformation, copyright, persistence of biases and social concerns (including job security) must be addressed. He pointed out that in the training of large language models (LLMs) copyright issues were unresolved and that AI models generated only what had been learned from source material and therefore reproduced historically dominant perspectives. He commented that AI appeared differently in products and services from academic publishers and library system suppliers, therefore it was important for library staff to understand how these products work so they can make informed procurement decisions. He made the point that this required reskilling of

library staff and that librarians needed time to get a feel for AI to build understanding of what was possible. Dempsey (2023c) referred to this as “a make, bake or take” approach to AI. Finally, he commented on governance and approaches to risk management.

Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers

It is crucial to situate the university library within its social context. As Naughton (2012) noted, society exists within a complex media and information ecosystem. This research study, therefore, examined the various challenges and opportunities that this ecosystem presents to society and universities, and how these factors influence the role of the library.

In the LIS literature, concepts such as the information society and the knowledge economy frequently appear in introductory statements and context-setting paragraphs of monographs, journal papers, and conference papers. Additionally, there is literature which presented findings of studies into the information seeking behaviour of students and researchers.

The network society and Information Age

The ‘information society’, ‘Information Age’, ‘network society’, or ‘knowledge economy’ and ‘knowledge society’ are terms which originate from academia in the latter half of the twentieth century. Stehr and Mast (2012) noted that “At least 75 terms were introduced between 1950 and 1984 designed to summarise the emerging social realities ... [including] Manuel Castells’s ‘network society’ (1996) as well as the even broader notion of the ‘information society,’ to name but a few of the relevant theoretical concepts” (p. 17-18). Significant is Manuel Castells’ work, *The Rise of the Network Society*, first published in 1996 and updated in 2000 and 2010,

which set out a world where technological advancement and the Internet has impacted global society to the extent that culture and the *modus operandi* for business has transformed. Specifically, social structures have changed; networks constitute the dominant form of organisation. Network structures have enabled, “highly dynamic, open system[s], susceptible to innovating without threatening its balance” and with that a “morphology” which has led to “dramatic reorganisation of power relationships.” (Castells, 2010, p. 501–502). Castells presented the network society as the social structure of “the Information Age”, and the Information Age as the equivalent of the Industrial Age of industrial society (Castells, 2023, p. 941). At first optimistic of the impacts of the network society, later Castells (2023) described the negative effects. For him, the disruptive nature of social media and the rise of fake news had “polluted the information space”, and generated a “moral, systemic decomposition of the information system” to the extent that “science, facts, and reason at large, as guidance of human action” were diminished (Castells, 2023, p. 943). This and the use of ICT for state surveillance in the tumultuous geopolitical environment, led Castell to warn that ICT networks — the infrastructure of the network society — overwhelm nation states to the extent that networks are “becoming the vehicles of our collective doom” (p. 945).

Chapman and Webster (2006) noted that there are two popular themes in the LIS commentary on the ‘information society’, namely the expansion of ICT and digital information, and the changes to the nature of work, particularly the growth in service industries. The university library response to the networked or information society has focused on three areas. Firstly, how to best manage digital collections. Secondly, the policies, practices, infrastructure and services to support academic information production and access, including open access (OA) publishing. Thirdly, how best to

support university communities as they search vast reservoirs of information through the development of their digital capabilities or literacies. All of these are discussed in subsequent sections of this literature review. Prior to this it is important to review the literature which speaks to changing information behaviour.

Information behaviour

Four themes were identified from the literature on information behaviour. Firstly, academic concerns about the use of the Internet in teaching and learning which dated back to early 2000s. Secondly and more recently, these concerns have become wider societal fears about misinformation, disinformation and fake news. Thirdly, there is literature specific to the behaviour of disciplinary communities, researchers, teachers, and students. Fourthly, the studies which explore the changing channels and challenges in communication of scientific information.

Brabazon (2002) argued that the Internet is detrimental to teaching, and later linked the rise of Google to university administrators' financial decisions to cut library funding (Brabazon, 2007). She criticised students for neglecting academic literature in favour of browsing Google and urged librarians to collaborate with teachers to develop students' information literacy skills. Similarly, Whitworth (2009) highlighted the negative impacts of the Internet, coining the term 'information obesity.' He used this analogy to describe the problem of an overwhelming quantity of low-quality information and decreased quality of information, such that the challenge for individuals is not access to information but being discerning users of it.

In coining the phrase the 'Net Generation', Tapscott (1998, 1999) set up a dichotomy between the generations, with parents and educators on one side and on the other students and young people born after 1980 into a world with the Internet. The Net

Generation morphed into the ‘digital native’ (Prensky, 2001a, 2001b), and spawned other descriptors, including Gen Z — the social media dependent “sharing generation” (Barnes & Noble College, 2015, p. 2). Thus, universities were driven to bridge a perceived digital capability gap between themselves and the young people they educate. The digital native conceptualisation was debunked by Thomas (2011) who stated that young people’s use of technology was most often in their social lives. Thomas called for educators to enter into sociopolitical debate — which considers on-campus / off-campus experiences and quality of education — about deployment of new technologies in teaching and learning. Kennedy and Judd (2011) described students as “poor” (p. 119) in using the Internet for academic purposes, and characterised search behaviour as “satisficing” (p. 127) due to its focus on “expediency” (p. 124). By 2019, Jarrahi and Eshraghi (2019) found that there were many factors beyond age (for example personality traits) which impacted the use of social media technologies.

In the mid-2000s, as Google came to be the dominant search engine and fears that the Internet would lead to the obsolescence of libraries, the British Library and JISC commissioned a study into how researchers of the future (those born after 1993) were likely to access and interact with digital resources ten years hence. The study (Rowlands et al., 2008) when released sparked LIS conference and meeting discussions. Its title and the headline findings played to digital native mythology; *The Google generation: the information behaviour of the researcher of the future*. The report overturned the then assumption that the Google generation were web-literate. It also characterised information seeking behaviour as horizontal, bouncing, checking and viewing in nature. This report was then followed by a number of studies commissioned by JISC (Education for Change, 2012), the Research

Information Network (RIN, 2009; RIN, 2011), and OCLC (Connaway & Dickey, 2010). The reports confirmed the increasing popularity of Google, highlighted the importance of convenience in accessing information, and noted disciplinary differences in the use of digital and print resources.

Four years after the Rowlands et al. (2008) study, Crook (2012), an academic in the University of Nottingham, studied a sample of 53 pupils across 17 schools, and used focus group conversations to explore the theme of new technology use at home and in school. Taking four areas of human communication: inquiry, literacies, collaboration and publication, the study explored the extent to which Web 2.0 technologies would be “eagerly appropriated into educational practice” (Crook, 2012, p. 77). His findings informed a deeper understanding beyond “merely denying a rhetoric of the ‘digital native’ ... suggest[ing] a sophisticated awareness among young people of institutional, social and moral tensions associated with modern web-based services, as well as a greater level of ambiguity of attitude than is normally recognised” (Crook, 2012, p. 63). This deeper and relational understanding of information behaviour was also evident in Catalano (2013), in her systematic review, a US meta-synthesis of post-graduate students’ information seeking behaviour. Catalano found that: “students at different levels of [post-graduate] study and from different disciplines access different types of resources. Most students will consult the Internet first when beginning their research, although doctoral students are more inclined to also consult their faculty advisors ... After faculty, students consulted librarians and peers” (Catalano, 2013, p. 268). The literature of information seeking behaviour continued to expand. Hayes et al. (2021) presented a disciplinary nuanced position in relation to information behaviour. Specifically, “Arts & Humanities, Education and Social Sciences student and faculty patrons were more likely to start

at the library than their colleagues in areas such as Health & Medicine” (p. 32) and in relation to OA the sciences were considered better placed with bigger funder budgets for article processing charges (APCs) and improved repository infrastructure. Hayes et al. (2021) went on to posit that the less favourable funding environment for the humanities, education, and social sciences means that when engaging with information students and academics “are more inclined to start in the library” (p. 32).

As social media platforms such as Facebook grew, they became “young people’s information source of choice” (Fowler-Watt, 2023, p. 2). The impact of this was wide ranging. There has been commentary on the effect of social media on politics, health information, advertising and marketing, and particular concerns in relation to fake news and propagation of mistrust among communities (Fowler-Watt & McDougall, 2023). Fake news is widely understood to refer to deliberately misleading information which is designed to mimic the look of actual articles from established news organisations. The term fake news came to widespread public attention during the 2016 US presidential campaign when inaccurate social media posts were spread to large groups, and again during the COVID-19 pandemic (Guess & Lyons, 2020; Yeoman and Morris, 2023).

Sunstein (2018) argued that social networking sites allowed politically likeminded people to find one another (due to the filtering effects of ranking algorithms), and so form ‘echo chambers’ where similar views were reinforced, isolated from opposing views. Thus, ‘filter bubbles’ of partisan content sharing are generated (Benkler et al., 2018; Pariser, 2011). Other concepts which have become part of the LIS lexicon are disinformation and misinformation. Disinformation is regarded as a subset of

misinformation. Disinformation is meant to deceive, while misinformation may be inadvertent or unintentional. Academia and the LIS community have been mobilised to develop awareness and media literacies in students so that they are better able to navigate this information environment (Dingli & Seychell, 2015; Haider & Sundin, 2022; Parker, 2023).

In relation to the impact of technology on research practices, Borgman (2007) discussed new technological infrastructures, the difficulties in engaging with huge volumes of data, the challenges of digital preservation and content management, the move from print to digital scholarly publishing, and the information practices of different disciplines. In her deeper consideration of data, Borgman (2015) argued that the data required for research relies not only on technologies but skills and investment in people, practice, institutions, and relationships. At the same time, Bartling and Friesike (2014) put this into its challenging context and highlighted that research, as a sensitive, complex process with many facets and millions of participants, hierarchies, personal networks, and structures, needs informed participants. Many words are used to describe the technology enabled research: ‘Science 2.0’, ‘Cyberscience 2.0’, ‘Open Research’, ‘Open Science’, ‘Digital Humanities’, ‘eScience’, ‘Mode 2’, and so forth. This has spawned a new wave of services in the university library (as discussed in Chapter 2: Literature review- Library collections and scholarly communication).

A recent Royal Society (2022) report provided a comprehensive overview of how the Internet has changed the way society engages with scientific information, including issues of misinformation, echo chambers, filter bubbles, and people’s ability to detect deepfake videos and images. The report aimed to support and inspire

early identification of misinformation “to counteract the algorithmic amplification of polarising misinformation in an attention economy which incentivises the spread of sensational stories rather than sound understanding” (p. 5). The authors found that the incentives for content production and consumption were key factors to consider when evaluating information. They recommended that the online information environment requires legislation which “can address the incentives of business models that shape the algorithms determining the spread of content” (p. 5). The report also drew attention to the incentives for scientific publication and communication, that “Open access has been a boon, but in an age of information overload we need tools to identify questionable publishers or platforms. Furthermore, scientists need to be clear and transparent about their own motivations and whether they are seeking to inform or seeking to persuade” (p. 5).

Library collections and scholarly communication

The networked society and associated behavioural changes have significantly impacted the role of university libraries as collectors, buyers, suppliers, and facilitators of information. Budd (2018) emphasised the importance of librarians understanding the “means of production of information” (p. 1). He also noted that the information environment has become increasingly complex in recent decades. It is not enough for librarians to merely understand this complexity; they must use this knowledge to effectively manage collections, design services, and develop systems that best support their university communities. The next body of literature reviewed explores how librarians have experienced and understood this evolving information environment.

Collections and collecting

There is a substantial body of literature on library collections and collection management. In his textbook on the academic library, Budd (2018) noted that technological advancements have significantly altered the concept of a 'collection' and continue to do so (p. 253). He also highlighted the differences between academic disciplines in terms of preferred information formats. For instance, books (both print and electronic) are particularly important in the humanities and social sciences, where scholars often present their work in book-length formats. In contrast, scientific communication tends to be briefer to facilitate faster dissemination of findings. Additionally, Budd (2018) pointed out the decline in the production of scholarly books and the simultaneous growth in the production of journals.

There is a body of literature which explores the scholarly and cultural significance of books and points to an uncertain future (Carr, 2007; Cope & Phillips, 2006; Deegan, 2017; Gomez, 2008; Jubb, 2017; Lynch, 2001; Smith, 2014). The future of academic book publishing is challenging due to limited markets for academic monographs and the costs of print production. In addition, books' demand of authors significant time and effort in researching and writing. In relation to e-books, Lamdan et al., (2023) reported that the fundamental change and issue for libraries is that the vast majority of e-books are licenced by publishers, made available on publishers' IT platforms and therefore are not owned or freely borrowed through libraries.

For libraries the management of the digital and print or physical collection has become an increasingly complex undertaking, e-journals became the dominant access route of choice for academic papers, and the use of e-books has grown (Corrall, 2011; Roberts, 2016; Rusbridge, 1998). Blankstein (2022) in a US study

tracked the changing research, teaching and publishing practices of academics. A survey was run on six occasions from 2006. In 2021, he found that the importance of the monograph has declined and there was increasing acceptance of e-books as an alternative to print. There were disciplinary differences in this area: 73% of humanists agreed that print monographs were important compared to 40% of social scientists and 27% of scientists.

The role of the university library has expanded to include providing repository infrastructure for institutionally created information resources, often digital, such as research publications, learning materials, theses, and research data (Bruce & McGregor, 2013). Dempsey (2017) referred to this as the “inside-out collection” (p. 338). Budd (2018) also emphasised that the collection does not belong to the library itself; instead, the university library sets the criteria for collection development and makes decisions regarding purchases and cancellations.

Roberts (2016) reported that the growth and “fluid reality” (p. 143) in electronic publishing have challenged established library models centred around print or physical ownership of items. Dempsey (2020) explained the shift in the role of the university library from assembling a collection to be provided close to the user, that is locally, to facilitating a “network environment rich in information and workflow resources — for research, for communication, for archiving, for social sharing, and so on” (Dempsey, 2020, p. 5). Thus Dempsey (2020) pointed out that libraries are part of a diversified information system which operated at the “network level” (p. 4). Given this, Dempsey (2020) proposed a move from the traditional institutional collection, to the “facilitated” collection and the “collective” collection (p. 5) at the network level.

Notwithstanding, there are a number of reports of the continuing role of the university library as custodian of special collections, including rare books and institutional archives (Williams, 2024a). These collections are often deeply connected to the mission, history and disciplinary focus of a university. Special collections are a particular area of focus for Research Libraries UK (RLUK) which has developed a strategy to attract reward and recognition for special collections across the consortium (Kamposiori & Crossley, 2019).

The scholarly communications environment or system

Definitions of the scholarly communication environment abounded. Firstly, from a disciplinary perspective, Atkinson (1990) defined the scholarly record as “that which has already been written in all disciplines ... that stable body of graphic information, upon which each discipline bases its discussions, and against which each discipline measures its progress” (p. 356). Secondly, Lavoie et al. (2014) considered the perspective of different stakeholders, for example, researchers as authors and readers, publishers, and librarians,

[A researcher] might view the scholarly record as any material that is useful in furthering their research interests. A publisher may view the scholarly record as those materials that have been made available through a formal publication process, including peer review and professional editing, as well as dissemination via an established communications channel like a journal or books. A library, on the other hand, might view the scholarly record as those scholarly materials that have been systematically gathered and organised into collections for long term use. (Lavoie et al., 2014, p. 7).

Thirdly, the American Association of Research Libraries (ARL) took a systems and process perspective, defining the scholarly communications environment as, “the system through which research and other scholarly writings are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly community, and preserved for future use” (Association of Research Libraries, 2016, What is Scholarly Communication section). The ARL also considered formal (for example peer-reviewed journals) as opposed to informal channels of communication (for example electronic correspondence).

Regardless of the perspective taken, commentators agreed that the system of scholarly communication has changed to the extent that it is in crisis and requires reinvention (Baldwin & Pinfield, 2018; Pinfield, et al., 2020). The fundamental issue lies in the interplay between four elements: academics publish research to gain reputation and reward; academics peer-review others’ work to ensure quality; libraries subscribe to publishers’ journal packages to access these papers; and over time, the costs of these subscriptions have risen significantly (Aspesi, 2021).

Open access (OA) publishing

Since the Finch report (Finch et al., 2012), OA publishing has been widely considered the answer to be the fix for “systemic problems in the journal publishing market, where large global suppliers exercise oligopolistic power” (Pinfield, et al., 2020, p. 15). OA has inspired philosophical and practical implementation reports, papers, and significant book-length overviews (Anderson, 2018; Bartling & Friesike, 2014; Eve, 2014; Fyfe et al., 2017; Pinfield et al., 2020; Suber, 2012).

A key move in OA was the introduction of research funder mandates so that publications arising from grants be made OA. However, Tennant et al. (2016) in

their review of OA's academic, economic and societal impacts, concluded "Open Access has the potential to become unsustainable for research communities if high-cost options are allowed to continue to prevail in a widely unregulated scholarly publishing market" (p. 2). More recently, in 2023 the research funder coalition cOAlition S took the view that OA can only be achieved with new academic publishing models (cOAlition S, 2023). Bergstrom et al. (2024) reached the same conclusion and called for investment in more "robust and nimble infrastructure" (p. 3) for effective and efficient scholarly communication. Frank et al. (2023) set out the pros and cons of open access publishing and concluded that higher education stakeholders are not well aligned on open access. They found that a full range of solutions was required, including international regulation to control oligopolistic practices, better education of researchers, and more incentives for high quality peer-review to improve the prestige of non-profit online journals (p. 6).

The publishing industry is increasingly taking legal action to protect copyright and leveraging Article Processing Charges (APCs) to boost revenue. They are also offering more comprehensive packages of services and content, with large publishers expanding into analytics services. Aspesi (2021) warned,

bundling has largely favoured publishers, whether it is bundling articles into journals (which improved the economics of printing, shipping, and selling); bundling journals into collections subscriptions (which put together important journals with less relevant ones, forcing libraries to pay for all of them); bundling reading and publishing activities in transformative agreements (which ensure high levels of spending and limit the opportunities for smaller publishers to compete); or bundling data analytics with

subscriptions. In every case, some valuable offerings are packaged with lower-value ones, forcing customers to pay for everything, regardless of their actual need. (p. 9)

The OA movement extends to Open Education, Open Data and Open-Source software. The development of open monographs has been challenging to advance, primarily because the urgency for immediate access to research outputs is less critical in disciplines such as the arts, humanities, and social sciences, which typically produce research monographs. Additionally, there is a lack of mandates from research funders for open monographs (Collins, et al., 2015; Jubb, 2017).

The evolving scholarly communications landscape and the increasing digitisation of research outputs have spurred the development of new services within the university library. These had three foci. First and second, to support academics to produce research and scholarship, and then to navigate communication outlets enabling dissemination of their work. Third, to develop and manage repository infrastructure to support the institutional record of research outputs. These changes have created new roles and necessitated negotiating the boundaries between the responsibilities of different groups of library and university staff, leading to professional jurisdiction tensions (discussed further in Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing library staff- Changing and expanding roles).

Equity, diversity and inclusion

An area of growing awareness and action in relation to library collections is equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). To “ensure that library collections truly do reflect the profession’s stated commitment to diversity” critical librarianship practitioners have urged libraries to “actively and aggressively collect resources by and about

underrepresented groups” (Morales et al., 2014, p. 446). Critiquing and challenging standards and practices of how knowledge is described and organised within library collections through the lens of EDI is an area of growing research and practice (Breidenbaugh, 2023; Garcia, 2015; Kamposiori, 2023; Ketchum, 2020; Morales, et al., 2014).

In addition, there is a growing body of work on Indigenous Knowledges (IKs) and their treatment by the colonial university and its library. Indigenous knowledge has been described as a “distinct system of knowledge that requires handling and management regimes for its materials that are different from those applied by the Western system of knowledge management” (Nakata et al., 2005, p. 7). IKs were historically brought into collecting institutions in extractive ways and, often, without full prior and informed consent. Traditional library systems have perpetuated cultural harm to Indigenous communities through colonial collecting, cataloguing, and classification practice. These practices ignore important Indigenous protocols around secret/sacred knowledge or access based on initiation, gender, or community — or attempt to simplify IK and systems in order to force-fit IK into existing knowledge management systems (Williams & Lancaster, 2024; Williams, Lancaster & Cruz, 2024; Nakata et al., 2005).

To address this Indigenous librarianship has evolved and includes critical collecting, cataloguing, and classification practice. For Frick and Proffitt (2022) this does not go far enough, they urged librarians to create new descriptive practices rather than “retrofitting existing systems” (p. 16). Academic libraries now also consider, Indigenous data sovereignty and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP), as Janke (2005) pointed out, “Copyright law does not cover all the types of

rights Indigenous people want...intellectual property laws actually allow for the plundering of Indigenous knowledge by providing monopoly property rights to those who record or write down knowledge in a material form, or patent it" (p. 96).

Supporting information capability development of students

The history of the university library supporting students to develop their information — and digital — skills or capabilities or literacies is long. Haider and Sundin (2022) reported that the term ‘information literacy’ went back to the 1960s, others including Juskiewicz and Cote (2014) attribute it to Zurkowski (1974). Juskiewicz and Cote (2014) traced the origins of information literacy back to 1880 when a Harvard librarian identified the need for bibliographic instruction for students. Salony (1995) considered it a progression from bibliographic instruction, user education, library instruction, and library orientation, stating that these — and information literacy — are all terms that we hear when reading or discussing teaching or instruction by librarians.

Budd (2009) highlighted the shift from bibliographic instruction to information literacy as significant due to its distinct pedagogical and cognitive approach. This transition moved away from linear problem-solving, which relied on tools and resources provided by the university library, towards a learning process where students develop critical approaches to information and the questions being asked of it.

There is a body of literature providing guidance and advice on designing and delivering information literacy programmes aimed at practitioners (Bruce, 1997; Budd, 2009; Grassian & Kaplowitz, 2009; Landøy et. al., 2020; Ragains, 2013). The ground covered includes experiential learning approaches, co-teaching with

academic colleagues, embedded information literacy sessions and/or stand-alone approaches, and online and face to face teaching. Ariew (2014) described information literacy frameworks developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in the US. Similarly, Griffiths and Glass (2011) described those of the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). Bundy (2002) presented the then Australian and New Zealand position.

Authors also considered the challenges for the university library in delivering information literacy teaching. These include questions of whether librarians have the skills and qualities to be effective in teaching and “inviting themselves” to discussion on pedagogy and curricular (Bundy, 2004, p. 10). Vassilakaki and Moniarou-Papaconstantinou (2015) noted that there was very little evidence of how academics respond to librarians’ engagement with the learning process. They suggest that further research is needed to shed light on academics’, students’ and other user perceptions of librarians’ engagement in this area. Although (as already noted in Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers-Information behaviour), Brabazon (2007) advocated for librarians to support the development of the information literacies of students. Owusu-Ansah (2003) stated that difficulties arose within the dynamics of universities, “the conflicting interests and political capital of the deliberating stakeholders has impeded progress, and it is this impasse and the relative weakness of librarians to assert a position ... concrete forms that information literacy instruction should take” (p. 227).

Over time the role of the university library in supporting the development of students’ information skills has evolved (Sample, 2020). Digital literacy or digital

capabilities is now the encompassing term for information literacy. JISC developed a framework for individual and institutional digital capabilities which has been widely used in the UK. In the US, Project Information Literacy (PIL) tracked the evolution from information skills (Head et al., 2022). The authors noted that despite digital and information capability programs designed to enhance students' skills, there remained much to be done to support students' information research processes. Looking ahead, the PIL team advocated for "reimagining information literacy in the academy in light of widespread concern about misinformation, fake news, and conspiracy theories" (p. 25). This reimagining, or 'third wave' of information literacy (Fister, 2019), is already underway. Recent developments included a focus on algorithmic literacy (Head et al., 2020; Ridley & Pawlick-Potts, 2021; Samokishyn, 2023) and media literacy in the context of misinformation and disinformation (Haider & Sundin, 2022).

The transformation of library spaces

The literature on library buildings is dominated by practitioner focused pieces which set out visions, management and design advice, and celebrate library buildings (for example, Matthews & Walton, 2013). In this thesis, the literature review focuses on how library spaces have evolved over time. Key drivers for these changes include the demand for study spaces, the quality of facilities to enhance the student experience, and technological advancements. Additionally, the literature discusses the library as a place where research and learning intersect, its role as a source of competitive advantage for universities, and its significance as a space for social connection.

Already considered in this literature review is commentary on libraries as emblems of culture and symbols of learning and research (Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?-Libraries as symbols of culture and learning, and

organic beings), and the challenge of accommodating growing print collections in the twentieth century (Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?-Growing print collections and demands on space).

From collections to social learning

Addressing the evolution of university library spaces over the last three decades, Bennett (2009), a Yale University Librarian Emeritus, conceptualised three paradigms of library building development: reader-centred, book-centred, and learning-centred. He attributed the progression from one paradigm to the next to the “transformations of information from a scarce to a superabundant commodity” (Bennett, 2009, p. 182). The reader-centred paradigm of library buildings originated in the monastic scriptorium, where spaces were designed for readers and writers, with desks placed near light sources. In the 1920s, the book-centred paradigm emerged to accommodate the growth in print collections. The third paradigm, triggered by information technology and changing pedagogies in the 2000s, shifted the focus back to readers as learners, giving rise to the concept of the ‘learning commons’ or ‘learning resource centre’.

Edwards and Fisher (2002) illustrated this evolution with section diagrams showing the relocation of books to off-site storage and the replacement of domed-roof reading rooms with learning resource centres. They emphasised that the media housed in the library dictate its architectural form and the designated use of space. They also noted that changing pedagogies, such as group project work, influenced how space is utilised. What remained “enduring” are elements like space, light, ambience, ventilation, and acoustic separation, all of which determine the “quality of experience” by which library spaces are judged (Edwards & Fisher, 2002, p. 162).

Much has been written about learning commons and information commons or learning resource centres (Edwards & Fisher, 2002; Halbert, 2010; Hickerson, et al., 2022; Spencer, 2006). These terms are often used interchangeably to describe spaces where learning, social interaction, and both print and digital resources coexist. Initially, these spaces were characterised by rows of computer terminals and the introduction of group study rooms (Edwards & Fisher, 2002). As universities adopted more active and collaborative learning methods, including the flipped classroom approach (Brown & Lippincott, 2003; Lippincott, 2022), the configuration of furniture began to change. Students now cluster around tables equipped with whiteboards and display screens. Open, student-centred collaborative learning spaces became the norm (Christie, 2009).

Recent reports indicated that the use of library spaces is stable or even increasing (Cox & Benson-Marshall, 2021). This trend contradicts early 21st-century concerns that the expansion of the Internet and the availability of online library collections would render physical library spaces obsolete (Carlson, 2001), then there were observations that “both students and faculty began to leave the library” (Hickerson, 2022, p. 5). However, Hickerson (2022) noted that the development of learning commons brought students back to libraries, although “faculty did not” return (Hickerson, 2022, p. 5).

Library as a laboratory and platform

Library space developments aimed at research students and communities have also grown, though to a lesser extent than learning commons (Hill & Ramaswamy, 2013). For instance, Brosz (2022) described a space designed to support interdisciplinary collaboration, with facilities and support for research data management and

visualisation. Hill and Ramaswamy (2013) stated that libraries “are in a prime position to fill the void many research users find with the lack of comfortable space where they can incorporate all aspects of their daily life” (p. 164).

Some university library developments have evolved into what Hemmasi (2022) described as a reconceptualisation of the “library as laboratory” (p. 29). This includes facilities such as research collaboration spaces, IT suites for data visualisation, makerspaces with 3D printing capabilities, and hackerspaces for intensive software development sessions (Hemmasi, 2022).

Contemporary library spaces also feature visible partnerships with other university departments that support students. Raschke (2022) referred to this as “deep collaboration” (p. 25) and conceptualised it as the “library as platform” for academic endeavors (p. 19). Andrews et al. (2016) defined the library as a platform as a “central location for users to connect with and learn from one another,” requiring library staff to focus on the “ideas, needs, and enthusiasm of our users rather than our traditional approach” (p. 166). This concept extends beyond student support, utilising library spaces and facilities (often ICT) for cross-disciplinary workshops and fostering creative partnerships (Nichols et al., 2017). DeRose and Leonard (2022) further describe digital humanities labs housed in university libraries. This has led to a positive repositioning of the library as a flexible platform for learning (Mathews et al., 2018).

Place theory and the library

Consideration of library spaces in relation to place theory (Buschman & Leckie, 2007; Elmborg, 2011; Osburn, 2006) offered philosophical, relational and psychological dimensions which can be, “incorporated into the profession’s thinking

about library service” (Osburn, 2006, p. 54). In so doing, opportunities to reconnect with “deeper, more human, values of the library experience” (Osburn, 2006, p. 55) were provided; the distinction between space and place is “that space is the physical container, while place is the metaphysical content” (Osburn, 2006, p. 63). Buschman and Leckie (2007) considered how different applications of place can assist in understanding the role of the library broadly. Essentially, they described the university library as part of the cultural construct of Western industrialised nations, and that as the social landscape developed, the role of the university library changed. In addition, the role of the library is interpreted differently through different theoretical frames. For example, “using a postmodern frame, we may examine how libraries function as sites of surveillance, contestation, and resistance, or as places of inclusions versus marginalisation” (p. 12). Leckie and Buschman (2007) also pointed out that in social science, notions of space/place are linked to the notion of community and therefore to a “multiplicity of other concepts” for example, “a place of residence”, “a symbolic moment”, and a set of “place-based” social relations (p.13). Thus, a connection was made between Bourdieu’s ‘habitus’; library users create and interact with the library as place. In this regard, the concept of place as community forming fits “very well” (Leckie & Buschman, 2007, p. 13) with consideration of libraries as culturally constructed places.

Osburn’s (2006) interpretation of the library as place, is noble. He presented the library as place which invites “communication with the thoughts, creations, and discoveries of many others, both past and present” (p. 70), so that individuals embark on intellectual journeys within a community of like-minded people. Thus, “the library is about providing information; but it is more, or more profoundly, about understanding. At its best, the library experience is about both understanding of self

and understanding of world” (p. 72). Place-making in library spaces extends beyond physical structures. According to Demas and Scherer (2002), “the successful library building, with its programs and its staff, creates a sense of connection to the values, traditions, and intellectual life of the community, and helps the patron participate in building its future” (p. 65).

Elmborg (2011) observed that librarians have long been attentive to the aesthetics of library buildings, focusing on the ambiance of spaces and the importance of managing these spaces to attract and retain users (p. 340). This concern with aesthetics coexists with a focus on facilities and space design aimed at enhancing students’ sense of belonging and contributing to the university community (Bruxvoort, 2017; Bruxvoort, 2023). For instance, modern libraries now feature cafes, family spaces, assistive technology rooms, outdoor study areas, graduate student zones, and spaces for exhibitions and events (Lippincott, 2022; Waxman et al., 2007).

Library spaces for university competitive advantage

The university library building as social learning space, as laboratory and platform, and as place for community, is therefore a “major asset to the institution” (Cox, 2023b, p. 385). Cox (2023b) puts these developments into strategic context, “A range of factors in higher education has converged to place a high premium on the type of learning space primarily provided on campus by the library building. Active, social, technology-enabled learning needs the right physical environment, and transformed library space has proved vital” (p. 385). Raschke (2022) emphasised that the mission and vision of North Carolina State University were central to the redevelopment of its library spaces, particularly the Hunt Library. These spaces were

designed to signal that the library, and by extension the university, is unique, offering “surprise, delight, and benefit” to everyone (p. 25). While many print collections have been relocated to prioritise space for people, some libraries have made exceptions to prominently display unique and distinctive special collections. These include exhibit spaces, learning areas, and venues for meetings and events (Calter, 2022). Thus, the university library, as a symbol of culture, learning, and research, draws people to the university.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university library

Much has been written about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university library, including the Baker and Ellis (2021) edited volume. Ashiq et al. (2022), in their systematic review, captured the body of LIS literature detailing the transformation of academic library services worldwide. They reflected on the challenges faced, such as changes in users’ information-seeking behaviour, infrastructure issues, human challenges like anxiety and stress, and leadership planning. Responses to these challenges included providing digital capability training for university staff and students, positioning the library as a community hub and a source of human connection and well-being, and increasing and enhancing access to digital resources. Additionally, the pandemic highlighted the library’s role as a community space, remaining open with new space management regimes (e.g., cleaning, physical distancing, booking systems) when other doors were closed (Atkinson, 2021; Williams & Wragg, 2023).

Atkinson (2021) noted that the well-established collaborative practices across university libraries were beneficial (e.g., for document delivery). He also noted that considerable concern was expressed about funding constraints and costs of licencing

e-content particularly e-books, as did Brenton and Tury (2021). Others made the point that the university library with its digital collections and adoption of technology was well positioned to shift to fully online support and services (Chan & Caplan, 2021; Moniarou-Papaconstantinou & Vassilakaki, 2021). Williams and Wragg (2023) reported that a range of options were provided to access print information. These included book pick up, appointments to access collections, and scanning services. Access to special collections was most impacted and managed through appointments and careful hygiene protocols, and in some university libraries, the introduction of virtual reading rooms.

Moniarou-Papaconstantinou and Vassilakaki (2021) highlighted that many electronic resource database vendors and publishers provided free access to COVID-19 related resources. Publishers unlocked their content and enabled resource sharing to support open research. They also noted the rise of fake news and misinformation, which emphasised the library's role in promoting digital health literacy. Morgan-Daniel et al. (2020) underscored the crucial role information professionals play in mitigating the negative impact of misinformation, addressing the digital divide, and responding to low levels of health literacy.

Atkinson (2021) commented on collaborations between the university library and other support departments. During the pandemic, these deepened and extended. Similarly, participants of the benchmarking study reported by Williams and Wragg (2023) were clear that collaboration was important. They noted the need for alignment with larger institutional decision-making processes and taking a whole organisation view. Williams and Wragg (2023) also found that the pandemic

triggered ICT skills shortages and that universities were not well placed to provide competitive salaries, as such staff development in ICT tools became a priority.

Williams and Wragg (2023) concluded that the effectiveness of the university library response to the COVID-19 pandemic was determined by technological adoption, understanding the needs of users, balancing staff working effectively remotely with requirements for on campus working, positive workplace cultures, and collaborative working within universities and across libraries. All of which was underpinned by commitment to change and non-siloed communication.

Changing library staff

A range of literature exists on library staff and leaders, covering topics such as evolving roles, gender and stereotypes, organisational structures, cultures and dysfunctions, leadership, and equity and diversity within the university library. Implicitly or explicitly, these works acknowledged that societal changes, developments in higher education, and advancements in information and communication technology (ICT) significantly impact staff roles and ways of working.

Changing and expanding roles

Budd (2018) dedicated a chapter to the ‘academic librarian’, outlining the various roles necessary in the university library. These roles allowed for specialisms in different functional areas (i.e., collections librarians, reference librarians). Over time, these specialisations have expanded. Mowat (2006) described the emergence of additional specialist roles due to automation, such as systems librarians. He also noted the introduction of new roles in the university library resulting from the

increased complexity of university administration, including HR officers, fundraisers, and accountants.

There have been a number of reviews of skills needed in university libraries for example, Auckland (2012), and Saunders (2020). RLUK's report, *Re-skilling for Research* (Auckland, 2012) mapped the changing nature of research and researcher behaviour to skills and knowledge of librarians. In addition, research into changing roles has been carried out, for example, Abrizah and Afiqah-Izzati (2016), Perini (2016), and Ratledge and Sproles (2017). Vassilakaki and Moniarou-Papaconstantinou (2015) identified six overlapping roles: librarian as teacher; technology specialist; embedded librarian; information consultant; knowledge manager; and subject librarian.

Particular attention is paid to the changing role of liaison librarians, for example Eldridge et al. (2016), Johnson (2018), and Larkin and Atkinson (2024). Corral (2010) coined the term 'blended librarian' in her application of the work of Celia Whitchurch (2008, 2009). She took Whitchurch's concept of the blended professional and described the blended librarian as one holding combined skillsets of librarianship, information technology, and educational design. As such the blended professional collaborates across organisational boundaries, but may suffer from "identity stretch" (Corral, 2010, p. 571, quoting Whitchurch (2009), p. 410).

Corral (2010) also examined the literature on research support, identifying it as a growing area that includes open access, publication metrics, systematic reviews, and research data management (RDM). Verbann and Cox (2014) explored research support roles through the lens of occupational sub-culture, jurisdictional struggle, and third space theories, resonating with Bourdieu's concepts of capital and field

forces. Their study aimed to understand how librarians, IT professionals, and research administrators perceived services supporting RDM. They highlighted librarians' dispositions suited to RDM, such as pragmatism, stewardship, preservation, and a focus on service and user empowerment. However, they also noted vying for position with others in the university, quoting Van House and Sutton (1996), "LIS risks being outnumbered, outmanoeuvred, and rendered marginal" (p. 145).

The literature on changing roles often reflected both a rhetoric of crisis and the potential for reinvention and innovation. As Gray (2012) noted, librarianship is striving to find a "route out of the LIS echo-chamber of identity crisis" (p. 37). Within, as Corrall (2010) described a "complex fast-moving pluralist context" (p. 576) that induces identity stretch, presenting challenges.

Status: librarianship as a profession

Fagan et al. (2021) described the longstanding concerns of librarians about how they are perceived; as professionals, as expressed in stereotypes, and their own sense of identity. Librarians are both proud and insecure about their professional status.

Abbott (1998) attributes this essentially to two factors. First, the fact that the nature of the work of the librarian ranges from the simple to the complex, and second, that there are growing opportunities for technology to replace librarians' work. He considered the "perpetually changing work of the profession in its three contexts: the context of larger social and cultural forces, the context of other competing occupations, and the context of competing commodities" (p. 434–435). Thus, the role and status of the university librarian is impacted by for example changes in HE, including changing student behaviours and expectations, and introduction of IT

support roles for e-research. Abbott (1998) went some way to proposing a way forward. In comparing librarianship with the engineering professions, he called for a federated approach; people from different but related disciplines coming together sharing a common purpose or output. Abbott noted advantages in this federated approach, “the ability to absorb subfields that challenge them. They can thus survive in rapidly changing environments as specialists cannot. They gain too the ability to co-opt organisational resources for their own ends” (p. 442). Some academic libraries have grasped this and for example taken on responsibility for institutional e-learning development, for supporting students in academic skills development, and have undergone major staffing and overhauled organisation roles and structures.

Mowat (2006) described the university library in the 1960s as hierarchical in organisational structure; “the traditional pyramid of control reigned, with a small group of senior staff (usually designated sub-librarians) answering directly to the Librarian and with sub-sets of professional and non-professional staff answering to the sub-librarians” (p. 396). He described the traditional division between technical services (acquisitions, procurement, cataloguing and classification) and reader services (book circulation, shelving and enquiry and user support functions), and an alternative approach which focused on disciplinary subject-group staff. Hoodless and Pinfield (2018) reported on what became an ongoing debate on the effectiveness of functional or subject focused organisational structures. They noted key drivers for functional structures as alignment with institutional strategy and to provide enhanced research support. However, there were also major concerns, particularly the loss of close relationships with academic departments. They found little consensus that library structures seek to balance functional and subject-based approaches, and therefore that “local circumstances and particular institutional requirements mean

that there is no ‘one best way’ of structuring a library service.” (Hoodless & Pinfield, 2018, p. 357).

Organisational culture and dysfunctional libraries

There is an emerging body of professional library literature concerning organisation dysfunction. This literature addressed the cumulative social, psychological, and political effects of changes and challenges facing libraries and librarianship on library staff. Henry et al. (2018), in their seminal book *The Dysfunctional Library*, listed the following causal factors of workplace dysfunction in libraries: incivility, toxic behaviour, organisational deviance, workplace politics, poor communication, conflict management, ineffective collaboration, teamwork conflict, and poor leadership. From their survey of dysfunction in libraries, Henry et al. (2018) found that 53% of respondents characterise their library as dysfunctional. Others developed the theme of the dysfunctional academic library further. Acadia (2020) stated that dysfunctional organisational cultures “occur when libraries become stuck relying on their outdated, legacy habits that, in turn, lead to discontinuities in new organisational knowledge, competency, and strategy” (p. 72). Henry et al. (2022) found that the situation is getting worse, “since 2017 library workplace dysfunction, cyberloafing, and bullying behaviours have increased” (p. 42). This was attributed to communication issues, feeling of disconnect, leadership, and “inadequate staffing, heavy workload, trust issues, and differing political or diversity views” (p. 58). By combining the framework of dysfunction discussed by Henry et al. (2018) with the framework of work alienation put forth by Seeman (1959) namely powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, self-estrangement, and isolation, Sasyk (2022) shed new light on working conditions, management, and class divisions within academic libraries. Sasyk (2022) found that “organisational dysfunction are both caused by and

symptomatic of the Marxist concept of work alienation, or alienation from process” (p. 252). Findings also included differences in relative work alienation among librarians, library paraprofessionals, and administrators. He recommended that further study should be carried out to determine whether work alienation and organisational dysfunction in the university library are a symptom of the HE context or more specific phenomena found in other library types.

Leadership

Wong (2017) reviewed library leadership literature and stated that leadership capability although of significant interest to librarians had not produced a cohesive framework from which to shape leadership development interventions. Gwyer (2018) in her report of the work of the SCONUL ‘Leading libraries’ group recommended leadership capacity building in the UK. It is not clear whether this was acted on.

Cooper et al., (2022) found that university senior stakeholders sought library directors who did not act as “chief manager of the library but rather as a university leader with responsibility for the library” (p. 17). In Cox (2023a) considered the extent to which the university library leader was focused on internal library matters as opposed to university matters. He called for a re-balancing of leadership effort “to yield greater influence” (p. 280). Cox (2023a) also discussed the position of the library in the university organisational structure. He considered it detrimental for the university library to be located within an administrative organisational grouping rather than an academic management structure. The proximity of the library leader to the most senior members of the university were also considered, for example Gwyer (2018). Positioning affects the recognition, resourcing and prospects of academic

libraries and their place in the power structures of the institution (Atkins, 1991; Corrall, 2014; Cox, 2018).

Baker and Allden (2017b) surveyed library leaders internationally and established differences between the UK and other countries. They found that the status of library leaders in US universities was higher. They attributed this in part to the requirement that they hold a PhD and that libraries be located with academic organisational structures. They also found that the UK requirement for a more business-orientated approach to management had increased the distance between the library and the academic culture of the university. In addition, there was recognition that work was required to raise the profile of the university library contributions to the research endeavour.

Equity and diversity in the university library

Mowat (2006) highlighted that although women have long dominated the library workforce, it wasn't until the 1980s that women began to appear in senior university library positions (p. 397). Kirkland (1997) questioned the scarcity of women library directors and identified several barriers, including exclusion from organisational information channels, the tendency to recognise men's smaller achievements over women's larger ones, and junior women undervaluing senior women colleagues. She recommended mentoring and raising awareness of gender bias among senior university administrators and academics.

Radford and Radford (1997) examined the stereotype of the female librarian surrounded by books, noting a body of literature which expressed concern over the negative impact of this stereotype. Adams (2000) discussed the persistence of the 'old-maid' stereotype despite the digital transformation of libraries. She addressed

issues such as the male gaze, the cultural notion that intelligent women cannot be attractive, the internalisation of negative representations by librarians, and responses through parody and mimicry.

Harris (1992, 1993) compared the librarian-user relationship to other service professions, noting that in libraries it is more focused on the client's needs than the librarian's expertise, which can be disempowering for librarians (Harris, 1993, p. 874). She attributed this to the historical view of librarianship as 'women's work' and observed that librarians often blame each other, creating a substantial body of self- and woman-blaming literature (Harris, 1993, p. 874).

Ethnic diversity is notably lacking in university library staffing, reflecting broader university vulnerabilities (Cox, 2023a). A 2017 ITHAKA S + R study found that among 98 responding ARL members, white staff made up 71% of the total, 82% of professionals, and 89% of leaders (Schonfeld & Sweeney, 2017). The diversity in the LIS workforce across various libraries lags behind that of the general population; the US Department for Professional Employees (2023) stated that "The librarian profession suffers from a persistent lack of racial and ethnic diversity" (p. 3).

Affirmative action and diversity programs in individual libraries aim to improve recruitment and retention, alongside culturally sensitive workplace initiatives (Cruz, 2019; Leong, 2023; Mestre, 2010). In Australia, initiatives such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identified positions (where being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is an occupational requirement), trainee library officer roles, and graduate librarian programs are increasingly important for improving diversity in academic and public libraries (Mills, 2021). Additionally, recruiting student workers from under-represented communities in academic libraries helps increase diversity in

front-facing and student-facing roles (Cruz, 2019; Mestre, 2010; Morales et al., 2014).

How do different stakeholders see the role of the university library?

Cox (2023a) reported that “the perceptions of key stakeholders about what academic libraries actually do and can potentially offer to the institutions are often inaccurate or incomplete. They commonly reflect a lack of understanding and tend towards a significant underestimation of the library role” (p. 267). The existing literature on stakeholders’ views of the university library is limited, with a predominant focus on the perspectives of senior stakeholders.

Senior university staff perceptions and budget decisions

Cox (2023b) reported that the university library occupied “a distinctive place in the minds of senior institutional leaders and administrators” (p. 267), and that they based their views on their experiences of them as students themselves. Therefore, misperceptions and dated and narrow views resulted in “underestimation of actual and potential library roles by stakeholders, compromising academic library influence and resourcing” (Cox, 2023a, p. 265). Baker and Allden (2017a) reported that while university strategic leaders value the library and its leadership, they saw the university library as low-profile, not a problem and neither a strategic concern nor a risk.

This issue is not new. As early as 1968, Robert Munn, a Provost in the US, observed that senior academic administrators rarely considered or discussed the library. He suggested this was because administrators focused their attention on issues likely to cause a “crisis or a coup ... trigger a riot or bring in a multi-million dollar grant”

(Munn, 1968, p. 52), and on organisational units that consumed large portions of the university's budget, categories which did not include the university library.

Munn (1968) also stated that setting the university library budget was problematic for two reasons. Firstly, because research libraries are expandable such that there are no guiding definitions to determine the boundaries of their needs. Secondly, the allocation of resources to the university library was influenced by the priority of a wide range of other things, so that whilst decision makers were in favour of more funds for the library, it was always at the expense of other priorities. Long after Munn, Rauf (2017) reported that university library budgets have declined in relative terms and now account for around half of the former 1982 share of institutional expenditure.

Hardesty (1991) revisited Munn's paper and confirmed that senior administrators rarely thought about or discussed the university library. However, he found that there was a good understanding of the role of the library in support of the institutions' mission. He recommended that library directors capitalise on this and take a visible, active and informed interest in university and college educational and strategic strategies. Similarly, Robertson (2015) in his interviews with Canadian Provosts found that there was awareness of the range of contributions offered by the university library albeit somewhat focused on collections and space. He proposed that library leaders promote the library's role in scholarly communication and other areas of expertise in their institutions so as Provosts are better able to envision a fuller role and the future value of the academic library.

Another pair of studies, one reported in 1998 and the other in 2005 in the US (Grimes, 1998; Lynch, et al., 2007), tracked the attitudes of university Presidents and

Provosts, with regard the central importance of the library to the university, its centrality and the concept of the library as the heart of the university. In the first study, Grimes found that it was the practical impact of the library which was of most significance to Presidents and Provosts (i.e., collections and spaces to study). The Lynch study reported similar findings, however they observed that the library's role was changing because of advances in ICT, to the extent that one participant stated that it was becoming obsolete; the "advance of electronic access to information and publications signalled the end of great comprehensive university libraries" (p. 225).

Later, Estabrook (2007) interviewed 25 Provosts and Chief Academic Officers and found that they wanted their libraries to meet accreditation standards and support academic success for both faculty and students. They also desired well-utilised libraries and assurance that library leaders were working towards efficient collection sharing initiatives. Surprisingly, they did not view costs as a major concern and were open to more assertive lobbying from library leaders for resources. Murray and Ireland (2018) surveyed over 200 US Provosts in 2016 and discovered that libraries were generally perceived as only somewhat involved in student retention, academic success, faculty research productivity, and accreditation. Fister (2015) reported even more disappointing findings, noting that senior administrators exhibited "benign neglect" towards the university library (p. 56).

Cox (2018), in his review of literature on the positioning of academic libraries within their institutions, identified several key concerns for the future of university libraries. These included indifference or lack of interest from senior stakeholders, criticisms of insularity and insufficient innovation within libraries, a greater emphasis on libraries' contributions to teaching and learning rather than research, and ineffective

communication of the library's value to senior stakeholders. Similarly, Baker and Allden (2017a) found little evidence that senior stakeholders were concerned about critical issues facing university libraries, such as rising journal subscription costs, or were aware of the potential for libraries to contribute to research assessments, research strategies, and the teaching excellence framework.

These findings highlight the ongoing need to align library services and resources with institutional priorities. Murray and Ireland (2018) suggested that library leaders should strategically leverage endorsements from deans, directors, and other administrators, along with user data that correlates library use with student retention, success, and evidence of learning information literacy skills. Library administrators should use anecdotal or qualitative evidence sparingly, complementing it with clear, explicit evidence of impact.

Collecting evidence of the university library's impact has become standard practice. Influenced by Oakleaf's seminal work (2010, 2014) on measuring and demonstrating the value of academic libraries in the US, subsequent reviews of good practice (Connaway et al., 2017) have established that library metrics and impact measurement are well-developed.

How students view libraries and librarians

Although the literature on information-seeking behaviour provides some insights into student use of university libraries, and libraries are adept at gathering student feedback on service satisfaction (Corrall, 2016; Wilson & Town, 2006), there is limited research on how students perceive the university library. An exception is the 2014 OCLC study (De Rosa et al., 2014), which found that libraries are "viewed as losing relevance" (p. 50). This perception was linked to the association between the

library 'brand' and the 'book' brand, with books seen as less relevant in the age of the Internet and mobile information (p. 56). The authors emphasised that "relevance is determined by perceptions, not products, not services, not reality" (p. 82), highlighting this as a significant issue for the university library. They debunked the notions of the library as the 'heart and soul' of the campus and as a campus connector. Despite this, the study reported positive perceptions, noting that students feel they can rely on the library and that "libraries are loved and revered" (p. 50). Recommendations included integrating the university library into the online and on-campus learner support ecosystem and communicating library services in ways that emphasise benefits relevant to learners, such as tools, technologies, spaces, and expertise to help them accomplish their work (p. 91).

Fagan et al. (2020, 2021) reviewed literature on perceptions of academic librarians and found that students generally view library staff as approachable and feel reassured and inspired after consultations. However, the findings also indicated that most students do not consult librarians, even though they recognise the librarians' expertise.

How academics perceive libraries and librarians

Fagan et al., (2022) also considered academics' perceptions of academic librarians. They found that academics acknowledge and value librarians' information seeking skills, subject knowledge, and support with new information tools (software and resources). Blankstein (2022) in a US survey of academics found that the library's most important function was that of buyer of scholarly resources, and that academics consider the library's role in providing direct support to students essential. This included provision of learning spaces and technology support. Additionally,

academics expressed continued support for open access and viewed the library as essential in facilitating it.

Gray (2015) explored the relationship between the university library and academic colleagues by examining Australian academics' views on professional staff. His study found that while academics held departmental professional staff in high regard, they were ambivalent towards those in central units. Gray also identified a divide between academic and professional staff, highlighting conflicts between academic collegiality and managerialism. There was a perception that professional staff were a financial burden and part of an overgrown bureaucracy. However, it was also recognised that academic and professional staff have complementary agendas best served through partnership. Additionally, the concept of third space roles, which blend academic and professional responsibilities (Whitchurch, 2008; Whitchurch, 2009), was acknowledged. Gray concluded that “complementary agendas and the third space offer a conceptual shift from the binary offered by the ‘professional other’” (Gray, 2015, p. 549).

Predictions of the future of the university library

Consideration of the future of libraries is not a new topic. Licklider (1965) emphasised the impact of the significant growth in publications on research libraries. Since then, numerous edited volumes, surveys, reports, and opinion pieces have been published on the future of the university library. Some focused on specific aspects, such as space (Hines & Crowe, 2016), collections, or the impacts of technology (Adams Becker et al., 2017). Others addressed these and additional factors, for example discussing the strategic development and direction of university libraries

(Baker & Evans, 2017; Chigwada & Nwaohiri, 2021). The special issue of *New Library World* in 2014 published eight papers on the challenges and responses to new technologies and changing contexts and recommended: rethinking traditional attitudes, and consideration of the future of the book, open access publishing, space development and collections. Similarly, a series of essays published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) (Allen, 2015) covered developments in HE, technology, library positioning, partnership on campus, competition, opportunities, values, and leadership. Later, the Association of College and Research Libraries (2020) identified common themes relevant to the future of the university library, namely change management, technology, scholarly communications, and developments in HE.

A report commissioned by SCONUL presented a UK perspective (Pinfield et al., 2017). It identified a multiplicity of trends driving the future for academic libraries (e.g., ‘datafied’ scholarship, technology enabled learning, and political and economic pressures), while confronting issues of identity, perception, alignment, and competition on campus. An article based on this research further examined how libraries envision the future, including their readiness for change and leadership capabilities (Cox et al., 2019).

Calvert (2020) reported on the findings from professional workshops on the future of research libraries in North America. He emphasised the need for collaborative and collective approaches to emerging technologies, including cloud tools, to support online teaching and research continuity. Calvert stated that libraries were well-positioned to help shape the future of their institutions. The report concluded optimistically, stating, “Research libraries hold a vital position to shape higher

education despite uncertainties, and this should embolden research librarians to engage partners and technologies strategically” (Calvert, 2020, p. 19).

In his examination of future research library services, Lippincott (2021) summarised opportunities to facilitate information discovery, steward the scholarly and cultural record, advance digital scholarship, further student learning and success, and create learning and collaboration spaces. Other future focused discussions included those on environmental sustainability and critical librarianship. First, as part of the growing literature of green librarianship (summarised by Fedorowicz-Kruszewska, 2021), sustainability of library buildings and practices were considered. Second, an area of growing awareness and action is equity, diversity, and inclusion in library collections, services and staffing. In the US, to “ensure that library collections truly do reflect the profession’s stated commitment to diversity” critical librarianship practitioners urge institutions to “actively and aggressively collect resources by and about underrepresented groups” (Morales et al., 2014, p. 446). Across the whole of library practice, critical librarianship, is growing. Informed by a variety of critical perspectives it is self-reflective and activist in nature, and “provides a framework of critiquing traditional librarianship, along with the structures and systems surrounding libraries” (p. 142, Rapchak, 2021).

In 2023, AI became a significant point of discussion in LIS (Chapter 2: Literature review-AI and the university library). To imagine future scenarios for AI and machine learning (ML) and how they might transform the research enterprise and impact the university library, ARL and the library and IT membership group Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) formed of a joint task force, the findings are yet to be reported.

Whilst new services and ways of workings have been proposed, there are no definitive blueprints or agreement of a future for university libraries. Instead Schöpfel (2017) summed up the prevailing sense of uncertainty and opportunity:

Nobody can, in good faith, predict the future of academic libraries. One of their main characteristics is an amazing diversity and variability which is essential to survival in unstable and fast-changing environments. Another feature is their flexibility and great capacity of adaptation. In natural and human history, the survivor is not necessarily the fittest and strongest species but the one who adapts best. (Schöpfel, 2017, p. 123)

Bourdieu and the university library

The literature review found no Bourdieusian field studies specifically focused on the university library or LIS. However, Bourdieu's theoretical concepts and methodological tools have been applied to LIS and are reported in the literature. Already considered is the Van House and Sutton (1996) review of the context shaping the future of educational programs in library and information studies. They used Bourdieu's habitus to explore the boundaries and rules of competition in the information field. They suggested that the dispositions of library staff and the traditional values and practices of LIS might disadvantage the university library in its competitive response to a changing environment.

Budd (2003) applied Bourdieu's concepts of practice, habitus, and symbolic capital to comment on Wiegand's (1999) discussion of the complex issues facing librarianship and the lack of frameworks to address these questions. Budd found that the influence and success of librarians were often unrecognised and underutilised. He stated, "libraries employ symbolic power through their operations but tend not to

recognise the source or the use of that power. As a result, they may be insufficiently reflective and may not realise the critical goals of praxis, including interpretive, ethical social action” (p. 19).

Wein and Dorch (2018) used Bourdieu’s field tools to examine the role of research librarians. They found that this role had been marginalised due to changes in the academic field, the transition to digital information, and the evolving functions and responsibilities of research libraries. Murgu (2023) explored the profession of librarianship through Bourdieu’s concepts of capital, examining how cultural and social capital is converted to economic capital. He concluded that “bolstering support behind the notion of a professional might not be the most prudent course of action” (p. 1) because a profession is a historical socio-cultural construct that may not serve its members well in the current environment.

Knox (2014) argued that librarians’ support for intellectual freedom enhances their symbolic capital. Wasserman and Berkovich (2022) used Bourdieu’s theory of distinction to portray academic librarians in the neoliberal university as transforming their cultural, aesthetic, and professional distinction, thereby generating occupational capital and renewed legitimacy.

Gonzalez and Galloway (2018) deployed Bourdieu’s concepts of field, habitus and capital to analyse the first ten years of the journal of *Information & Culture*, finding that complex historical and social relations impacting the development and decline of the journal included competing principles of legitimacy (from peers, the dominant class in the field namely university administrators, or other means of support for example users or readers). They noted that transformation of symbolic capital to economic capital requires that individuals have “appropriate judgement of

circumstances, competence in leveraging resources, and luck compounding accessible wealth or capitals in the context of changing norms and values within and among fields” (p. 6).

The library as a site of and a source of social and cultural capital production and dissemination for its users has been evidenced (Goulding, 2008; Hussey, 2010; Wojciechowska, 2021). Johnson and Reed (2023) described libraries as a “bridge” for their users into society, and a “hub” for generating social capital (p. 186). Specifically in relation to the university library Bourdieu’s Cultural Capital Theory (CCT) was applied by Reed and Johnson (2023). Their focus was on equity of service for university library users. They found that there was limited current understanding of cultural capital in libraries and suggested that academic library leaders address equity issues by examining their services, through a cultural capital perspective.

In relation to scholarly communication, Cronin and Shaw (2002) applied the concept of symbolic capital to an analysis of citations as a measure of research impact. Similarly, Desrochers et al. (2018) considered the symbolic capital of academic authorship and citation practice. Padmalochanan (2019) defined the academic publishing field and the exchange of capitals in Bourdieusian terms. She found that whilst business models and economic perspectives were addressed in the literature, the inter-dependency between academics and the field of academic publishing required further exploration and research.

The references from LIS provided sources for the Bourdieusian analysis of Chapter 8. They were supplemented by studies which applied Bourdieu’s theories and methods in education including HE (Gonzales, 2014; Heffernan, 2022; Murphy &

Costa, 2015; Thomson, 2017), in digital scholarship (Costa, 2015) and in digital sociology (Ignatow & Robinson, 2017; Levina & Arriaga, 2014).

Applications of Bourdieu's field tools across different domains were wide ranging (Albright et al., 2018; Costa & Murphy, 2015; Petit-dit-Dariel et al., 2014). These applications informed the methodological approach of this research study.

Additionally, works that explained and applied Bourdieu's theoretical framework proved methodologically invaluable, most notably Grenfell's (2008) book *Pierre Bourdieu: Key Concepts* and Albright et al., (2018). The works by Bourdieu examined for this study included *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* and *Homo Academicus*.

Conclusion

The literature review traces the history of the evolving university library, highlighting the changing context that has driven its transformation. Notably, the rise of the network society in the Information Age has altered information-seeking behaviour and displaced the university library from its role as the sole provider of information to students and academics.

While the university library's role in information provision has diminished, its role in place-making has expanded. New uses of library spaces have become popular with students, transforming these spaces into environments where students engage in a learning habitus and interact with the library as a place. However, there is uncertainty about whether university stakeholders recognise and value these new functions beyond the traditional library roles.

The literature also identifies significant challenges in transitioning the library workforce to support these changes. Reports of challenged identities, professional jurisdictional struggles, and dysfunctional organisational cultures are concerning. Despite this, the literature reflects both a rhetoric of crisis and an articulation of opportunities for reinvention and innovation. The successful transition to new roles and mindsets was evidenced by the university library community's response to COVID-19, demonstrating adaptability, collaboration, and the ability to navigate evolving external conditions.

For decades, literature on the future of libraries has depicted a landscape of opportunities and challenges, crises and obsolescence, and uncertainty and confidence. The university library, therefore, is a dynamic and multifaceted entity. It has experienced some decline in its position in recent decades, yet it continues to engage in evolving relationships with both internal and external stakeholders within a shifting social context.

Chapter 3: Methodological approach

To answer the question “What is the role of the library in a modern university?” this research study comprises three elements: an interview study, a case study, and a Bourdieusian field study. These elements are supported by a literature review and complemented by orientation narratives which contextualise the data and analysis. This chapter outlines the approach taken for each element, reflects on the various issues encountered during the research process, and explains the rationale for utilising each element.

The data collection followed the initial research plan with some amendments and one addition. The original plan included the narrative of my practitioner experience, the interview study, and a Bourdieusian analysis. Amendments were made to the interview sampling and analysis, and an additional data point—a case study compiled in 2023—was included. These changes were in response to interviewee access, the size and nature of the emerging interview data set, and the impacts of COVID-19. An exploratory approach was adopted, allowing data points to build on and contradict each other. To maintain objectivity, strict discipline in data analysis and reflexivity were required.

Literature review

The aim of the literature review was to encourage a more comprehensive understanding of the changes in the university library. It focused on literature that situated the role and practices of the university library within the dynamics of the higher education (HE) environment, influenced by government policy, economic conditions, and technological advancements. It also explored what has been written about the nature of academic publishing and the interactions between publishers,

university academic communities, and the university library. Additionally, it addressed how libraries have evolved over time, the reasons behind these changes, and the perceptions of various stakeholder groups. Given these questions, the literature reviewed was extensive and varied, ranging from holistic views of the university library to detailed explorations of specific aspects.

No date limit was considered in reviewing the relevant literature. Active searching began during January 2017 and ended at the end of 2023. The literature review spanned both professional and research literature and prioritised Library and Information Services (LIS) literature. However, given the aim of the study to situate the university library in higher education and wider society, it did extend beyond LIS literature for certain themes. Content language was limited to English, and the literature consulted was focused on the UK, US, and Australasia.

Searches across major academic sources were carried out, most commonly Scopus, Web of Science, and JSTOR. Google and Google Scholar were included as search engines. In addition, professional literature was sourced from the websites of LIS professional associations, namely the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) in the UK, the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) in Australia, and in the US the American Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Other key professional sources searched were websites of bodies which provide consultancy services to universities and university libraries, they include the Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC), Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), EDUCAUSE, and the Education Advisory Board (EAB).

Many permutations of search terms and phrases were used, including: future of libraries, crisis AND [university OR academic] AND libraries, [change OR changing] AND [university OR academic] AND libraries, [university OR academic] AND libraries AND [students OR academics OR researchers], [university OR academic] AND libraries AND [publishers OR publishing], library staff, library leaders, libraries AND [technology OR Google OR Web OR Internet OR IT OR AI], [COVID-19 OR Covid OR pandemic] AND [university OR academic] AND libraries, scholarly AND [communications OR communication OR publishing], Bourdieu AND “field studies”, Bourdieu and libraries.

The search process was iterative, involving the consultation of over 500 items. This included historical research papers and essays, research monographs, and consultant reports. Research monographs and papers helped develop a broader understanding of the history and evolution of libraries, the concepts of the network society and the Information Age, and the development of higher education. Additionally, reports and research on the perspectives of students, academics, and other stakeholders regarding the role and engagement of the university library were considered important. Some sources were included based on prior personal knowledge. Reference lists were examined, leading to the identification of additional documents.

Some materials consulted were not presented in the literature review, they are referenced at appropriate points in the thesis to support specific arguments or to orientate the reader to matters raised in the empirical analysis. Other items consulted were not deemed to be of sufficient relevance. Relevance was defined as discussion, either directly or indirectly, related to the university library and its environment. Papers employing anecdotal approaches, including simple case studies, were

excluded. While anecdotal evidence has its value in that it reveals the opinions and in practice approaches to examining the role of the university library, it did not provide evidence appropriate to the methods of this study.

Digital sources and physical sources were reviewed. Once reviewed, key findings and authors were noted and arranged in themes and subthemes with associated notes, using a physical file system. Mind Maps and summaries of these themes were drafted to support the design and drafting of the literature review chapter. References were managed in EndNote, the bibliographic management tool. The literature review was presented as narrative or traditional literature review, in thematic form.

Reflections on the literature review

In searching the literature of LIS and exploring the broader forces impacting the university library, two significant issues emerged. Firstly, the relevant literature was diffuse. Extracting key points to use as evidence and insight into the changing environment and experiences of the university library required extensive sifting; it was beyond the scope of this study to do so comprehensively and critically. Bridging the gap between understanding societal changes and considering the role of the modern university library proved challenging. Secondly, engaging with the work of Pierre Bourdieu demanded significant intellectual effort; his writings are intentionally challenging to ensure precise meaning and interpretations free from prior assumptions.

The changing university library through the lens of my career

As part of this study, a chapter is presented on the changing university library through the lens of my career and formative experiences spanning 34 years, from 1989 to 2023. This chapter is divided into two sections: the first provides an account

of my career progression and work experiences, while the second discusses the learnings and insights gained, as well as the struggles, dilemmas, and difficulties encountered. It was constructed through a review of CVs, leadership presentations, authored papers, conference presentations, and the memories these reviews triggered. The aim is to contribute to reflexivity, illuminate the relationship between the author and the research subjects or objects, and present my lived experience of the evolving university library. This chapter is not intended to highlight the author's blind spots and biases—though that may occur—nor is it presented from a narcissistic standpoint. Instead, it aims to express the author's relationship with the modern university library, the object of the research.

The interview study

To explore how key stakeholders understood the situation of the university library semi-structured interviews were carried out. Eleven interviews were conducted between January 2018 to January 2019.

Ethics approval

Ethics approval was granted, and the project deemed low risk. The only potential risk identified was the possibility of participants' professional reputations being harmed if their identities could be ascertained through the data shared. To mitigate this each stakeholder group had at least two participants, data sent for transcription was password protected and a contractual agreement was made for it to be kept confidential. Participants were also informed that they could stop the interview at any time, that they could withdraw from the study, and had the option to remain anonymous when giving consent. In addition, in some sections of the analysis of the interviews, quotes are attributed at group level only so as not to risk the anonymity

of people interviewed, and names of individuals or companies mentioned were removed. The data was kept securely and will be retained for ten years from the date of publication of the thesis and then destroyed.

Sampling

The original intent was to interview 11–12 senior people from the stakeholder groups (identified below) based in the UK. The stakeholder groups originally identified comprised: 2–3 university librarians/library directors in England, 2–3 library and information science academics from the UK; 2–3 publishers and information providers; and 2–3 national library senior representatives in the UK.

After discussion with my supervisors about whether university students, academics and library staff should be included, it was deemed beyond the capacity of this study to gather original in-depth data from these groups. Instead, insight into their behaviours and perspectives was captured through the reports of those interviewed and the literature review.

The initial interviews yielded significantly more data than anticipated. After discussion with my supervisors, we decided to limit the sample to 11 participants to manage the data set size. Consequently, adjustments were made to the sample groups to ensure they included more than one participant. The national library and the library and information science academics groups were removed in favour of senior leaders, and the university librarians/library directors group was expanded.

Ultimately, the interviewees were categorised into three groups: university librarians or library directors, publishers, and senior leaders from HE or LIS.

Study participants, interview location, date and record

Participants in the study were recruited from three stakeholder groups: University Library Directors (six participants), Senior Leaders (three participants), and Publishers (two participants). All the interviewees had risen to senior positions and the majority had experience working in a range of roles. They had portfolio careers. They had moved nationally, internationally, in and out of different roles in HE, in different universities, and in different libraries, and institutions.

Organisation and access

The focus of the first batch of invitations to potential participants was library directors and publishers. They were individually contacted via email, given brief information about the study (see Appendix 2) and invited to participate. All but one potential participant approached agreed to be involved. The one who declined, from the publisher group, asked to see the questions and proposed responding to them in writing rather than in an interview. A response was not received despite sending the questions and a couple of reminders. An additional participant (a senior leader) was proposed by one participant after their interview. An invitation was sent to this potential participant, who agreed to participate. Given the positive responses and the substantial data from the initial interviews, the second batch of invitations was not sent.

Those who agreed to take part in the study were given options for the location of their interview (including online on Zoom or in-person) and appointments were made. Some dates and locations were arranged to coincide with meetings or events that both the interviewer and participant were attending, allowing the interview to be conducted at the event location. Before each interview, the participants were re-

briefed about the study, the interview process and the use of data in the study and asked to sign consent forms.

The interviews were scheduled on an electronic calendar to remind participants of the interview details, including the time and venue. Each participant received a friendly reminder email a day before the interview. No interviews were postponed or needed to be rearranged.

Format

The interviews followed a semi-structured format, allowing interviewees to respond in their own way and in their own words, with their own emphasis. The semi-structured approach meant that interview length ranged from 60 minutes to two hours, according to the time available and participant willingness to continue discussion after the prearranged 40 minutes.

Pilot interview

A pilot interview was carried out. It confirmed that the questions provided opportunities to explore the perspectives of the participants in relation to the research questions. The key learning from the pilot was in relation to interview technique. As interviewer I summarised the interviewee's response after each question, for the participant this changed the tenor of the interview from one of non-judgemental exploration to pursuit of definitive answers. I also used the interview cues too often, which suggested to the participant that they had not covered the areas I wanted them to. As a result, in the formal interviews I was less obtrusive and used the order of the questions and cues more loosely and as a checklist at the end of the interview. In addition, when I wished to gather more insight on a topic, I used neutral phrases such as "you mentioned x, could you say more", and "interesting, please go on".

Data collection

The interview guide is shared in Appendix 3 and an example of an abridged interview transcript is provided in Appendix 4. Many interviews started with an informal catch up on practical work-related matters and then moved to discussion on the information circulated in advance of the interview, see Appendix 2. The tone set from the start was informal and professional. The interview guide and prompts were effective.

Participants shared personal insights, reflected on careers spanning over 20 years, and discussed formative experiences, research, and opinions. They covered a range of institutions and geographical areas, focusing on organisations and trends impacting libraries both nationally and globally. There was a high level of disclosure and use of familiar references. Although the aim of the interviews was not to uncover motivations for working in university libraries, many University Library Directors and Senior Leaders shared their reasons for joining the library profession and working in universities, as well as their ongoing motivations as leaders.

Nine interviews were recorded and later transcribed into text. However, there are no recordings or transcriptions for two interviews due to venue-related issues. In one case, the recording failed amidst the clutter of a café table, and in another, the noisy environment of a pub restaurant made recording impossible. Consequently, the records of these interviews are limited to handwritten notes that were subsequently typed up. There were no issues with recording the other interviews, whether conducted on the online platform Zoom or in meeting rooms.

Summary of interview participants and record

Table 2 presents a summary of the interview participants and their gender. It includes a designation of the perspective of each participant as inside or outside of the university library. Also noted is the location and date of the interview, and the nature and size of the interview record.

Table 2 *Interview participants and record*

No	Participant number and designation	Gender	Perspective on LIS	Place	Date	Record
1	Publisher 1	M	Outside	Restaurant (participant choice)	3/8/2018	Interview notes 1,747 words
2	Publisher 2	F	Outside	Café (participant choice)	20/12/2018	Transcript 3,327 words
3	Senior Leader - 1	F	Outside	Zoom	20/4/2018	Transcript 8,709 words
4	University Library Director - 1	F	Inside and Outside	Meeting room (on interviewer campus)	19/3/2018	Transcript 13,260 words
5	University Library Director - 2	F	Inside	Campus meeting room	24/1/2018	Transcript 10,104 words
6	University Library Director - 3	F	Inside	Café (participant choice)	15/1/2018	Interview notes 1,282 words
7	University Library Director - 4	F	Inside	Zoom	20/3/2018	Transcript 5,705 words
8	Senior Leader - 2	F	Outside	Zoom	30/1/2019	Transcript 4,474 words
9	Senior Leader - 3	M	Outside	Zoom	31/7/2018	Transcript 5,596 words
10	University Library Director - 5	M	Inside	Zoom	6/4/2018	Transcript 4,498 words
11	University Library Director - 6	M	Inside	Zoom	11/12/2018	Transcript 7,979 words

The analysis

The analysis of the interviews began a year after their completion and was initially conducted sporadically. Early attempts at coding the first interviews proved challenging due to their wide-ranging and in-depth nature. Participants discussed their careers across various roles and organisations, revealing that geographical or typological views of their current employers offered little insight. Instead, they spoke as individuals with diverse and varied experiences and perspectives.

As informants from different groups were compared, it became clear that individual perspectives did not necessarily generate majority group perspectives. Taken in groups there were differences between the University Library Directors and Senior Leaders, but they were not as distinctive as expected. There were distinctions between the perspectives of Publishers, Senior Leaders, and University Library Directors, but these were complicated by the differences between the two participants who were Publishers. The dominance of the individual rather than group voice disrupted the research methodology and presented challenges for analysis and presentation of findings.

After over a year of reading and rereading transcripts and searching for similarities, patterns, and differences in this data set inductive thematic analysis was adopted (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Braun & Clarke, 2021). Coding required four iterations. NVivo software was used and ultimately 200 codes, and 20–30 themes, were distilled into a final set of four major themes with 14 subthemes.

In documenting the findings, the interview data from the University Library Directors was deployed as the primary grouping for the thematic analysis. The Senior Leaders commentary is used both as a counterpoint and a supplement to the

University Library Director group. The Publishers group was predominately used as a counterpoint. For some themes and subthemes, it was occasionally possible to compare the perspectives of the three different groups, providing insights into their differing viewpoints and motivations. This treatment of the different groups did not impact on consideration of each individual interview. All interviews were considered equally, irrespective of length, depth of commentary, or role.

To manage the record of the differences and key points made by the different interview groups a summary table was created (an extract of this is presented in Appendix 5). The table ultimately formed a reference data set of insight to be selected from and implemented in practice in the case study and a source for the Bourdieusian analysis.

Further reflections

The high level of positive responses to the invitation to participate and the ease of access to participants were likely due to professional networking relationships. These connections had brought me into contact with all the University Library Directors and one Senior Leader to varying extents. Additionally, many participants expressed interest in the research question, suggesting an intrinsic interest in the study. This likely contributed to the high levels of trust, disclosure, and informality observed in many of the interviews.

Despite intending to remain unobtrusive and position myself solely as a researcher, my identity as a practitioner emerged. Participants knew me, knew of me, or were aware of my position. As a result, stories and digressions were shared, and I did not discourage this, aiming to keep the interviews conversational and informal. Many

participants remarked that they enjoyed the interview process as an opportunity to reflect on their careers and significant events and people.

The case study

The interview study was conducted before the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the literature review included studies on the pandemic's impact on the university library, there was an opportunity to gain deeper insights by incorporating a case study. This case study not only shared the pandemic experience but also applied the learnings from the interview study and the literature review to the University of Queensland (UQ) Library. It demonstrated the evolution of the university library's role over four years, from March 2019 to March 2023, while referencing its past and future aspirations. It was not considered a structured intervention from which to assess success or not of the strategies identified in the interview study. Instead, a commentary on the impact of changes in strategy, positioning, and role of the UQ Library (UQL), and the impact of those changes on stakeholders, namely library staff, UQ students, academic and professional colleagues, and senior stakeholders.

The case study considered all aspects of the work of the UQ Library, including services, spaces, and collections. Key elements also included library strategy, organisational culture, staff, and leadership. Additionally, the study highlighted relationships with both internal and external stakeholders, including publishers.

UQL was not considered as a research case study until after the demands of responding to COVID-19 had eased. The approach taken was a review of key emails, documents, papers and presentations, both internal and external to UQ Library.

These documents were generated in a non-research context, without expectation of future use in this way. To manage this, consent was secured from UQ via the Deputy

Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (see Appendix 6). The documents were not analysed as objects in themselves, rather as sources to determine timelines and my observations of key considerations at different points, and as triggers to memories of events which are recounted.

Bourdieuian analysis: the field study

To respond to the research questions the recommended steps for a Bourdieusian field study set out by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 104–105) were applied to the data gathered in the literature review, the personal reflective experience piece, the interview study, and the case study. Summary tables of key points were created to organise the data by themes for different stakeholder groups (see Appendix 5) and across different time periods — past, present, and future (see Appendix 7).

Additionally, literature on Bourdieusian applications in higher education was reviewed. The selection of Bourdieu field tools applied are those set out in Chapter 1: Introduction-Introducing Bourdieu’s concept of field and field tools.

The field tools enabled movement from an expansive view of economic and social conditions impacting on the university library to in-field group perspectives. The field study was set out according to the following steps.

1. **Defining the social and economic boundaries.** Draw or define the permeable and flexible changing boundaries of the field of study in relation to the broader fields of power and analyse the positions of the individuals, groups, institutions and economic or social sectors (the actors, the players, the agents) in relation to this field of power.

2. Groups gaining and allocating resources (economic, cultural and social).

Map out or articulate the structures and terms of engagement between these groups as they contest and seek economic and symbolic capitals (cultural — embodied, objectified, and institutionalised — and social) in relation to each other.

3. Modus operandi of groups and relation between them. Describe the habitus of groups and how it has evolved over time (1960 – 2022) and what groups do and things they don't do, what they believe, and how these impact their relative positions and the field and its trajectory.

Problems with field theory and its application in this study

“Bourdieu’s writings spanning four decades are described by conceptual elasticity and evolution, not to mention abstruse prose. This means that Bourdieu articulates the same concept with a different accent over time allowing for different readings” (Nair, 2024, p. 5). Engaging with Bourdieu’s work is inherently challenging.

Additionally, researchers applying Bourdieu’s field tools, such as Thomson (2008), have highlighted several concerns and limitations. Relevant to this study are first, the problem of fuzzy borders of fields: where do they stop? In considering the related fields to the university library, the ICT field was difficult to bound in terms of its impact on the Information Age, the networked society and the dominance of Big Tech. Second was the problem of too many fields. The analysis identified five semi-autonomous fields, with ICT added to the field of power. The relationships between these fields were complex and intertwined, requiring careful disentanglement to understand the dynamics within higher education fully. Third, it was difficult to assess the success or otherwise of the changing moves of the university library in the

changing field of higher education at different points in time. As Wacquant (2016) noted, habitus is dynamic and subject to continuous revision in practice, displaying varying degrees of coherence and tension (p. 68). The analysis considered past, present, and future incidents, trends, and aspirations rather than fixed points in time. Fourth, understanding the distinction between doxa and habitus was challenging. Particularly as habitus, is a “system of dispositions – a past which survives in the present” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 82), and dispositions are themselves ways of seeing and being in the social world which are underpinned by perceptions, internalised understanding of social positions and associated social expectations, which are manifested in nuances in social interaction and action i.e., doxa.

Bourdieu and reflexivity

Bourdieu’s stance on reflexivity prompted significant reflection, especially considering the dual role of researcher and practitioner in this research study. The autobiographical reflections in Chapters 4: The changing university library through the lens of my career and 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library, highlighted the distinct perspective of an insider and outsider (researcher) examining the insider (practitioner) world. Additionally, the thematic analysis of the interview study was designed to minimise the conscious imposition of themes, thereby reducing bias. Feedback from the PhD student-supervisor relationship further facilitated a greater separation between the researcher and the research subject.

Nevertheless, in the methodological approach to this study there is an acceptance of Bourdieu’s position on reflexivity, as Maton (2008) put it,

Bourdieu's theory begs the (reflexive) question of the extent to which his analyses of the partial and positioned nature of knowledge produced by actors within intellectual fields are more than merely the reflection of his own partial and positioned viewpoint. ... Bourdieu (1994) views epistemic reflexivity as a means of underwriting rather than undermining scientific knowledge; without this *deus ex machina*, his work becomes just another viewpoint among many equally partial and equally valid view. (Maton, 2008 p. 57)

Bourdieu and recognition of systemic oppression

Since the latter-half of the twentieth century when Bourdieu completed his work, there has been growing recognition of systemic oppression associated with gender, race, socio-economic position, and marginalised groups. Bourdieu often wrote of occurrences relating to people without reference to characteristics such as being a woman, a person of colour, or having a disability. As such many of his conclusions — rather than methods — require reassessment with a contemporary understanding of the differences and prejudices different groups can face in the social world.

Chapter 4: The changing university library through the lens of my career

This chapter aims to share my experiences of the evolving university library. It is divided into two sections: the first provides an account of my career and work experiences, and the second discusses the insights gained and challenges encountered.

My career and formative experiences

My first job in a university library was as a graduate trainee and library assistant at the Institute of Ophthalmology, University of London, in 1989. It was a small specialist research institute with a research library. The library housed print volumes in large glass-fronted bookcases, and a traditional card catalogue was used to locate items. The people who used the library valued it, they were largely practising ophthalmologists and researchers. In response to library user requests, I spent many hours searching the Index Medicus abstract and index in its monthly print volumes (now a much faster online process on MEDLINE). The one PC in the librarian's office, not for public use, was used for word processing memos.

Whilst working there, the Librarian received a message from the Library and Information School of University College London (UCL) asking whether the graduate trainee would like to apply for a place in the Master's degree program in Library and Information Studies. I was interviewed, awarded a bursary and joined the course. The course covered cataloguing and classification, communication of research information, but there was no access to IT or reference to the digital library. Nevertheless, the learning from this proved to be foundational to my work in university libraries. My choice of dissertation topic — the role of user and citation

studies — also spoke to early interests in measuring the impact of the university library.

From there I moved to Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and worked in three roles. The organisational structure at MMU Library was typical of its time. It was split into two departments: Reader Services and Technical Services. There was a clear distinction in job titles between professional librarians and non-professional staff. The library was well regarded in the university to the extent that the university librarian was awarded Professorial status.

As Assistant Librarian in the Technical Services department, I catalogued and classified print books according to well established international rules and schemes and followed local processes filling in paper forms for others to then type into the online catalogue. The processes were clearly defined and adhered to by all staff. The other half of my role was allocated to Reader Services and based at the campus library which supported the School of Education. My duties included responding to enquiries, managing an audio-visual (AV) collection of audio and video tapes and providing induction sessions for increasingly large cohorts of first year undergraduate students. By then the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) had replaced the card catalogue and computer terminals were available for all to search. The enquiry desk was always busy. Although there was variety in Reader Services work, standard practices were defined and followed. These were set out in the MMU Library manual, a folder of instructions for everything from issuing a book to using a standard template for a word-processed document.

However, there were some opportunities for autonomy. In 1992, while at MMU, I experienced my first online database development work. I used a dedicated software

application to create the inventory of AV items in the collection, and then generate themed lists printed out to assist teacher training students in selecting items for use on teaching practice. At the time, this was innovative.

At MMU there was support and a development programme for 'first professionals' to gain Library Association accreditation. After gaining accreditation I was able to apply for a more senior job and in 1993 I became a Senior Library Assistant in the Acquisitions department. In my first year in that role, we made the transition from paper-based orders to online transmission of orders to book and journal suppliers. The annual round of journal renewals was done on a title-by-title basis. Publishers' above inflationary increases were tough to negotiate down. At that time in Manchester, university librarians had begun to realise that joint negotiation could bring costs down and the Consortium of Academic Libraries in Manchester (CALIM) was mooted, then set up, and later to expanded to become Northwest Academic Libraries (NoWAL).

After leaving MMU, I joined Nottingham Trent University (NTU) as Information Specialist - Visual and Performing Arts. My job was to liaise with the Visual and Performing Arts department staff and students and deliver tailored support to them. This involved collection development, reference desk or enquiry work, attendance at departmental meetings, and management of the slide library and its small team of staff. I remember that enquiry work was quite demanding, with queues of students often six or seven deep at the desk. I also supported the development of the pioneering Arts Council Live Art Archive, this involved creating a separate online database to capture and organise details of posters, photographs, videos, and other materials. Consequently, technology and tasks extending beyond traditional library

collections became integral to my work. It was also at NTU where I was exposed to a different kind of management practice; one-to-one meetings with my manager were supportive, objective setting was collaborative, and training and development needs were discussed and supported.

In 1999 I moved to take up the position of Subject Information Specialist Team Leader – Arts at the Open University (OU). There I managed a small team providing library support for Arts Faculty course teams and researchers. At the onset of developing distance learner support for students at the OU, the shift to digital collections and e-learning was crucial. This period also marked a growing awareness within the library community about the importance of the Internet. My first publication, Williams (1999), highlighted my concern for addressing the needs of the user community I served in this emerging digital information landscape.

In 2001, I returned to MMU, where the transition from print to digital collections was less advanced. Without the imperative of the OU to reach students at a distance, there was less investment in digital content. We talked of the ‘hybrid’ library of print and digital collections. Instead, MMU Library was at the forefront of building redevelopment and had secured government and University funds to improve the quality of its physical space. As site librarian, for the Faculty of Food, Clothing and Hospitality Management, I managed a newly constructed library which epitomised new kinds of student study space, a mix of individual and group, and a light and inspiring environment. As a member of the MMU Library Senior Management Team I became a vocal advocate of the development of electronic services and digital information, so much so that I was moved to a newly created post of Electronic Services Development (ESD) Manager.

In this role, I led digital and library service development projects and had a small team who also took on newly defined roles. We built relationships and worked collaboratively with colleagues across MMU within and beyond the library, for example, with Information Systems teams, the Learning and Teaching Unit and faculties. Specific achievements included: developing a new information skills project, *InfoSkills*, (Murtagh & Williams, 2003); securing additional university funding and then managing the introduction of a wireless network in the main library building, the first in a university library in the UK; and managing image digitisation of special collections. I was involved in the first e-book purchasing negotiation for libraries in the Northwest, which culminated in the first UK consortium deal. I collaborated with the University Teaching and Learning Development Unit to create an early video/slide/audio learning package on information skills. Additionally, I spearheaded the development of a new approach to student induction that, for the first time, considered the preferences and mindset of new students. Within the ESD team, we embraced technology, focused on user needs, and moved away from many traditional library processes and practices.

The University Librarian was an advocate for research informed practice and had contacts with researchers and library thought-leaders across the UK and the US. He would invite high profile speakers in Manchester, and encouraged staff to read their work. The NoWAL consortium also organised training and development. I participated in numerous workshops, acquiring a wide range of skills, including staff management techniques. A significant benefit was the opportunity to connect with peers from other universities, expanding my network of contacts and friends. Additionally, MMU provided the financial support for me to pursue an MBA.

My next role took me out of libraries and into Mimas, a national data centre based at the University of Manchester. The move was driven by my career progression and my passion for all things digital. My first role at Mimas was as the Executive Director of Intute. In this position, I led the second phase of developing a national service that provided a vast database of websites deemed suitable for use in higher education. Intute was funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and was delivered through a consortium of eight universities across England and Scotland.

Intute exemplified the prevalent thinking of the late 1990s, where librarians believed that, much like in the print environment, there was a need to select, organise, and manage digital content for academia. Although initially successful, Intute eventually became misaligned with broader developments: the exponential growth of web content, advancements in search engines, and students' increasing reliance on them. The rise of Google ultimately rendered Intute obsolete.

I became Deputy Director of Mimas. For over two years I led national services and projects for the library and information community. At a career crossroads (deciding between libraries or IT), I returned to university libraries joining the University of Nottingham, and after an organisational restructuring became Director of Libraries, Research and Learning Resources (LRLR) in 2012. This was a senior and challenging role. I was responsible for both learning technologies and libraries. Over eight years I was part of several key projects in library and student experience development. I reported first to the Chief Information Officer, then to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), and then to the Registrar. Changes in line management mirrored the evolving nature of the university and the uncertainty about

the optimal positioning of the university library. In my role, I was a member of key committees at the University and outside of Nottingham, including Research Libraries UK (RLUK), and the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL). I also had the opportunity for regular international travel, particularly to University campuses in China and Malaysia.

Strategic development and alignment with the University's strategy became central to my approach, along with understanding the needs and preferences of students and academics regarding the university library and learning technologies. The University was adapting to the audit culture driven by the Research Excellence Framework (REF), National Student Survey (NSS), and the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), while also embracing technological advancements.

Student surveys at the time indicated a desire for a range of ways of engaging with learning, consistent experiences, more books (both print and electronic), seamless access to e-journals, and additional study space. It became evident that our library and learning technologies, along with support models, lacked coherence at both strategic and operational levels and were not scalable. Additionally, many library buildings and the learning technology infrastructure were not consistently inspiring, robust, or reliable.

With University support, I led two major library building redevelopment projects and implemented Moodle as the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Collaborating with the library leadership team, I designed a new organisational structure for LRLR, eliminating approximately 15% of old roles and creating around 20% new roles. This revitalised special collections, introduced a new approach to information skills

teaching, enhanced customer services, and provided new support for research services and digital developments.

I learned that securing funding required more than a credible business case; it also involved gaining buy-in from decision-makers outside formal meetings and understanding how their interests aligned with my proposed projects. I began to recognise the impact of their relationships and noticed alliances or competing interests. I realised that my personal credibility and reputation were crucial in gaining support from senior stakeholders, which became a key aspect of my professional development, discussed in the next section.

As my career progressed at the University of Nottingham, securing increases in the annual operating budget for LRLR became increasingly challenging. Rising University costs and difficult internal budget negotiations emphasised efficiency over effectiveness, and service development investments required detailed business cases. By the time I left the University of Nottingham in early 2019, the library's leadership team aspired to maintain relevance for a new generation of students and support the development of their digital literacies.

I joined the University of Queensland (UQ) as University Librarian in March 2019. As University Librarian I report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (DVCA) and am part of a senior team of professional and academic leads focused on teaching, learning and the student experience. Chapter 7 presents the case study of UQ Library (UQL) and my work there.

For this account, I note that the transition to the Australian higher education environment was smooth. There are many similarities between the University of Nottingham and UQ. However, I had to recalibrate in three areas. The first was the

sheer size of UQ; over 56,000 students. Secondly, some library staff mistrusted people in leadership positions. Thirdly, Australian research-intensive universities did not prioritise the student experience to the same extent as their UK counterparts. Nevertheless, it was evident that the DVCA was eager to foster connections and develop a coherent strategic plan across the DVCA portfolio to create an integrated and supportive environment for students at UQ. This became the primary focus of my first year at UQ.

The second and third years of my tenure at UQ were largely shaped by the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have documented this period both in comparison to other institutions (Williams & Wragg, 2023) and specifically regarding UQ Library (Williams & Smeaton, 2023), as well as in Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library. In summary, UQL staff and I assumed additional roles during this time. My responsibilities included leading a team to revise the timetable due to restricted capacities in teaching spaces, identifying budget savings across the DVCA, shaping the new online exam experience, and defining student support measures. After participating in several meetings over the course of a week, I checked in with the DVCA, asking, "Am I stepping on toes? I know I'm not sticking to library matters. Is this contribution welcome?" Her response was an emphatic, "Yes, please keep doing what you are doing." Ultimately, our response to the pandemic increased the visibility of the Library's work within UQ.

As we transitioned into the 'living with COVID-19' phase, I led the development of a Library spaces master plan and proposed a significant organisational restructure. While both initiatives enhanced my professional skills and knowledge, the latter had

the most profound impact on me. The proposal redefined roles and teams for 25% of the Library staff, with a greater emphasis on digital roles. The restructure was initially met with considerable resistance from staff and faced significant backlash from the Trade Unions. After four months of consultation, we reached an agreement and implemented the changes in stages over 18 months. Now, we have a fully implemented structure, a new Library strategy, and have regained the ground lost in relation to culture during the restructure by introducing a newly designed People and Culture Plan.

Reflections on my career

I have taken many opportunities to learn from others, worked at different universities, and pursued various development opportunities. I feel privileged to have had access to higher education and the career it has afforded me, and I feel a moral obligation to make the most of it. For me, this means striving to be the best leader, manager, and information professional I can be. This requires a deep understanding of the information environment, including how information is created, communicated, and stored, as well as strong management and leadership skills to run efficient and effective library services, which encompass managing people, buildings, technology, services, and collections.

Early in my career, I was driven by an interest in the communication of information. As I transitioned from the role of Information Specialist at NTU to taking on greater management responsibilities at the OU, I realised I needed to shift my focus from working directly with information resources to becoming a proficient manager. Around that time, I also noticed that moving to different parts of the country and to

different universities for career advancement was not common. However, moving felt natural to me, having experienced my father's relocations for work.

My experience has taught me that it is vital to understand teaching, learning and research practices, and the needs and behaviours of students as they learn and engage with academic information and university life. I have experienced and embraced technological advancement and its impact on the university library. Whilst I have had many positive experiences of technological change, it has also challenged me. Through the experience of the demise of Intute I have learnt to question existing practices and mindsets including my own, and know the risk of obsolescence is real for library and information services. I look back on the opportunity I did not take to change the Intute model to a social media-like platform. What was needed was a shift away from the traditional library paradigm of collecting and describing. However, this shift would have resulted in significant job losses, a path I was not willing to take at that time.

Since then, organisational change and restructures have become a regular part of my working life. I recall hostile reactions to change, including negative comments and personal insults in emails, such as "it will all unravel," "you are ruining the profession," and "over my dead body." I have struggled with my emotional responses to this feedback but have learned to take time to examine and respond to it. Often, even aggressively expressed feedback can be helpful, and some expressions of personal anger and discomfort may diminish over time.

I no longer believe that negative feedback is simply a result of people experiencing the change cycle; it often runs deeper and is more complex. When I have presented the rationale and proposals for change, I have noticed that some staff feel a strong

need to hold on to established processes and practices, from which they derive their identity and confidence. Additionally, there is sometimes a gap between understanding the environment in which the university library operates and comprehending what this means for the future of library work and jobs.

However, managing staff through the COVID-19 pandemic revealed something different. When staff are clearly directed and focused on the needs of students, they can overcome internal and team tensions. They also, supported by each other, build collective resilience.

My experience working at several universities has shown me that investment in libraries is often precarious. Justifying operational budgets and new investments requires clear evidence of value, benefits, and favourable comparisons to benchmarks. Coupled with the need to align with changing user needs and practices, this makes organisational change inevitable. Budgets stay the same, and traditional methods and roles are replaced with new ones. In designing and implementing change, I reflect that I haven't always struck the right balance, especially between providing generic services and those tailored to specific disciplines. Additionally, I may not have fully understood the impact of losing relationships with academic colleagues compared to the gains in operational capacity and efficiency.

My relationships with academic colleagues have been overwhelmingly positive, except for the challenging discussions about withdrawing print collections. However, relationships with senior stakeholders have been more complex. Initially, I felt discomfort as I recognised and began to navigate the 'politics' and occasional self-interest of academic and professional leaders. I learned to accept this and develop strategies to influence effectively. I strive to understand the priorities and interests of

individuals, finding opportunities to brief them on library developments and initiatives, aligning with university priorities, and timing my requests appropriately. Securing buy-in from senior stakeholders for library priorities has not always been successful. On at least two occasions, the rejection of a business case by a senior team prompted me to think creatively about my challenges, leading to more enterprising development of my department or initiative.

Throughout my career my line managers have supported my professional development. I have worked to develop library and information skills, and management and leadership expertise. I have an BA, MA, MBA, and have been supported in my doctoral study. I have had access to coaches and mentors. I have also had many trips to international conferences. I have taken opportunities to progress up the hierarchies of library work and have been prepared to change my university employer to do that. I have never had a 'career plan' as such, instead I have taken opportunities as they arose. My career has coincided with major changes in the university library, particularly the digital shift, and in this I have found excitement, motivation and many opportunities for professional learning and career progression.

Chapter 5: Time and people, orientation to the interview data set

The aim of this chapter is to provide contextual information to orient the reader to the interview data set. It outlines the key environmental factors which have impacted the university library and were mentioned by the interview participants.

Additionally, this chapter includes pen portraits of the interview participants, offering insights into their professional focus and identities. Complementary definitions and explanations are provided in Appendix 1.

Context over time

Participants highlighted key environmental factors which influenced their careers. They primarily focused on the most recent decades, up to the Brexit vote and pre-COVID-19, though some mentioned events as far back as the 1960s. The geographic focus varied: discussions on higher education (HE) policy and its impact on universities generally referred to England, but also extended across the UK and globally, especially when addressing the ICT environment and academic publishing.

Higher education (HE)

Many interview participants mentioned the growth in student numbers at universities, often referred to as the massification of higher education (HE). This expansion saw student numbers more than quadruple, rising from around 400,000 full-time HE students at UK institutions in the 1960s to over 2 million by 2007 (Wyness, 2010, p. 4). The expansion began in the 1960s, with the recommendations of the Robbins Report (Committee on Higher Education, 1963). The government's vision for an expanded and diversified HE system was articulated in 1965 by Anthony Crosland, Secretary of State for Education and Science, in his Woolwich

speech. This vision included both universities and polytechnics, with polytechnics providing high-level vocational education. The Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 (England and Wales) later eliminated the distinction between polytechnics and universities, allowing polytechnics to acquire university status and become known informally as post-1992 universities.

Student populations increased without a corresponding rise in government funding. This led to larger cohorts, reduced student-to-academic ratios, and a greater prevalence of large group teaching. Consequently, infrastructure deteriorated, and support services became overstretched. By 1998, the report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (1997) into the future of higher education in the UK (the Dearing Report) concluded “the funding of institutions to provide education and research was effectively flat-lined” (Watson, 2015, p. 40). A publicly funded mass higher education system in England and Wales was considered unsustainable (Greenaway & Haynes, 2003). It’s important to note that Scotland operates a different system from England and Wales.

The Dearing Report recommended transitioning from a system where undergraduate tuition was fully funded by government grants to a mixed system which included tuition fees supported by student loans. Fees were introduced and increased after the 2004 Higher Education Act (England and Wales) and again in 2010 following the Browne Report (2010) and the 2008 Global Economic Crash. Further increases followed as the Westminster House of Lords passed the April 2017 Higher Education and Research Bill. This, and the earlier White Paper *Students at the Heart of the System* (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2011), gave rise to another phenomenon: the concept of student as consumer. Many interviewees

considered this characterisation. At this time internationalisation of HE scaled up. Peitsch (2020) found that balancing university finances for domestic teaching, learning, and research necessitated growth in international students.

Neoliberalism developed alongside expansion, diversification, and reduction in government contribution to the higher education sector. The adoption of commercial mindsets and business practices, alongside universities' public good mission, were prominent themes in the interview discussions. Interviewees also highlighted increasing accountability. New forms of assessment and accountability, such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the UK National Student Survey (NSS), and the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), significantly influenced university planning. The relationship between these assessments and university league tables, which have become reputational assets, was also noted by interviewees.

Technological advancement played a crucial role in enabling the audit culture by facilitating data collection and display. Additionally, technological progress has driven changes in university administration, teaching and learning, and research.

ICT and the networked society

In the 1960s and 1970s, media and communication channels at home were limited to TVs and landline telephones. In the workplace, the dominant forms of communication were the telephone, memos, and letters. Fax machines were introduced in the 1980s. For news, people relied on print newspapers, and photographs were taken on film cameras, with prints taking time to develop.

The 1980s marked the beginning of the development and adoption of personal computers (PCs), with companies like IBM and Apple leading the market. As PCs

became more affordable, individual uptake increased. During this decade, the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the US linked national supercomputing centres, forming the origins of the Internet. In the UK, the Joint Academic Network (JANET) went live in 1984, connecting the country's universities and research councils.

In 1989, Tim Berners-Lee proposed an information management system and protocols via the Internet, creating the Web. Interviewees discussed the advent of the Internet and Web, and the widespread adoption of wireless and mobile technologies, viewing them as significant drivers of change. By the 1990s, the handheld mobile phone revolution was underway, email became the dominant form of workplace communication, and digital television and digital cameras emerged, eventually being incorporated into mobile phones.

The impact of social media and search engines on society and university libraries was a common theme in many interviews. In 1998, Google was founded by Larry Page and Sergey Brin, aiming to create a search engine that used links to determine the importance of web pages. Facebook, started by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004, was quickly followed by YouTube in 2005. These platforms enabled a rapid increase in digital information. Naughton (2012, p. 168) noted the impossibility of knowing the Web's size but cited Google's 2008 claim of identifying one trillion unique URLs. By 2013, Facebook had over 1 billion members, and YouTube reached 1 billion unique monthly visitors.

These developments have significantly impacted those who work, study, teach, and research in universities. Universities have embraced the automation of administrative functions (e.g., finance and HR) and introduced new technologies in education, such

as institutional-wide virtual learning environments (VLEs) and campus-wide wireless networks. Libraries and librarians adopted technologies in their administrative and information management practices, automating card catalogues and book issues. In addition, the eLib program, a government-funded digital library project, created a national platform for library technology services (see Chapter 2: Literature Review-Technical Evolution and the University Library).

The adoption of technology was not without controversy. For example, in 2018, there was public outrage when news reports revealed that data from millions of Facebook users had been collected without their consent by the British consulting firm Cambridge Analytica (Cadwalladr and Graham-Harrison, 2018). Additionally, two interviewees discussed the risks associated with Big Tech and its prevalence in society.

Scholarly communication and academic publishing

All interviewees were aware, to varying degrees, of the changes in the academic publishing industry. They noted the growing dominance of Elsevier, the introduction of ‘Big Deals’ that bundled journal titles into subscription packages, the rise in journal subscription costs known as the ‘serials crisis’ (Douglas, 1990), and the decline in competition within the industry. Open access (OA) was seen as a response to these challenging market conditions. The interviewees discussed the impact of these market conditions on the university library’s efforts to manage collections budgets, maintain relationships with publishers, and advocate for OA. They were acutely aware of the ongoing challenges in the scholarly communication environment (as set out in Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication-Open access (OA) publishing).

In terms of print and digital formats, in the 1960s academic publishing was print based and formats were largely journals or serials and monographs. By the 1970s academic publishing was growing exponentially with a “doubling time of around 15 years” (de Solla Price (1963) in Fyfe et al., 2017, p. 8). Abstracts and indexes were created and printed so that subject and author searches could be carried out.

The 1980s saw a rapid increase in digital publishing. Print materials were converted to digital, print abstracts and indexes became available on CD-ROM. In the 1990s online journals became dominant, and with them a plethora of publisher databases and search platforms. University libraries acquired both print and digital materials and collections were known as hybrid. The Web and advances in search engines took the shift to digital information to a new level: in the 2010s Google became the search engine of choice for academics and students. In response to demand for technology-rich study spaces library buildings were redeveloped into popular learning commons (see Chapter 2: Literature review-The transformation of library spaces).

Summary of the changing context of the university library

The changes in HE, ICT and networked society, and the scholarly communication and academic publishing, and their impact on the university library are summarised by decade in Table 3. These events were referred to directly and indirectly by participants.

Table 3 *Timeline for key features of HE, ICT, and publishing environments*

	<i>1960s</i>	<i>1970s</i>	<i>1980s</i>	<i>1990s</i>	<i>2000s</i>	<i>2010s</i>
Higher education environment	4% of young people at university. Woolwich speech announcing polytechnics.	Student fees as a percentage of university income less than 10%.	Student numbers around one million. Government funding cuts to HE.	Student numbers c.1.6 million. The Dearing Report — funding for universities had flat-lined.	Student numbers c.1.8 million. 2004 Higher Education Act. 2008 Global Financial Crisis.	Student numbers c.2.1 million. Student contribution system. REF, NSS, TEF.
ICT and the networked society	At home TV, telephone, newspapers. At work telephone, memos and letters.		Adoption of PCs. UK Joint Academic Network (JANET). 1989 Tim Berners-Lee creates World Wide Web.	Handheld mobile phone revolution. Digital television. Email dominant. Google founded 1998. ELib projects commissioned - £20M of government funding. Automation of library processes metadata, self-issue etc.	2004 Facebook launched. 2005 YouTube founded. Rise of the learning commons.	2013 Facebook 1.11 billion members and YouTube 1 billion monthly visitors. Digital native coined. Cambridge Analytica scandal.
Scholarly communication and publishing environment	Estimate of journals worldwide 10,000. Card catalogues, paper issue of books.	Publishing growing exponentially. Rise of Elsevier.	Estimate of journals worldwide 62,000. Library serials crisis. Conversion of library catalogues to online databases.	Transition to online journals. Hybrid (print and digital) libraries.	The Big Deal. Anti-competitive publishing market.	2012 Finch report open access to research through new publishing models.

Getting to know the people interviewed

The interview participants brought a wealth of diverse and substantial experience from their work within, leading, and interacting with university libraries across England, Ireland, Australia, and Europe. The interview data set comprises 11 detailed accounts. The following pen portraits offer individual stories, setting the stage for the thematic analysis in Chapter 6.

In these interviews, participants shared their career journeys, current and past roles, and pivotal moments, including advice from mentors and role models. They discussed their values and approaches to their practice, explaining why certain aspects are significant to them. They also highlighted their leadership efforts, how they have driven change, and how they have positioned themselves and their roles within their organisations.

University Library Directors

University Library Director 1 (ULD1)

This interview was discursive and relaxed, and there was a high level of disclosure. ULD1 had a varied career having worked outside the library sector as well as in public libraries and different types of university libraries. This interview was particularly important in presenting comparisons between public libraries and academic libraries, and between management practices in local government compared to universities. There was a feeling that chances to collaborate between academic and public libraries had been overlooked, particularly in terms of broadening access to collections across different domains. She believed that public librarians were more strategic and politically savvy compared to their academic counterparts, noting that they had “clearer recognition about the need to work with

others and therefore a broader view ... of where public library services fit in public services and probably a better political antenna.”

Her motivations for being a librarian were values driven; “[in the] early- ‘80s, ... driving public libraries were ideas around citizenship, ideas around lifelong learning and ... really powerful principles in public libraries, ... and that’s what attracted me.”

Other notable points that distinguish this interview include firstly, a clear view on the unique appeal of libraries: “One of the reasons they have such a powerful hold on people... is that they are both public and private spaces. You can go into a library and be very private in that public space, or you can go into a library and be public while you’re there, engaging with others. It’s that combination of the public and the private which is so powerful.” Secondly, a different perspective on OA: “We’re facing strong commercial business interests. No matter how unpalatable we may find them... [publishers] are not acting illegally.”

University Library Director 2 (ULD2)

This interview was comprehensive and informal, and there was a high level of disclosure. ULD2 had worked in public libraries, in health libraries and in university libraries. She described formative experiences, support of mentors and role models, and conveyed a sense of growing self-confidence as her career progressed.

ULD2 reflected on the attitude of staff and levels of resourcing in public libraries compared to university libraries, noting that “there was an expectation that people mucked in regardless of what their role was because resources were so scarce ... there was more kind of a sense of, ‘We’re all in it together’.” She described early career role models, one of whom believed that “any new starter, even at the most

junior level, was potentially the director of the future”, which meant that all staff “were exposed to the decision-making processes.”

In the 1990s, ULD2 transitioned to higher education, describing those years as uncertain but exciting, like a “merry-go-round.” She recounted her experience of managing change, sharing reflections of very difficult situations. Her staff management capability and emotional intelligence shone through. Overall, she expressed a deep passion for her work and a sense of privilege and excitement about being part of the library profession.

University Library Director 3 (ULD3)

ULD3 expressed strong support for this research study, highlighting its importance and interest. The interview was informal and relaxed. She outlined her career which spanned various types of libraries, providing rich insights into leadership and specifically the role of the university librarian within senior university leadership. She shared formative experiences and commented on support from mentors and role models. She also discussed gender inequality in relation to career progression.

She spoke highly of several internationally renowned leaders in the LIS profession and shared advice from a Vice-Chancellor, who suggested the library should “lose the chip on its shoulder.” For ULD3, being a leader first and a librarian second was crucial. She viewed the university library as a networker, influencer, and connector across universities. Her strategic vision for the library included a strong commitment to students and the services provided to them, emphasising a customer-focused approach.

Throughout her career, ULD3 led change and she offered insights into the motivations and self-perceptions of library staff and leaders. She believed it was

essential to have the right workforce to deliver excellent service to the university and emphasised the importance of building strong connections with students.

University Library Director 4 (ULD4)

The interview with ULD4 maintained a professional tone throughout. Having spent much of her career in research-intensive university libraries, ULD4 provided a wide range of commentary. More than other interviewees, she extensively discussed special collections, OA, the role of the library in the university, and university presses. As well as experience of managing special collections she had been involved in the second wave of national digitisation projects funded JISC during the 2000s. She was equally authoritative on print and digital collections. She was clear about the value and importance of heritage collections alongside digital developments.

She reflected on the relationship between the past, present, and future, acknowledging the evolving role of the university library: “So much of what a library is abides, but its angle, its emphasis, its focus, has shifted sharply as our universities and higher education demands have changed.” She envisioned the library as an “institutional kind of knowledge shaper, maker,” describing this as “a modern take on an existing role about helping to manage, provide access, shape, influence, and sometimes produce knowledge.” She characterised the library’s work as “library as a service” and viewed the university library as a conduit for the student voice.

Like other ULDs, she expressed concern about open access publishing. However, her focus was on disciplinary differences: “I think it’s a problem about how we’ve approached open access both within libraries and within funders of assuming that

one size fits all.” She went on to highlight different research practices and the challenges for arts and humanities disciplines in working in a more open way.

University Library Director 5 (ULD5)

The interview with ULD5 maintained a relaxed professional tone. He did not share formative experiences or reference role models, making his interview less revelatory compared to others.

There was full commentary with specific attention paid to managing change, library space redevelopment, and support for research. He was very knowledgeable about OA and university presses. He was clear about the need to change the current publishing model where “academics hand over copyright in their outputs to commercial publishers in return for being published. Then universities have to buy it back. It’s sometimes a very significant cost.” He was disappointed that the transition to OA as agreed in the Finch Review hasn’t happened. He saw the future of scholarly communication as moving away from established academic publishers and “setting up alternative publishing vehicles and opportunities for academics.” During the interview, we digressed into a lengthy conversation about my university and its university press, which was professionally useful for me.

University Library Director 6 (ULD6)

The interview with ULD6 had a friendly and relaxed tone. It was a lively, engaging, and fast-paced discussion, rich with expressions and clear viewpoints. He spoke from a broad geographical perspective and extensively on the contribution of libraries to society.

The conversation covered a wide range of topics, with a major focus on sharing formative moments and discussing influential people and mentors. He also provided

important commentary on special collections, museums and archives, and learning spaces. He highlighted the need for university librarians to balance “books or seats” (i.e., space for collections versus study space) and the tensions between resourcing research support and enhancing the student experience, as well as defining library value.

It was evident that he was intentional in developing his management practices. He believed that leaders needed analytical skills and an organisation-wide perspective. When discussing the library’s role within the university or larger organisation, he emphasised relationship building, influencing, institutional politics, and strategic alignment. He noted that the changing role of the university library in relation to learning spaces sometimes led to negative feedback from peers, “Oh well those librarians, they’re just empire-builders and they want to control things.”

He also talked about innovation and change, stressing the need to mobilise and motivate staff to work as a team. Additionally, he commented on the challenges posed by Trade Unions and the impact of difficult industrial relations.

Senior Leaders

Senior Leader 1 (SL1)

This was an inspiring interview with a senior leader at the end of a very successful career which spanned a number of different kinds of university libraries and national libraries. The focus was on library collections, technologies, change management, and the purpose of libraries and their contribution to society. The commentary on university libraries was both as an insider and as an outsider looking in depending on the career stage discussed. SL1 was very knowledgeable, reflective, open, and clear about her motivations for joining the library profession. She was a committed

advocate for libraries. She shared role models and formative moments, and the excitement of working with others with clear focus: “I found that a really dynamic and inspirational period in my career.”

SL1 recounted four waves of change for libraries associated with publishing, technology, spaces, services and audiences and at least four major organisational restructures. She said, “A huge amount of my career has been I think based on change.” She was clear about when change was required and its benefits, but mindful of the impact of change on people. For her the purpose of libraries had expanded over time beyond the “heartland” of collections management, to “the cultural purpose, the learning purpose, the international purpose.” Her commitment to change was balanced with deep knowledge of the more traditional practices of librarianship for example, conservation and preservation, and she considered these both in the print and digital perspectives.

Looking from an outside in perspective on university libraries and their future she commented on unnecessary overlap between the professional bodies namely the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) and Research Libraries UK (RLUK).

Senior Leader 2 (SL2)

The interview with SL2 was both important and informative, featuring a senior leader with a successful career in university and national libraries. Her career spanned both the public and private sectors, providing a valuable perspective to the data set. She had been on the cutting edge of change in universities and university libraries from the 1990s and had been a role model and inspiration for many other

librarians. She approached the interview with openness, directness, and a desire to be helpful to the study.

SL2 reflected on the policy environment for universities, reminisced about the peak of library digital developments, including eLib projects, and discussed changes in library spaces, collections, services, staff, and leadership. She specifically commented on librarians' adaptability to change, the emergence of new roles in libraries, the evolving roles of libraries and librarians, the centrality of libraries to students, and the critical role of libraries in developing students' information literacy. She also addressed changes in research and teaching practices and the shifting expectations and motivations of students.

She emphasised the deep connection between ICT and libraries and its impact on her career. She further noted that her approach to working in universities was not typical of librarians: "So I would defy, if you like, the stereotype... always embedding myself and the contribution in a sort of value-added way as a contribution to learning, pedagogy, research, and the strategy of the institution. I think that, really perhaps is unusual."

SL2 provided insights into the changing mindsets of students, highlighting their focus on social justice and preference for entrepreneurial careers over large corporations. She called for new library services and partnerships to meet these evolving needs.

One of the lasting impressions from the interview was her statement about the capabilities of professional librarians and the skills needed in the library workforce: "the skills needed for that are by and large not people in our profession and I regard as entirely catholic whether I would appoint a librarian, or an array of other people."

Senior Leader 3 (SL3)

This interview was dominated by commentary on the changing information environment in its widest sense — technology, government, and societal changes. Beyond the research purpose, it was a fascinating interview from a practitioner perspective. SL3 was focused on solving the big challenges for libraries and information work. He had been involved in significant national initiatives and reflected on the political and policy environment for universities. Depending on the career stage under discussion the commentary was both as an insider and as an outsider looking in.

His personal research focused on scholarly communication technology, and his career was deeply rooted in advocating for OA. He found inspiration in the pioneers of OA and technology adoption. Reflecting on the political landscape, he expressed disappointment over the delay in government leadership on Open Science. He conveyed frustration with the slow pace of library adoption and advocacy for change within the scholarly communications environment. He emphasised that much work remains and that libraries are not as engaged as publishers: “Much of the scholarly infrastructure is global and so much of it is fragile, and we really need institutions—and I think libraries here are the agents of institutions—to play an active role in sustaining that infrastructure.” He characterised publishers as “licking their lips” due to their stronghold on scholarly communication. To counter this, he stressed the importance of national and international collaboration, noting that while there has been some collective action, it remains relatively small.

SL3 also commented on the lack of visibility of the university library: “it seems to me that libraries in the UK at least, in UK universities, are generally not seen as the shining jewels of the institution.” He believed that the work of the university library

should not be seen as separate from the changes in the social technological landscape and the changes in research practice. He hoped for a happy future for libraries and called for the university library to “rediscover its raison d’être” as creators and curators of the scholarly communications environment.

Publishers

Publisher 1 (P1)

The interview with P1 was professional and friendly. He had worked in several publishing companies and was in a senior position for a large academic publisher. He came across as a well-informed academic publishing professional, citing recent publications about student learning and engagement with eBooks.

He discussed the evolution of academic publishing, noting the rise of ejournals and the decline of the academic book market in the 1990s, as well as the current differences between the ejournal and eBook markets in terms of print sales. He viewed the introduction of the Big Deal as a transformative event. He described the growth in information as the “next industrial revolution,” emphasising that this growth “proves the case for peer review” and the role of publishers: “there is always a place for quality.”

P1 spoke about academic journals and monographs in terms of publication size and financial aspects: “We anticipate a monograph to be 280 pages, with a rough market price; profitability dips if it gets too long.” He did not mention profit margins as being high or unreasonable, focusing instead on the benefits of access to information and the viability of for-profit business models. While he commented on OA, it was clear that he believed OA would change how profits are achieved, but not eliminate them.

Publisher 2 (P2)

P2 had a varied career as an academic and publisher, and as such had a breadth of insight. The position taken by P2 was that of an outsider looking in on academic publishing and all the stakeholders: big publishers (as opposed to smaller ones), academics, and librarians including scholarly communication librarians and procurement librarians. She also shared perspectives — to a lesser extent — on senior leaders in universities, research funding bodies, students, and Big Tech companies.

As she talked about publishers and university libraries, she shared insights into the motivation of publishers and how they see university librarians. She spoke with respect for publishers and talked of the political and business environment in relation to OA and publishing more broadly, including lobbying and highly skilled marketing and collaboration between publishers, and described what she called a “huge, polished machine [which] operates quickly and with a real laser light focus.” She characterised academic publishing as an “ecosystem” of interactions between publishers and universities. Within this ecosystem “publishers hold the whip hand” and even in OA developments publishers “have the potential to be king of the heap once again.” For her the ecosystem had not experienced radical change nor should it, she lamented the sometimes-adversarial position between publishers and universities and looked for a future of collaborative and partnership working. Nevertheless, she advised librarians, “to find your roar, collective roar.”

Concluding remarks

This chapter orientates the reader to the interview data set by summarising the evolution of HE and ICT and its impact on the university library. Academic

publishing has changed, and the collections, spaces and services of the university library have changed significantly. The environments in which university libraries have evolved were perceived differently by the individuals interviewed, who have experienced and led these changes. For some, technological advancement has been an opportunity; for others, it has posed challenges. The gap between the commercial mindsets of publishers and the public-minded values of senior leaders and university library directors was evident. Within the ULD group, there were differences between those focused on research support and OA and those prioritising the student experience.

Interviewees shared their varied experiences and perspectives, which did not necessarily align to form majority group perspectives. The prominence of individual voices over group consensus made the analysis of the interviews more about honouring individual differences in focus, experience, and perspective rather than finding commonality and agreement.

Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews

This chapter presents the thematic analysis of the interview data set. The interview study aimed to discover how key stakeholders understand the role of the university library, how university libraries have changed, and the implications of changes for the future. The interview data set gave a range of possible answers. Presenting these elements is valuable itself and it is important as subject matter for the Bourdieu field study in Chapter 8. To ensure that nothing of potential significance was overlooked, the analysis was more inductive than deductive. It incorporates both synthesis and analysis. This analysis is arranged around the four main themes. Within each theme there are subthemes and for some subthemes there are one or more topics. Table 4 summarises the themes and subthemes.

Table 4 *Summary of themes and subthemes from the interview study*

1 Situating the university library in its wider environment	2 The scholarly communications environment	3 Library people, positioning, and relationships	4 The purpose, role and services of the university library
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Changing higher education (HE)• Technological advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publishers' perspectives• University Library Directors' perspectives• Senior leaders' perspectives• Looking to the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaders and leadership• Positioning the library in the university• Change management• Employees and skills• Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose and role• Services• The future of the university library

The analytic narrative of the themes and subthemes first reports the external factors impacting university libraries. It then examines how library leaders and staff responded to these factors, translating their responses into roles and services across past, present, and future contexts. The narrative highlighted changes in the environment—higher education (HE), technology, and publishing—and how these

have altered the established purpose, focus, and services of the university library. These changes manifested both similarly and differently across individual libraries. In delivering services, the staff and leaders of the university library are impacted; their work and how they work is changing. Overall, changes in HE, technological advancements, publisher behaviour, and scholarly communication have intertwined in complex ways, affecting the people and roles within the university library.

The data set consists of three groupings: six University Library Directors (ULDs), three Senior Leaders (SLs), and two Publishers (Ps). Individuals are referred to as ULD 1–6, SL 1–3, and P 1–2. Regardless of grouping, individuals made comments which were particularly relevant to some themes and subthemes but not others. Taken as whole there was depth and breadth on all the themes; taken alone by individual or group there was only a partial view.

ULDs were the primary grouping for this thematic analysis. Given that SLs had experience of working in and/or leading university libraries and national institutions, their commentary was used both as a supplement to the ULD group and to extend the context and purpose narrative. The P group was predominately used as a counterpoint. For some themes and subthemes, occasionally it was possible to present the perspectives of the three different groups in relation to each other to gain insights into different perspectives and motivations.

Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment

All the people interviewed commented on the wider environment within which the university library operates, particularly changing government policy regarding the sector. Comments covered the scale of the sector, what universities offered to whom, university work culture and finances, and the centrality of the student experience.

Other points made about the environment within which the university library operates included technological advancement (considered here), and academic publishing (considered in Theme 2).

Changing HE

Some ULDs, all SLs, and both Ps talked about growth and change in HE. ULDs noted the impact of changes in HE policy on universities, in relation to student numbers, increased governance and audit, and student fees. SLs and Ps also spoke of the HE audit culture referring to the National Student Survey (NSS), Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), and the Research Excellence Framework (REF). A typical comment was “there has been an increase in sort of accountability and audit culture” (SL3), and “not just REF, now grading of universities on their teaching ability” (P2).

Both Ps also commented on sector growth and diversification, and policy driven change. They were explicit about the issue of student dropout rates, financial implications, and challenges for university leaders. For example, “The leaders of those institutions are grappling with enormous change, huge pressure in terms of finances” (P1).

The impact of the growth of managerial practices in universities on the university library was discussed by three ULDs. One recounted — with a tone of sadness — a cut to library staffing and budget resulting from a benchmarking exercise. He viewed this cut as in opposition to “being a world-class research library.” Conversely ULD6 described librarians as good corporate citizens: “We’re generally the people who early on adopt corporate policies and make them work.” ULD1 expressed the tension

experienced by libraries “in the middle” of academic and management cultures of universities.

SLs acknowledged the internal cultural challenges of the audit culture and the growth in managerialism in universities. For SL2 it was “for better or worse”, she described how academics and librarians “recoil against” top-down management, and SL3 warned that there was “increasingly strident resistance to what’s seen as creeping managerialism”. SL3 noted that the university library must take a position within academic and managerial cultures and that finding the appropriate position was challenging, “I think there’s a real risk that librarians will find themselves on the wrong side of that ... [managerial] argument.” P2 also recognised tension, “academics don’t necessarily wish to be managed.”

Interview commentary covered growth in student numbers, and the university library as a barometer for student learning and as a conduit for the student voice. Key points made by ULDs were that: librarians were in a good position to “capture that student voice and play it back further up” (ULD4); that in the neoliberal university students were characterised as consumers (ULD5) and that this characterisation was uncomfortable for librarians (ULD4); and that students’ involvement in university projects and decision making through ‘students as partner’ initiatives and committee membership was positive (ULD3 and ULD4).

SLs were clear about the value of involving students in university planning and development and supported the “centrality of students” (SL2). SLs also commented on student fees in respect of university finances. SL2 acknowledged universities as organisations with a global market, and therefore the importance of international students. SL3 raised the issue of fee income supporting research describing it as

unsavoury, “there’s all kind of dirty cross-subsidies going on within university finances between research and teaching and learning.”

Both Ps were clearly aware of the focus in universities on the student experience and the impact of the introduction of student fees, but they talked less about it. There was a comment about how students prefer to use eBooks compared to print books, namely as reference texts. P1 saw an opportunity for partnerships for libraries; insights into student needs could be used in the development of learning resources: “Students seem very complicated to me. So there must be opportunities [for libraries] to partner with educational publishers.”

In conclusion, this subtheme highlighted changes in higher education (HE) governance and finances, as well as the divided organisational culture within universities. The university library was seen as occupying a space between managerial and academic cultures, making it complex to determine the ‘right side’ to align with. As enhancing the student experience became a university imperative, the university library positioned itself as a key contributor. It seized opportunities to act as a conduit for the student voice and to operate in harmony with them.

Technological advancement

This subtheme presents the commentary on technological advancement. It covers the impact of technology on society, universities and students and their practices, and the university library. It is important to note that these interviews took place before the COVID-19 pandemic, which is significant because of the subsequent acceleration of technological adoption. Because of their similarities, ULDs and SLs comments are considered together. Ps’ perspectives are presented separately.

All SLs and ULDs discussed the effect of technological advancement on society and how this has impacted universities and student behaviour. There was commentary on the prevalence of technology in the lives of young people and students, for example, “students live on social media” (SL2), and “my kids carry around probably a hundred times more computing power in their pocket than put people on the moon in 1969” (SL3).

Managing technological advancement in universities was considered to be complex. SL2 made the point that technology is a channel for information, and that technological change is not about technology per se but about managing information as an asset. She also raised the inherent uncertainties in managing technology: “one lives with the complexity of legacy technologies and new technologies, and you have no idea which ones will win out.” ULD1 was sceptical about technology and its impact on universities given that universities “don’t move quickly” thus disruptive technology is a “contradiction.”

There were some concerns about the impact of Big Tech on society and whether the Internet was a “force for evil and a force for good” (SL2). There were also comments about trust and online information, the filter bubble, and the fragmentation of news media (SL3).

SLs and ULDs highlighted technology-driven change dating back to the 1980s including: automating routine practices, for example, issue and return of books; moving from card catalogues to databases; the shift from print to digital collections; building web gateways; setting up institutional repositories for research papers; and robots and AI.

Adoption of technology had an impact on how libraries worked in other ways. For example, SL1 stated that automation of routine processes freed up time for collaborative working across libraries: “things that had taken a huge amount of our time and attention suddenly became routine and operational and business-like. So the profession could stop agonising about cataloguing standards and start thinking more holistically.”

ULD4 described the change in ethos of the university library from information provider to service provider. She characterised the “digital shift” as “technology enrichment” of “the content, the skills and the services” of the university library. Thus “people and how we approach things” changed in every aspect of work.

The significance of the shift from print to digital collections on library practice was described by SL3. For him, libraries had adapted collection management processes so that digital formats rather than print materials were accommodated. As such there was no fundamental disruption to university library collections work, rather a format shift: “in lots of ways it’s completely, completely changed, and in other ways it hasn’t changed at all.”

There was some commentary on the relationship between technology and information content. ULD6 related how an IT leader said, “You’re the most important bit because you’re the content. The wires in the boxes don’t matter. It’s getting your content out to people.”

The relational and human impacts of technological advancement were considered. For example, in recounting system implementation, ULD5 noted, “the politics were harder than the technology.”

The positive professional development legacy of working with technology was also raised. SL2 considered the lasting impact of the eLib programme to be changed ways of working and new skillsets: “I think the most profound legacy of that was it gave libraries the chance to develop things like project management skills and research skills.”

There was also some commentary on workplace practices, namely using Office 365 which required different ways of working (ULD1). There were comments on the digital skills of library and university staff and their capacity to understand what is required by students who were characterised as digital natives.

A counterpoint expressed was the need for personal real-world connection in a digital world. It was acknowledged that people need to have physical space to come together and connect socially and that the library provides this: “the more that you can sit in your office and do text and data mining on a large data set in a different part of the world, the more you actually value ... sitting in a reading room and having more of a physical experience” (SL1).

The perspectives of both Ps on technological advancement covered similar ground but demonstrated a business mindset. P1 described the move to digital publishing as significant but not disruptive stating: “journals were digitised and brought online as you know in the mid-1990s, but in a really, it was duplication of the print copies.” He described how the digital shift had required investment from publishers in new technology and how ejournals delivered greater value than print journals as usage increased.

For Ps the transformation was still unfolding: “it’s accelerating now with really innovative platforms and services coming out” (P2). P1 made the point that

platforms outside of traditional academic publishing, for example blogs, enable the communication of research outputs more quickly, to the extent that, “hot debates continue to rage about content”, specifically whether it should continue to be “commoditised” and charged for (P2). Publisher product development and innovation is further discussed in Theme 2.

Reflecting on this subtheme, interviewees viewed the 1980s and 1990s as groundbreaking and exciting, marking the era when university libraries began adopting new technologies. In hindsight, while technological advancements were fundamental to changes in library services and operations, the shift from print to digital collections was more of an adaptation than a radical transformation for publishers and librarians. Changes in skill sets and roles within libraries primarily related to service delivery and project management, indicating a shift towards neoliberal ways of working.

The commentary also highlighted the downsides of technological advancement on society, particularly in terms of finding trustworthy content. This concern was especially evident among the SL group, who also discussed the impact of technological developments on young people.

Theme 2. The scholarly communications environment

This theme brings together the commentary related to scholarly communication. Its focus is on publisher practices and perspectives, and relationships and ways of working with libraries. It discusses changing research practices particularly in relation to publication, including open access (OA) publishing. There is some discussion of transformation of publishing enabled by technology. Publishers’ (Ps) perspectives are first considered, then those of University Library Directors (ULDs)

and Senior Leaders (SLs). All perspectives are brought together at the end of this theme in the discussion on projections of the future and the conclusion.

Academic publishing is a contested environment, as encapsulated by SL2:

“Publishing. Well, it’s almost an unbearable topic ... it’s linked a bit to copyright of course and then it’s linked to the defensiveness, particularly at the scientific journal publishers.”

Essentially the university library subscribes to and purchases journals and books and other materials from publishers for their university communities within a set budget. Budgets are under pressure. In HE there is a complex network of relationships between university authors, editors, and university research funders and impact measures. OA is seen as a disruptor to this. Implementing OA brings practical and operational challenges for librarians and academics.

Publishers’ perspectives

Descriptions of academic publishing and the industry

P2 painted a picture of the academic publishing market as “kind of cushy” from a revenue perspective for publishers but difficult for librarians. P1 described the evolution of academic journal publishing from a commercial perspective. The strategy of academic publishers has been to launch a journal, increase the number of issues, develop new journals in new subject areas and increase prices. This practice started in the 1970s “in the white heat of scientific revolution there was expansion of journal publishing” (P2), but price increases had to stop when it became difficult for university libraries to maintain budget levels. When this happened, P1 reflected that “no publisher wanted to be the first to accept lower prices ... to accept an annual price increase of 3% when others get 6-7%.” He continued by emphasising the

importance of business growth and setting journal prices based on demand, reputation, and profile. He provided several justifications for increasing journal prices, including investments in technology and the establishment of new journals. He made it clear that the marketplace is highly competitive: “It is cutthroat between publishers” (P1).

P2 described the academic publishing industry as “a huge, polished machine, [it] operates quickly and with a real laser light focus.” She described how publishers use “input marketing” to understand what researchers need to develop their business and set the scene for product launches so that “everybody’s not only aware of it and where it’s come from but are just desperate and hungry for it.”

Nevertheless, P2 focused less on the financial elements and more on the intertwined relationship between universities and publishers. She described an ecosystem of libraries, academics, and publishers, where publishers made a valued contribution in support of researcher publication, where libraries act as aggregators of content and manage university collections budgets.

P1 shared his view of the Big Deal: “It’s a bit like a fixed term mortgage with a price cap of 4%, you’ll know what your budget is and the price of that is no cancellations.” He recounted how it came about. It was the idea of a former chairman of a publishing company who reportedly said to his sales team: “so long as I get more money from each library each year, I don’t mind what I give them.” The Big Deal took hold, though now it faces challenges: “Everyone got into it, now librarians resent it, and it does provide high usage at a reasonable cost.” Despite this resentment, P1 believed that librarians were reluctant to act against the Big Deal, as doing so would reduce access to information for students and academics.

P1 presented some insights into the behaviour of publishers and how they engaged with universities. He described how employees of publishing companies occupy a range of roles (e.g., content commissioning editors and sales staff), and how inconsistent dialogues between individuals and groups in any one university and any one publisher co-exist: “businesses don’t always think with one head, different stakeholders and different committees”. However, he was that clear that publishing is ultimately about profit: “everything has to be set up on the basis that it will be profitable.”

Both Ps commented on diversity in the academic journal publishing market. P1 distinguished between small and large journal publishers, and on the other hand noted that the academic book market was not differentiated, comparing this to the grocery market where consumers went to different supermarkets for different products. P1 and P2 distinguished between publishers by their strategic intent: “The bigger players ... have clearly identified opportunities in the [research] service space and are going all out in that direction. ... The vast majority of other publishers, ... think of themselves as publishers, as quality assurance providers first, rather than as intellectual property owners” (P2), and “[large publishing company] decided several years ago to be like Google is to search, and Apple is to the smartphone. They foresaw a world where scientists go to them for everything, they built the tools to give the researcher everything they want” (P1).

How publishers regard librarians and universities

P2 viewed the role of the university library as managing finances and for their users, bridging the various online database interfaces of publishers. P1, on the other hand, lamented the decline in the university library’s importance to senior university stakeholders. He believed that this issue needed to be addressed to secure increased

budgets for collections. Conversely P2 complimented libraries on their neoliberal strategies, on management capability and leadership, and their strategic alignment in universities. Further, P2 commented that given their contribution to universities, librarians “don’t get such credit.” In contrast, P2 also believed that libraries required greater commercial acumen and agility so that they could contribute to university income generation. She felt libraries needed to adopt “tough, hard-nosed approaches” to partnership and licencing.

The relationship between universities and publishers

Another key feature of the scholarly information environment is copyright and licensing. Copyright legislation protects the rights of authors, yet authors frequently sign over their copyright to publishers when publishing in academic journals. The library community has been lobbying the government for changes in legislation and raising awareness with academic authors to influence them not to sign over their copyright. P2 noted that: “Copyright is ... under attack by librarians”. P2 also noted that the position of the university library in this regard; it does not always match with university senior leaders: “librarians have very different attitudes to copyright than university leaders who are more used to perhaps thinking about trademarks and patents and income revenue generating.”

Overall, both Ps recognised the deteriorating relationship between publishers and librarians, attributing it to “power relationships and costs” (P2). P2 also made it clear who holds the dominant position in this dynamic, stating that “publishers hold the whip hand.”

Open access (OA) publishing

Both Ps implied that OA was only desirable if it increased profits. From this position they then criticised OA. P1 inferred that the influence of research funders on researchers was misplaced; that research funders were unnecessarily controlling, “they can also micromanage.”

University Library Directors’ perspectives

ULDs expressed their views about the scholarly information environment, of publishers and the opportunities and difficulties in the relationships and on OA including the role of university presses.

The scholarly information environment

The significant changes in the information environment require new thinking and new work from libraries. ULD2 described how “the scholarly comms side of things is changing so significantly, so quickly, that we are still kind of finding our feet in that space where in many ways we shouldn’t be because that’s the space that we’ve inhabited for a very-very long time.” ULD4 reflected on disciplinary differences in academic publishing. For her libraries did not necessarily fully understand the implications of these differences, nor the licencing and copyright issues, and implications of OA research publication.

On publishers and publishing, and OA

Like both Ps, ULDs commented on rising journal subscription prices and publishers’ profits, and the deteriorating relationships between librarians and publishers. ULD1 summed up the tension between not-for-profit universities and profit-making publishers: “we are in a world where we’re kind of on open access, we’re butting up against really strong commercial business interests. ... the values which are butting up against one another are both legitimate and firmly held.”

On the move from paying to subscribe to journals to paying to publishing in journals as part of the OA movement, ULD6 raised practical administrative challenges for the university library. ULD4 discussed research funder mandates and the funding challenges of OA, and was concerned about the sustainability of OA despite being supportive from a philosophical perspective.

ULD5 and ULD6 pointed out the connections between research publication and academic performance appraisal and reward, OA and research integrity, and OA and funder compliance. ULD6 also articulated the position this puts university librarians in, “we will do our best to try and make the funders happy and the academics happy.” He went on, “I think [OA funder compliance] is going to be a challenge for us and we’ll be the people that’ll cop it, not the funders.” Nevertheless, there was some optimism and recognition of the benefits of the library’s work on OA and the opportunity of university presses.

There were some further comments in relation to university research systems, and the reputational gains for libraries resulting from supporting researchers. ULD4 raised the issue of integrating research publishing with university research administration systems. ULD5 commented on how being visible in the research environment demonstrated the contribution the library was making to the “academic future of the university.”

Senior Leaders’ perspectives

SLs made similar points to ULDs, however their commentary introduced insights into challenges and root causes, and opportunities for the university library in the scholarly communications environment. Overall SLs regarded publishers as savvy but defensive. Challenges identified included: copyright; influencing publishing in a

global marketplace; the extent to which publishers (not universities) have developed the infrastructure of scholarly communication; ability of publishers to collaborate with each other when mutual interests are at stake; the stronghold of the Big Deal on the university library; and the naivete and agency of librarians. For example, “we’ve slightly sleepwalked into a model [the Big Deal] that gives publishers total control” (SL1), and “university libraries are now suffering from this because they’re locked in. ... academics assume everything is at the touch of a button in their offices” (SL1).

SLs like ULDs were somewhat divided on OA. The principles behind it were supported but the practical implications — including costs — and the defensive position of publishers had hampered success. SL3 was clear that what research funders want was to deliver on a broad agenda for public good and advancement of UK research impact and productivity, and that was considered positive. SL2 attributed the limited implementation of OA to the “mighty” defence mounted by publishers to maintain their revenue. In addition, SL2 stated that change would require that “editorial boards refused to give their services.”

Looking to the future

Looking to the future, SLs and Ps anticipated that dominant publishers would accelerate the development of products to support research impact, metrics, and infrastructure. SL3’s view of publishers was that they are “far-sighted organisations” who would offer extensive services supporting “entirely digitalised research life cycle.” P1 felt that this made them a potential threat to the university library: “if they [large publisher] could go to the University Vice-Chancellor and say we will provide all of your information support services ... for research and it would cost you this

much less than your library service, I would think Vice-Chancellors would have to think twice.” Not surprising then, that SL3 expressed his hope that non-commercial alternatives would be developed: “I would really, really like to think that universities, libraries and JISC and also internationally could propose and develop some alternatives that are more open.”

P1 firmly held the view that academic publishers would persist into the future because of their role in the peer review process and assuring the quality of published research. P2 presented a future scenario which was dominated by publishers: “a world where all content is freely available, and where the organisations who can invest in infrastructure and services to Hoover up that content and deliver it to end users in ways that are really powerful, I mean seamless, have the potential to be ‘king of the heap’ once again.”

ULD5 was accepting of the limited success of OA: “The library community in the UK have tried to engage with the publishing industry in changing that [subscription] model with limited success.... I don’t think that transition has happened.” Yet, he was optimistic that university presses and other not-for-profit publishing services would grow.

Theme 3. Library people, positioning, and relationships

This theme presents the analysis and synthesis on views of ULDs and SLs on people leading and working in libraries, how they work with others, how they are perceived, and what concerns them. ULDs and SLs shared their motivations and values, and their career development including — for some — progression outside of libraries. They shared their lived experiences of managing change. They also gave perspectives on others: the library workforce and university colleagues. This theme

also brings together the commentary on working across universities with national bodies.

For this theme, there was no substantial commentary from Ps, therefore they have been excluded. The views of ULDs and SLs are handled together with distinctions made between ULD and SL groups as appropriate to the commentary. However, for some subthemes and topics, there was a mix of individual views across the ULD and SL groups rather than group distinctions. In these cases, ULDs and SLs are treated as one combined group. So as not to risk the anonymity of people interviewed quotes and topics are only attributed at group level, however in the instances when the ULD and SL groups are combined, group attribution is not assigned (as there is no analytical value). In addition, names of individuals or companies mentioned have been removed.

Leaders and leadership

This leadership discussion is shaped by individual experiences and perspectives, providing valuable insights into values and motivations. Topics covered include the role of the leader, as well as various leadership styles, practices, and mindsets. Individual motivations were conveyed both directly and through stories and recollections.

Some interviewees described how they “fell” into librarianship or started work in libraries without giving their career much thought. For example, “I kind of fell into the profession. It wasn’t an active choice.” Other interviewees made active choices to work in libraries inspired by positive experiences as children or as students using libraries. For example, “I’d always been a library user as a child, you know, you have the usual story about inspirational public librarians who helped me when I was

a kid.” Three people stated that they were drawn to a career in librarianship because it allowed them to simultaneously pursue their research interests. Others described varied career paths, for example, “in a way I’ve zig-zagged.” They had worked outside of libraries either at the beginning of their careers, or they had stepped in and out of employment in university libraries.

Many found work in libraries intrinsically interesting and rewarding. Some had been excited by technological advancement, for one interviewee the generalist or interdisciplinary nature of library work was a draw, and another interviewee was motivated by the role of the library as information provider. In addition, one person had appreciated the opportunity to work in many kinds of universities.

Some people were driven by their personal values. Four people considered library work to be a valuable public service (regardless of whether it was in a university, national or public library). For example, “I’ve actually quite a public service set of personal values.” Three were energised by the importance and opportunity of what a library brings to a university. For example, “libraries, they’re quite fantastic places to me. The potential is enormous.” ULDs talked about specific university projects with wide impact which had been motivating and rewarding. These included building redevelopments, implementing OA, and leading organisational change. Three people made a point of how exciting it was to be a library leader at that point in time. For example, “I think it’s a really-really exciting time to be in this profession.”

Many mentioned role models who inspired them, who supported and encouraged them, who made them feel that their work was valued, and who influenced their leadership style and approach. One ULD celebrated egalitarian management cultures and inclusive leaders. Another ULD found great inspiration and motivation from a

leader who was clear about the contribution of the university medical library to peoples' lives who said, "you probably think, in the grand scheme, [running the library is] relatively unimportant ... I don't want you to ever think that because if those student nurses don't go out of here as a well-equipped and as knowledgeable as they possibly can be, somebody's health suffers."

Overall, regarding career progression, there was a sense of a new generation of leaders who were both strategic and operationally effective. By adopting a holistic view of the university, they achieved success for libraries and created opportunities to further develop their careers and take on additional responsibilities.

As people talked about their careers, they shared personal reflections and revealed challenges. They valued a whole university and strategic perspective and felt that the career progression route — the deputy director role — does not necessarily provide this. Nor was the strategic view considered to be a universal trait of university library directors.

On gender equality, there were comments from female leaders about "breaking down barriers"; they had actively sought to pave the way for future leaders. Others shared internal battles with self-confidence. For example, "perhaps that's a question I should have asked them [the interview panel], why me? why did you pick me?"

There were also accounts of being given more responsibilities and/or moving on to more senior university positions beyond the university library. The reason being "often because as the university librarian, they're seen to be very, very student focused" (SL), and for university senior leaders "the university librarian is seen as somebody who can broaden their horizon" (SL). There was a sense that moving

beyond libraries represented career success for individuals but that was not necessarily of benefit to the status of the library within a university.

Many of the ULDs and SLs commented more generally on leadership, and people management. They talked about their role and practices as leaders, and views on others in leadership positions.

The role of the leader had many different elements: building the library leadership team; developing library staff, “enabling other people to flourish”; being influential in the university and having “political nous”; contributing to strategic development of teaching, learning and research; having a whole view of the university; and transforming library services, “I’ve deliberately tried to change the role and function of the library.”

ULDs and SLs described their leadership styles and practices. Overall, there was a sense of a move away from directive or traditional, to authentic, collaborative and empowering leadership. This was contrasted to leaders of the past who were authoritarian; “[she] was very formidable, ... only way to ... achieve things in those days was for her to bulldoze things through.” Another described the scholar-librarian leader of the past; “he used to go in on the weekends and catalogue rare books in his spare time.” As these directive and scholarly leaders retired, a new wave of leaders came to the fore; “we are very different leaders.”

Positioning the library in the university

Views on the reputation, standings and status attributed to the university library were explicitly and implicitly revealed. Interviewees commented on organisation structures and reporting lines in universities and where the university library fits. They also shared their views on how they and the university library related to other

organisational groupings, making distinctions between academic and professional services colleagues and departments.

One powerful example of leadership positioning was provided by a ULD as he described his reporting line to a senior research leader. He considered this advantageous in its clear connection of the library to the academic community, “not to professional services, but to research.” He was also clear about the library’s role in leading “new developments in a pan-university setting.” He described this as “we’re seen as an instigator and leader in the university, not just a provider of services to students.”

The library as a leader was also discussed in relation to learning space development and management. The success of library building transformation projects (see Theme 4) had led to a larger role for some university libraries. For example, “I’m leading institutionally on the Learning Spaces Strategy” (ULD). This was considered to be advantageous to library positioning as a strategic contributor to the university, for example, “helping to shape the university’s thinking about independent learning space, sometimes how that relates to the kind of more formal aspect of teaching spaces” (ULD).

However, a downside to taking on a wider role in learning spaces was reported by another ULD. He referenced derogatory comments from university colleagues who described librarians as ‘empire builders’ who wanted to increase their span of control. This contrasted with the experience of another ULD who was surprised by the acceptance of others of this leadership role, “[a] more central role in learning and teaching which goes beyond library provision. ... And it seems to have been kind of accepted without question which I was a little bit surprised about.” Another ULD

acknowledged that it didn't have to be libraries which assumed this responsibility, "I don't think those spaces need to be managed by people who are experts in the management of information which is essentially what library experts are."

The modern university library has been positioned as both a leader in learning space management and in research support. However, there was a report from one ULD of challenges to this from staff who feel that they were spread too thin: "we all haven't got enough resources. All this stupidity around students. At the end of the day, we're a research university and why don't we just stick to that and we'll get the students we want and need without distracting us or diverting our limited resources."

More broadly, a ULD discussed that leadership positioning was not necessarily comfortable for library staff. They talked about how library work attracted employees with subservient predispositions, "Academic libraries have a master servant relationship. ... It was academic led; this was deep rooted in [name of university] culture. ... Those people who were attracted to the profession were attracted to this; slotted into being subservient."

Influential people and the standing of the university library

Interviewees mentioned a range of relational factors which impacted on the reputation and position of the university library. One ULD talked of the relationship between the library and the Vice-Chancellor, noting that the disciplinary background of the VC can impact on a university library: "VCs are hit and miss, the VC will form a view of the role of the library and of you as a director of the library. We suffer under scientists." Another ULD considered senior individuals in universities and their personal history of relations with librarians: "I see this time and time again

where libraries can sink or swim largely on the whim of individuals and their negative experiences.”

This relationship-based positioning was further explored in the context of academic and professional service departments, senior administrators, and their understanding of the university library’s work, as well as the political acumen of university librarians. For example, “there has been a rise in senior administrators, such as directors of students. How does the librarian sit alongside these people?” and “they do not understand the extent or complexity of what we do or how it corresponds with their work.”

One ULD reflected on the decline and recovery of the university library in university organisational hierarchies; “if you look back in kind of library history, the three most important people in the institution were the Vice-Chancellor, the Provost and the Librarian because that’s where more money sits. ... that kind of importance has declined ... but some of these external agendas are throwing the focus back on us. ... to get a great REF the library is seen really important.” This quote also draws attention to positioning within the university and funding, a theme which was also raised by a different ULD who considered funding decisions in the university made at the expense of library funding; “[university senior leaders] were happy to spend less on the library as long as they’ve still got a good service, and it liberated money for other university purposes.”

Similarly, SLs reflected on changes to role of the university library and how on one hand some have taken on responsibility for student services and on the other have been taken over by an administrative department. Overall, there was a sense of loss of power and position and that the decline was a result of the changing information

environment, the invisible contribution of the library to the university, and the relationship between university library leaders and senior university colleagues. For example, “the senior people running the university don’t see the library as important as it used to be.”

Change management

ULDs and SLs had experience of leading organisational redesign and staff restructuring and redundancy. They considered strategic development and/or funding cuts as the drivers for change. Some had experienced very difficult moments of feedback and resistance to change. Some pointed to the rewards of change.

On resistance to change and getting through difficult experiences, one ULD talked of receiving offensive feedback “it was keyboard warrior stuff” and the impact it had on her; “shocked” and “rattled.” A typical example from an SL on leading people through change was: “it’s tough, it’s painful, you have to really bring people with you.”

The question “Why are people so reluctant to change?” was posed by one SL. A question considered vitally important given the skills required for the modern university library in the changing information environment, “because you can’t wait. You can’t wait for the [staff] turnover to come.”

ULDs and SLs expressed empathy and understanding of the impact of workforce renewal on library staff. For example, “unfortunately you do sadly leave some people a bit bruised, and a bit battered through the process because not everybody has the mental make-up to accept change easily” (SL). There was also concern more broadly about the impact of changing university cultures and funding: “there’s a link there to mental health issues and that cuts right across a range of university services”

(SL). This concern was echoed by a ULD: “we’ve got such big problems with wellbeing and mental illness.”

Employees and skills

The literature review highlighted a significant shift in the workforce and working culture of university libraries over the past decade, a trend that began before COVID-19 and was accelerated by the pandemic. There has been a move towards hybrid and virtual services and new ways of working. New positions are being created, particularly in areas such as research data management, digital service development, and data curation.

All ULDs and SLs interviewed (pre COVID-19) with university library director level experience talked about library employees and their skills, attitudes, behaviour. Specifically, that changing information and technological environments require new skills to design and deliver new services and support. The nature of the library workforce and whether it is fit for the future was considered. Further, there was commentary on the professional librarian role. The ongoing professional development of library staff was seen as vital for the future. However, the nature of professional education of staff was seen as problematic by one SL; “library schools are failing us appallingly.” In addition, the point was made that library managers need training and development so that they have people management skills, something which may not necessarily come easily to librarians; “the fact that they are managing people and you manage performance, isn’t natural for a librarian I think.”

The changes in the university library workforce were attributed to the automation of processes, which led to a reduction in routine tasks. There has been a shift away

from rigid timetabling of activities to more flexible approaches to task management. Staff are now required to work more autonomously. Library positions are increasingly at higher grades, and responding to information inquiries has become more complex than in the past. Additionally, there were comments about the importance of staff dispositions and intellectual abilities, emphasising the need for “getting the right people with confidence and brains.”

There were differences of opinion in relation to the role of the professional librarian. For one ULD, there were two broad benefits of the professional liaison librarian role; deep understanding of the work of academic colleagues, and connection to teaching and research. For others, there was emphasis on the ability to work collaboratively across academic and professional service departments. For example, “an ability to work as a contributing member of a multi-skilled team, including academics and faculty, as well as including students and technology people and learning experts.” One SL advocated for new kinds of roles and skills; “the concept of data librarians ... and the skills needed for that are by and large not people in our profession”. In addition, a SL lamented the lack of disciplinary knowledge; “we don’t have many scientists in the profession. I think that’s a real problem”, and “I would really defend the research scholarly librarian, the expert in the subject, ... [with] deep understanding of the collections and the research process”. Another important issue raised was that of diversity, one ULD considered gender and commented: “we are shockingly un-diverse in that sense.”

Working together

University libraries are known for their collaborative and cooperative nature.

However, there was a perception that they were not doing enough on a national and

international level. The numerous professional associations and advocacy groups, along with their interrelationships, was seen as unhelpful. For example, “So there’s quite a lot of organisations with that sort of national view which are vying for some attention and vying for some kind of contribution from the same people if you like and I think that is difficult and I think those relationships need to be worked through.”

One ULD commented on missed opportunities to work with public libraries on subscription negotiations, special collections and the national catalogue of books and resources: “why are we not thinking about all of our potential stakeholders accessing all of the material that is available through libraries in the UK?” ULDs also commented on opportunities to scale up collective action for collection management and preservation, both print and digital, beyond and with university libraries. For example, “we need to take further that kind of national debate about now we work at scale in terms of digital services or share national collections and collecting.”

ULDs and SLs commented on opportunities for greater cross library working. Already discussed in Theme 2 are the opportunities for libraries to work together to shore up the scholarly communications infrastructure, and the role of national bodies in enabling collaboration. Other points made included the suggestion to do more internationally and follow the lead of others in the US, “In the States a lot of that’s happened through Mellon funding... It’s possible JISC funding can work towards that sort of thing.” In addition, there was reference to opportunities presented by JISC as a unique body in HE in England and Wales; “I would like to think that JISC is the way in which universities and perhaps traditionally libraries especially, is an

enabler of collaboration on a national scale in a way that other countries, most countries, don't have.”

Theme 4. The purpose, role, and services of the university library

In discussing the role of the university library there were two overlapping perspectives. The first perspective considered the activity it undertakes; what it does or delivers. The second perspective articulated role as the fundamental purpose of the university library or its *raison d'être*. In addition, several interviewees described purpose in terms of mission and values. In this synthesis and analysis, role, services and purpose are defined as follows:

- Role is used to describe what it is that the university library is responsible for in the context of the university.
- Services are the undertakings that the university library (as an organisational department) set out to provide for students, academics and others; the portfolio of things libraries do and deliver (spaces, collections, services, etc).
- Purpose is the ‘why’ behind the university library; the ultimate goal of its undertakings and the end to which resources are allocated.

All 11 people interviewed discussed the purpose and role of the library, and the majority of interviewees discussed its services. There were differences and similarities between individuals in their descriptions. ULDs are the primary grouping for this theme. SLs commentary is used both as a counterpoint and a supplement to them. The Ps commentary is predominantly used as a counterpoint. Occasionally, it was possible to present the perspectives of the three groups in relation to each other to gain insights into differences.

Purpose and role

There was general agreement between ULDs and SLs on the role and purpose of the university library, although comments ranged from philosophical to practical. The starting point for the majority of ULDs and SLs was the mission of the university and how the library supports and enables teaching, learning and research. From this, definitions of the university library's purpose, mission, vision and values were developed and implemented. One interviewee described the strategy development process, others simply made it clear that strategy development and institutional alignment were standard practice. Interviewees discussed information and collections, spaces, and support for research, teaching and learning, although individuals emphasised different elements.

ULDs and SLs agreed on the enduring values of libraries, particularly in providing access to information for learning and research. Some viewed collection management as the core function of the university library, while others expanded this to include helping people become discerning users and creators of information in a complex information environment. For some, the library's role as a provider of learning spaces was crucial. Additionally, discussions covered the library's roles in freedom of speech, community engagement, social responsibility, and cultural assets. There was also commentary on positioning the library as a partner in academic endeavours, along with insights on how the university library could gain credibility and improve its standing within the university and in relation to publishers.

Enduring values

ULDs who took a philosophical stance discussed the history of libraries and their enduring values, and the interpretation of those values in modern day library practice: "the common library of the scholar six hundred years ago is still there now.

So much of what a library is abides, but it's angle, its emphasis, its focus, has shifted sharply as our universities and higher education demands have changed" (ULD4).

ULD2 discussed personal values and the professional identity of librarians, sharing the words of a mentor: "'A good librarian has no religion, no morals, no opinion, no politics', personally yes of course you will have all of those things, but in your role ... you are there to offer, facilitate, so that everybody else can freely express theirs.'" They went on to discuss free speech and the opportunities for university libraries to support it.

Are collections the heartland of the university library?

ULD4 presented collections and information management as the foundation for the university library; "The library as institutional kind of knowledge shaper, maker" and discussed how this role dated back to the origins of the university library, and now required a modern take on "helping to manage, provide access, shape, influence and sometimes produce knowledge." There are further points in this regard, for example SL1 described collection management as "a professional heartland." SL3 made a disciplinary distinction regarding collections in the humanities, stating, "I think probably the role of university libraries is to work with the humanities scholars." However, he was somewhat reductive as he continued, "and to make sure that students have the readings they need... and to buy Big Deals from general publishers."

ULD4 went on to describe the complexity inherent in a contemporary collections and information management role; "it just has so many more permutations within the possibility of digital." In addition, SL3 described how this role could be extended to other university collections (i.e., "curating museums and galleries") but only if that

work was in line with university strategies; “that’s got to be part of the university mission and that’s the reason it’s doing it because it’s contributing to that mission”

However, two ULDs explicitly noted the declining importance of managing collections. Some attributed this shift to a preference for cross-library approaches. One ULD emphasised that this decline does not apply to special collections; “the move to digital collections and with consortia purchasing and all that, we all ended up with the same collections, and really the things that differentiated us, were our rare and special collections” (ULD6). For both Ps, the fundamental role of the university library — already discussed in Theme 2 — is aggregating published content, managing university collections budgets, and providing study spaces for students.

Strategic alignment

Many ULDs and SLs discussed strategic alignment with the university, changing teaching and learning and research practices, and the student experience. For SL2 expertise in and understanding of pedagogic practice was important to being considered a credible and equal partner to academic colleagues particularly in “universities who want to be innovators in the learning process.” Others commented on how different university strategies and missions dictate varying roles for the university library. For example, “I don’t think there’s one way to be a university library anymore. I think it depends on the way that the strategy of the university is evolving” (SL1).

In addition, leveraging business intelligence and intellectual property were highlighted as university-wide opportunities for the university library. The Ps pointed out that there were unrealised opportunities to use intelligence (insight into

behaviour and needs) about students to inform the development of collections and called for librarians to develop their business acumen. A further suggestion related to management of intellectual property and its potential positional gains, “to embrace ... intellectual property. Be owners, as it were, on behalf of their institutions, to think about the intellectual assets and outputs of their university as an asset to be leveraged for new partnerships, [and] for more licencing arrangements.” (P2)

Missed opportunities for technology leadership

There was important commentary from SL3 about the lack of technology leadership from the university library,

“We’ve had a revolution in information technology. Library’s business is information technology. It’s information certainly and the technologies that support that. There has been a massive opportunity. Its business should have transformed, and if you look at some of the ways in which some American libraries are seizing control, seizing the initiative, ... some of them, admittedly with budget larger than any in the UK, are doing some terrific things ... with ways in which they’re engaging with their faculty, with the way they’re adopting publishing as an integral part of their mission.” (SL3)

The public good mission of libraries

SLs and some ULDs considered the public good mission of the university library. Opportunities to extend services to engage with the wider public were seen as advantageous and under explored. For example, ULD6 discussed the impact of philanthropic funding in Europe from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, namely “revamping the physical estate but really changing the total dynamic of what a public library can be” and in particular providing support for societal challenges.

He considered this to be a return to the role of the library as a “living room of the community.” ULD6 went on to comment on the backlash from librarians on supporting refugees from public library space. Those opposed vociferously expressed their view that the role of the library was to provide information, and not to support people who have been socially displaced. ULD6 believed this to be a misalignment with the values of librarianship and detrimental to its future; “we’re sort of almost imploding on ourselves.” This is reminiscent of some of the negative staff sentiment on the student experience shared in Theme 3.

Similarly, other interviewees described the importance of the role of the university library in inclusivity, community building, and in taking social responsibility. ULD4 stated that social responsibility was expressed in library support for widening participation, and in public engagement around collections and cultural resources. SL1 described the contribution to community and public good: “it’s a place where you host events, a place where you open up to the general public.” SL2 described the opportunities to connect with the public through sharing the traditional crafts of the library, “we find that a lot of the public who come through the door, they actually want to see things like conservation. ... one of the most successful things you could do was to put your conservators behind a glass wall and let them work in the full gaze of the public.”

Services

This subtheme brings together the discussion on services. The areas which generated most discussion were spaces, collections, and services to support research and digital capability development of students. Of these areas, spaces was the topic most commonly discussed.

Spaces

Four ULDs spoke in depth about library spaces. Already considered in Theme 3 (Positioning the library in the university), is library leadership of learning spaces. Here, this subtheme captures the developmental and operational perspective of library buildings as learning spaces.

Persistence of library spaces despite growth in digital collections

ULD1 recounted a short-lived drop in the number of people coming into library spaces coinciding with the move from print to digital information. She went on to describe how changing pedagogy drove the need for collaborative learning spaces, different opening hours and support models, and the advent of the learning commons. This view was also shared by ULD4 who confirmed the renaissance of library spaces, “all the prophecies around digital meaning we don’t need physical spaces anymore ... what we’ve seen is year-on-year increases in use of our spaces, predominantly by students.”

The discussion around collections and spaces focused on freeing up more space for students to study. Referring to one library building ULD1 said, “Fantastic Library. Prime space on campus. It’s being used as a warehouse. In no way is that sensible. It’s not efficient. It’s not effective.” Others mentioned the knock-on effect for print collections and the need of off-campus storage and the work required to assess what to retain in print, where to house it, and how it can be retrieved.

The library as laboratory

The university library as provider of learning space was characterised by ULD5 as a laboratory; “we see it much more as a laboratory for students to engage in different

sorts of learning. So, we have social learning spaces, we have group learning spaces as well as traditional quiet individual study spaces.”

Investment in library learning spaces

Many interviewees discussed significant building projects, mentioning the length of time to fruition, the complexity of stakeholder needs, and the cross-university ways of working. For some, building projects became all consuming, and for all they were exciting opportunities to redefine library services. For example, “It was a brilliant rocket-fuelled journey around moving an institution forward to improve student experience” (ULD4).

For the SLs the commentary on library spaces focused on the strategic drivers: growth in student numbers, student satisfaction, and technological advancement. In addition, SL2 commented on the role of library spaces for “social interaction, for human contact.” Like ULDs, they discussed changing pedagogies, but they placed even greater emphasis on technology drivers.

Managing collections and access to information

Themes 1 and 2 highlighted the impact of technology on universities, society and academic publishing. This subtheme brings together the discussion on collections management with emphasis on operational and service delivery. All participants talked of library collecting and collections and the implications of changes in publishing on the university library. The topics covered ranged from the demands for storage, preservation of the print and digital collection, legal deposit, the cost of subscriptions and the Big Deal, and students use of information. Excluded from this subtheme is the discussion on OA and university presses which were covered in Theme 2.

Collection management was described by some in polarising terms; the tension between managerial and academic cultures plays out, as can traditional and new notions of the university library. One ULD described a typical experience: “We were sitting in a meeting today around the new library and a very eminent professor of history wants a list of all the books that we’re throwing out, ... these are books that have never been borrowed at all [and there are] more than twelve copies of them available elsewhere in the UK, and yet he is really worried about us throwing away books.”

The challenges of digital preservations were described by ULD4. She talked of the inherent complexity of working with a wide range of materials including “born digital archives, but also research data and corporate records and other kinds of digital learning objects and digital research objects.” She drew attention to the costs associated with responsibility for preservation alongside well-established print collection stewardship; “there is a kind of resource shift in that ... we have a forever responsibility to stewarding those physical collections from the rare books, manuscripts, and archives, and we have a responsibility to do that digitally as well.” Others made similar points stressing the challenge of managing the hybrid library, for example “the problem is that we’re sort of running dual systems. We’re running the electronic systems. We’re running the print systems” (ULD6).

Reminiscent of Ps views of the university library discussed in Theme 2 (Publishers’ perspectives-how publishers regard librarians and universities), SL2 made a point about how much of the work of a library in providing access to information was invisible, “I think that expectation that every journal will be available ... is kind of taken for granted without anybody knowing the kind of negotiating that goes on and

indeed the library's role in ensuring that it happened." ULDs discussed special collections and cultural asset management. ULD4 considered an important opportunity to make decisions about ownership rather than providing access at point of need, based on university education and research: "the philosophy around access not ownership is going to be more and more critical to our future whether I think of cultural objects and collecting or whether we think of that kind of broader sense in how that plays to kind of educational delivery or research delivery."

Related to the potential role of university libraries in managing institutional intellectual property as discussed in Theme 4 (Purpose and role-strategic alignment), SL3 commented on the slow progress of libraries towards managing institutionally created content, "I remember ... [in] 1994/5 the Inside-Out Library, libraries increasingly curating the intellectual outputs of the university and hey, you know, we're still talking about that 20/30 years later." For him, the advent of the institutional repository presented "a huge opportunity for libraries in particular to play a very active role and to get very senior sponsorship in the institution for that role", an opportunity he believed had only been achieved in a small number of universities. He also made the point that in this area of work budgets have been insufficient.

Other services and support

ULDs and SLs discussed library services for teaching and learning and research. This takes many forms and represents a large volume of library activity. Support of academic colleagues and students is closely tied to the information mission and collections heartland of the university library as discussed in Theme 2, however it extends beyond collection management. This section specifically considers these related service and support functions.

Research support

There has been a revitalisation for some university libraries in the development of research services. For many interviewees, the REF had fuelled the development of bibliometrics services and OA the need for repository infrastructure and metadata creation, publication advice, and guidance on funder policies. Another growth area discussed was support for research data management (RDM). RDM was an area of service development which was contested. ULD6 believed that libraries did not have the right skills: “I’ve always been a bit nervous about our sort of trying to be, or say, we’re in-charge of that, when we don’t always have the knowledge and skills. Yes, you’re about cataloguing information and we know about meta-data and all those sorts of things, ... but I’ve always been worried about research data management ... [we] don’t necessarily have all the research skills to put it totally in context.” In contrast ULD1 felt that managing research data, “absolutely play to the core skills that library experts have. ... Because we do know how to think about how you organise data. We know how to think about how you organise information. We know how to think about making it discoverable and accessible.”

All SLs supported all these new services for libraries. They saw them as deeply connected to changing research practices and new research tools, and as such did not question that they become part of library service offerings, and that library staff should develop the capability to deliver these services.

Teaching and learning and digital capability development

Library services in support of teaching and learning have also grown. ULDs and SLs discussed the role of the library in support of students’ information skills and digital capability development. For example, “there’s a real role to be working with students around how they can cross-check biases, cross-check sources, ... the questions of

false news or sponsorship of data by particular companies and advertisers and so on. ... I think it's an important part of the library job" (SL2). In relation to research students, ULD1 commented on "a role for an intervention from an expert that can help [research students] organise and manage the information ... we know of researchers and PhD students who just haven't got any idea how to think about how they manage and organise information."

The future of the university library

The commentary on the role of the university library into the future was diffuse. Interviewees highlighted numerous existing elements that were likely to persist into the future, while also discussing opportunities and challenges where libraries have yet to realise their full potential. Overall, they depicted the future of the university library as complex, uniquely situated within each university context, and responsive to external forces that shaped internal strategies and services.

The university library was largely defined in terms of purpose, role and services. At its heart was enabling information access with all that it entails in relation to OA, working with publishers and managing the hybrid library. Strategic alignment with university mission meant that leaders made choices to dial up or down the transformation of spaces, the role of digital capability development of students, and the range and scale of research services. To supplement these functions, options were presented for: special and cultural collection management, and taking the role of knowledge manager for university information assets, university presses and publishing. In addition, there was some consideration of libraries supporting and leading university community building activity, and that libraries as social spaces, were important into the future.

Further suggestions for future roles and services were made, for example SL1 recommended supporting researchers' use of new tools which help them engage with vast amounts of information (e.g., data mining). In addition, SL3 identified university libraries in America as leading the way in relation to space development, engagement with academic colleagues, and "adopting publishing as an integral part of their mission." SLs also commented on the rise of the AI.

SL3 considered the threat from publishers as they developed data analytics products and embedded them into the research lifecycle. He described the risk to the university library as not having the skills to support researchers in this new era of data driven research; "some radical action needs to be taken if the workforce in libraries is going to be technologically literate, sufficiently technological and data-literate in order to seize this opportunity because at the moment it quite frankly isn't." On a more positive note, SL3 saw many opportunities for national and international collaboration. He proposed the need for "probably at times quite painful conversation between libraries at a senior level collectively and scholarly societies and scientific societies as to basically who does what, who gets to pay for it."

As discussed in Theme 4 (Purpose and role-strategic alignment) using insights into student behaviour to develop new products, and embracing the role of intellectual property manager of the university were suggested by Ps as opportunities for the future of the university library.

SL2 made two future focused points in relation to the perspective of students, one on their commitment to social justice and the other on entrepreneurial mindsets. On the former she said, "I think it's about what students are demanding, we are observing that whilst students go into corporates so they can earn loads of money to pay off

their debt, they are really turned off a lot of the corporates, they don't trust those people and are much keener on social justice." On entrepreneurial mindset, SL2 suggested that university libraries partner with others in their universities to develop new support services; "[students] aspire to do is setting up their own companies and they want to be entrepreneurs as well as students. ... if for example you've got a Business School as part of your university, libraries I think can be great partners in some of that around the skills needed for researching patents ... and doing market research."

Discussion of the findings of the thematic analysis

The interview study provides a complex response to the research questions. There are external forces (government policy, neoliberalism, technological advancement, and changes in the academic publishing market), and internal forces (staff and leadership perspectives) which pull in different directions. Tension arises within the university library perhaps because university library leaders see their role as responding to strategy set by others in their universities or controlled by market forces. There is a sense of a disparate domain, where university library leaders are focused on different things and have different views. There is a shared past, but the complexity of the present is deemed to require tailored responses for many, and the strategies and services for the future can be selected from a range of possibilities.

The interview study points to the role of the university library which is aligned to university strategy. Some interviewees are clear that the heartland of the modern university library is collections and information access, and that there is a vital role as institutional knowledge shaper and maker. This role when considering information in all its forms — digital or print, owned or accessed, freely available or

purchased — requires partnerships with other libraries and university departments, being technologically savvy, and having deep understanding of the academic endeavour across disciplines. But for others the future is found in refinement of library and information service practice to deliver a combination of services, space, and collections work.

A range of services are designed and provided. At the risk of stating the obvious, to deliver these services people are required. The people dimension is not straightforward: it includes consideration of leadership and the library workforce — skills, capabilities, mindsets, and dispositions. It also includes relationships with senior stakeholders and with professional services peers.

Regardless of their vision, individuals working in university libraries face internal struggles. These include tensions for librarians who strive to be good corporate citizens while lamenting neoliberal practices. Additionally, they need the support of professional services colleagues but often find themselves competing with these departments for university funding and professional jurisdiction over ICT-related activities. In addition, the requirement for university library leaders is to have a whole university perspective and political acumen so that they can best position the library in the university. For library leaders, challenges can also come from library staff who feel that the priorities for a research library do not include providing broad support for the student experience, and in relationships with academic colleagues which deteriorate as print collections are reviewed and withdrawn.

Nevertheless, one of the biggest challenges for the university library is the complexity of and relationships in the scholarly communications environment. Interview participants described this environment as an ecosystem of relationships

and transactions between libraries and publishers, academics, research funders, and university senior leaders. At the time of the interviews, ULDs and SLs were in agreement on the moral arguments for OA — free public access, research reproducibility and integrity, retaining copyright within universities — but this was tempered by concerns about costs and practical application of OA models and research funder mandates. Ps, ULDs and SLs also agreed that implementation of OA is partial, and its future utility contested. In addition, ULDs shared insights about disciplinary differences in relation to publishing practice, and SLs raised the transformative impact of technology on research practice and dissemination of research findings.

Ps were clear that they considered themselves to be a vital part of the scholarly information environment. They occupy a strong position from which they seek to build, and operate according to commercial interests. For ULDs, Ps, and SLs the dominant publishing model was inextricably linked to the reputation and impact of academics and universities. Ps' commentary on librarians was interesting in that it presented them as strategic and influential and at the same time misguided and lacking in business acumen. There was wide recognition of the deteriorating relationships between librarians and publishers. Yet, explicit and implicit in the interview commentary are ideas for change, these ranged from propositions for local activity (for example, retaining copyright of research publications), to national approaches (for example, lobbying for changes to break the link between academic career progression and publishing), and international action (for example, building shared scholarly communication research infrastructure).

The wholehearted embrace of technology in the university library in the 1980s has dissipated. These pre COVID-19 interviews paint a picture of the peak in the 1990s when government funding enabled libraries to embrace the opportunities afforded by technological development. These opportunities focused on automation of library processes and the growth of digital collections. This heyday had a positive legacy for libraries in the form of new staff and skills. However, this not a legacy of technology leadership. Nor is content considered to be more valuable than systems and apps, in a world overshadowed by Big Tech and the implications of the networked society. The university library has declined; it is no longer the sole provider of information in the university. However, this is mitigated (to some extent) by agreement on the role of the university library in supporting the digital skills development of students, the advent of new research support services, and the renaissance of library spaces.

This analysis of commentary on university library leadership is to some extent conflicting: leaders are good corporate citizens in the neoliberal university and are aligned to student needs. They can be rewarded for this through investment in library building redevelopment, the tangible major projects which are exciting and impactful, or by taking on other responsibilities. Yet university library budgets are constrained. The energy and attention which could be directed to responding to the challenges of the university environment are spent on navigating the neoliberal university. Nevertheless, in the words of a ULD, “So the things that we’re looking at are challenging but they’re interesting. ... I wouldn’t want to be anything else other than a librarian. I can’t think of anything else that I’d rather do for a living. Can you?”

Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library

This chapter presents the case study of the University of Queensland (UQ) Library; its changing role and relationships. After completing the interviews for the interview study, this research project was disrupted. Firstly, by my move to Australia in March 2019 to take up the position of University Librarian (UL) at UQ. Secondly, by the COVID-19 pandemic. To illuminate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university library, Chapter 2: Literature review-The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university library, considered library and information services (LIS) commentary on this situation, and Chapter 4 detailed my practitioner experience and reflections from that time. However, to maintain the original ambitions of this study, for contemporaneity and originality, this was not enough. The case study was therefore introduced to bridge the gap between the findings of the interviews and the changing role of the modern university library, as represented in UQ Library (UQL).

The key area of interest in this chapter is the future of the university library — as expressed in the case of UQL — in the context of the University and its community. It examines UQL past and present, and internal and external relationships. UQL is part the wider University and is impacted by its process of budget setting, strategic directions, and the overarching governance and policy framework of UQ. Considered in this case study are the forces outside of UQ which had a significant impact, namely the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting economic downturn, and Australian and Queensland government responses impacting higher education (HE).

Regarding stakeholder groups, the categorisations used for constituent groups of UQ were university senior leaders, academics, students, professional services staff,

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (DVCA) colleagues, library staff and professional librarians, and library managers and leaders. There are overlaps between these groups. I rely on them in the case study to illustrate relational perspectives and needs of the users of UQL.

The investigations into UQL as a research case study did not start until after the demands of my COVID-19 practitioner work had eased. The approach taken to the case study was to review key emails, documents, papers and presentations, both internal and external to UQL. These sources were not generated in a research context; at the time they were created there was no expectation of use in this way. I was either the author or co-author of these documents in my role as University Librarian (UL). They became sources in themselves and triggers to my memories of events.

In this case study, I have focused on decisive incidents, change, and perspectives of stakeholders, including library staff, academic colleagues, and students. I have analysed the impact of changes in strategy, positioning, and role of the UQL. In so doing, I present a rigorous and complex case of an in-practice response to the research questions for one university library.

Before going into the case, it is important for me to situate myself. As a researcher, I had carried out the interviews for the interview study. As a practitioner I carried the knowledge gained in conducting the interviews with me into my role at UQ. In practice, I applied ‘in the moment’ insights of what was possible, and what had been lost and gained, for the modern university library. Inevitably, this application was adapted according to my understanding of the differences and similarities between the Australian and English universities, and to UQL. This case as representation of

my practitioner work is therefore, informed by the interview study. However, it is not a structured intervention from which I can assess success or otherwise of the findings of the interview study. It is also important to state that the case reflects what I observed and what I found significant. It is not comprehensive in consideration of UQ and UQL.

The case study is not a thematic investigation rather a chronological exploration of change driven by internal and external factors. Although it directs commentary to key considerations of the role of the university library: strategy, alignment with university imperatives, relationships internal and external to the library, collections, spaces, services and staffing. It is set out in the following way. It starts with a historical orientation dating between 1960 and 2019, and orientation to the UQ and Australian higher education context. It then sets out four phases of development spanning March 2019 – March 2023. First, one year before the COVID-19 pandemic as UQL strategy was refreshed; second, the response to and impact of the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020; third, the next phase of strategic planning and major organisational change in 2020–2021; and finally, the phase of strategic development in 2022–23.

Orientating the reader to the case

Introducing HE in Australia and UQ

Since 1960, the HE sector in Queensland, Australia has evolved in similar ways to the sector in England. There has been expansion and growth in student numbers, and introduction of a mixed system of undergraduate tuition fees supported by student loans. National research and student experience assessment and surveys and global ranking league tables are a feature of UQ and the Australian university landscape.

Like the UK, there are several Australian universities which are research intensive, and others are teaching focused. There are 43 universities in Australia. This includes eight research intensive universities known as the Group of Eight (Go8). Go8 universities span all Australian States, UQ is the only Go8 in Queensland. There are approximately 56,000 students at UQ. The University has three campuses; the main campus is located at St Lucia, Brisbane. Within Australia, UQ vies for position in the top three with the University of Sydney and the University of Melbourne. These are very large universities. More than 40% of their student populations are international, and the majority are from China. Go8 universities compete for international students; for domestic students there is little competition as those who achieve higher secondary school grades will tend to select the Go8 university within their respective State.

University funding is through Federal Government research and teaching grants and student fees supported by Federal Government-backed loan schemes. Other funding sources include State government funding, overseas student fees, investment income and income from contract research and consultancy. The impact of currency exchange rates for Australian universities has been significant. Economic conditions dictate the spending power of the Australian dollar and the value of purchases and income in US dollars, British Pounds, and Euros.

Geographic location and its impact

The UQ community of staff and students live and work in difficult climate conditions. Brisbane is the capital and most populous city of the State of Queensland with a population of approximately 2.6 million. House prices and the cost of living are high; affordability is an issue for staff and students. The city is in the

hilly floodplain of the Brisbane River Valley. It has a subtropical climate and experiences high humidity and a cycle of drought and flooding. In my five years of living in Brisbane I have experienced severe flooding to the extent that the UQ campus was inundated and completely closed for a week, annual outbreaks of mould in library spaces and collections, and forest fires impacting regions within a one hour drive of the city.

History of colonisation and its impact

A distinct feature of the Australian environment is the destructive impact of British colonialisation on Indigenous people. The progress has been slow towards Reconciliation with First Nations peoples, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Like many universities in Australia, UQ has a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which sets out how it will address the equity, respect and relationship shortfalls between its dominant white population and Indigenous staff, students, and wider community. Many at UQ support the development of cultural competency, employment of Indigenous people, the Reconciliation movement, and other significant work (i.e., the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Strategy, and the Indigenising the Curriculum project).

The governance, structure, and leadership of UQ

Like many universities, UQ operates within a formal governance system. At the most senior level, it is governed by a Senate, led by the Chancellor. The University of Queensland Act 1998 grants Senate powers to appoint staff, manage and control University affairs, property, and finances to promote the University's interests. The UQ Senior Executive Team (USET) includes the Vice-Chancellor (VC), Provost, Chief Operating Officer (COO), Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Executive Deans of the faculties, and a representative of research institutes. USET has responsibility

for advising the VC on whole-of-university management, strategic direction, budget setting, oversight of risk and assurance, and organisational culture. The Academic Board is the University's senior academic advisory body. The Board formulates policy on academic matters including new programs, teaching, learning and assessment, research, promotions, student academic matters, prizes and scholarships. It provides transparency and opportunity for challenge in decision making. As UL I am a member of the Academic Board, and a member of many of its subcommittees, in addition the Library Advisory Committee reports to the Academic Board.

The administrative organisation of UQ is typical of Australian Go8 universities; there are some differences compared to many English universities. Reporting to the VC, there are senior administrative and academic groupings, led by Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Provost and the COO. The Library is part of the DVCA portfolio which includes the Library, Student Affairs, Academic Services and the Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation (ITaLI).

Navigating across administrative, support and academic departments is complex. There is often collaboration within different portfolios yet across portfolios there are different interests to navigate. No one can operate without the support of the COO portfolio, which includes HR, Property and Facilities, and Information Technology Services (ITS). This gives the COO significant influence.

Teaching and learning at UQ

UQ is a comprehensive university which is highly regarded for teaching excellence and the student experience. Modern pedagogic practices such as problem-based learning are commonplace. Blackboard is the University-wide Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Initiatives include technology-enhanced solutions, like flipped

classrooms and videoconferencing, and non-technological methods, such as team-taught courses and peer assessment. The adoption of digital learning for academics accelerated in the pandemic.

Research at UQ

UQ has a global reputation in research. It is ranked in the world's top 50 for Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers for World Universities. With increased competition for funding and the ongoing importance of league tables and University rankings, maximising impact is essential. Technological advancement has played a part in changing research practices with the introduction of supercomputing for example. UQ is no exception to the UK university research data management initiatives aimed at improving access and archiving of data generated through research.

Introducing libraries in Australia and Queensland

There is a network of public and private libraries in Australia and Queensland. State libraries and public libraries are funded through State Government grants. University libraries are funded by their universities. The professional groups are active. The national group open to everyone working in libraries or studying library and information science is ALIA, the Australian Library and Information Association. My impression is that there are, relative to equivalents in Britain, many members of university library staff who are actively involved with ALIA and consider professional membership as important to their work and career development.

The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) is an advocacy organisation for university libraries in Australia and New Zealand. CAUL leads national journal subscription negotiations and cooperative activity between

university libraries. It represents the interests of its members to government, the community and other stakeholders. There is a Queensland group: the Queensland University Libraries Office of Cooperation (QULOC). There is also a Go8 university librarians group which addresses challenges unique to research libraries.

Introducing UQ Library (UQL)

UQL is a large and busy university library. Library branches are spread across campuses; there are 11 library sites, many open 24/7. Compared to other university libraries in Australia (according to 2021 CAUL data), UQL has the fifth highest number of study seats, fourth highest staff FTE, the highest number of metadata records in its institutional repository (over 2.7 million), and within the Go8 the highest usage of information resources (print and digital) at over 21 million accesses per year. Collections include special collections which incorporate the Fryer Library and UQ Archives. UQ Library aligns its work to support research, teaching and learning.

History of UQ Library in context: pre pandemic 1960 to 2019

A detailed analysis of the UQ environment and how the University and its library evolved is presented in Appendix 8. The history of UQL follows a similar trajectory of British university libraries, albeit with different political and economic forces triggering responses at different times. There is a long history of fluctuating budgets allocated to the Library by central UQ administration. Nevertheless, the evolution of UQL is impressive. As the University developed and acquired new campuses and sites so did the Library. As student numbers grew, as changing teaching and research practices emerged, the Library developed new services and facilities.

In the 1960s and 1970s, like UK libraries UQL practices revolved around managing print collections. The 1980s saw a rapid increase in digital publishing. ‘Born digital’ materials emerged, online materials and online journals became dominant and with them a plethora of publisher databases and search platforms. The Web and advances in search engines took the digital shift to a new level. UQL has kept up with all of this.

The digital shift provided some opportunities for the Library in relieving space issues. However, since the 1960s space to study and opening hours has been a source of dissatisfaction for students. Whilst growth in student numbers and changing teaching practices increase demand for learning commons style spaces, finding it at the expense of housing print collections has been polarising. This was evidenced in the 2018 vocal backlash from academic colleagues to a project focused on withdrawal of print materials: the Active Collections project. Space challenges also include difficulties finding and keeping storage space as the University addresses storage challenges from other parts of its operation.

Internal surveys of and feedback from UQ students reveal that they seek flexibility in access to library facilities and services to accommodate paid employment and timetabled teaching. Students expect administrative processes which are easy to navigate (e.g., enrolment) and which are technology enabled. They seek access to information collections (from searching Google or their course online environment) and access to support with information access and use (e.g., referencing guides). Students’ relationships with academic publishers are limited to purchasers and readers of textbooks.

The evolution of UQL staffing and its leadership has been similar to that of other universities in which I have worked. There is a history of pioneering University Librarians responding to the demands of the growing University in 1960s and 1970s, followed by those who embraced technological change and took on managerial practices. These leaders developed foresighted strategies and identified the need for workforce development and change.

There were three landmark decisions in relation to the role of UQL. First, the early adoption of ICT and stepping into the role of student IT support provider. This positioned UQL firmly in the two important areas of student experience and IT leadership. Second, Library staff have been proactive in growing and transforming research information services, for example the move in 2005 from reference enquiries to supporting bibliometrics and open access (OA) publishing. UQL also took responsibility for management of UQ authored research papers and the institutional repository, now a fundamental service for UQ. Third, the automation of services which for some Library staff meant that, as the University Librarian put it in 1983, “the environment to which they had been attracted is disappearing” (East, 2010, p. 26).

The demands of workforce management first became evident in industrial relations reports in the 1980s and the introduction of a position for a senior member of Library staff with a focus on personnel in 1988. There have been at least three major staff restructures since 1980. All of these triggered vocal and influential industrial relations responses. Overall, there has been a gradual decrease in staffing levels since 1992.

Nevertheless and in short, in the words of John East, former liaison librarian and UQ historian:

Over the previous one hundred years it had grown from a small, underfunded provincial university to become a world-class institution, and its library had grown with it, from a tiny, inadequate and poorly housed collections to one of the largest libraries in Australia, and a significant collection even by world standards. ... It was an achievement to which many staff, at all levels, had contributed over the course of the century, and one in which all could take justifiable pride. (East, 2010, p. 40)

The four phases of change

Phase 1. The year before the pandemic: UQ Library strategy, relationships, staff and organisation culture

Initial assessment of UQL strategy, staffing and relationships

On taking up position as UL at UQ in March 2019 I assessed the strengths and weakness of the Library. Areas of concern included, the strategic alignment between the Library and the University, the variability in the quality of library space and — at times — overcrowding of libraries, a disconnect between Library staff and leadership, lack of collaboration between the Library and others professional services departments (with the exception of ITS), and discontent from individual academic colleagues and liaison librarians about the approach taken to withdrawing print collections to free up space for redevelopment as study space.

Of these, I first assessed the Library strategy considering it to be fundamental.

Although the Library strategy mapped itself to UQ strategic aims it shoe-horned Library service development projects into it, rather than considering the distinct

position of the Library and its contribution to the University. Nor did it sufficiently emphasise the impact of technological advancement, or the potential contribution of the Library to the student experience — learning space, building community, employing students, digital capability development — and being a conduit for the student voice. All of these areas had emerged as important in the interview study.

Another issue which I addressed early on, was the damage to relationships caused by the Active Collections project, a two-year initiative to reduce print collections in libraries. In 2017–18 the Active Collections project drew up criteria to identify print items to discard or move to the off-site warehouse from campus libraries. This received strong negative feedback from academic colleagues and liaison librarians. Academic colleagues believed that they were not sufficiently consulted on the criteria for print withdrawal decisions, or that the criteria sufficiently considered disciplinary differences. Liaison librarians had been caught in the middle of dissatisfaction from the academic communities with which they engaged and a project that had been endorsed by the Library leadership team, the Leadership Executive (LX).

A further area suffering from a breakdown of trust was in relation to a 2015 staffing restructure. In restructuring there was a reallocation of resources to areas of increasing demand. It impacted on 20% of the workforce. When I met with staff individually as the new University Librarian four years after the restructure, approximately ten staff expressed unhappiness with the Library leadership team for the way they communicated changes to individuals impacted. They told me that they felt disrespected personally, and that their work was undervalued.

Refreshing the Library strategy

Mindful of the UQL relationship issues, the change management insights from the interview study, and my own past experience of managing change, I designed an inclusive approach to redeveloping the Library strategy: the Strategy Refresh. In June 2019, consultation and the ideas generation process started for the Strategy Refresh. The majority of Library staff participated in the process via the seven working groups established, and over 700 ideas were put forward. The working groups generated reports and from these I synthesised key points and then prioritised areas for development to create the new strategy for 2020–2021. One of the interesting things about this process was the high level of engagement, yet the difficulties for staff and leaders in synthesis and prioritisation of ideas. The interview study had taught me the importance of alignment with university strategy, which I used to guide my prioritisation.

The refreshed strategy opened with a new mission statement, built on the UQ vision of ‘knowledge leadership for a better world’, it was *empowering knowledge leadership for a better world and be a catalyst for change*. Nine strategic focus areas then followed, of these six were directly in line with the interview study findings: collaboration and partnership; OA and open scholarship; contribution to the UQ research infrastructure; building the digital, data and information capabilities of academics and learners; identifying and delivering on opportunities to develop library environments that are welcoming and inclusive and inspire learning and collaboration. Two were tailored to UQ strategic imperatives: inclusivity and Reconciliation; and developing front-line services to provide a seamless network of support for students. The latter required the Library to move out of its silo thinking and engage more meaningfully with other DVCA and UQ teams. The final strategic

focus area aimed to review and adjust the Library suite or portfolio of services to maximise the value delivered by the resources available.

A new aspiration for Library culture

While undertaking work on the Strategy Refresh, Library staff made many points about the culture of the Library. It was clear that some staff could not let go of hurt from the past or did not trust that positive change could happen. There was also a perception among some staff that inappropriate behaviour was not addressed, and that people did not always speak to each other in respectful ways.

To address the cultural issues raised, I worked with another group of staff volunteers to create an aspiration statement for culture development. This statement became known as the UQ Library Way. The UQ Library Way identified four foundational pillars: understanding, providing opportunities, supporting, and collaborating. All speak to relational and behavioural aspects of work. To support its implementation a range of training and development opportunities were provided; topics included crucial conversations, essential behaviours, situational leadership, influencing, and connected leadership.

Increasing capacity and capability in digital library development

Another key enabler of strategy delivery was technological advancement. The interview study had painted a picture of the 1990s as the heyday of technology and that recent opportunities to embrace technology had been missed. Given UQL's strength in digital library development and existing capabilities, this was an area to scale up. It was opportune to consider increasing ICT developments for four reasons: its history of leadership in technology adoption (see Appendix 8), its role as provider of IT support for students, its Library Technology Service (LTS) team of 15 staff,

and excellent relationships with UQ ITS. The aim was to partner with others including ITS to increase capability and capacity in digital library development.

Building positive working relationships through collaborative strategy implementation

To implement the redeveloped Library strategy, new project groups were formed, and staff were invited to participate as volunteers. There was much interest and in 2020 the groups started to deliver good outcomes. There was one project that ran the risk of feeling threatening to staff; the service portfolio project. It aimed to achieve clarity about Library services by documenting them, defining the value of specific services, and then setting up a framework for continuous improvement. With a play on words we called the project “the service suite-spot”. One of the first outputs of the project was a service catalogue; this provided detail on everything the Library offers to students, staff and the wider community. This was followed by a set of value statements, articulating the benefit of these services.

Library space development

Another early success of the strategy implementation was to secure additional funding to commission a Library Spaces Master Plan project from the UQ Capital Management Group. Although the project developed a detailed Master Plan, implementation plans were derailed during mid- 2020 when the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on UQ’s financial position became clear.

What did this phase reveal about the role of the university library?

Strategic alignment of the Library with the University can appear as a retrofit of established library services and practices to institutional strategy. Whilst Library staff have many ideas for improvement, turning these ideas into actionable projects requires systematic methods and approaches. Similarly, once a service was offered,

there were no mechanisms for assessing whether it should stop in future. Staff were happy when working in collaborative ways which are facilitated and purposeful, they are very unhappy when faced with organisational restructures and the uncertainty about the nature of their roles.

Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response

This second phase is marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the essential role of UQL for students and established it as a credible digital partner.

This section sets the context for the changes that occurred during the pandemic years of 2020–2022, discussing the widespread impact and response of UQ and UQL. It examines what happened, why it happened, and the resulting changes in ways of working.

The Australian and Queensland experience of the COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic was declared on 11 March 2020 by the World Health Organisation, and on 20 March 2020 Australia's borders closed to all non-citizens and non-residents. Simultaneously Queensland's 'stay at home' restrictions were put in place, followed by the first Queensland lockdown which ran from 30 March–2 May 2020. This lockdown — compared to other Australian States and other countries in the world — was relatively short. It set what was to become a key characteristic of the Queensland Government's handling of the pandemic: short and strict lockdowns with intensive contact tracing and quarantine. These were followed by relaxation of lockdown conditions supported by public health campaigns and measures such as occupancy density restrictions in workplaces.

The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine across Australia started on 22 February 2021. By 7 October 2021 over half of Queensland adults were vaccinated. There followed

some easing of public health and border restrictions. However, it wasn't until December 2021 that Queensland State borders opened to Australian citizens and residents, and March 2022 before Australia's borders fully opened to international travellers.

Across the world government responses to the pandemic balanced measures to reduce the spread of the virus with economic and social concerns. On 24 March 2020 the Queensland Government announced a AUD \$4 billion package to support health, employment, households and businesses. However, this package excluded universities. The income of UQ — like other universities — was particularly vulnerable because of reliance on international students' fees. Thousands of international students were unable to travel to Australia to start or continue their studies. Some respite came with additional university research funding in the form of a two-year Federal Government Research Support Program (RSP) grant (total \$98M), widely considered as compensation for the loss of international student fees. A further \$1 billion in 2021 was allocated to support research in Australia's universities.

UQs strategic response to the COVID-19 pandemic

In response to this situation, UQ identified three key strategic imperatives. First, there was a widespread shift to online teaching, known as the 'digital pivot.' Second, efforts were made to keep campuses open for teaching, learning, research, and business continuity as much as possible. Third, there was a focus on reducing costs. These strategic imperatives significantly impacted UQL in all areas.

Changes in UQL services and support for students

The digital pivot required that Library staff increase their digital capabilities quickly, and that services scaled up and/or changed. The Library team shifted help and support services (including training) online. By mid-2020 Library online technology training sessions for students attracted thousands more attendees than previously (peaking at 4,000 attendees in May 2020).

Online assessment and online exams with proctoring proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of the digital pivot. New systems and services were evaluated and purchased quickly. In adopting these systems there was a steep learning curve for academics setting exams, exam administrators, systems and IT staff, and critically the students who were now required to use new technologies to sit exams. UQL took on the role of provider of online exam support to students and redeployed staff from across three different teams to run the new service. This support involved two different elements — physical space and infrastructure, and online real-time support via chat and phone. This service was designed quickly and iteratively improved in close collaboration with colleagues in the Examinations Office, ITS, ITaLI, faculties and schools.

Another example of a new Library service was the development of a laptop loan scheme. Colleagues realised early in the pandemic that there were some students who either did not have access to technology at home, or who had to share PCs and laptops with parents and siblings. Within two days of identifying this need we had a very basic laptop loan service up and running; our supply relied on laptops removed from computer labs all over campus. This was new to UQL but tried and tested in many other university libraries and beyond. The Library trajectory from idea to

service was rapid, thanks to the shared knowledge of those libraries who had gone before us.

The pandemic environment triggered concerns with student wellbeing. Sense of belonging and the impact of social isolation on mental health were concerns, as was hardship as sources of income (e.g., part-time jobs in hospitality) were impacted by pandemic restrictions. Library staff stepped out beyond UQL to meet the huge demand on Student Services to for example, administer financial aid and food aid to students in need during lockdowns.

The visible contribution of Library spaces to the UQ community

Like other libraries across Australia, COVID-19 adjustments included physical distancing measures which led to study space reductions. Keeping libraries safely openly demonstrated to UQ colleagues the important part they play as both a safe space for students seeking support and as highly visible and open spaces for learning.

Open library buildings also meant access to print collections. This required new solutions in times of strict lockdown and we were reminded of how important our print and special collections were to researchers and students in the humanities disciplines. To support the continuation of research, UQL provided a priority retrieval service for researchers, higher degree by research (HDR) students and final year undergraduate students. In addition, we introduced an appointment system so that special collection material could be consulted in an environment that minimised contact with other people and where items were quarantined for a period before being made available to others.

Within the Library the service ethos of staff who work with physical collections — including our special collections — meant that many of them worked at home only

when the strictest lockdown conditions were imposed and so access to collections was largely maintained. This could have created a divide between those staff who could work from home and those who came onto campus. What we found was that the majority of staff who worked with physical collections were happy to come to campus to resume that work. Both their commitment to Library users and enjoyment of their work was clear.

Spaces and staff: working from home and on campus

It is worth noting that different UQ locations were subject to different State restrictions, for example, Brisbane city lockdowns were not in force at the rural Gatton campus, and hospital and health precincts operated under more restrictive protocols. The University Incident Response Team developed a planning framework. This framework presented scenarios ranging from 1–5 in severity and for each campus permissions and arrangements were specified for teaching, learning, research, and administration.

There was such a range of options for what and when different activities could take place on campus, that different interpretations could be made. University staff operating under different tiers of campus access were expected to sometimes be on campus and at others working from home, and variations within that were possible depending on whether people were working on research or teaching and differed across academic disciplines. The apparent inconsistency generated some ill feeling between staff groups — within the Library and across UQ — but it also prompted helpful discussions about the benefits and limitations of working from home.

United across UQ to support students

For all teaching, learning and student experience matters the DVCA became a fulcrum for communication across UQ central services (i.e., Health Safety and Wellness, Property and Facilities, ITS, and faculties). We worked together with a UQ-wide perspective to respond to the impact of the pandemic. Previously self-contained conversations across teaching and learning, student experience, risk management, health safety and wellness, estate management, and student communication all opened into UQ-wide dialogue. The DVCA group facilitated a two-way stream of information from the UQ Incident Management Team to academic and administrative leaders in faculties.

Whilst the UQ Health, Safety and Wellness team became the ‘go to’ for advice and direction, it is worth mentioning the contribution of UQL to student communication. Led by the UQ Student Services team, with support of UQ Public Health academic colleagues, Library staff joined with them to work through student guidelines and messages. The Library’s role as a key communication channel was recognised and we became a component of the shared hive of thinking which shaped UQ communication with students.

Planning for course delivery was complex. Academic and DVCA staff collaborated to plan and propose the balance of online and on-campus teaching and recalculate the capacity of lecture theatres and seminar rooms to accommodate social distance requirements, and timetable accordingly. This was one area where I stepped outside my University Librarian role and led a group who carried out the analysis and proposed the way forward and created a timetable which was flexible enough to accommodate on and off campus teaching. Working in this way and with a strong

focus on the student experience reinforced and made visible the Library as a key collaborator.

Spotlight on the Library: data for decision making and to track student engagement

There was new senior level interest in Library data about students' use of digital resources and services, as well as campus use of library spaces. Data driven decision making was important, and Library usage data was considered by senior UQ staff and groups. The uptake of the scaled-up laptop loan service was considered worthy of reporting to USET, as were the number of students coming into campus to access wi-fi and study in libraries. The Library team were much more acutely switched on to what was happening within UQ and how that translated to student behaviour. They became real-time data gatherers, analysers and synthesisers on student engagement, which facilitated rapid decision making and gave USET insights into levels of student engagement.

These experiences enhanced the Library's understanding of teaching and learning at UQ. It became evident that a comprehensive institutional approach — encompassing faculties, schools, and professional services — was crucial for effectively delivering support and services.

The impact of cost reduction measures on UQL

Although enrolled student numbers were maintained, income fell as fees were discounted for online participation. UQ also experienced the impact of disrupted global supply chains in the shape of rising costs for capital projects and utilities. The Provost, COO and the VC put out a call to all staff for financial prudence. In 2020 non-essential recruitment was deferred, travel and hospitality budgets cut, capital purchases paused, and budget savings sought. Conversely and understandably,

technology investments were made as UQ sought to transition services and courses online. Recruitment savings proved the most difficult, as workloads for some dramatically increased. For three years UQ operating budgets were cut, the Library budget was no exception with approximately 3%–5% cut each year. Trade Unions continued to raise concerns about staff workloads, pay rates and employment conditions.

With reducing budgets and the risk of staff sickness, this meant considering service continuity and service priorities. Over the course of 2020 and 2021, across UQ we created, reviewed, and iterated business continuity plans within the DVCA senior team, continually asking ourselves “What are the most critical services?”. To generate the priority list of Library services I reviewed the service catalogue. I proposed and agreed with the LX that the Library’s priorities were supporting students with their enquiries and digital capability development, and maintaining access to the digital library infrastructure and collections. Furthermore, maintaining safe study spaces with access to print collections and IT facilities including wi-fi were deemed essential.

The pandemic, publishers, and the cost of journal subscriptions

The interview study set out the challenges faced by the university library in relation to rising costs of journal subscriptions. During the pandemic, for UQL the cost reduction directives of UQ resulted in an AUD \$3 million cut to the Library collections budget. This at first seemed very challenging: prior to 2020 the annual inflation rate on academic books and journals was 5–6%. Through CAUL and independently university libraries secured many price freezes in 2020 and into 2021, largely because publishers were mindful of the impact of the pandemic on university

funding. However, for publishers of journals which have a high impact and strong reputation inflationary increases persisted.

More broadly, the pandemic shone a light on publishers and what content was available openly and what was behind increasingly expensive paywalls. On the one hand, we saw publishers and research groups sharing COVID-19 related research and commentary while, on the other, accusations of espionage and hacking into vaccine research abounded.

Ways of working in the Library: when staff joined together and when they did not

During the pandemic Library staff demonstrated that they could work quickly and creatively, and beyond their job descriptions. This was illustrated by the redesign of library spaces following the State Government's announcement of a COVID-19 safety measure late on a Sunday afternoon in March 2020. This measure stated that 1.5 metres had to be maintained between people. To comply we needed to remove furniture from libraries and reposition what remained. That Sunday night I sent an email to the leadership team and those whose roles focused on library spaces, asking them to join me the next morning to work out how we were going to make spaces safe. At 8 a.m. on Monday morning, more than 20 staff had come in early to help. We quickly planned how we would work, what exactly safety compliance looked like, and reorganised all 4,000 library study spaces in 3 hours.

Yet some things failed or were difficult to manage when Library staff did not pull together. For example, working to identify and purchase additional digital learning resources for the digital pivot did not go smoothly, as the Information Resources and Liaison Librarian team tussled for overall ownership of this work and the associated decision-making responsibility. Determining why there was a difference between the

cross-team successes and challenges in the various pieces of work proved difficult. The interview study findings, along with literature on library dysfunction, suggest that tensions between professional librarians and other library staff may have played a role.

In contrast, mutual support became a hallmark of how Library staff worked during the pandemic. Online meetings during lockdown offered glimpses into each other's homes, where we saw colleagues juggling childcare and enjoyed the impromptu appearances of cats, music practice, and more. We witnessed each other on tough days when emotions were high and found words of support. This deeper rapport and empathy enhanced the Library staff's sense of belonging. These empathetic relationships showed that goodwill was present within Library teams, despite the challenges in cross-team collaboration mentioned earlier.

Leadership and management

Our experience during the pandemic showed us how important it was for leaders to be visible and present, and we saw leadership outside of organisational hierarchies. In the early months of the pandemic, I moved from the collaborative style of the Strategy Refresh to a directive yet empathic style. The ability to adapt was a key trait in UQ Library leaders at every level. Those who didn't have a management role but could quickly adapt and act were key to setting up and changing services quickly and to supporting others to remain grounded. Looking back, I consider that the adaptive and emotionally intelligent leaders played an important role during the pandemic.

Collaborations with other libraries

Outside UQ, other relationships were strengthened during the pandemic. These connections facilitated collegial sharing, enabling quick decision-making and

support. Engagement with the State Library of Queensland and other university libraries in Brisbane intensified as we shared responses to changing restrictions and lockdowns. Within QULOC, there was an exchange of know-how and experiences, providing emotional reassurance and a sense of togetherness. The national group CAUL played a crucial role in securing favourable subscription deals with publishers.

What did this phase reveal about the role of the university library?

UQL's response to the pandemic solidified its role as a cornerstone of the student experience, showcasing its value, proving its collaborative capabilities, and increasing its visibility among UQ senior stakeholders. It became evident that UQL supports students' sense of belonging, addresses IT needs and digital capability development, provides study facilities, and meets academic information needs (both print and digital).

The pandemic experience revealed that Library staff were willing to step beyond their job descriptions to ensure business continuity and to support students and researchers. Nevertheless, there are instances where relationships were strained. Some leaders and managers can adapt their styles according to the situation in hand, some Library staff — regardless of position in the hierarchy — are effective leaders.

Collaborative working made the UQ pandemic response effective. Working across professional services and academic schools and faculties delivered good responses to challenging student needs. UQL's role as two-way communication channel was recognised and the Library became a component of the shared hive of thinking which shaped UQ communication and decisions.

Phase 3. We're not going back to the way we were

Disruptions to the implementation of a new Library strategy, increased demand for digital services, and new ways of working led to a pivotal moment in an LX meeting when a team member asked, "We're not going back to the way we were, are we?". This question sparked a period of further strategic planning, resulting in a new strategic document called the 'Blueprint,' which outlined the aspirational future role of the Library. This, in turn, led to fundamental changes: an organisational restructure, the expansion of the Library Master Plan into service transformation, and the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections and Services team.

Major organisational change

As the new wave of collaborative strategic planning discussions extended to all UQL staff, it revealed that while some staff embraced the development and delivery of new and scaled up digital services, others believed that these services were not appropriate to the Library remit. UQL staff were divided on how the boundaries around the role and services of the Library. Nevertheless, it was clear to me that the new support and services were valued and momentum for strategic development should be maintained. To deliver the new and growing digital support services long-term with a shrinking budget would only be possible with an organisation restructure.

For restructures UQ sets out a process known as Major Organisational Change. Major Organisational Change is defined in the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA). The EBA sets the conditions and pay of UQ staff and was negotiated with UQ senior management and the Unions. In December 2020 we started on the Library

Major Organisational Change process, which took almost two years to fully implement.

After three months of consultation and one month of negotiation with the Unions, the new Library structure was agreed, transition plans were developed and put in place. Overall, this impacted directly on approximately 25% of Library staff.

Like many of those in the interview study who shared their experience of restructure and change, this change was difficult to manage. Complying with the formal and highly structured process set out in the EBA and supporting staff through change was extremely challenging. UQL has a highly unionised workforce and the Unions took an oppositional position. The change consultation was characterised by protests, media campaigns, and many anonymous offensive messages were posted online or emailed. I found these difficult to respond to, particularly statements which suggested that I had betrayed staff.

My focus shifted to providing as much support and information to staff as possible, dedicating much of my time to calm and clear engagements. I commissioned an onsite counselor and offered career development courses and interview coaching to support staff. Communication was extensive, including team briefings, all-staff sessions, and one-on-one meetings.

For the liaison librarians, although the proposed change appeared to be an evolution of their current role on paper, they perceived it as a radical shift and responded negatively. The transition from traditional liaison librarian service delivery to outreach librarianship, which is more relationship-focused, highlighted a potential disposition mismatch.

The successes experienced during the pandemic of collaborative working and trust in leadership, could not be maintained. Staff felt very uncomfortable with the prospect of moving from familiar roles to a new and not yet operational (and therefore unclear) roles. To rebuild relationships and to empower the liaison librarian team to shape their future, I set up a transition team of four. I invited expressions of interest from members of the liaison librarian team to be seconded from their current roles to the transition team. We worked together to develop very detailed service definitions and to build skills and confidence, so that staff felt able to move to the new roles.

Culture and people development

The negativity prompted by the organisation restructure was a setback to Library culture development work. As a result, we have renewed our communication efforts and carried out two reviews of the process and outcome of the restructure so that lessons can be learnt. One such lesson was to increase focus on opportunities for cross-team working within the Library and with other student support networks external to the Library (Student Services, Student Affairs, ITaLI, ITS, faculties and schools).

Leadership lessons

The interview study highlighted the shift towards collaborative leadership approaches and the challenges of managing people through change. Reflecting on leading formal organisational change at UQ, I found it crucial to maintain clear and concise communication while providing detailed descriptions of new roles. Genuine engagement and adapting plans to meet staff needs were essential for building trust in leadership. Additionally, managers play a vital role in supporting their teams and must have a thorough understanding of the aims and impact of changes on their teams and individual members.

However, achieving this understanding proved challenging within the framework set by the UQ EBA, as implementation of the EBA process for change requires that leaders set out proposals for consultation rather than work with staff collaboratively to design change. I also believe there remains a gap in understanding the changing environment, the necessary strategic responses, and how these changes impact everyone's work in the Library. Continuous efforts by library leaders and managers to make sense of and communicate these changes are crucial.

What staff and students want from Library space: the Master Plan

During the pandemic work on the Library Master Plan project continued. As part of this project several surveys, focus groups, and interviews were conducted with students and academic colleagues.

The Master Plan went beyond consideration of space, the project proposed that there was much that could be done to respond to increasing student expectations and changing needs and behaviour and utilise change in spaces as a catalyst for transformation of service. Libraries should provide consistently high-quality environments where students and staff can come for learning and research, supporting on-campus focus, productivity, discourse and discovery. Insights were synthesised to paint a picture of the aspiration for the Library experience. A compelling layered vision of spaces supported by Library staff which uplift the student, academic, and community experience was created (see Figure 2). The new aspiration for the Library was as sanctuary, community, and source of inspiration.

Figure 2 *Aspiration for the UQ Library experience*

- The home (me): A sanctuary to support individual needs which is a place to welcome everyone.
- The village (we): A community of students, staff, partners, professionals, and visitors to meet others, be heard, and validate understanding.
- The beacon (us): A beacon and platform with all the necessary tools, resources and expertise to enable learning and knowledge creation and drive action.

This aspiration influenced a further iteration of the Library strategy contained in the next version of the Blueprint, ‘Beyond the Blueprint’, which is discussed in Phase 4.

Building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and collections team

The Blueprint made a clear commitment to inclusivity, creating a welcome environment for all, and to Reconciliation. While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been valued members of the Library team in the past, in 2020 I made the practical commitment to create the Identified (where being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is an occupational requirement) role of Reconciliation Action Plan Officer and secured DVCA strategic funds to do so. We appointed the Library’s first full-time Aboriginal employee dedicated to developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and collections, supported by a second Identified role as part of the Vice-Chancellor’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Graduate Program. Together, they worked to uncover the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections held at the Library and form a new path forward for describing and cataloguing Indigenous materials as well as increasing visibility and access. However, this work brought with it serious considerations for cultural load and cultural safety. Experiences of discomfort and trauma were unavoidable as materials were reviewed which demonstrated the destructive, violent, and marginalising

treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through Australia's colonial aggression. This team has grown to four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. The team are supported by a network of colleagues across the Library who implement technical enhancements, develop metadata, and provide support for the dedicated services developed. Together they support UQ-wide project and initiatives including the Indigenising the Curriculum project and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island research strategy. Their work has been recognised in two UQ VC Awards for Excellence. Phase 4 discusses the wider implications for libraries in the decolonisation of collections.

What did this phase reveal about the role of the university library?

Strategic alignment of the Library with the University and constrained resources meant that organisational restructure was required. For staff this triggered negative feelings born of previous restructures and put a wedge of distrust between them and Library leadership. Whilst understanding the reasons for change, the opportunities for career development paled into insignificance compared to the negative personal impacts of disestablishing existing roles.

The boundaries between library space development aspirations, service development, and staff ways of working are permeable. To consider students' experience of the university library in terms of space design and strategic development of library services opens up the possibilities for experience design which in turn can facilitate community building as well as support for learning.

The global Black Lives Matters movement and the growing recognition of the destructive impacts of colonisation on Indigenous People, together with growing awareness of equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI), and accessibility require that

universities and university libraries recalibrate. They require that universities as institutions born of white Western traditions of knowledge and learning, acknowledge how these make them places of racism and where — in Bourdeusian terms — inequality is reproduced.

Phase 4. The 2022–2024 strategy: is this the role of the library in the modern university?

This section considers UQL’s strategy, services, staff and management post pandemic from 2022–2024. It was the period of further refinement of UQL strategy informed by learnings from the previous phases.

The key strategic document, the Blueprint, was updated in 2022 and became known as ‘Beyond the Blueprint’. The new Blueprint reflected the learnings from the Master Plan project, particularly the aspiration for the Library as sanctuary, community, and inspiration. This aspiration encompassed strategic thinking on community and sense of belonging, and imperatives of equity, diversity, inclusion and Reconciliation. The focus on equity and inclusion emerged as a key UQ-wide strategic imperative through an initiative called the Queensland Commitment. The Queensland Commitment aimed to break down personal and financial barriers to higher education facing students. Beyond the Blueprint also recognised the increase in demand for IT support and the opportunities for new technologies to enhance services.

Beyond the Blueprint articulated five domains of strategic development for UQL. They were connecting people to information, information literacies and digital capabilities, placemaking, community, and embracing technology. For each domain there was an assessment of the current position of UQL and definition of the projects

and new initiatives required for the future. In addition, supporting projects were identified. These focused on people and relationships, evidenced-based practice, and processes for continuous improvement. The challenges and opportunities inherent in the strategic domains and supporting projects are outlined below.

Connecting people to information

The aim was to develop financially sustainable collection management practices; advocate for OA; partner with other collecting institutions in UQ; and ensure Library collections and services embody principles of EDI.

OA and collection management

Compared to the interview study findings, the situation in Australia is different in relation to OA. Public access mandates from Australian research funders are limited compared to the advocacy and mandates in place in Europe and North America.

UQ has a long-established OA policy which was updated in 2023. Practice has largely focused on green OA through the well-established institutional repository, eSpace, widely used and actively developed. The driver for inclusion in eSpace was maintaining the UQ record of research ready for submission to the national research assessment exercise, Excellence in Research Australia (ERA).

Consistent with interview study findings, the move towards OA has continued to be difficult. Although many publishers are now offering transformative or read and publish agreements which move away from a subscription to access model, the charging models have the potential to be more costly for research intensive universities, and keen negotiations are commonplace.

UQ Library via the Open Textbooks @ UQ platform has published nine textbooks since its launch in 2021, with a further 21 textbooks currently in development. The Open Textbooks @ UQ platform allows academic staff to adapt and create high quality digital learning resources, which are free to students. Open textbooks can significantly reduce financial stress on students and improve their experience. Universities across North America are more advanced than Australia in this space; they have been developing open textbooks for many years, some funded through government grants.

The strategy for UQ Library in managing the collections budget and relationships with publishers is to consider them in the broader context of UQ academics' relationship with publishers and publishing. Publishers have direct relationships with academics as authors, editors, peer reviewers, and so forth. Discussions with the UQ academic community, review of our subscriptions, and consideration of sustainable approaches to publishing are ongoing and proactive. In 2022 the UQ Scholarly Publishing and OA Working Group (SPOAWG) was set up to explore opportunities for UQ policy and practice to align with the principles of OA and Open Research. This working group is raising awareness of the costs of the current academic publishing model and its membership includes many academic advocates for change.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections

Decolonisation of libraries and the critical librarianship movement (discussed in Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication-Equity, diversity and inclusion; Chapter 2: Literature review-Predictions of the future of the university library) recognises that library practices are not where we need to be. At UQ Library with the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team we have been seeking to address the difficult questions such as how

Indigenous knowledges have been described in library practices which are born of western traditions.

To this end UQ research funding was secured for a project *Elevating and Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and perspectives in UQ Special and Research collections* (Murphy, 2023). The project has highlighted the culturally significant materials held within a subset of Library special collections and identified gaps and limitations in the existing descriptive practice resulting in findability issues. Moreover, the research raised important considerations around Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property rights, including issues of cultural access, secret and sacred material, and attribution. This work impacts not only UQ researchers and students, but also Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland and beyond.

Other challenges for collections

UQL experiences other challenges with collections management. One pressing matter is the conditions in which the special collections and archives are stored. Whilst flood and mould damage has been limited, the environments within which collections are stored are substandard. This was flagged to be addressed as part of the Library Master Plan project. In addition, digital collection management is challenging, the requirements for digital storage for digitised collections and the preservation of born digital information sources, have not yet been addressed.

Information literacies and digital capabilities

UQL has a track record of success in supporting information literacies and digital capabilities. For example, online ‘Digital Essentials’ modules are accessed by thousands of students each semester. There is significant demand from academic

colleagues to embed digital capabilities development in their courses. The Library team has begun exploring the next wave of digital capability teaching and redesigning our offerings. This next wave responds to the concerns of algorithmic literacy and the dominance of social media, as discussed in Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers, and raised by interview study participants (see Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment-Technological advancement). The challenge is to keep UQL staff expertise and digital capability up to date to make a meaningful contribution.

Placemaking

Despite ongoing investments, the history of UQ library space is marked by a persistent perception of inadequacy among students. There have been improvements with the conversion of collections space to learning commons. However, more is required, and this is set out over a ten-year period in the Library Master Plan. The investment required is significant and spread over nine buildings. Despite a business case which has been endorsed by USET it unfortunately remains unfunded. In this constrained financial environment other capital projects are understandably more pressing, for example, replacing failing research infrastructure, and investments in response to cyber security issues.

Nevertheless, we have been able to secure relatively small amounts of funding to make incremental annual improvements to spaces. These are in response to student feedback, most recently installing soundproof single person pods to provide private space for online meetings. We are also mindful of feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who feel that not all Library spaces are welcoming. In response, we have made small but positive improvements, such as prominently

displaying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and installing Indigenous artwork loaned from the UQ Art Museum.

Community

The placemaking work is entwined with UQL's community building aspiration, and the developments in collections in relation to EDI and decolonisation. This domain goes further by recognising the contribution of the Library in building and extending the UQ community, whether that be by working with secondary schools and their pupils or working with other communities in support of the Queensland Commitment. The Library is also referenced on the *UQ Disability Action Plan* and the Aboriginal and *UQ Torres Strait Islander Research and Innovation Strategy*.

Cultural collaborations

One key area of collaboration for UQL involves partnerships with UQ cultural institutions, such as museums and UQ Press. These relationships hold significant potential for development, particularly in the realms of OA publishing and enhancing cultural experiences. The latter was recognised in the University of Queensland (2022) strategic plan *Toward 2032: UQ Strategic Plan 2022-2025*, which set out the strategy to "Nourish intellectual vitality through inclusive access to debates and public lectures, cultural events, and UQ's museums and libraries" (p. 16).

Systemic embracing of technology

The Library Technology Service (LTS) team has developed the digital collections infrastructure similarly to other research-intensive university libraries, including the institutional repository, eSpace. Additionally, LTS manages the IT equipment in libraries for student use.

Findings from the interview study and UQ's experience with the COVID-19 digital pivot have underscored the importance of keeping pace with technological advances to fulfill the university libraries' mission of information provision. UQL's strategic aspiration is to integrate library resources and support into the digital workflows of students and academics, embedding technology within Library services. There is more we can do, particularly in deploying AI. Changes in how people search for and compile information could significantly shift library approaches to search tools and support for systematic searching and literature reviews. More broadly, the rise of generative AI in universities has raised issues of academic integrity, prompting new policies and guidelines. UQL has a role in supporting students in the ethical and appropriate use of AI.

Culture and workforce

Restructures have been used to create new roles and bring in new skills to the Library. The 2020 restructure introduced new roles but not without disrupting relationships between leaders and their teams and between teams. I hope that we have reached a position now where incremental change coupled with investment in staff development keeps the workforce equipped to deliver on strategic priorities. The risk is that the rapid pace of technological advancement may outstrip the speed at which staff can adapt.

We have redefined our aspirations for Library culture through the UQ Library People and Culture Commitment. This document outlines our goals and objectives, focusing on three key commitments: continuous learning and development, fostering a diverse, healthy, and effective workforce, and ensuring a positive workplace experience. This initiative has been well received by Library staff, and a dedicated working group is leading its implementation.

Evidence-based practice (EBP), continuous improvement and the service portfolio

When making incremental changes with a constrained budget, deciding what to prioritise is crucial. Our goal is to adopt a service portfolio management approach. One area where we've made significant progress, accelerated by the pandemic, is evidence-based practice (EBP). Articulated by Koufogiannakis and Brett (2016), EBP involves a process model that facilitates questioning practices, gathering data, and using information wisely to make decisions.

New UQL data sources were utilised by senior stakeholders to better understand student behaviour during the pandemic, and now this data supports budget allocation negotiations. The next step is to use this data to inform discussions on which services to stop or pause.

What did this phase reveal about the role of the university library?

Since 2019, the strategic development of UQL has been influenced by Library staff, UQ strategy, responses to the pandemic, funding cuts, requests and feedback from academic colleagues, students needs and expectations, and a deep consideration of collections, spaces, technology, and staff skills and capabilities. Phase 4 culminated in defining the Library's work in terms of information, place, and community. This was built on strong foundations, with a clear necessity for strategic alignment with the University and collaboration.

Additionally, UQL utilised data, insights, and feedback to inform service development and decision-making. However, tensions persist between staff responses to change and the ongoing need to reinvent services. This is particularly challenging in the context of continuous technological advancement, which requires

staff to adapt to new AI-supported processes and continually develop digital skills for the future.

Discussion of the case study of the changing role of the university library

The case study explores the evolving role and relationships of the UQ Library from 1960 to 2023, with a particular focus on the period from 2019 to 2023 and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout this time, the Library experienced both evolutionary and revolutionary changes, periods of both abundance and scarcity in budgets, and the development of collections befitting a research university. UQL has embraced technology, developed new services to support research, and shown a steadfast commitment to enhancing the student experience.

The case study findings build on those of the interview study, providing a response to the research questions that is informed by the pandemic experience and an in-depth examination of one university library. While the interview study found that the role of the university library can be chosen from a range of possibilities (such as research, teaching and learning, university community, student experience, and management of university cultural collections), the case study demonstrated the specific choices made by UQL and the impact on staff, relationships, and service development.

Additionally, the case study offers deeper insights into the psychology of library staff and their relationships with each other, their leaders, and their responses to change. It also highlights the numerous opportunities for partnership and collaboration with academic and professional service departments.

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic offered many opportunities for UQL to provide visible support for the student experience and to take on wider responsibilities. It also led to greater partnering and collaboration with professional services and academic colleagues. Additionally, the case study highlighted the opportunities for the library to position itself as an enabler of university connection, culture, and community. The case study presented a multidimensional university library; as the home where individuals can find sanctuary, the village where communities of students, staff, and visitors meet, and the beacon for the university with all the necessary tools, resources and expertise to enable learning and knowledge creation.

The current opportunity is to consolidate and extend these relationships and strategic gains. One approach is to promote Library spaces as visible manifestations of learning, contributing to a sense of belonging on campus, aiding future student recruitment, and serving as welcoming places for the wider UQ community, including parents, alumni, employers, visitors, and partners. Another opportunity is to consider the insights from the interview study about supporting student entrepreneurship and to cultivate relationships between UQL and University colleagues who provide support and services in this area.

Another key element of the case study is the role of the university in Indigenisation of collections and support for teachers and researchers as they do the same in the curriculum and in research practice. For LIS professionals, the work of the UQL in this area is garnering significant interest nationally and internationally.

Developing UQL in line with the areas identified in Beyond the Blueprint could indeed provide the best path for strategic and operational growth. However, several

challenges need to be addressed. Constrained budgets impact collection management and space provision. Workforce management is also challenging in three key areas: tensions between different staff groups, trade union lobbying, and the mindsets and dispositions of staff. These issues are particularly problematic given the need for digital capabilities, relationship management skills, and business acumen in the evolving information and technological environments. Additionally, the deep integration of publishers into the academic reward system presents further challenges.

Determining the optimal configuration of resources—time, people, and funds—and the appropriate level of resourcing for UQL cannot be resolved through data analysis alone. Instead, it requires the professional judgment and leadership capabilities of UQL, along with the support of UQ senior stakeholders, to facilitate UQL's development and success.

Chapter 8: Bourdieusian field study

This chapter presents the Bourdieusian field study. The analysis follows the recommended steps for a field study set out by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) and described in Chapter 3: Methodological approach-Bourdieuian analysis: the field study. In summary, three steps are carried out:

- Defining fields in relation to the fields of power and analysing the positions of the individuals, groups, and institutions (the agents).
- Mapping how groups gain and allocate resources (economic, cultural and social) in relation to each other.
- Describing the habitus of groups and how that has evolved over time, and the impact of their relative positions and the field.

For each step of the analysis, evidence supporting the observations is derived from the literature review, the interview study, the case study, my personal experience, and Bourdieusian literature.

Defining the social and economic boundaries

Chapter 1: Introduction-Boundaries of the study, presented a depiction of the fields in which the university library operates and identifies the relevant stakeholder groups. The primary field of analysis is named *University Libraries*. This field is situated within the field of *Higher Education*. In addition, three other fields impact the field of *University Libraries* and to a lesser or greater extent the field of *Higher Education*; they are the field of *Academic Publishing*, the field of the *Networked Society*, and the field of *Library and Information Services (LIS)*.

The *University Libraries*, *Higher Education*, *Networked Society*, and *LIS* fields exist within economic and government fields. In Bourdieusian terms, government and economic fields are considered ‘fields of power.’ These are social spaces occupied by the most dominant groups, who exert significant influence on subordinate fields.

The fields of power

There are three key features of the fields of power and their impact on the fields of the *University Library* and *Higher Education*. Firstly, Thomson (2017) highlighted in her analysis of leadership, management, and administration in education that Bourdieu observed how governments can exert influence and control over education through financial intervention, policy, and regulation. In higher education (HE) government policies have led to significant change; the massification of HE, the audit culture, and a move from predominately public funding to a mixed model of funding (see Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?-Higher education policy and funding; Chapter 5: Time and people, orientation to the interview data set-Context over time-Higher education; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment-Changing HE).

Secondly, there has been significant disruption to global economic conditions such as the 2008 global financial crisis (GFC), geopolitical uncertainty, for example, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and ongoing war, and the health and economic crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. These events prompted government responses, including austerity measures which affected public institutions, universities, and broader society. Additionally, disruptions to global supply chains led to increases in the cost of living, see Chapter 5: Time and people, orientation to the interview data set-

Context over time-Higher education; Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-Orientating the reader to the case; Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-Four phases of change-Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response.

Thirdly, Naughton (2012) asserted that “change the environment, and you change the organism; change the media environment and you change society” (p. 15).

Consequently, the pervasive presence of technology in society elevates ICT to a field of power, see Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment-Technological advancement.

Sub-fields and their interactions with the fields of power

The field of the Networked Society

The field of the *Networked Society* has arisen because of the rise of Big Tech and technological advancement and its impact on how society creates, consumes, and shares information, see Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers. In the interview study, Senior Leaders highlighted the central role of technology providers in the communication of information both within and outside universities. They expressed broad concerns about the political, behavioural, and emotional manipulation of people by social media and search algorithms. The advent of generative artificial intelligence (AI) exacerbates this issue due to its potential to reproduce bias (see Chapter 2: Literature review-AI and the university library).

The rise of the Internet, Google, and social media has raised concerns about the impact of the Internet on teaching and learning and changing information seeking

behaviours of students (Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers-Information behaviour). On the other hand, the rise of the network society has enabled new and open communication across geographical boundaries (see Chapter 2: Literature review-Technical evolution of the university library-Electronic information and the Internet; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment-Technological advancement). In HE, research practices and publication have taken new forms, and the move from print to digital publishing has provided easier access to scholarly content (see Chapter 2: Literature review-Technical evolution of the university library-Electronic information and the Internet; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 2. The scholarly communications environment). The work of the university library is situated in this complex information environment.

The field of Higher Education

The field of *Higher Education* is largely comprised of universities. Universities are places of research and education; they pursue knowledge generation for the advancement of society. To sustain their mission, funding is required, including student fees (international and domestic) and other sources of support such as research grants and philanthropic contributions. The proportion of government funding to universities has reduced over time and has been increasingly tied to student recruitment and satisfaction ratings, and research reputation. Universities are measured and compared with each other; forms of assessment include the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the National Student Survey (NSS) and the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). These inform university league tables and ranked position becomes reputational asset. As such the public

good mission of universities and the neoliberal drivers co-exist in tension (see Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?-Higher education policy and funding; Chapter 5: Time and people, orientation to the interview data set-Context over time-Higher education; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment- Changing HE).

The audit culture influences university planning, strategic development, and investment decisions. In addition, neoliberal forces set up tension between academic and management cultures. The lived experiences of these tensions are related in interview and case study accounts, for example one University Library Director (ULD) described the focus on university efficiency and cost containment as being at odds with the core purpose of a university library (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment- Changing HE).

As government funding for HE has reduced, the proportion of funding generated through student fees has increased. The interview study highlighted that student fees cross-subsidise university research activity (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment- Changing HE), and commentary by the Russell Group (2024) is clear that international fees cover the shortfall in government funding for UK students. This raises a number of interconnected tensions and practices. First, universities strive to maximise income by balancing the ratio of domestic and international students. Second, student recruitment is vitally important to the financial sustainability of university teaching and research. Student choice is subject to factors including

university league table ranking, courses offered, geographic location, reported student satisfaction, facilities available, and recommendations from peers and family. Third, success in attracting research funding — from governments, industry, philanthropy and elsewhere — is subject to university status and ranking, track record of researcher and research groups employed, alignment with research funder priorities, and collaborative know-how, and so forth. Thus, research status and success, and student recruitment, attainment and satisfaction are entwined as essential components of financial sustainability.

For some universities, research and grant success is the commodity most valued. For others different strategic choices are made, for example to focus on teaching and the student experience, or to be comprehensive in coverage rather than specialising in one (or a small number of) disciplinary domain/s. The interview study revealed the growing importance of student experience priorities, and the tensions experienced in universities resulting from balancing research, teaching and learning, and student experience activities (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment-Changing HE).

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic (Chapter 2: Literature review-The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university library; Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-The four phases of change-Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response) highlighted the necessity of international student fee income to university sustainability. The impact of COVID-19 and rising costs and declining income also triggered cost cutting in universities. In addition, the drive towards online learning and assessment accelerated, and cemented university ICT as vital infrastructure.

Separately, the impact of higher education on society was considered by Bourdieu (1984) in his analysis of the French higher education environment. He focused on the reproduction of inequity in society through universities: as the privileged gained access to and inhabited universities, their dispositions and perspectives excluded others, and so class privilege was reproduced (and not shared) within and beyond the university. Reproduction of privilege resonates with other contemporary HE systems, exacerbated by the neoliberal dimension. In England, government policy has led to the massification of HE but with the introduction of student fees. As Thomson in Heffernan (2022) stated, this “speaks of, and to, a massified higher education field, to which many more have access, but where changing logics dictate how strong hierarchies of privilege are maintained” (Thomson, 2022, p. vii).

The literature review, interview study and case study provided insight into the constituent groups of people in HE, and how they interact with and perceive the university library, and the relationships between them. These groups are considered in detail later in this chapter in the section, ‘Capital creation and exchange impacting the field of *University Libraries*’.

The field of Academic Publishing

The literature review, orientation to the interview study, the interview study, and the case study all recount the changing academic publishing environment including the impact of these changes, and how publishers operate and are perceived. There are six key areas of orientation to academic publishing as a Bourdieusian field.

First, academic publishing is a commercial field but was not originally set up that way. Fyfe et al., (2017) found that, “until relatively recently, research publications were rarely financially profitable Virtually all journal publishing and much book

publishing depended on the generosity of sponsors who were willing to subsidise the costs of circulating knowledge in the scholarly community” (p. 2). Now, commercial academic publishers publish the outputs of research from universities and other research organisations and groups. These outputs typically take the form of journal articles or research papers, and research monographs or books. In disseminating academic research, the aim of many publishers is to generate profit from their activities (see Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 2. The scholarly communications environment-Publishers’ perspectives). The for-profit ethos has led to market conditions whereby large commercial publishers have merged to create an oligopolistic market and the number of academic publishers has declined (Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication-The scholarly communications environment or system). This has led to rising annual journal subscription costs above national inflation rates, except for a hiatus in the COVID-19 years (this is discussed later in this chapter in the section, ‘Capital creation and exchange impacting the field of *University Libraries*, Academic publishers and capitals’).

Second and third (as evidenced in Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 2. The scholarly communications environment-University Library Directors’ perspectives), the relationship between academic publishers and the academic community is complex. University academics who take roles as authors, editors and peer reviewers are often not paid by publishers for their work. Yet, the norm is for authors is to sign over the copyright associated with their work to the publisher. The benefit to authors is not financial, rather it is reputational reward as their work is published, and personal intrinsic satisfaction of contributing to knowledge creation in their field. Next, the dominant publishing model is inextricably linked to the

reputation and impact of universities as well as individual academics. Authors' research outputs are counted as part of REF returns in their respective universities and so generate institutional reputation.

Fourth, publishers consider themselves to be a vital part of the scholarly information environment. The reputational drivers for academics and universities ensure supply of content to them, and commands high subscription prices. Fifth, Open Access (OA) was considered to be a mechanism to manage the costs of journal subscription and to extend the dissemination of research outputs. However, there is now doubt as to whether this is achievable as evidenced in Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication-Open access (OA) publishing.

Sixth, the digital shift for academic publishing has supported growth in the publishing industry and wider dissemination of content. Further, some large publishers are deploying ICT to strategically positioning themselves as core to university research infrastructure and are offering analytics services to further their interests in HE (see Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 2. The scholarly communications environment-Looking to the future).

Padmalochanan (2019) in her Bourdieusian examination of the literature on academics and the field of academic publishing described the field of publishing as one which combines business, culture, society and technology, and that publishers adapt to challenges in the fields of power which in turn or simultaneously impact on HE. Publishers occupy a powerful position, they “perform a significant role both in supply and value chains” (p. 93), namely commissioning or accepting works, managing peer review and editorial activity, and production and dissemination. As such the fields of *Higher Education* and *Academic Publishing* are entwined.

The field of Library and Information Services (LIS)

The field of *Library and Information Services (LIS)* encompasses different types of libraries and different kinds of library and information professionals. Whether libraries are serving the public or providing specialist services (e.g., medical and law libraries), they are information providers, supporting users within their respective communities. Their aim is to make information accessible by identifying, acquiring, classifying, and cataloguing it, and storing and preserving content. They operate according to established ways of working, standards, and systems. Public libraries have been particularly impacted by government funding cuts, and technological advancement has impacted all types of libraries.

In Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 3. Library people, positioning, and relationships, interviewees' shared experience of working in different types of libraries. For some, their career progression spanned public, national, special and academic libraries. University library staff engage with the *LIS* field as their careers start and as they develop their skills, experience and professional networks. The *LIS* field is particularly important for professional staff in LIS who usually have library and information studies undergraduate or postgraduate degrees and have gained accreditation through a national library association.

In addition, public, state, and national libraries are used by many who inhabit the field of *Higher Education*. They are used for research, for study, and for leisure reading and activities. They are part of government funded community offerings in both England and Australia. Public and school libraries often set the expectation of university libraries as students join universities. Yet, as highlighted in the interview study, there are missed opportunities for cross LIS sector working.

The field of University Libraries

The literature review illustrated how the university library has changed over time. These changes have been driven by changes in HE and technological advancement. Specifically, the literature review outlined the history of the university library as at first, the respected collector and custodian of books, engaged with booksellers and publishers to procure content for scholars. Then the explosion of book publication in the nineteenth century, which exerted pressure on the capacity of library buildings, subsequently led to changes in LIS approaches to collecting. By the 1960s growing numbers of students and their requirements for space to study challenged libraries to think differently about space. Government intervention followed, and funds were made available to universities to extend and upgrade library spaces. Nevertheless, by 1993 the academic library system in the UK was considered to be in crisis and in need of further review. The Follett review (Joint Funding Councils' Libraries Review Group, 1993) identified three main areas for action: automation, buildings and collections. Investment in the development of library buildings, digital infrastructure and collections was made available and importantly the university library assumed a leadership role in technology adoption.

Contemporary history highlighted university library responses to imperatives arising from the fields of power (Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?; Chapter 5: Time and people, orientation to the interview data set-Context over time; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1.Situating the university in its wider environment). The university library, like the university, is impacted by government funding reductions and the rise of neoliberal practices. To secure funding university library leaders had to be politically astute (providing evidence of impact and senior academic supporters) and to position the library

favourably (as efficient and aligned with university strategy) comparative to other professional services and with university priorities. Overall, the literature shows that libraries have experienced a decline in allocated share of university expenditure (see Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?-funding the university library).

The literature review described other changes, changes which have been driven by responses to changes in the fields of *Higher Education* and the *Networked Society*. Changes in teaching pedagogy, research practices, and student expectations have had significant impact on the role, services and ways of working of the university library. The university library has aligned itself and its spaces with the student experience and has reorganised so that it can provide new support services to researchers in the digital and research impact focused environment. The extent to which these initiatives compensate for encroachment of the boundary around the role of the library as information supplier in the university is not clear. Search engines and publishers can be regarded as competitors to the university library: they engage directly with information seekers and deliver access to academic content online. Search engines and academic publishers are an accepted part of the fields of *University Libraries*, *Higher Education*, and the *Information Society*.

Capital creation and exchange impacting the field of *University*

Libraries

This section considers the second stage of the field study; how groups gain and expend resources or capitals. It identifies the constituent groups and map outs how these groups seek and contest capital. Capitals considered were set out in Chapter 1 (Table 1 Bourdieu's types of capital). Typically, these capitals are split into two

broad categories: economic and symbolic, and the symbolic grouping is further differentiated by culture and social capitals, and cultural capital is further divided into embodied, objectified, and institutionalised. To situate the capitals at play in the field of *University Libraries* it is necessary to consider the capitals at play in the field of *Higher Education*.

Constituent groups in the field of *higher education*

Heffernan (2022) defined constituent groups in HE as academics (including professors, associate professors, lecturers, principal investigators), senior management (including Vice-Chancellors, Deans, and Heads of School), and students (including part-time, full-time, domestic, international, undergraduate, and post-graduate) and professional staff. The characteristics (as evidenced in Chapters 2–7) of each of these groups are set out below. These descriptions are also informed by Heffernan’s (2022) Bourdieusian analysis of HE.

Senior leaders

Heffernan (2022) observed that Vice-Chancellors and university Presidents are leading businesses which require financial prudence and “employ thousands of employees (academics and professional staff) and tens of thousands of customers (students)”, as distinct from a role which was “once about leading the research and teaching decisions of an institute that was small, adequately funded, and isolated from government, business, and social pressures” (Heffernan, 2022, p. 106). This change resonates with the findings of the interview and case studies.

University senior stakeholders (professional, e.g., Chief Operating Officer and academic, e.g., Deputy Vice-Chancellor) hold the power to distribute economic capital (i.e., budgets) to academic faculties, schools and departments, and to

university professional and support services. In so doing, they weigh the varying costs of disciplinary and central infrastructure (e.g., equipment and expertise) and teaching and research, and the economic capital income generating power (e.g., research grants and student fees) with the symbolic (e.g., research impact).

Universities, in their pursuit of league table ranking, seek symbolic capital which can be translated into economic capital through student recruitment (fees) and research funding. For the university library, demonstration of value in relation to teaching, learning and research, as well as economic efficiency, can lead to symbolic capital gains.

Students

Universities UK (2024) reported that there were more than two million students studying in UK HE institutions in 2020/21. This compares to 400,000 full time HE students at UK institutions in the 1960s (Wyness, 2010). Alongside growth in student numbers, HE is impacted by changing student expectations and behaviours. The NSS sets out the measures by which students' may assess their university experience. In the survey, students are asked to rate teaching and learning, academic support, course organisation and learning resources. The assumption being that students expect to engage with academic content, have access to appropriate facilities, learn actively and have agency in their learning. They are required to both consume their experience at university and act as autonomous (albeit supported) learners.

Students enrol in university and pay fees (economic capital) to gain qualifications, know-how, and to build social relationships (symbolic capital) which equips them to work and live in society and so generate economic capitals (e.g., through employment) and further symbolic capitals (e.g., through widening contacts and their

status in society including with friendship groups). They access the economic capitals required to join university from public/private sources (e.g., student loans, government funding allocations), and for many, through paid employment. They also require symbolic cultural and social capitals; including the know-how to navigate entry systems and make choices about which university to study at, the qualifications required for entry, and the social capital of networks of family and friends or ability to meet and build relationships with new people.

Symbolic capital is different depending on the status or ranking of a university and can be traded by students on graduation for different kinds of paid employment, Heffernan (2022) stated,

institutional capital from the prestige of the university ...often results in secure and higher paying employment; and this is perhaps the capital that transcends most fields and assists in ordering many field hierarchies. We do live in a capitalist society driven by material objects, and most people do adhere to these aspirations. (p. 80)

Capital generation from students' success and experience is reciprocal. After graduation students bestow symbolic capital on their universities in two ways. First, through their employment status which is captured in surveys, and second, through assessment of their university experience through the NSS in the UK and Student Experience Survey (SES) in Australia. The results of these surveys are made publicly available to support future students in making choices about which university to attend and are — in some cases — factored into university rankings. Students also give and receive symbolic capital to the university whilst studying, for example, through their participation in university decision making groups. The

government policy landscape in the UK has been instrumental in driving the growth in the symbolic capital of students. For the university library, aligning with the student voice and supporting the student experience can lead to symbolic capital gains.

Academics

Thomson (2022) observed that roles of academics as researchers and teachers on one hand make them “disposed to see time for thinking as the essence of academic life” and on the other they are, “struggling with hefty workloads, ... subject to publication targets, public engagement and impact rubrics, and a variety of quality and productivity audits” (p. vi).

In exchange for their symbolic capitals (intellectual and contribution to the public good) academics receive economic capitals (salaries) and further symbolic capital as their reputation grows. For academics, research and teaching success can be quantified in publications, grants, and student surveys. They are not necessarily judged on their research and teaching efforts per se but on efficient and effective (and visible) dissemination of knowledge, which generates, expends and conserves economic and symbolic capitals (e.g., reputation) for individuals, discipline communities, research groups, and universities.

Early career academics are characterised by Heffernan (2022) as developing skills in research and teaching, and building their disciplinary networks and collaborations, whilst writing publications and producing outputs which can be quantified and translated into symbolic capital (e.g., course content and research papers) to enable career progression with associated title and position changes. Heffernan (2022) considered that for senior academics seeking to further their university careers

beyond professorial status, their track record in teaching and research are no longer sufficient to guarantee success. Now, managerial expertise is sought for roles such as Dean or Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

Different disciplines vary in how they consume and generate capital. Some fields demand substantial economic capital for specialised equipment and research methods, making them accessible primarily to the wealthiest universities or those most successful in securing grants. In contrast, other disciplines rely on high student enrolment numbers to generate income, which in turn elevates the importance of teachers in those fields.

Desrochers et al. (2018) examined the symbolic capital reward system for publication and dissemination of research through traditional academic publication and via social media. They considered authorship, attracting journal citations and having social media presence as symbolic capital amassing activities. They found that old and the new approaches had a shared foundation and were not in competition with each other. Nevertheless, in practice they concluded that the reward system for research does not recognise all the building blocks of knowledge sharing and as such needs overhaul.

Overall, both the ability to generate and manage economic capital and the ability to translate research and teaching into visible symbolic capital are at play for academics and their leaders. For the university library, alignment with academic disciplines and academic colleagues and teaching and research endeavours are positions of potential symbolic capital gain.

Professional staff

As the culture of managerialism has developed in universities, so professional groups and departments have grown. They are tasked with university administration and supporting academics and students in teaching, learning and research.

Professional staff now typically manage campus estates, ICT, wellbeing and academic support for students, marketing and student recruitment, HR and finance.

These sit alongside the longstanding functions of the academic registrar (ensuring academic standards and accreditation) and the university library (information provision).

Professional services have an inherent need for economic capital generated by others in the university. There are few opportunities for professional service functions to generate economic capital from outside the university. This secondary position in relation to capital generation makes them both susceptible to criticism in relation to costs and in pursuit of increases in symbolic capital. They seek to increase symbolic capital by successful service provision and alignment with those who generate and control economic capital, and so influence decisions about the distribution of economic capital. There are some exceptions, such as philanthropic departments and commercialisation functions, which generate income for the university. The literature review revealed that academic staff can perceive professional staff as a financial burden and part of an overgrown bureaucracy (Chapter 2: Literature review-How do different stakeholders see the role of the university library?-how academics perceive libraries and librarians). However, it was also acknowledged that academic and professional staff have complementary goals that are best achieved through collaborative partnerships.

The situation with symbolic capital is vicarious. Heffernan (2022) considered the hierarchy of staff within a university and positioned professional staff at the bottom (p. 50). However, professional staff do have symbolic capital generation opportunities. Cultural capital can be derived from being effective (use of knowledge and skills) and social capital from their skills at working with others across the university. Whitchurch (2010) examined the position and roles of professional staff in HE. She found that some are involved in activities which in the past were undertaken by academics. In these and on other matters (e.g., cross university projects), professional staff and academics work side by side, to the extent that professional staff were seen as “critical friend and dealmaker” (Whitchurch, 2010, p. 177).

The capitals of the university library and its leaders, managers, and staff

The university library and its staff are part of university professional services. Library leaders, managers, and library staff — professional librarians and others — are the managers of economic capitals (library buildings and budgets). They generate embodied cultural capitals (staff know-how and networks) and are custodians of information collections (objectified cultural capitals). Their connection to the tradition of LIS means they have a longer history than many other university professional services and with that comes either more or less symbolic capital depending on how that tradition is regarded by others (e.g., old fashioned and irrelevant, or vital to the success of the university). Library leaders, managers and staff, and library operations predominantly generate symbolic and consume economic capitals. University library resources in the form of budgets, library buildings, and acquired information collections, IT equipment and systems are

economic capitals with extrinsic value. These may persist and increase or be used and diminish over time.

Library collections

Library information collections — books, journals, and other materials in print and electronic form — are cultural capital purchased with economic capital. Information resources are made available by the university library to university communities to support learning, teaching and research. As such engaging with library collections generates cultural capital for its users. The university library is challenged to make its economic capital (in the form of collections budget) meet the information needs of academics and students across all disciplines and to do so in a way that balances costs with use.

Collections are valuable in themselves but are never sold or charged for — they are not converted to usable economic capital. They also exist as objectified cultural capitals in two ways; the collection represents the amalgamated work of academic authors whose knowledge is captured in their published outputs, and the university library as the aggregator of these outputs gains symbolic capital according to the volume and range of information resources collected.

The university library whilst managing space required for print collections and costs of electronic collections subscribed to, can lose capital by discarding items in the collection or relegating them to off-campus storage. The practical approaches (based on use and cost) of managing print collections and cancelling online journal titles ignore the cultural capital losses as academic colleagues object to the ‘mistreatment’ of outputs which symbolise — directly or indirectly — their objectified cultural capital (see Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 4. The purpose,

role, and services of the university library-Services-Managing collections and access to information).

Another issue with the library collection concerning objectified capital is visibility. The shift from print to electronic information has reduced the physical collection on bookshelves, making digital collections visible only when accessed online (except for special collections). Additionally, online searching of library digital collections is now outside of the library as librarians make collections discoverable through Google (Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication-Collections and collecting). This results in an apparent reduction in the objectified cultural capital of libraries.

The interview study highlighted additional points regarding the capitals generated by library collections and collecting. These include the library's role in managing the institutional repository, supporting OA, facilitating research data management, partnering with university presses, and preserving traditional practices like conservation and bookbinding. Each of these activities offers opportunities to gain symbolic capital. Acting as the custodian and promoter of university knowledge outputs enhances capital, but doing so effectively requires the expenditure of capital, such as technical skills for research data management, advocacy skills for OA, and funding for new infrastructure and services. Yet without these symbolic capitals, the university library risks failure and loss of reputation. Consequently, the varying positions of different University Library Directors (ULDs) on research data management in the interview study become less surprising; some are willing and have the resources to take the risk, while others do not (see Chapter 6: Thematic

analysis of the interviews-Theme 4. The purpose, role, and services of the university library-Services-Other services and support-Research support).

Studies into the value and impact of libraries have shown that engagement with library collections contributes to student academic attainment (Cox & Jantti 2012; Stone & Ramsden, 2013). The collection combines the embodied cultural capitals of the library in the know-how of collection management and the collection itself. The library collection is then converted into qualifications (i.e., cultural capital) by students.

Whilst library users come to the library and its collections to consume the products of cultural production, the collection and distribution of these products in themselves by the library is a form of cultural production and reproduction (Budd, 2003), with both constructive (e.g., knowledge generation) and negative (e.g., reproducing bias) implications.

Library buildings

Library buildings, particularly the study spaces they offer, are heavily used by students. These spaces hold intrinsic value as part of the university estate and as objectified cultural capital of the university library. Prospective students often evaluate libraries during open days, factoring them into their decisions about where to study. Moreover, the availability and quality of study seats affect student convenience and satisfaction, which in turn influence responses to the NSS and SES surveys.

University investment and university library know-how are brought together in library space redevelopment projects. The university expends its economic capital on facilities with an expectation of return on investment through student recruitment,

satisfaction, and success. University libraries who have embarked on building projects gain economic (through project funding) and cultural capital (by visibly aligning with the student experience).

There is a tension between collections and study space when considering objectified cultural capitals. The spaces of the university library full of collections are objectified cultural capitals, and the spaces full of students studying are also objectified cultural capital in the form of visible manifestations of learning. It is difficult to weigh these capitals, and economic costs — to house collections or student space — forcing a trade-off. In the interview study, several ULDs commented on this tension (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 4. The purpose, role, and services of the university library-Services-Spaces).

There are additional points regarding capital and library spaces. First, literature on libraries highlights their unique positioning and increased symbolic capital as providers of study spaces and a sense of community and belonging (Chapter 2: Literature review-How has the university library changed?-Libraries as symbols of culture and learning, and organic beings; Chapter 2: Literature review-The transformation of library spaces). Second, library buildings now have significantly longer opening hours compared to other university buildings, ensuring efficient use of them (as economic capital). Third, library staff involved in redevelopment projects have leveraged connections and relationships with students and student bodies, leading to successful projects and the development of further social capital (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 3. Library people, positioning, and relationships-Positioning the library in the university).

Library staff

University library staff are not a homogenous group. They include professional librarians, project managers, IT developers, student support officers, research metrics specialists, and others. Each group has different capitals. The institutionalised symbolic capitals in the form of qualifications range from undergraduate and post graduate degrees, membership of professional bodies, IT qualifications and memberships, to first aid certification. These qualifications can be exchanged for jobs — and through them economic capital. Experience on the job or knowledge of metadata schema for example, and other know-how (embodied cultural capitals) can also be exchanged in the same way. For individuals, as these capitals grow so does the opportunity to progress up the library staffing hierarchy and thus further increase individual capital.

As well as the formal organisation structure in the university library there are informal hierarchies. Like the wider HE environment, university library staff implicitly attach symbolic capital to those with experience in different kinds of universities (e.g., research-intensive institutions). Additionally, library staff view those with or without library and information science qualifications in different ways depending on their own position. For example, a library staff member with a PhD but without a library and information science postgraduate qualification may not be perceived as having as much value as a member of staff without a PhD but with a library and information science postgraduate qualification. As a result, the interactions among different groups of staff can sometimes be divisive. While a workforce with diverse skills, qualifications, and experiences has the potential to foster a productive group dynamic, this isn't always the outcome. The literature review considers this factor amongst others in the discussion of the dysfunction of

the library (Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing library staff-Organisation culture and dysfunctional libraries).

As well as qualifications and know-how library staff have social capital in the form of who they know; they know academic colleagues, university senior staff, publishers, other library staff in other universities and organisations, and students. This social capital can be leveraged to understand and meet the needs of library users, thereby improving services. Additionally, it can also be selectively shared or withheld to boost the symbolic capital of an individual.

Library leaders and managers

Library leaders and managers are at the nexus between managerial and academic cultures. Each culture has different capitals and different mechanisms for generating them. Leaders must secure economic capital through university budget processes to sustain and develop library services. As a professional service leader, they must demonstrate effectiveness and efficient use of resources allocated to them, from which they derive symbolic capital. At the same time, they are surrounded by people and groups with capitals generated by academia, essentially symbolic capitals of academia in the form of practice (teaching and research) and/or its published outputs. Library leaders are therefore in a position whereby symbolic capital acquisition and use requires them to make choices between alignment with academics, professional services colleagues, their own professional domain, students, and others. The interview study revealed the different alignment preferences of library leaders. For some, there is pride in libraries operating in a business-like way and being ‘good corporate citizens’, and others talked of their value driven alignment with students (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 3. Library people, positioning and relationships-Leaders and leadership).

The interview study provided evidence of how the leaders of the university library gain capital (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 3. Library people, positioning and relationships-Positioning the library in the university). In relation to economic capital, there was mention of philanthropic activity and developing ‘charged for services’ for businesses. In relation to symbolic capitals, the focus was on building credibility through strategic alignment, that is, on the development of services in support of university strategy. The opportunities for working with others in the university (social capital) were also considered. However, one ULD felt that other professional services were squeezing out the university library and failing to understand its role in the university. Others lamented the opportunities missed to collaborate across the LIS sector in relation to collection development and technological advancement. Both speak to the opportunity for more effective and strategic use of economic capital by pooling it.

The library and the university community

Within their communities, libraries — including the university library — also connect their users to the norms of the groups within which they wish to operate or exist. Johnson and Reed (2023) described libraries as “bridges” for those who are not fluent in how to acquire cultural capital which can potentially elevate their status. They provide collections (objectified cultural capitals) and “serve as hubs which promote additional forms of capital, such as social capital” (p. 186). As such they recommended that the university library “consider how they can allow students to see themselves in the library” and design support services to enable students to “apply their personal knowledge and skills to the academic research process” (p. 186).

The university library and COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many university libraries enhanced their symbolic capital. Firstly, where lockdown restrictions allowed, their buildings remained open with public health measures in place to limit virus transmission. Secondly, access to digital collections enabled students and researchers to access necessary information resources remotely. Thirdly, new services were developed or expanded to support university business continuity. The case study in Chapter 7 illustrates this well. For instance, University of Queensland (UQ) students appreciated that libraries remained open, and cross-university collaboration generated symbolic capital through new relationships, expertise, and increased visibility of the UQ Library. Additionally, the digital capabilities of library staff were highlighted in UQ's pandemic response.

During the pandemic many universities adopted cost saving strategies and library collections budgets were cut. Yet there was a need for scientific information to be freely available particularly for those working on pandemic related research.

Publishers' subscription prices were largely frozen during the pandemic and COVID-19 related publications were made freely available. In the context of the pandemic, it appeared that publishers were conscious of the risk of harming their relationships with the university community and damaging their reputation. For publishers during the pandemic, the risk to symbolic capital in pursuing economic capital tipped in favour of the symbolic.

The university libraries and ICT

The evolution of the university library is closely linked to technological advancements. As libraries embraced technology, they gained expertise and operational efficiency, thereby increasing their symbolic capital. However, the shift

from print to digital collections brought about a more complex scenario. When digital collections offered by university libraries were compared to the low-quality information freely available on the Internet, the symbolic capital of the library was preserved. Conversely, as search engine algorithms became more sophisticated and academic resources more accessible through them, the visibility of the work of the university library in digital collections, and consequently their symbolic capital, diminished. In addition, the economic capital which came to libraries through government funding administered by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) in the eLib programme and the resulting symbolic capital gains in developing new digital services, were eventually lost.

Regarding symbolic capital related to ICT, the case study highlighted that UQL assumed the student IT support role, unlike other university libraries where IT departments typically handle this function. Additionally, UQL has been a leader in supporting the digital capability development of both students and researchers.

Academic publishers and capitals

Academic publishers possess substantial economic and social capital. They capture the symbolic capital of the academic community—such as research papers, data, and monographs—and convert it into economic capital through subscriptions and purchasing charges. In return, they provide authors with symbolic capital in the form of prestige associated with publication in reputable journals and impact through dissemination of research findings.

Padmalochanan (2019) noted that publishing aligns with the goals of individuals, universities, and governments, who seek reputation gains and the dissemination of knowledge for economic development. She also described the business expertise of

academic publishers as symbolic capital and highlighted the “love-hate relationship between academics and publishers, whereby neither group can afford to ignore the other” (p. 92). Regarding OA publishing, Padmalochanan (2019) characterised the library and academic communities as not “sufficiently powerful to redefine the norms, rules, or goals of the market players of publishing fields” (p. 96).

Beyond the business models of academic publishing, many scientists believe the industry exerts too much influence over research choices. Researchers often favour topics popular with editors, rather than pursuing risky projects or auditing past studies. Thus, the symbolic capital of academic publishers is so significant that it shapes research decisions.

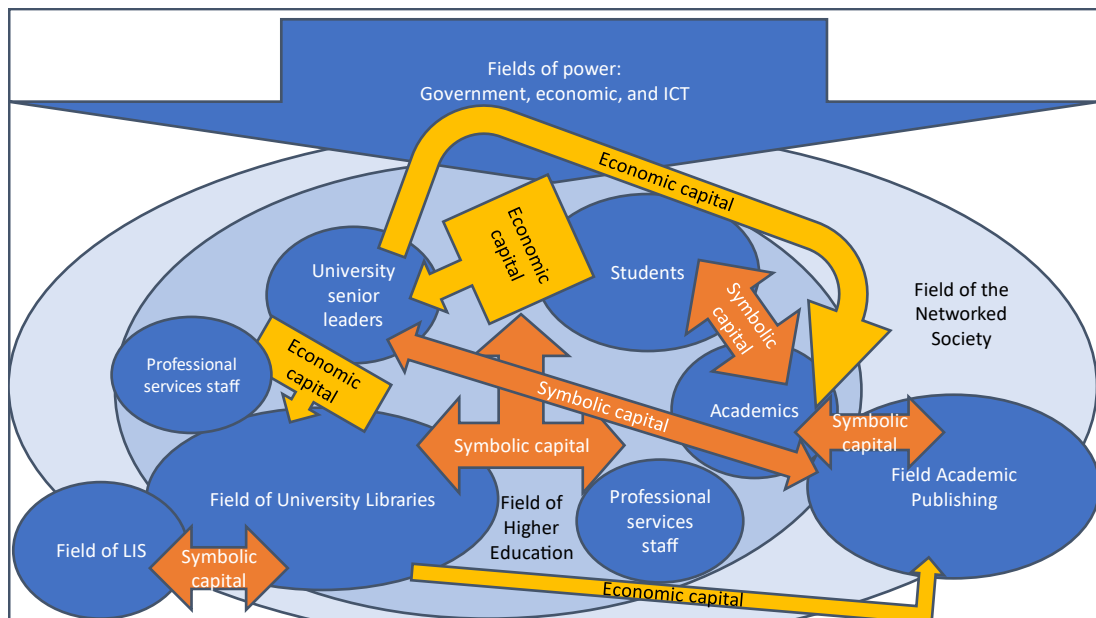
The game for the university library: gaining and expending capitals

Overall, the game on the field of *University Libraries* for the university library is to secure economic capital to provide for the information needs for the academic community and sustain its work. Over time, this has become more complex. The university library secures economic capital (i.e., budgets) from senior university stakeholders to support teaching, learning and research by generating symbolic capital (its reputation and standing) from students and academics. It generates symbolic capital by providing the environment for students to study and succeed, managing and promoting the information created by a university, and providing information resources for the academic community.

The surrounding fields (as illustrated in Figure 3) — at a simplistic level — play supporting, competing and defining roles. The field of *LIS* plays a doxa defining role; as outlined in Chapter 1: Introduction-Introducing Bourdieu’s concept of field and field tools-Doxa, doxa is the natural or deeply ingrained practice and underlying

beliefs which can be unnoticed by individuals and groups in themselves. Whereas the field of *Academic Publishing* both supplies the university library with information resources and competes with it for the attention of academics. The field of *Higher Education* contains the university library and determines whether the university library is efficient and effective in supporting the university mission in the context of the demands placed on it by government and economic conditions (the field of power). In addition, the field of the *Networked Society* has a significant impact on information provision and communication, which in turn impacts on universities, their students and staff, and the university library. In the dynamics between and within fields, groups of agents exchange and compete for capital, these exchanges are also represented Figure 3. All fields are in tension with each other, the game is a shifting one.

Figure 3 Representation of capital exchanges in the field of Higher Education



Modus operandi of groups and relationships between them

This section examines the third stage of the field study, focusing on how groups operate and their interrelationships. It describes the habitus of groups and its evolution over time, considering the actions and beliefs of groups and individuals, the consequences of their decisions, and how these impact their relative positions and their social trajectory.

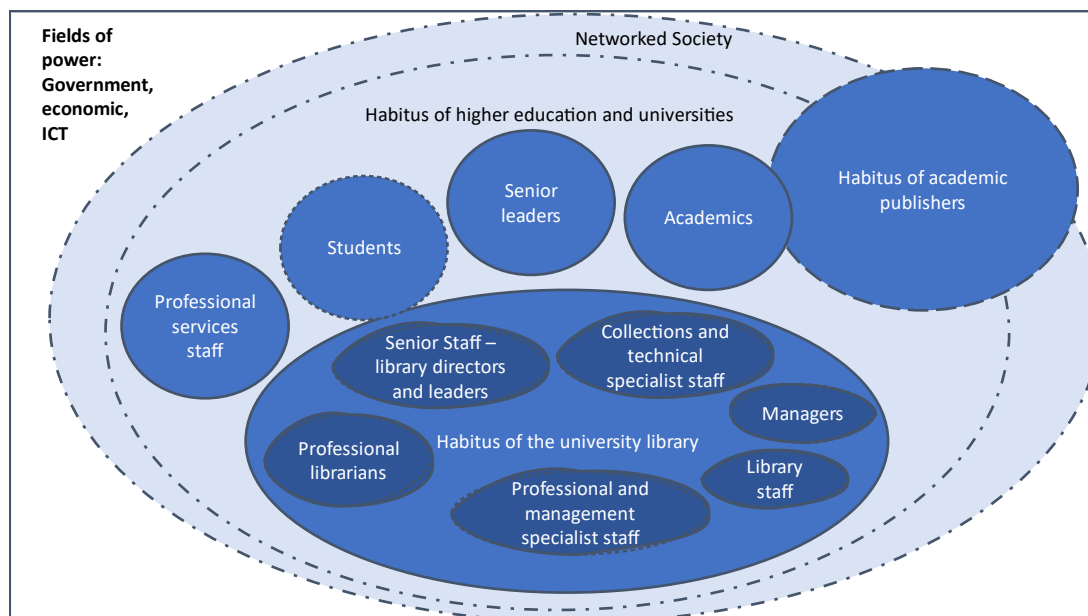
Habitus is dynamic, multi-layered, and not always coherent. It encompasses the past and present conditions of agents, derived from their experiences both outside and within the field. Habitus shapes how agents interact and perceive each other, being simultaneously created in the present and influencing future habitus. Agents' dispositions, as individuals and groups, are enacted in shared interactions and situations, forming and reforming habitus. It is expressed visibly through words and actions, and subconsciously through the options agents consider available in any situation, thus influencing their apparent agency.

Agents bring their doxa into play as habitus is experienced and develops. Doxa is deeply embedded in habitus, and challenging it requires radical reorientation of dispositions, emotional responses, and thinking. The interplay between group and individual strategies or practices, both conscious and unconscious, as they seek to gain capital, impacts their relative positions and the field, setting the conditions of the field over time.

The field of *Universities Libraries* operates and evolves according to the habitus of university library senior leaders, managers and staff (professional librarians and others). The field is impacted by the habitus and doxa of those groups interacting with it from within it and from other fields, namely university senior leaders,

academics, students, and professional service colleagues in the field of *Higher Education*, and academic publishers from their field. An overview of groups and their location in the fields is presented in Figure 4, noting the boundaries around the fields are permeable.

Figure 4 Representation of agents and fields, and field locations



Habitus of the agents in the field of *Higher Education* impacting the *University*

Libraries field

An analysis of the habitus and doxa of these different groups — senior leaders, academics, students and professional services staff — in the field of *Higher Education* in relation to the field of *University Libraries* is set out below.

University senior leaders

Senior leaders work to accommodate government policy changes and meet accreditation and reporting requirements. They combine professional managerial and academic practices to oversee university operations, allocating and seeking economic and symbolic capital. They take opportunities to influence the government fields of

power and take carriage of university contributions to the socio-economic environment around them. During the COVID-19 pandemic as income streams from international students reduced senior leaders sought to maintain economic capital and reduce expenditure, and secured additional government funding (for example, Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-The four phases of change-Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response).

Senior leaders shape the strategic direction and planning of both the university and its library, determining the funding levels and operational conditions (e.g., prioritising students or research, supporting international students, etc.). They expect library data to support government assessments of teaching and research, and they demand efficient and effective library and information services to meet the needs of teaching, learning, and research. However, the literature review revealed that, despite valuing the library and its leadership, university strategic leaders often exhibit indifference or lack of interest in the library (Chapter 2: Literature review-How do different stakeholders see the role of the university library?-Senior university staff perceptions and budget decisions).

Academics

The habitus of academics in the field of *Higher Education* changes as their careers progress. They have many demands on their time; they are required to balance research, teaching, administrative and other contributions. Academics work within disciplinary groups, schools, and faculties. Career progression often leads them to roles such as head of school or director of research or education within a school or faculty. Advancing to the position of faculty Dean requires a transition to management, governance, and administrative responsibilities. They must balance the

tension between managerial and academic practices. During the pandemic, academics made significant efforts to transition to digital teaching and maintain a positive student experience (for example, Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-The four phases of change-Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response). Academics maintain close relationships with academic publishers, serving as authors, editors, peer reviewers, and readers (Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication-The scholarly communications environment or system).

Academics look to the university library for effective services that support their work (Chapter 2: Literature review-How do different stakeholders see the role of the university library?-How academics perceive libraries and librarians). They need assistance with navigating academic publishing, complying with open access funder policies, and using metric services for promotion cases and grant applications. Academics also expect the library to acquire and manage information resources, support reading lists, and help create learning materials. Additionally, they value support for student learning, and student digital capability development (including information skills), academic integrity, and access to spaces and facilities. Furthermore, academics seek help in meeting increasing audit demands.

Particularly important are the relationships with academics often in humanities, arts and social science disciplines with regard to special collections and research monographs, often in print (Chapter 2: Literature review-How do different stakeholders see the role of the university library?-How academics perceive libraries and librarians; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 4. The purpose, role, and services of the university library-Purpose and role-Are collections

the heartland of the university library?; Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-The four phases of change-Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response).

Students

Throughout the literature review, interview study, and case study, both implicit and explicit insights into the habitus of students are revealed. Students' engagement with the habitus of HE begins when they are considering their choice of university and continues with their progression through various levels of study. Over time, the cost of university education has increased, with tuition fees introduced in the 1990s and subsequently raised (Chapter 5: Time and people, orientation to the interview data set-Context over time; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment-Changing HE). The concept of students as consumers has emerged, allowing them to exert greater collective influence on university administration. In addition, technology and social media play crucial roles in their lives (Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing behaviour of information creators and consumers-Information behaviour). During the COVID-19 pandemic, students continued their studies online, which negatively impacted their sense of belonging and mental health (Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-The four phases of change-Phase 2. The COVID-19 University environment and the Library response).

The case study highlighted what students want from university libraries. Students at the UQ require flexible access to library facilities and services so that they can work around paid employment and scheduled classes. They need support in developing academic skills and digital capabilities and seek a sense of belonging and community. Students expect user-friendly administrative processes (e.g., enrolment)

which are technology-enabled. They want 24/7 access to university libraries with high-quality facilities, comprehensive information collections (accessible via Google or their course online environment), and support for information access and use (e.g., referencing guides). Students' interactions with academic publishers are primarily as purchasers of textbooks.

The literature review found that while students generally had positive perceptions of libraries and view library staff as approachable and supportive, libraries are losing relevance to students. This relevance is influenced more by perceptions than by reality (Chapter 2: Literature review-How do different stakeholders see the role of the university library?-How students view libraries and librarians).

Professional services staff

Neoliberal HE is characterised by the expansion of professional service departments. These departments often function as cost centres, though there has been an increase in those focused on income generation, such as philanthropy and research commercialisation. Different professional service departments have varying opportunities to generate capital. For some, their reputation and standing (symbolic capital) is enhanced by visibly supporting the capital generation efforts of others within the university. There are a range of professional practices used to structure work and a range of professional dispositions in play. The case study revealed that professional service departments often lack mutual understanding regarding their respective contributions to the university. This can lead to siloed working and missed opportunities for integrating university workflows and processes.

The interview study and case study highlighted the habitus of professional service staff and the competitive and collaborative choices made by university library

leaders. The literature review and interview study indicated that there can be animosity towards the university library from other professional services, along with jurisdictional struggles (Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing library staff- Changing and expanding roles; Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews- Theme 3. Library people, positioning, and relationships-Positioning the library in the university).

The relationship between the university library and IT departments is particularly crucial. Additionally, partnerships can form as cultural assets managed by university museums and galleries connect with library special collections, such as through public exhibitions. Shared interests also exist with university presses, some of which operate as OA publishers, partially or fully funded by their host universities (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 4. The purpose, role, and services of the university library-The future of the university library).

Habitus of publishers in relation to the field of *University Libraries*

The field of academic publishing and the associated capital exchanges have been outlined above. Fundamentally, university libraries strive to balance the information needs of the academic community with available budgets, amidst oligopolistic market conditions and the stronghold of publishers in universities (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 2. The scholarly communications environment). The dynamics between publishers, university libraries, and the academic community place university libraries in a challenging position. As OA has not succeeded in transforming the scholarly communication environment, efforts are now shifting towards establishing new academic publishing infrastructures. However, radical transformation remains a distant dream. A notable example of

radical opposition to the traditional approach of academic publishers is Sci-Hub, a web platform that allows the free sharing and downloading of scientific papers, in defiance of copyright laws. Elsevier obtained a £15 million injunction against its creator, Alexandra Elbakyan. Elbakyan has argued that science should belong to scientists, not publishers (Buranyi, 2017). While this stance appears to be moral, there are indications that it may be supported by a nefarious state actor.

Habitus, dispositions and doxa of university library staff, managers and directors

As universities and their library collections, buildings, and services have evolved, so too have many library processes and practices. Consequently, the roles, knowledge, skills, and behaviours of university library staff have also transformed. Despite these changes in habitus and their impact on dispositions, it remains unclear to what extent the doxa of university library directors, managers, and staff has shifted and how this may be influencing habitus. This next section examines the positions and trajectories of different groups of library staff.

The habitus, practices, and trajectories of various groups of library staff, along with the dynamics between them, are analysed and presented in Appendix 9. This analysis draws particularly, though not exclusively, on the case study of UQ Library staff's response to the pandemic and organisational restructures. Summaries provided here illustrate how different staff groups—identified and considered in different ways—have different capital, habitus, and doxa. Table 5 presents a summary view of three broad groups of library staff and their responses to change. Table 6 provides a more detailed breakdown of different types of library staff, examining their sources of capital and their focus in relation to academics, students, and managerial alignment.

Table 5 *Capital, habitus and doxa of UQL staff in response to change*

Group/Concept	Capital: economic and symbolic (cultural and social)	Habitus: ‘a fish in water’	Doxa: embedded beliefs and structures
Library staff (e.g., front-line, technology trainers, collections administrators, etc.)	Increase in symbolic capital through reputational gains as services and support shifted quickly online and scaled up. Impact made visible to senior leaders through reporting.	Ease in moving to fully online services and utilisation of technologies. Embraced new services.	Committed to primacy of the student experience. Built new and deeper University-wide relationships, especially with ITS and Student Services. Restructure response: neutral or positive.
Professional librarians	Some increase in symbolic capital with academic colleagues through reputational gains as services shifted quickly online.	Ease in moving to fully online services and utilisation of technologies. Did not consistently positively respond to team dynamics across Library.	Restructure response: negative and resistant.
Library leaders	Symbolic capital increased through alignment with senior stakeholder imperatives: cost reduction, student experience, business continuity. Increase in symbolic capital did not generate more economic capital at a time of financial uncertainty.	Made physical spaces safe and usable. Digital collections demonstrated their value. Online services and support heavily utilised. Stepped into new areas of support for students, particularly IT focused.	Welcomed publisher price freezes. Built new and deeper University-wide relationships across professional services and with academic leaders.

Table 6 *Changing capitals of university library staff*

Staff group	Neoliberal focus	Sources of capital (e.g., know-how and networks)	Capital over time
Student facing	Student and managerial	Insights into student behaviour and needs.	Increasing
Academic facing	Academic	Insights into academic behaviour and needs. Relationships with academic communities.	Decreasing
Professional librarians	Academic	LIS domain know-how.	Decreasing
Collections specialists	Managerial and academic	Control of collections as information resources (print and digital). Management of special collections.	Variable
Technology specialists	Managerial	Control of technology developments and support.	Increasing
Management specialists	Managerial	Alignment with university business practices and demands. Alignment with university library directors.	Increasing

This analysis of library staff reveals six specific tensions. First, tension occurs between those who have a library and information science qualification and those who don't, and this tension is evident throughout the library organisational hierarchy. Second, the rise and position of the management specialist compared to the professional librarian, and the trend towards data driven practices over professional librarian know-how. The management specialist works to improve efficiency and effectiveness of services. Their positions have been created at the expense of other library jobs (staff budget is repurposed) and they pose a threat to others in the very nature of their work which may change or make redundant the roles of others. Third, those staff aligned closely with academic communities see this alignment as a source of status and power. This puts them in tension with those at similar levels in the hierarchy whose practices are more managerial. Further, one of the most contentious library structure and role changes has been to move from liaison or subject librarians to functional librarians. Essentially there are two alternative approaches to this functional position, one is to create schools and faculty

library ‘business partners’, and the other to creating research support and teaching and learning library teams who are not aligned to faculty disciplines. This is a neoliberal move, favouring the functional — arguably more efficient — practices, above the academic discipline structure (Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing library staff-Changing and expanding roles; Chapter 2: Literature review-Changing library staff-Status: librarianship as a profession).

Fourth, is the rise of the importance of the student experience without a corresponding improvement in the status of those staff working in student-facing roles, which remain positioned at the lower levels of the library hierarchy. Instead, management roles have been redirected towards student experience strategies and relationships, and new models of students as staff or peer to peer support introduced.

Fifth, is the lack of progress in operationalising the changing conceptualisation of the role of the university library in collections and information management. The perspectives on network level collections and discovery outside of the library (Chapter 2: Literature review-Library collections and scholarly communication) should have transformed collections work. However, traditional doxic practices persist, internal library groups compete for lead responsibility for collection development, and the complexity of operationalising a network level ethos stops innovation. Sixth, is the fragmented and uncertain response to and adoption of generative AI. AI for libraries presents both a service development opportunity (e.g., tailored chatbots), and a radical shift in the information environment which requires university-wide response (Chapter 2: Literature review-AI and the university library).

Library managers supervise staff in teams and groups. They have often progressed from specialist roles to managing the team in that or a similar area. They inhabit their specialist area and may or may not have a qualification as a professional librarian, or be a technical or collections specialists or from another profession, or a higher degree. In progressing to a supervisory or middle management position, staff develop management capabilities (and qualifications) alongside their specialist knowledge. To build effective working relationships they negotiate the dispositions of their team in relation to others across the library. Further, they enter one of the most challenging spaces in the university library, as they experience the tension between the specialist team habitus and the management and leadership neoliberal habitus (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 3. Library people, positioning, and relationships-Employees and skills; Chapter 7: A case study of the changing role of the university library-The four phases of change-Phase 3. We're not going back to the way we were-Leadership lessons). Library managers may find themselves either at odds with or in harmony with management specialists, depending on their respective teams' practices within the library. Consequently, they can feel either supported or under attack.

Managers and leaders navigate relationships between the different groups of staff and the tensions therein. Library leaders and managers also allocate and manage the economic capitals (library buildings and budgets) assigned to them and their cultural capitals (staff know-how and networks) to best position and deliver the library function.

Library leaders are often experienced professional librarians and people managers, who understand and have experience of the business and management practices

necessary to run a university department. The role of the leader is to seek funding from university senior leaders; negotiation and political skills are required to do this. They must demonstrate the value of the library to the university and ensure alignment between library practice and university strategy. They also need to be influential; this requires that they balance business acumen and academic credibility and navigate the neoliberal tensions of the university (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Discussion of the finding of the thematic analysis).

Library leaders need allies across the university to support their bids for economic capital. Yet, the imperative to secure economic capital brings them into competition with other university departments, particularly other professional services. They navigate arising tensions and seek to lead or form partnerships to strengthen the position of the university library. A significant example is the relationship with university IT departments. However, as the role of Chief Information Officer (CIO) became commonplace in universities, the library lost ground as the leader of the technology-enabled university. Additionally, library leaders now occupy a position of declining relative importance within the university. In the past, the university librarian was one of a few senior administrators, but now they are one of many professional service leaders (Chapter 6: Thematic analysis of the interviews-Theme 3. Library people, positioning, and relationships-Positioning the library in the university).

For many in library management and leadership, the challenge lies in aligning with students, academics, professional service colleagues, and senior leaders, while balancing the needs of different groups of library staff. Leaders aim to identify the best portfolio of library services and priorities for their university communities and

implement these decisions as much as the tensions between staff groups and available dispositions allow.

Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and doxa prompt another layer of analysis. Tensions between library leaders and staff arise as leaders make decisions about library services and priorities and reallocate staff resources during organisational restructures. Different doxic beliefs contribute to these tensions. These differing beliefs cut across both horizontal and vertical hierarchies and characterisations of various groups of library staff. While leaders focus on the strategic direction of the evolving university library in response to a changing environment, library staff may have different perspectives. The potential doxic misalignments with the strategic direction of the university library are presented in Table 7. For doxic beliefs to change, they must first become apparent to the person who holds them, which is inherently challenging. When these beliefs conflict with the strategic direction of the university library, generational change may be necessary, as one interviewee suggested. As staff retire or leave and new staff with different beliefs join the university library, habitus and practices may gradually adjust.

Table 7 *Examples of doxa in opposition to strategic direction*

Doxic belief	Strategic direction
Relevant information for teaching, learning and research must be and can be collected and organised by the university library.	Discovery happens elsewhere, libraries provide access rather than own information required. The information available and required by students and academics is bigger than any one university library collection.
Library and information science qualifications are the best route to employment in a university library and should be respected above other skills.	A range of expertise is required to deliver library services, it spans ICT and management capabilities. Digital capability is essential for all library staff.
The role of the university library is to help students find information.	The role of the university library is to support students as they navigate the university and what is expected of them. This spans locations, systems, assignments, exams, and navigating the contemporary ICT environment.
Employment in a university, and in the university library is stable and secure.	Employment in a university and in the university library requires that people are open to change and development, and given financial pressures, this may not be secure.

What is the trajectory of the university library?

In considering the fields impacting on the field of *University Libraries* and the field itself, the changing capitals mean that the positions of the agents in fields take on trajectories over time. Trajectories are determined in the dynamics between and within fields, and the changing field positions of agents relative to each other. These trajectories may or may not be explicitly known or be visible to agents, nor will the competitive nature of relationships between agents be obvious. Figure 5 presents a summary representation of trajectories of agents (excluding those of the university library) in the fields in and impacting on the field of *University Libraries*. Table 8

presents an assessment of the trajectory of the university library in relation to other agents and influences in and impacting on the field of *University Libraries*.

Figure 5 *Representation of agents' competitive position*

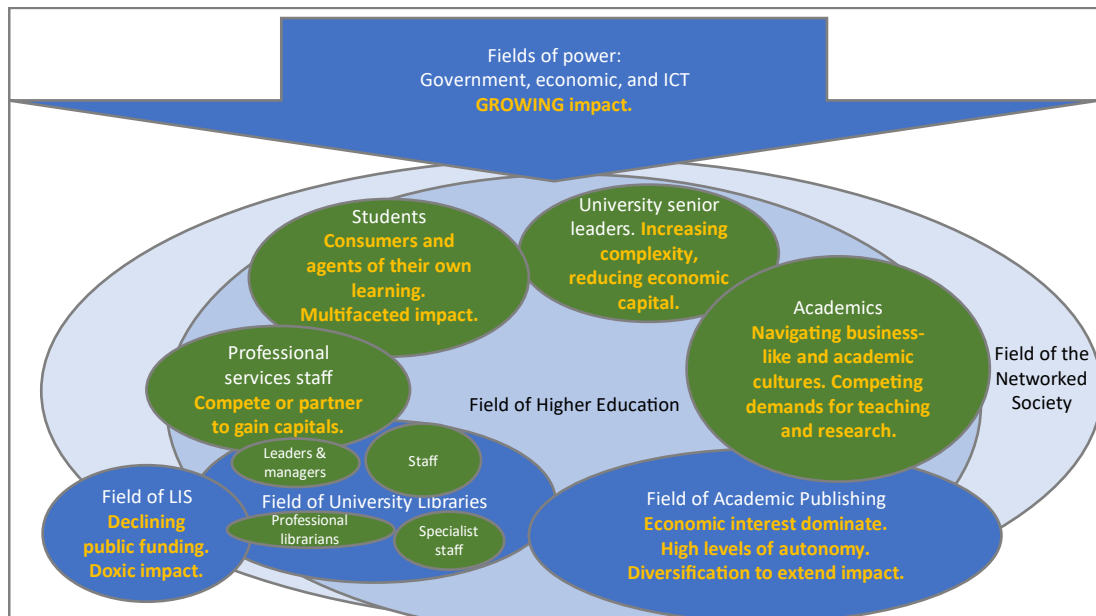


Table 8 Assessment of the trajectory of the university library

Influence	Impact	Trajectory
HE policy changes	Neoliberal impacts. University library in competition for funding and standing in the university.	Declining
Rise of the student experience	Library is successfully navigating alignment with student needs and expectations e.g., learning spaces and support for digital capability development.	Growing
Rise of Big Tech	Increasing adoption of ICT across university activity. University library role supporting (not leading) the digital university.	Declining
Challenges for academics in the neoliberal university	Library balancing disciplinary needs and service efficiency. Supporting growing complexity in research publication and changing pedagogic practice.	Maintained
Publishers increasing stronghold on universities	Library seeking new alternatives to OA implementation and raising concerns about new research analytics from publishers.	Uncertain
Growth of digital information and new search tools (including AI)	Library visibility and importance declining. Opportunities available to play a leading role in AI and to extend activities from information to knowledge management.	Declining & uncertain
Doxic misalignment with library strategic direction	Library staff are unable to respond to the changing environment within which the library operates.	Declining & uncertain

Overall, the university library is facing a confluence of three challenges: navigating the increasingly complex and competitive neoliberal university environment, maintaining its relevance amidst developments in the information landscape, and transforming staff mindsets and ways of working. The library has experienced budget reductions, increased internal competition from other professional services departments, a diminishing role as the sole information provider, and strained relationships with academic publishers.

Initially, the focus on automation and the transition from print to digital brought early rewards, such as extending access to information (symbolic capital gains) and

reducing administrative overheads (economic capital efficiencies). However, these gains have not necessarily persisted, as digital collections are less visible compared to print books on shelves. Additionally, the early lack of sophistication in search engines' ability to discern quality information has been resolved, making academic information easily discoverable on the Internet. The vast amount of available information means no single library can be the sole supplier of its university's information needs. The Internet, with the right digital capabilities, is a valid source of information.

Regarding academic publishing, rising subscription and publishing costs have damaged relationships between university libraries and the academic community. While support for the OA movement is morally desirable, it continues to be challenged by publisher practices and market conditions.

Strategies to improve the university library's position have included aligning visibly with student needs, transforming buildings into learning commons, developing and managing institutional repositories, providing research data management services, and adopting specialist functions (e.g., research metrics and IT support for students). Although many of these strategies have been successful, they have required changes in the library workforce, leading to internal challenges when these changes conflict with established doxa. It is difficult to assess the overall impact of the current strategies of the university library on its trajectory and the extent to which doxa is adapting. Although it is certain that the university library is experiencing pressures on its habitus and field. Regardless of whether these pressures are gradual or abrupt, the capacity for the university library to dynamically respond will determine if the library can reposition itself successfully or if the risk of obsolescence is growing.

Given this existential threat, it is crucial to consider whether library leaders recognise the changing situation for what it is and therefore if the full range of response strategies are being employed. In Bourdieusian terms recognising field conditions and the impact of them is important. Field conditions influence the agents within the fields within which they operate; their habitus and capital. Bourdieu identified different field mechanisms that arise from field conditions. In this research study, the most relevant field condition is ‘misrecognition,’ and the most useful field mechanism to consider is ‘hysteresis’.

Bourdieu uses the concept of ‘misrecognition’ to refer to a situation that is not recognised for what it is because it is not understood in an implicit or tacit way from within the range of usual ways of working, doing, or thinking by one or more groups of agents (within their doxa and habitus) as they engage with it. Instead, the situation is attributed to another available area of meaning or interest, and in the process, the interests and positions of agents may be maintained or diminished without them consciously understanding or being aware of it happening and why it has occurred. ‘Hysteresis’ is the term used by Bourdieu to describe a disruption in the relationship between habitus and the field structures to the point that they no longer correspond.

Broadly speaking, it is not clear whether the university library community is misrecognising the changing university and information environment as threats to the very existence of the university library, and the field of *University Libraries* is in fact in hysteresis. If so, the current strategies deployed by the university library or proposed in the interview study may not be sufficient to create a positive trajectory for the university library. Furthermore, it is uncertain whether the time taken to adapt to field changes and the management and leadership effort required to change

habitus and beliefs is adequate. In this situation, to address the declining trajectory of the university library, habitus regenerating activities must be radically different, mindful of the changing positions of other agents, as the elements of habitus, capital, and field interact to determine the practice of field ($[(\text{habitus})(\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$). Changing the practice (in Bourdieu's sense) is the only way to improve the trajectory of the university library. Ultimately this Bourdieusian analysis warrants a reiteration of the warning from Van House and Sutton (1996),

The field is changing: the boundaries, players, capital, and rules of competition are all in flux. Other professions and academic disciplines are moving into the information field in response to its growing importance and potential for the accumulation of capital – money, power, and prestige. LIS risks being outnumbered, outmanoeuvred, and rendered marginal. (p. 145)

Chapter 9: Discussion

In this chapter the response to the research questions is presented as a synthesis of the findings of the literature review, the interview study, the case study and the Bourdieusian analysis. The discussion of the role of the university library assumed two overlapping perspectives. The first perspective considered the fundamental purpose of the university library or its *raison d'être*. The second perspective defined the role according to the activities undertaken by the university library; what it does and delivers. Both required consideration of the library in relation to constituent parts of the university, and the impacts of the environment in which it is situated and how it has changed over time, or in Bourdieusian terms, the fields of power and the surrounding fields, namely the *Networked Society*, *Academic Publishing*, *Higher Education* and *LIS*.

The discussion has been organised around four themes: the role of the university library in the context of the university and including considerations of technological advancement; library services and spaces including considerations of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; library staff and leadership; and library collaborations, relationships and positioning within and outside the university.

The role of the university library

The interview study found that the role of the university library was to support the university mission by providing access to information to enable teaching, learning and research. Some interviewees viewed collection management as the core function of the library, though this was defined in different ways. The broadest definition described the library as an institutional knowledge shaper and maker. This included enabling people to be discerning users and creators of information in a complex

environment, and managing institutional research outputs and cultural assets.

Additionally, some saw the library's role as a provider of learning spaces as fundamental. Other roles discussed included supporting freedom of speech, engaging with the external community, building the university community, fostering entrepreneurship, and promoting social responsibility.

The literature review, interview study and case study illustrated changes over time in the role of the library as information provider and manager. The evolution of the university library and its role in the information environment is complex and multifaceted. The university library is no longer the primary source of information (which was initially largely in print and then in digital and physical formats) for university communities, it has been overtaken by search engines and AI. The Web and search engines have made information discovery ubiquitous, and generative AI technologies and chatbots now enable conversational interrogation of vast amounts of information. Over the past 20 years, university libraries have centralised collections, shifted to providing digital content, and moved away from personal selection of items to data-driven collection management. This shift has increased the distance between library staff and academic communities, making library information management less visible and reducing the symbolic capital of the library. The rise of roles such as Chief Information Officer (CIO) and IT departments has further diminished the library's position as a technology leader. Moreover, the impact of the university library leadership role in OA is inextricably linked to the success of the OA movement. On one hand, librarians, academics, university leaders, and research funders have worked together to address the stronghold of publishers, but on the other the university library has been in a key position in a disappointing

area. The academic publishing environment's oligopolistic conditions has enabled large publishers to thwart the OA agenda.

The case study reinforced these findings, presenting a confident university library which embraced many roles and considered information access and collections management as its core. It added three insights: IT support for students remained unchallenged by the rise of the IT department, there was growing recognition of the need to decolonise collections and address diversity issues, and COVID-19 accelerated digital services and highlighted the value of library spaces for community building and knowledge creation.

The Bourdieusian study found that the significance of the reduction to the role of the university library as information provider is subject to misrecognition.

Misrecognition has curtailed reflexive dialogue in the university library community.

Reflexive dialogue and analysis of the dynamics of academic publishing and the university are necessary to identify actions and to identify available opportunities.

With an extended and expansive definition of what it is for the university library to be a knowledge shaper and maker, other roles (e.g., digital capability support, research publication support) become connected and cohesive. The role of provider of learning spaces also dovetails when considered in terms of university knowledge creation and community place-making. In particular, as student satisfaction continues to be an area of concern for university senior stakeholders, so it is for the university library, not solely from a neoliberal student retention and recruitment perspective, but because without a sense of belonging students cannot fully realise their individual capabilities for knowledge making at university. Similarly, the role

of the university library in research impact and excellence extends into working with different information formats, systems, tools, and practices.

Library services and spaces

Pedagogical developments and new research practices have resulted in experiential learning, digital research and online teaching, the latter accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, new strategies have been implemented by the university library. These have redefined the information work of the library, reinvented library spaces and services, and impacted on staff roles and ways of working.

The interview study revealed that the university library's role encompasses a variety of possibilities, including supporting research, teaching and learning, enhancing the university community, improving student experience, and managing cultural collections. The range of services offered by the library has expanded. The case study further highlighted the automation of library processes, the adoption of customer service practices, the library's role in IT support for students, and the development of new services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Bourdieusian terms, symbolic capital increases when library services align with university strategies and senior stakeholders' imperatives, and when they respond to the needs of academic colleagues and students. However, optimising economic capital to deliver this expanded range of services has required reallocating resources from other areas. This shift has challenged the established norms (doxa) of library staff, making it difficult to achieve.

The literature review, interview study and case study illustrated the reimagination of the collecting mission of the university library. To date this has focused on managing the transition to digital collections, developing services and systems to support

scholarly communication including OA, and transition from teaching students' information skills to supporting digital capability development. Rebalancing traditional practices with new ones has been essential. For example, work to shelve print books continues albeit significantly scaled back, supporting a systematic review has become more complex, and new work may include guiding a researcher to develop a research data management plan.

Throughout this research study the challenges and opportunities related to library spaces have been considered. The literature review set out the drivers for redevelopment of library spaces. Namely, the demand for space to study and the quality of facilities in support of the student experience. It also summarised discussions on the library as a place where research and learning intersect, the university library as a source of competitive advantage, and the meaning of the library as a place for social connection. In the interview study participants shared experiences of moving print collections and converting space to learning commons. It also highlighted the impacts of major library space redevelopment projects, namely increases in student satisfaction and closer connections between the library and the student community. In the case study, the UQ Library has struggled to secure internal investment for its spaces due to a difficult UQ financial environment.

In Bourdieusian terms, space changes have reduced library symbolic capital as it related to print collections and increased it in relation to student engagement and alignment. The ideal position is one that takes into account disciplinary cohorts as well as the general study population and makes collection activity visible (e.g., digitisation, and special collections) alongside student study space. Library cultural capital associated with space can be increased further by activating library spaces for

events and engagement with academics, students, and the external university community.

There are opportunities to consider the role of the university library beyond service and space provision. As library spaces have developed in response to changing pedagogies and increased in popularity with students, so they have become places where students can inhabit space to learn alongside each other. Therefore, within the framework of place theory discussed in the literature review, the library within the university offers philosophical, relational and psychological opportunities for community and expression. Thus, the connection is made between Bourdieu's habitus; as library users create and interact with the library as place.

Library staff and leadership

All elements of this thesis point to significant challenges in the library workforce. Changing roles and organisational structures, and staff skills and dispositions were features of the interview study and case study. The literature review synthesised the key themes in the body of works on library staff and leadership. These included consideration of changing roles, gender and stereotypes, organisational structures, cultures and dysfunctions, leadership, and equity and diversity.

The emerging literature on the dysfunctions within library culture, though not specifically examined in the interview and case studies, echoed findings on the dynamics between different staff groups. Leaders shared challenging experiences of managing change, highlighting these issues. The case study demonstrated how library strategies and new services impacted staff and their relationships with each other, and their managers. Contrary to these concerns is the successful transition to new roles and mindsets as part of the COVID-19 response; the university library

community demonstrated that it is adaptable and collaborative, and capable of navigating evolving external conditions. The Bourdieusian analysis illuminated the range of doxic positions and trajectories of different groups of library staff. These differences are likely to be a root cause of relationship breakdown and individual and group discontent.

On leaders and leadership, the interview study painted library leaders as collaborative, facilitative, and politically savvy. Interviewees implicitly or explicitly recognised that strong change management skills are an essential attribute. The need for greater business acumen featured, particularly when engaging with publishers, as did the requirement for the leader to broker relationships across university boundaries. The case study confirmed this and added in the need for detailed consideration of team functions and service design in organisational redesign and restructure.

The Bourdieusian analysis illuminated the complexity of the leadership role. External forces (government policy, neoliberalism, technological advancement, and changes in the academic publishing market) and internal forces (workforce challenges, budget constraints) pull in different directions. University library leaders have key roles to play in sensemaking so that decisions can be understood in the neoliberal context and so that staff can understand their roles in relation to each other. A whole university perspective and political acumen is also required of them, so that they can best position the library in the university. They generate symbolic capital through alignment with senior stakeholder imperatives: cost reduction, student experience, business continuity. In turn, they secure economic capital but do so in competition with others in the university.

From the perspective of the university library community, leadership responses appear fragmented. Library leaders are concentrating on various challenges and strategies, each with different viewpoints. While there is a shared history, the responses are local and tailored for many. Consequently, the future is being approached more on an institutional level rather than collectively. Thus, in Bourdieusian terms leadership misrecognition is a real risk to effective engagement with the position of hysteresis in the field of *University Libraries*.

Library collaborations, relationships and positioning

In the evolving landscape of HE, the interview study and case study paint a picture of university libraries as key players in fostering collaboration across diverse stakeholders. This collaboration is not limited to the confines of the university but extends to a broader network that includes other academic institutions, library partners, and cultural organisations. Nevertheless, Demspey (2019) argued that library collaboration should be more deliberate and strategic, and that “there should be active, informed decision-making about what needs to be done locally and what would benefit from stronger coordination or consolidation” (p. 231).

Whilst the strategies and transformations of the university library over the last 30 years have seen effective changes in services, workforce and spaces, the environment within which they operate has continued to change. The literature review tells the history of libraries as declining in status and support in the university; university library leaders are no longer part of the most senior university governance and decision-making groups. The interview study and case study highlight the successes and challenges, and the Bourdieusian analysis illuminates the complexity of the current situation and gives rise to concern for the future.

Inherent in the neoliberal university is a fundamental difference between constituent parts of the university; those who generate income and those who consume it. For all there is competition to secure resources within the university. Overall, the trajectory for the field of *Higher Education* can be characterised as one of increasing constraints, rising expectations, and competition internal and external to the university. Therefore, a fundamental challenge is securing economic capital to fund the library mission.

Cost containment strategies are also important, particularly with regard to purchasing from academic publishers. The nature of the relationship between libraries and large publishers is antagonistic: the cost containment and ideological positions of libraries clashes with the profit and business-driven objectives of publishers. There are no signs that the stronghold publishers have on HE is abating as they focus on building research metrics services and infrastructure to support digital research. The interview study and case study demonstrated the complex relationship between publishers and universities, and the Bourdieusian study showed the seemingly intractable position whereby publishing generates symbolic capital for academics and universities.

It is increasingly difficult for the university library to align with the needs and expectations of academics as they themselves navigate the neoliberal university. Providing services, collections and space specific to the needs of disciplinary groups is more costly than providing generic support. The routes to research dissemination for individual and institutional impact are difficult to navigate. The tensions between academic publishing and OA persist. Yet, the alignment of the university library with student needs represents a positive step.

The proactive adoption of technology by the university library in the 1980s positioned it well until the rise of Google in the 2000s. Now technology leadership is a contested position for the modern university library. Yet the case study illustrated the many open doors to partnership and collaboration with academic and professional services departments, including IT services. Inherent in the neoliberal university is that it operates in a business-like way and utilises technology in its management and business processes. The university library has and continues to do just that. The case study also highlighted the strength of the position of the library as it supported students and academic colleagues in the digital shift required during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bourdieusian study confirms this was a savvy move. Aligning the library to those who now lead technological innovation increases its symbolic capital. However, skills and expertise are required of library staff to be credible and useful contributors to this work. Technology continues to provide opportunities to engage with students and staff in new ways, to reconsider library practices and processes, and present new requirements in information management.

In addition, the interview study findings pointed to clear agreement on the role of the university library in supporting the digital skills development of students. With this comes the opportunity to raise the profile of the library and strengthen its position. This is in relation to not only the student experience, but also in the management of cultural assets (digital and print), and research support. If taken, these opportunities are likely to further increase the symbolic capital of libraries.

Conclusion

Overall, the university library is facing a double threat. First, navigating the increasingly complex and competitive neoliberal university, and second, maintaining

its relevance in the face of developments in the information environment. The networked society in the Information Age has displaced the university library as sole provider of academic information, and so they navigate these neoliberal tensions from a weakened position. The interview study and case study demonstrate the strategies adopted in response including redeveloping spaces, setting up and managing institutional repositories and research data management services, and adopting specialist functions (e.g., research metrics and IT support for students). Overall, implementing these changes has required organisational restructures and transformation of library leadership and staff mindsets and ways of working. However, despite these strategies the position of the university library has declined. New and renewed strategies are required for the future. In Bourdieusian terms, new strategies to respond to the challenges and opportunities faced by the university library must first recognise the situation (field conditions) for what it is and its own part in creating its conditions (habitus and capital exchanges), then the university library should engage with the agents within it in new ways to increase symbolic and economic capital and address its declining trajectory.

Chapter 10: Implications for practice and research

This chapter outlines a series of strategies for university libraries, highlighting both practical applications and areas for further research. While some libraries have already implemented these strategies to varying degrees, others are. I propose six strategies for change: three centred on purpose and positioning, and three on facilitating that purpose. My goal is to inspire continued transformation within university libraries.

Purpose and positioning strategies

Regain the lost ground as knowledge partner to the university

The interview study presented a reimagined role for the university library; to support the university community to engage with the changing information and digital environment. This role is operationalised through a disparate range of old and new practices and services. There are two challenges which arise which were not experienced in the past. First, the disparate nature of current library and information services makes it difficult to communicate or present them to library stakeholders as an interconnected whole. Second, the wide range of services means that service delivery is complex; it requires different kinds and levels of expertise and technical infrastructure way beyond the library online catalogue.

There are some libraries who provide services to manage and preserve institutional research data, and some have taken a publishing role and have carriage of university presses and/or open journal and open educational resource publishing platforms. For others this mission extends to providing support for the technologies that enable high-tech interrogation of information, for example data visualisation or text mining. This extension can make library directors and their staff feel uncomfortable as they

move into areas of work which may not clearly be the territory of the university library, and so engage in areas of contested ownership with university professional service colleagues. In addition, going beyond familiar information types requires challenging established standards and practices in content management and curation. To make these changes, library staff enter into dialogue across the library and information services (LIS) community, and agreement on the redevelopment of national and international standards becomes necessary.

A further difficulty is that the university library is required to respond to several information management challenges in order to realise the ambition to extend information services, make them visible, and reconnect with disciplinary communities. First, modern data driven collection management practices (i.e., withdrawal and cancellations) can undermine the symbolic capital intrinsic in information sources and in the collection and management of them. Second, the enabling infrastructure of information management — the underlying systems and technologies that support the storage, retrieval, preservation, and dissemination of information — are not the sole responsibility of the university library. These technologies extend into virtual learning environments, and institutional and data repositories of research outputs, and as such can be the domain of IT services, research computing services, learning technologists, and so forth. Third, the extent to which facilitation of engagement with data and information at an institutional level as opposed to an individual level has shifted. Libraries, once stores of multiple copies of textbooks and custodians of the reading list, are no longer able to mediate and aggregate all learning resources, many are scattered throughout virtual learning environments. Fourth, there is an absence of systematic methods for identifying content which is not published in the traditional way, this impacts on the ability of

libraries to make it discoverable to others in the university community. Fifth, there is growing recognition that information management tools deployed by libraries (e.g., classification schemes) betray racism, sexism, and other discriminatory characteristics. All of these require examination, redevelopment, and application of critical librarianship methods. Finally, knowledge of information and data architecture theories, and disciplinary research communication and dissemination practices are required to inform the development of systems and services.

Responding to these challenges is not enough. To deliver the purpose of the university library — to support the university community to engage with the changing information and digital environment — more expansive strategies are required.

Specific actions to regain the lost ground and move from information manager to knowledge partner to the university are both generic and disciplinary, they focus on digital scholarship and deployment of technologies, and require data management and systems developments. They include learning resource and content design, curation, and management in virtual learning environments, and research output management, curation and preservation including owning the institutional repository function and mechanisms to ingest content from external repositories. These could be supported by staff and student training in technologies which enable the creation and interrogation of information in its new forms, for example, data science, AI and text mining. Here the potential of AI is to revolutionise scholarly information search, retrieval and analysis. Technological skills can be complemented by digital literacy training and teaching which includes a sociological view of information and how it is communicated. Thus, information citizenship is developed and issues of

misinformation and disinformation, free speech and academic debate, hate speech, the 'filter bubble' and fake news are tackled. Disciplinary information nuances can be supported by a new generation of subject information digital specialists, and support provided for advanced searching and discovery of information including systematic reviews, requirements for evidence-based practice methods, and data visualisation. In addition, there are opportunities to generate and use insights from learning and research content creation and use to design and implement interventions to support teaching, learning and research.

These strategies for new kinds of information sit alongside the more traditional management of cultural assets and university archives, and celebrating the practices and traditions associated with information collections of the past, for example, by making visible print conservation, and special collection displays and events. In addition, across all kinds of content, it is vital to indigenise and decolonise collections and adapt the tools used in the library tradition which reproduce bias and inequity.

At a university-wide level the opportunities are to develop university information strategies for learning and teaching and research assets, and discipline information strategies. These should consider how data insights can be developed and used and protected from third party exploitation. Positioning the university library as a knowledge shaper and maker can significantly enhance its symbolic capital. However, determining whether a university library should pursue these goals independently or in collaboration with other university departments or libraries requires further investigation. There are also opportunities to explore increased national and international collaborations to achieve economies of scale, collective

bargaining power, and shared digital infrastructure. Central to these broad strategies is making the reimagined information purpose of the university library visible to academic communities within and beyond any one institution.

There are some additional potential benefits from these strategies if achieved. By making more visible the traditions of the print library through the work of special collections, philanthropic and community engagement opportunities present themselves.

Re-evaluate OA and create new models

The university library community have supported and advocated for open access (OA) publishing for twenty years. The collective action of libraries has leveraged bargaining power with publishers, and OA publication has been funded and mandated through research grants. However, the aspirations of the OA community have not been fully achieved and the complexity of the open access publishing arena remains problematic.

SPARC (Aspesi, 2021) urged the academic community to take control of its own content and infrastructure to best serve both its own interests and to protect academic freedom. In 2023, cOAlition S put forward a new proposal for consultation. It came with the recognition that in the main, open access has been delivered through business models which are inequitable. The proposal from cOAlition S was for a community-based scholarly communication system, breaking from the current academic publishing norms (cOAlition S, 2023). Such a systems will require new investment. As these proposals develop into practical plans, the university library must reevaluate its position in relation to OA and consider where infrastructure investments are required (locally, nationally and internationally).

In developing new strategies, the learnings and insights of the last ten years should be employed. These include recognition of academic publishing as a global business. Different countries do and will have different approaches, as do different publishers. Researchers work across national boundaries, with different funders, and publish with different publishers. Therefore, they require an international approach. In addition, government intervention, without legislation or regulation of the academic publishing market, has not achieved the fundamental change it aspired to, even research funder mandates have little impact on publishers' revenues streams. Given that large publishers employed government lobbyists to protect their financial interests, universities should anticipate pushback from publishers and rejection of any future proposals to support the development of a new scholarly communication environment. To address this, the university library community would benefit from government advocacy and therefore requires the expertise of professional lobbyists, and a shared high-level HE stance on OA.

For the university library a new position and new strategies should follow. Clear messages and guidance are required to support and galvanise the research communities in universities. Moreover, libraries should consider whether to move into or develop their role as research publishers and consider the symbolic and economic capital needed to do this. To take this role may be a departure for some while for others the library as publisher is in their purview. The provision of data and publication repositories takes libraries in the right direction, as do connections to and even direct management of university presses. To realise this opportunity and respond to its inherent challenges, alignment and collaboration with academic colleagues and partnership with university professional services departments (including IT departments and research support offices) is required. This also

requires developing library staff so that they are equipped to take on the role of publisher. The extent to which the university library has capacity (i.e., resources and staff) which can be repurposed or can secure new resources is also to be determined.

Align with students' needs

University libraries have adopted strategies that have generated symbolic capital through alignment with students. This visible alignment with student needs has in turn generated economic investment. There are opportunities to build on success in alignment with student needs for learning spaces and resources. First, the impact of the redevelopment of library buildings as learning commons is significant. Often progressed by working with student groups and student unions, space developments have been effective in increasing the visibility and reputation of the university library.

Second, university libraries have taken action to support students experiencing financial pressure by adopting strategies to minimise costs to students whilst maximising access to learning resources. With academic colleagues, librarians work to make it clear what textbooks must be purchased by student cohorts; they provide free digital access to others and support the development of open textbooks and open educational resources. The opportunity is for libraries to be proactive in identifying courses which lend themselves to open educational resources by reviewing virtual learning environment modules to identify where similar content exists in multiple places or digitising special collections for use in teaching. Realising these opportunities requires staff with the right skills in content creation. It also requires an investment of time and expertise from academic colleagues, and so design of new

recognition and reward systems so that academics can generate symbolic capital from creating these kinds of resources is an area worthy of future research.

Third, the library can provide new kinds of support by extending its teaching and training programmes for students' digital capability. For some, this includes the provision of IT skills training and support for students. All of this is vital to student success. The interview study identified new opportunities for libraries, in partnership with university employability and innovation hubs, to support students who chose entrepreneurial paths. University libraries are increasingly considering students in the round, as people with lives outside their studies and as people on their journey through higher education then onto employment. New services, spaces and support are being designed appropriate to varied life experiences and for transitions in and out of the university. This can take the form of activating spaces with events or displays, and dedicated spaces such as parent rooms, so that people feel welcome, inspired, and included.

Fourth, employing students in libraries provides them with valuable work experience (including development of their digital capabilities) and income, while benefiting the library. The value of peer-to-peer support models and opportunities to flex the workforce — with students — are established and are gaining support.

Fifth, in developing and providing services and support to students, libraries gather data from and about students, for example through focus groups and surveys, and by working with students as partners. As interview participants pointed out, libraries advocate for students to senior leaders and use their insights about students to inform service development. Some libraries work with those involved in teaching and learning analytics, contributing to data aggregations to support student retention.

There is an opportunity for libraries to monetise insights, for example, in informing the design and development of digital textbooks and learning resources. In addition, some libraries are taking on a more formal role in market research, survey administration, and orientation coordination. The university library could become the hub for student insights. However, taking on the role of gatekeeper to the student voice also comes with risk. This risk is in the dynamic between the library and other professional services. Student data is the territory of others, for example, student unions, student services, and marketing and communication departments. To mitigate this, relationships with a range of professional services departments should be navigated in ways which acknowledge everyone's strengths and interests. It is the skills in data management and analysis, data on student engagement with its services and collections, and access to students in libraries that form the foundation of the library's contribution. The university library's track record of working in partnership with academic schools and faculties is also an asset.

Enabling strategies

Enabling strategies respond to the challenges and opportunities faced by the university library. To deliver these strategies libraries must continue to develop new ways of working. The interview study and case study demonstrated that new roles have been created at the expense of more traditional library roles. This research study has highlighted the challenges inherent in organisational change and gives insights into the motivations and dispositions of people who lead and work in the university library. These enabling strategies are explicit responses to relational and people challenges. They consider library workforce transitions including loss and disempowerment, the need for dialogue between library staff with different skills and

dispositions, and necessity of staff development. Additionally, strategies for leadership and collaboration are proposed.

In workforce transitions recognise the different losses and gains for different groups of staff

To some extent the tensions experienced within different groups of staff represent the old and the new, the print and the digital, the managerial and the academic. Many library staff and leaders have experienced the transitions associated with automation, the shift from print to digital collections, the professionalisation of customer service, and the introduction of managerial and project practices. For some, there is a sense of loss and disempowerment, while others positively and constructively embrace new ways of working.

The hierarchical standing once attributed to the professional librarian now competes with other roles, for example, project managers, software developers and research data specialists. It is not surprising that responses to restructures are emotive. As certain groups of staff loose standing and familiar work, interviewees recounted receiving offensive feedback and difficult discussions. More broadly, the literature on the dysfunction of the library makes the case that libraries do not function well internally, describing toxic behaviour and culture. This thesis is clear that the university library is influenced by factors internal and external to its organisational construct including hierarchical structures, leadership, and how the library relates to other units in the university, in particular, the library's relationship with the networked society and ICT. To deepen our understanding of this phenomenon, I propose that further research is undertaken into library organisational culture through a Bourdieusian lens.

In addition, I would like to confirm and extend two strategies deployed in the university library. First, to enter into a dialogue — which is open about what is lost and what is to be gained — between groups of library staff and between leaders and staff. More specifically, leaders should extend change narratives to acknowledge past practices. They need to allocate time to discuss and recognise what is ending, along with the associated feelings of loss and disempowerment. Leaders should also communicate clearly to library staff that different groups may be on different trajectories, fostering respect and understanding for various positions and dispositions. This approach will cultivate a more collegial environment, better enabling the navigation of tensions and the exploration of synergies.

Second, to invest in staff development and to incentivise it. There are opportunities to design new roles so that they are attainable for current staff, and to create pathways towards them with training and development in key areas (e.g., data science and AI). In this redesign of roles, a deeper understanding of information management and knowledge creation in different discipline communities is required. To pursue this effectively, investment is required in the redevelopment of symbiotic relationships between library and information science educators and university library leaders. The work of the modern university library should be both understood by library and information science students and informed by research. AI presents an opportunity for new roles, as library staff support students and researchers to engage effectively with AI. Digital skills more broadly have become an essential component of the university library workforce.

For some, these strategies and actions may seem out of reach, and for others they may not go far enough. It may also be that resources do not permit this level of

investment in dialogue and staff development. An alternative way forward is to create new roles and teams alongside or instead of existing teams, which is perhaps unrealistic in a climate of financial constraint. In this regard, generative AI may be helpful in that library practices can be automated further, particularly in relation to information enquiry work and metadata generation.

These are not the only considerations in managing the development of the library workforce. In regaining the lost ground as knowledge partners, library employees should include people who understand the information world from digital, sociological, and psychological perspectives. In addition, a deep understanding of disciplinary information domains and the technologies at play within them is required. This knowledge, combined with skills in consultancy and pedagogy, can be applied to deliver high level information and research services and to co-create courses with teachers and learning designers.

Develop reflexive leadership and situational awareness

Leaders of university libraries must understand themselves and their work within the dynamic environment within which they operate. In undertaking this research, I sought to address this, and to also respond to the challenge from Budd (2003),

To avoid some blind spots and tunnel vision, librarians should become more reflective so that we can understand more completely the complex exercises of symbolic power and cultural production that can be imbedded in human action generally and in praxis in librarianship specifically. (p. 31)

With symbolic power and practice in mind, leaders must navigate the neoliberal university, the changing information environment, and the politics of professional services and the academic community. The interview study and case study point to

career progression and leadership success when library leaders — grounded in management and professional practice — are at the forefront of technological advancement, student-focused developments, or research support. The interview study points to dispositions that are generalist in disciplinary nature, service-focused, status aware and politically savvy. However, there are trade-offs between neoliberal managerial and academic practice, and income generating and public good ethos of the university which impact on library strategies, decisions, services, and the views of library staff. Career progression is testimony to the fact that leaders successfully navigate these trade-offs. Library leaders could strengthen their ability to navigate these cultural tensions by accepting the reality that there is internal university competition for resources. As libraries compete with an increasing number of professional services departments for economic capital, the role of the leader is to secure sufficient resources for the library to fulfill its purpose as knowledge manager.

My initial recommendation for regaining ground on the information mission distinctly positions the university library's role in alignment with teaching, learning, research, and in the digital and physical space. This approach better reflects the diverse experiences that have supported the career progression and success of current leaders. Without a clear directive for knowledge shaping and making, communicated effectively to others, future leaders will find themselves operating from a diminishing position.

A further consideration is the location of the university library in the university structure. Positioning can have positive or detrimental effects on the influence of and resourcing of the university library. Baker and Allden (2017a) in their review of

academic library leadership found that libraries were more or less closely associated with academic organisational structures in different countries. They found that in the UK the university library is increasingly regarded as a service department.

Conversely, outside of the UK — particularly in the US — there are more scholarly associations, so much so that many university librarians are given the title Dean and have a PhD qualification. This suggests that in the UK context of managerial efficiency, university library directors may have a blind spot in relation to opportunities to gain symbolic capital from their own academic achievement.

Further, the generalist is not necessarily rewarded in university culture. This, and the point made by participants in the interview study that library leadership is not the purview of the university library director alone, but that of the library leadership team, provides a further opportunity. In building library leadership teams, consideration of academic discipline structures alongside LIS functional expertise presents an opportunity for library repositioning. I imagine matrix structures which combine disciplinary expertise and functional responsibilities.

The strategic choices of university library leadership are important to the success of the university library. It is a vital role of the library leader to establish how they, their team, and the work of the library, is best positioned in the university. Additionally, what needs to be done locally, or collaboratively within or outside the university, is key and is discussed in detail in the next section. This is an active choice and one which should consider symbolic capital and its potential to secure economic capital. Libraries should strive to use their assets — whether they be collections, space, staff expertise, or technology — to their best advantage as players of the capital exchange game in their university and the HE environment. In resource constrained times, this

means identifying what to stop, namely those activities which compared to others generate less capital and where more efficient practices can be introduced, often leveraging automation and AI. It also means being discerning about what to start. Consideration should be given to the balance between what symbolic capital could be lost or gained, and the risk of detracting from the library's connection to scholarly information provision. Ideally, new roles which align with the information mission are desirable.

Build collaboration and extend partnerships

University libraries have wide connections within their institutions. University libraries collaborate with academic and professional colleagues. However, relationships and collaborations require proactive management. These relationships can be positive, and they can also be strained. University-wide initiatives can seek out the library or overlook it. In addition, contested professional jurisdiction is a feature of the university's internal environment. It is only through relationships with professional services departments that the university knowledge manager mission of the library can be delivered. It requires that libraries navigate across boundaries between systems which store teaching and research resources, the people who create them, and the policies and processes which manage them.

Collaboration with other libraries is particularly important; however, it is challenging to execute effectively and demands both strategic drive and collective operational capacity. Through initiatives such as interlibrary loans and shared catalogue systems, university libraries expand the resources available to their users. Collaborative efforts also extend to joint acquisition strategies, shared digital repositories, and cooperative collection development, which allow libraries to provide a wider range

of materials while also managing costs. There is a track record of effective shared services. I recommend an investigation into further opportunities for shared services, utilising organisations such as JISC, OCLC, and JSTOR. The strengths of national bodies such as SCONUL and RLUK could also be extended nationally and internationally, and augmented by more prominent voices on information environment issues and opportunities.

Purpose and functions for the university library in practice

Implementing strategies for change impacts services, systems, staff and staff structures, partnerships and relationships with publishers and others. These can be coherent and layer upon each other. Figure 6 illustrates the purpose of the university library as a knowledge shaper, creator, amplifier, and manager and its enabling infrastructure or resources, suppliers and assets. Figure 7 presents more detail on specific functions of the university library and how they — and the roles — connect and overlap.

Figure 6 *The purpose of the university library and its enabling infrastructure*

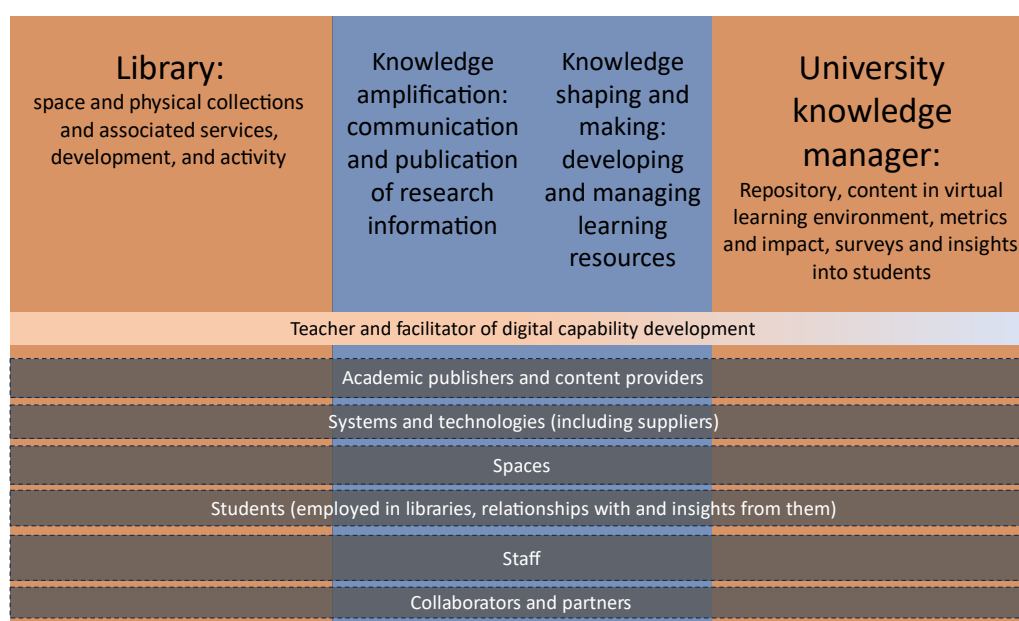
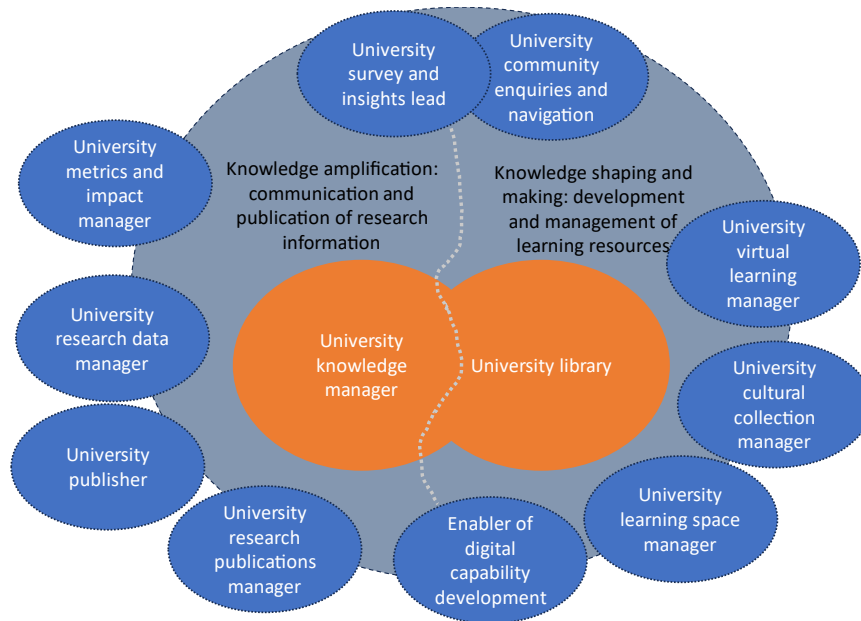


Figure 7 *The functions of the university library aligned to its purpose*



Concluding remarks

Successful engagement with these strategies requires that the university library community acknowledge the extent of the impact of technological advancement, the neoliberal university, and the changing publisher marketplace on the position of the university library. In addition, definition of an expansive understanding of the role of the university library is required. Successful implementation of these strategies entails grappling with two fundamental concerns. Firstly, the extent to which the university library has the capability, collaborations and capacity to deliver on an extended definition of its role: the university library as a knowledge shaper, creator, amplifier, and manager. This is not simply transactional service provision, rather knowledge creation is a process carried out by people — alone, together, aided and manipulated by technologies — and the knowledge produced takes many forms and is subject to permeable boundaries. Therefore, the role of managing, providing access to, organising, shaping, influencing, and producing knowledge is relational and complex. In addition, ongoing scaling up of national activity and focus

compared to institutional focus is required. Secondly, the recognition of this role and support for it from university senior stakeholders, the academic community and professional services colleagues. There is contradictory evidence of whether university stakeholders see beyond the traditional library functions and space, and value the more recent manifestations of the university library.

Engaging in constructive dialogue about the neoliberal university within the networked society will drive the next wave of change for university libraries. To support this, further research is essential to understand how the potential of the modern university library is perceived, valued, and could be utilised. This research should also explore how library leaders can position the university library not as a cost centre to be minimised but as a vital component of the institution. National and international conversations with the research community are necessary to address the challenges posed by the slow progress of OA. It is evident that balancing the global pursuit of knowledge with the economic realities of national research funding and the influence of the academic publishing industry presents complex issues.

To conclude this thesis, I reflect on my experiences and practices and how they have evolved during this research study. Throughout this process, I have tested my assumptions, reflected on my practice, drawn on the insights of other practitioners and researchers, and engaged with Bourdieu's theories. This thesis has provided a framework to examine changing practices within their evolving environment and to articulate new directions for the university library.

As the University Librarian at the University of Queensland, I have begun to implement much of what I have learned. I have fiercely protected the staff development budget, refocused UQ Library's engagement with academic colleagues,

and dedicated significant time to whole-staff dialogue and sensemaking about changes in higher education and ICT. When interacting with colleagues from other professional service departments, such as IT Services and Property and Facilities, I seize every opportunity to understand their priorities and concerns and to articulate the library's contributions to the university.

However, the advance of Big Tech remains a significant concern. I believe that the societal impact of the network society necessitates government intervention, supported by extensive academic research into the effects of AI, misinformation, and filter bubbles.

I am committed to sharing my research and experiences to inspire, challenge, and support others. My previous papers on strategy development (Williams, 2008) and change management (2013) are now joined by UQ Library's recent work on equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and decolonisation (Williams et al., 2024). Additionally, I have been commissioned to co-author a LIS handbook on leading change, where I plan to include reflections on the power of aligning with a greater good to inspire staff, as demonstrated by the COVID-19 experience and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives at UQ Library.

My learning and personal growth through this research journey will inform the LIS sector and beyond. I hope that colleagues in universities will find resonance with my narrative and analysis, and that our professional dialogue goes deeper into holistic, dynamic, and relational considerations of the university library.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions and explanations

The library and higher education (HE) domains abound with jargon and acronyms.

Throughout this thesis are comments on a range of bodies, practices, national and international projects and initiatives, and features of the HE, technological, and social environment within which the university library operates. For clarity, definitions and explanations are provided below. These do not extend to Bourdieusian terms, interpretations of these are included in Chapter 1: Introduction-Introducing Bourdieu's concept of field and field tools and Chapter 8: Bourdieusian field study.

Academic library. An academic library is a wider term than university library, it refers to libraries which are part of higher education institutions (i.e., universities and colleges).

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), formerly the Australian Institute of Librarians and Library Association of Australia, it is the professional organisation for the Australian library and information services sector.

APC. Article Processing Charge, see **open access (OA)**.

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) is a nonprofit organisation of research libraries in Canada and the US. ARL's mission is to empower and advocate for research libraries and archives to shape, influence, and implement policy.

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) is a division of the American Library Association representing the interests of people working in academic and research libraries in the US.

Bibliographic database. A bibliographic database is a collection of bibliographic records of book chapters and journal articles and other materials. These records are

stored in a database and made available for searching. Over the last two decades these databases have been replaced by databases which include the full-text of the materials to which they refer.

The Big Deal. The Big Deal is the dominant mode of subscription provided by the big four publishers — Elsevier/RELIX, Springer Nature, Wiley, Clarivate (formerly Thomson-Reuters) — and others. These deals combine a large number of journal titles together into one subscription package (e.g., Science Direct, see below) and often purchase commitments span three or more years. This makes it difficult for libraries to cancel individual unwanted titles, and containing costs by unbundling can be administratively prohibitive and not cost effective.

Big Tech, see **Tech Giants.**

The British Library (BL) came into existence in 1973 as a result of the British Library Act. One key function of the BL, pre-dates this, established in English law since 1662 is **Legal deposit** (see below).

Cataloguing and classification. Cataloguing provides information on information resources which can be searched and discovered in databases. This data often follows a standard schema and is referred to the MARC record, MARC being machine readable cataloguing record. The content of the cataloguing record is often known as metadata. Library classification assigns numerical and or alphabetic and numerical groups to identifiable categories of subjects. There are three major classification schemes in use across libraries, the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) scheme, Library of Congress Classification (LCC), and Universal Decimal Classification (UDC).

The **Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL)** is the professional association for university libraries in Australia and New Zealand. CAUL leads national journal subscription negotiations and cooperative activity between university libraries. It also represents the interests of its members to government, the community and other stakeholders.

CILIP. CILIP is the UK's library and information association. It is the professional membership association for people working in information, knowledge, libraries and related disciplines.

cOAlition S is an international consortium of research funding and performing organisations, originating in Europe. Its aim is that scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants must be published in compliant OA journals or platforms. In 2023 cOAlition S stated that the traditional business model underlying scholarly communication should change and that new infrastructure was required to provide academic communities opportunities to embrace alternative modes of discourse and for information consumers greater access to research at lower cost.

Collections. There is interchangeable use of 'collections' and learning, research, or information 'resources' to refer to a range of media including monographs, textbooks and journals gathered by libraries.

College and Research Libraries (C&RL) is the online-only scholarly research journal of the Association of College and Research Libraries. See also **Association of College and Research Libraries**.

Copyright. Copyright is one area of intellectual property. It is a legal right that gives the owner control over their work (literary, artistic, etc.) and how it is used. The first

owner of copyright will normally be the author. Owners of copyright can use, sell or license a work (to a third party). When publishing academic papers in journals, authors regularly sign over the copyright of their work to the publisher of the journal. In the UK copyright protection for published works can last up to 70 years after the author's death. However, the duration of copyright differs depending on the type of work and whether it is published or unpublished. After copyright expires, the work is in the public domain.

Critical librarianship. “Critical librarianship, informed by a variety of critical perspectives, provides a framework of critiquing traditional librarianship, along with the structures and systems surrounding libraries” (Rapchak, 2021, p. 142); as a practice it is self-reflective and activist in nature.

Decolonisation. As a general concept, decolonisation “is usually understood as a way of challenging colonialism, empire, and racism as key forces in society today” (Jimenez et al., 2023, p. 224). Within the LIS sector, decolonisation involves practices and processes that recognise an Indigenous world view in organisation of knowledge.

Digital native is a description of people who have grown up with digital technologies and the Internet in their lives. It came to prominence when used by a technology advocate in 2001 (Prensky, 2001a, 2001b). See also **Generation Z**.

Digital capabilities are those skills which equip someone to live, learn and work in a digital society. It is an extension of information literacy or information skills, which can be defined as abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning. Recently, it has been expanded to include algorithmic and artificial

intelligence (AI) literacy; the ability to understand algorithms and AI, how they work and how they can influence search results. Many university LIS groups for example JISC, have created frameworks for digital capability development. The JISC framework extends to consider digital capabilities of organisations. Library staff offer a range of sessions on digital capability development for students. Sessions can be embedded into courses, delivered in partnership with academic and/or student support colleagues, online or in person tutorials, individual consultations and support, and peer-to-peer sessions. In the US these interventions are often referred to as ‘instruction’ and in the UK and Australia as ‘teaching’.

Document supply. See **Inter-library loan (ILL)**.

EAB (Education Advisory Board) is a consultancy firm based in the US who carry out practice research for universities and other education organisations.

EDUCAUSE is a US nonprofit association researching and enabling use of technology and data in higher education. The member community engages with practice-led research delivered through conferences and reports. The annual Horizon reports outline key trends and emerging technologies and practices for higher education.

eLib is the short phrase used to describe the Electronic Libraries Programme which ran from 1995–2001. It was established by JISC. The programme comprised three phases that spanned over 7 years when around 70 projects were undertaken. These projects tackled a range of challenges including digitisation of print materials, digital preservation, and managing hybrid libraries.

The Finch report (Finch et al., 2012) is a government report into research publication. It recommended that open access to research literature could be

achieved through new publishing models, the implementation of which has become one of the major challenges in the field of scholarly communication. This has resulted in adaptations to publisher and research practices (See also **Open access** and **Scholarly communication**).

Generation Z or Gen Z is in popular use, it refers to those people born between the mid-to-late 1990s and early 2010s. It is one of many technology-focused characterisations of people born in different decades. Characterisations do not form a neat demographic typology; there are overlaps between them. Those born in the 1990s into a world of touch screens and the Internet, are called the **Net Generation** (Tapscott, 1998, 1999), a few years later they are described as **digital natives** (Prensky, 2001a, 2001b), and later they become known as **Generation Z** or **Gen**, or **Millennials**. After Gen Z came **Generation Alpha** with birth years from 2010 to the mid-to-late 2020s. **Gen Alpha** are characterised as social and streaming media dependent or the “sharing generation” (Barnes & Noble College, 2015, p. 2).

Global financial crisis (GFC) was the period of extreme stress in financial markets and banking systems worldwide between mid-2007 and early 2009. The GFC triggered recession in many national economies, government intervention to support failing banks, and government cuts to public funding known as austerity measures.

Group of Eight (Go8) is the Australian equivalent of the **Russell Group**. It includes eight research intensive universities spanning all Australian States. There is a Go8 University Librarians Group which addresses challenges unique to research libraries and advises and advocates for relevant issues to the Go8 research and teaching and learning groups.

Hybrid libraries. Hybrid libraries are collections which are mixes of traditional print material such as books and magazines, as well as electronic based material such as electronic journals, e-books, and so forth. Hybrid libraries are the norm in academic libraries.

ICT. Information and Communications Technology, this expands IT (information technology) to include reference to the networks which connect IT systems.

Information and the information cycle. Information comes in many forms and has been given different meanings. For example, mathematical or biological data, and physical or digital information. The information cycle is used to conceptualise the dynamic nature of creation, collection, consumption and processing, storage and deletion of information.

Information literacy and information skills. See **Digital capabilities**.

Inter-library loan (ILL). Prior to Big Deals, university libraries would subscribe to individual journal titles and when requests for non-subscription journal content were made, the library would obtain it via inter library loan (ILL) usually from the British Library Document Supply Centre. This practice continues but has dramatically reduced.

Information Commons or Learning Commons. Many universities have redeveloped their library spaces as information commons or learning commons. Often characterised as social learning space, they include a variety of study spaces for individuals or groups, provide access to technology — hardware and software — and provide support and training for students from staff or peers.

Information Society. The concepts of the information society, knowledge economy and network society originate in research literature in the latter half of the twentieth

century. Theories of the knowledge economy were articulated in response to the observation that a transition was underway from industrial societies. Fundamental to these concepts is that the production of knowledge and sharing information is a significant form of exchange to be invested in to create successful economies, corporations, and individuals.

ITHAKA based in the US is the sister organisation to **JSTOR** (see below) which undertakes and publishes research into higher education and university libraries.

Janet (Joint Academic Network) is the UK's national academic network connecting universities to the Internet.

JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) was formed in 1983. JISC provides **Janet** and shared services and expertise in relation to library and IT services and infrastructure. Also important is JISC Collections, the national negotiating body for university consortia deals with publishers.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organisation with provides access to more than 12 million journal articles, books, and images in 75 disciplines. JSTOR is concerned with future accessibility to scholarship and pursues long-term preservation strategies.

Learning Commons see **Information Commons**.

Legal deposit is the statutory obligation for publishers to deposit at least one copy of every UK publication, free of charge, at the British Library and other designated deposit libraries: National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales, Oxford University, Cambridge University and Trinity College Dublin. It helps to ensure that the intellectual record of the UK is collected systematically. It is recognised as an important part of the work of some libraries but it brings challenges — capturing, preserving and storing — both print and digital content.

Liaison librarians are often professionally accredited and qualified librarians whose role is to engage with groups of library users. In the university library they will be aligned with university schools and faculties and develop understanding of relevant disciplinary domains and academic faculty colleagues. Other related roles include Subject Information Specialist, and Outreach Librarian.

LIBER (Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche – Association of European Research Libraries) is a network of European research libraries. Its working parties and projects encourage and support collaboration, shared learning, and service development, across research libraries. It is particularly strong on promoting OA.

LIS. Library and Information Services, although there are variations in use: Science, Studies and Services.

Massification. The concept of massification of higher education refers to the significant expansion and transformation of the higher education system. In the context of England and other countries, this process has led to a substantial increase in the number of students enrolled in universities.

Metadata is 'data about data'. Metadata is structured, encoded data that describe characteristics of information object to aid in the identification, discovery, management, and preservation of the object. See also **Cataloguing and Classification**.

Neoliberalism is an economic perspective which emphasises free markets. In higher education, neoliberal government policies support competition between and encourage business-like practices within institutions.

NSS is the UK National Student Survey. It was introduced in 2005 with the objective, according to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Hefce), of contributing to public accountability, and helping inform the choices of prospective students and providing data that assists institutions in enhancing the student experience. The NSS has been published every year since 2005. It is completed by final year undergraduate students and the results are publicly available.

OCLC (Online Computer Library Centre) based in the US is a not-for-profit, member-driven library collaboration. It provides shared technology services, original research, and community programs for its membership and the library community at large. There are thousands of library members in more than 100 countries.

Open Access (OA) refers to unrestricted access to academic publications online. These include articles, books and book chapters, conference papers, theses, working papers, data, images and textbooks, video content and lecture notes. Many research funders now mandate that the publication outputs arising from their grants should be made open access. For journal papers the two main routes to OA are the **green** and **gold**. The difference is how the document is made freely available:

Green - self archiving in an OA repository. The author archives a publisher-approved version of the manuscript, free of charge, in an online repository.

Embargo periods may apply when publishing through green OA.

Gold - pay to publish OA. The publisher makes the final version of an output immediately and permanently available online, free of charge to the reader.

An Article Processing Charge (APC) is usually paid to the journal. Gold OA includes papers in journals with an OA option as well as fully OA journals.

Hybrid - an APC is paid to make an individual article immediately OA in a subscription-based journal. The article will be made available via the journal's website but other articles in the journal may not be available via OA. This model gives the publisher the opportunity to 'double dip' by charging libraries a subscription for the journal, and the author an APC to publish an article.

There are other routes to OA. **Diamond OA** refers to journals that are free for readers to access and free for authors to publish in. Diamond journals leverage their research community and volunteers, and are usually funded by universities, governments, societies, or associations.

The OA movement also extends to Open Education, Open Data and Open-Source software. See also **Open Science** and **Read and Publish agreements**.

Open Science is an umbrella term used to refer to the concepts of openness, transparency, reproducibility, and replicability, which are considered fundamental features of science.

Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). OPACs are online catalogues of library collections made available for library users to search so that they can access the books and journals within library collections.

Professional librarian. A professional librarian is a person who has undertaken an undergraduate or postgraduate library and information science degree and then gained sufficient work experience and professional development to be accredited by a national library association. See also **Liaison librarian**.

QULOC, the Queensland University Libraries Office of Cooperation is a group representing the interests of people working in university libraries in Queensland, Australia.

Read and publish agreements. See also **Open access (OA)**. In a move towards OA many publishers offer transformative or read and publish agreements. Read and publish agreements bundle together access (read) and also article processing charges (publish) into one agreement. Some of these deals allow for unlimited publishing, while others set a limit on publications at the institutional or consortia level. These types of deals typically require a multi-year agreement. In England, they are negotiated by JISC Collections.

Repositories. Institutional repositories are databases which store the research outputs created by academic institutions. As such, institutional repositories represent one of the best opportunities for libraries to work closely with academic colleagues to help shape the future of scholarly communications. There are also several high-profile subject repositories, where the global research community in a disciplinary field deposit and share their research papers and data.

RAE. Research Assessment Exercise. See **REF**.

REF is the Research Excellence Framework. It is a research impact evaluation of UK higher education institutions carried out approximately every four years. It is the successor to the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and it was first used in 2014. Its stated aims are to provide accountability for public investment in research and establish the impact of that research. Research is ranked by university and the government funding allocation derived from the ranking.

RLUK. Research Libraries UK was founded in 1983 by seven university libraries (Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester and Oxford) and initially operated under the name CURL (Consortium of Research Libraries). It has expanded into a consortium of the leading and most significant research libraries in the UK and Ireland. It aims to shape the research library agenda and contribute to the wider knowledge economy through innovative projects and services that add value and impact to the process of research and researcher-training.

The Russell Group is an association of twenty-four public research universities in the UK. Often billed as the ‘Ivy League’ of British universities, the aims and objectives of the Russell Group are to promote the interests of universities in which teaching and learning are undertaken within a culture of research excellence, and to identify and disseminate new thinking and ideas about the organisation and management of such institutions.

Scholarly communication. The scholarly communications environment is the system through which research and other scholarly publications are created, evaluated for quality, disseminated to the scholarly community, and preserved for future use. Scholarly communication is often described as a lifecycle of steps including creation, publication, dissemination, and discovery of academic research.

Science Direct is a huge full text database (over 4,000 journals and 30,000 books) of Elsevier published content. It covers multiple disciplines such as life sciences, health sciences, physical sciences and engineering as well as social sciences and humanities.

Sci-Hub is a controversial website that provides free access to millions of research papers and books, without regard to copyright. Sci-Hub was founded in 2011 by a computer scientist. It is a disruptor to publishers’ high-cost access to research papers.

The site is extensively used worldwide with disregard to the legal injunctions imposed after publisher action.

SCONUL. The Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) represents all university libraries and national libraries in the UK. It promotes awareness of the role of academic libraries, and represents their views and interests to government, regulators and other stakeholders. It helps member libraries collaborate to deliver services efficiently, including through shared services, and to share knowledge and best practice.

Scopus is Elsevier's abstract and citation database. It contains more than 94 million records of journal papers and books and other academic information.

Special collections are library collections or departments which house materials requiring specialised environmental storage and security. Materials housed in special collections can be rare books, manuscripts, photographs, archives, and digital records. They can also include association with important figures or institutions in history, culture, politics, sciences, or the arts. The uniqueness of special collections means that they are not easily replaced (if at all).

SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) is a non-profit advocacy organisation that supports systems for research and education that are open. Its membership is international, although most members are from 250 libraries and academic institutions in the US.

Students as consumers. Reconceptualisation of students as learners engaged in higher education to those who purchase their education. With that comes expectations of choice — course of study, mode of study, university — and that they

adopt purchasing behaviours such as seeking value for money in terms of satisfaction and employment outcomes.

Tech Giants refers to the dominant companies in the ICT industry, most notably the largest: Alphabet (Google), Amazon, Apple, Meta (Facebook), and Microsoft. These companies are referred to as the Big Five. The Big Five have millions of users globally. There are concerns over monopolistic practices. In 2019, John Naughton wrote in the Observer newspaper that "it's almost impossible to function without the big five tech giants" (Sun 17 Feb 2019) Dominant companies like IBM and Microsoft were the twentieth century equivalent to Big Tech.

TEF is the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework. It is a UK government assessment of the quality of undergraduate teaching of higher education providers in England. The TEF rates universities as Gold, Silver, Bronze or 'requires improvement'. The first results were published in June 2017. In October 2017 the official title of the exercise was officially renamed from Teaching Excellence Framework to the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework. The TEF ratings are based on statistics such as dropout rates, student satisfaction survey results and graduate employment rates.

Users. Those people who engage with libraries are most known as users or patrons, in the past they were referred to as readers, and now can be also known as clients and customers.

Web of Science is a comprehensive database of academic literature including citation indexes. Its 196 million records go back to 1864. It is owned by the competitor to Elsevier, Clarivate.

Appendix 2: Further information for interview participants

Participant Information Sheet

Project title: What is the role of the library in a modern university: a Bourdieusian analysis

Researcher's name: Ms Caroline Williams, MA, MBA

Supervisor's name: Professor Christine Hall

I would very much like to interview you as part of this research study. Before you decide whether you will take part, I would like to say something of the thinking behind the research, share some information about me and about what your participation will involve.

Firstly, the aims of this project are to better understand how key stakeholders understand the role of university libraries, how university libraries have changed, and the implications of current changes for the future. This is important now because university libraries are faced with a “confluence of shifts in technology, changing user demands, and increasing budget pressures are now forcing academic libraries to either adapt or risk obsolescence. The library’s traditional role as a repository for physical books and periodicals is quickly fading, with important implications for space utilisation, resource acquisition, and staffing” (Education Advisory Board (EAB), 2011¹).

These implications are concerns in the UK and Europe, as well as the US. The UK equivalent of the EAB work was the Curtis+Cartwright JISC funded Academic Libraries of the Future (2011)² project. Billed as a visionary project to explore future scenarios, it aimed to help organisations look at the challenges faced and formulate strategies to ensure libraries continue to play a valued role. Where the EAB report gave a clear articulation of the challenges faced, the JISC report presented three scenarios (wild west, beehive, and walled garden) to prompt discussion. Both opened

¹ Education Advisory Board 2011. Redefining the Academic Library. Managing the Migration to Digital Information Services. Washington, DC: Education Advisory Board.

² <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/tags/libraries-of-the-future>

up the debate on future strategies for university libraries. It is hoped that my research will update and add to this debate.

Secondly, now as Director of Libraries, Research and Learning Resources (LRLR) at the University of Nottingham, personal and professional agency is important to me. Yet for the library profession, I have always been aware, on one hand, of a sense of disempowerment and, on the other, of fierce protectionism. This manifests itself in early-career sharing stories of the social embarrassment of declaring “I am librarian” on being asked “What do you do?”, to later-career cries of “you are ruining the profession” from my own staff when I propose changes to ways of working. Hence a Bourdieusian analysis to allow me to explore themes of capital, habitus, and field or our power and agency, ways of doing things, and the impact of the environment within which we operate.

Thirdly, to reiterate how much I would value your contribution to this study as an experienced and influential [librarian, publisher, information provider]. If you agree to participate I would like to interview you either in person or via Skype in March or April. The interview will be based around a semi structured interview pattern and will take approximately 40 minutes. It is intended as an opportunity for you to express your views and reflections on the changes have you observed in university libraries, the implications of these changes, and the role now and into the future of university libraries. The interviews will be recorded, and later transcribed into text form. Your transcription will be sent to you for approval. As part of the presentation of results, your own words may be used in text form. With your permission, I would like to be able to name you and attribute quotes from the interview to you, once approved by you. If you prefer that your contribution is anonymised I would be happy to do this. However, given your position it may be possible to identify you from what you said, although I will make every effort to mitigate this.

All of the research data will be stored in a secure place in a separate, password protected file. Please note that you can decide to stop the interview at any point, and that you need not answer questions that you do not wish to. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw during the interview or any time and without giving a reason. If you withdraw from the study all data will be withdrawn and destroyed. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. Once the thesis arising from this research has been completed, a brief summary of the findings will

be made available. It is also possible that the results will be presented at academic conferences and journals. The data will be kept securely for ten years from the date of publication, before being destroyed.

If this study has harmed you in any way you can contact the University of Nottingham using the details below for further advice and information:

Researcher: caroline.williams@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Christine.Hall@nottingham.ac.uk

School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix 3: Interview guide

Preliminaries: recording, consent form, timing (45–60 mins)

Introductions: introducing me and my research

- Research questions

What is the role of the library in a modern university?

How do key stakeholders/agents understand the role of university libraries?

How have university libraries changed and what are the implications of current changes for the future?

- As I said in my email I'm really interested in understanding this from your understanding of different perspectives: Academics, Researchers, Students, Publishers and information providers.

Questions:

- Could you say a bit about your own career and own involvement with university libraries, academic publishing?
- What changes have you seen in university libraries over your time? (*past orientation*)
- What are the implications? (*past, present and future orientated*)
- What do you actually think the role of university libraries is now? (*present and future orientated*)
- What do you think the role of university library will be in the future?

Checklist of areas to draw out:

- What about the people (human resources)
- Buildings space
- Collections
- Technology, process

- Publishing
- Anything else [in terms of access to information]

Appendix 4: Example interview transcript — abridged

CONFIDENTIAL

Interviewer: Things have changed on many levels for university libraries. What do you see as the main changes?

Respondent: I think the main changes are still the things which to be honest we're still working through certainly at the university libraries ... I would say that is the digital shift which is the shorthand which we use for the technology enrichment both of the content, the skills and the services. I think a shift linked to that which is moving from library as site to library as service, and that being a concept which is both physical and digital but also about people and how we approach things. I think with that has also come a substantial shift as research needs, particularly research intensives have changed, to the kind of moving into a different kind of time for the library as research support alongside what has always been strong but has heightened with the fees environment of the library as a player and an advocate for students and the student experience. So I guess that the library's role in research and education has been part of what academic libraries have always done. It was there. ... the common library of the scholar six hundred years ago is still there now. So much of what a library is abides, but it's angle, its emphasis, its focus, has shifted sharply as our universities and higher education demands have changed and I think in that context, the digital shift, library as a service, the library and its intensive partnership around teaching education of students and library as a partner in the research lifecycle with other kind of partners like Research Officers is paramount now. That has brought different kind of professions and different kind of professional skills into our structures. I would say just for many research-intensive universities... , the

challenge partly is around we're doing those things at the same time as still having a long responsibility to the wealth of our physical analogue responsibilities and collections which continue to deserve our attention.

Interviewer: On staff would you just expand on that a bit more?

Respondent: Of course. On one hand I recognise that one of the qualities of librarians has been a willingness to think broadly about their skill-sets and about their profession for many-many years. So librarians have been developing skills with marketing, with communications, with teaching, with learning, with research and managing spaces, you know, throughout and that continues. On the other hand I think many of us are more willing perhaps than we used to be to think we don't always need to develop a librarian to do those additional things. There are other professional colleagues who can come in who already have those skills and can help us develop them. So examples of that would be communications experts. It's certainly people with very direct kind of research experience who may be in a sort of third space professional supporting aspects like research data management, data science, open access and that kind of broader aspect around scholarly communication. I think it also is around the... I'm wary of using the word professionalisation because it suggests we're not being professional and we are deeply so, but I suppose recognising the particular skills that libraries need to call on in terms of really good business and operational practice. That is partly about the scale at which we work, but it's also recognising that there are different sets of skills there including kind of management, accountancy and others, which I think we need to draw on.

Interviewer: The changes in the focus on the student experience, I'm just wondering if there's anything more there that you might like to say?

Respondent: Yeah. I mean I think one of the most powerful changes that has occurred in higher education during the time, 25 years now, in which I've been in my profession, has been the increased voice of students within that space and I think that was evident before fees came in but it's certainly sharpened the thinking in many higher education institutions. I think one of the great things was that libraries probably were closer to their users than some services in universities and certainly recognised both the importance of a more user-focused approach and student-focused approach. I think that for me, having had that experience at the start of my career and also perhaps knowing that my particular set of professional skills which is intrinsic to my leadership is about enjoying the company of people, being a social thinker, knowing my job is about communication advocacy, then the student voice and the student community has been a critical part of that from early days for me, but there were certain interventions like the greater marketisation of higher education, introduction of fees, the more structure in governance terms, also forced different ways of working. ... structural change has been evident in how we govern. So the presence of students in committees, in decision-making bodies, in projects, is I think an important part of the formal change of ensuring that voice, the different needs of that group, the disruptive and innovation that they can bring, but I'd also think it's about a deeply embedded way of working. ... embed that kind of user experience thinking into how we design our business and we've done that through commissioned pieces of work around space, currently around the student learning

journey, also about learning more by discovery needs. That's not all about students, but that is a powerful way of building an evidence base that moves us away from kind of policy through anecdotal personal experience, to what our students are actually telling us.

Interviewer: You mentioned buildings. Could you say more about change in the context of library buildings?

Respondent: Sure. I think again this is where it has been one of the things that has changed so enormously during the last ten to fifteen years and perhaps I should have mentioned earlier the role that the library plays and often the university librarian or director in helping to shape the university's thinking about independent learning space, sometimes how that relates to the kind of more formal aspect of teaching spaces, but also how library spaces are changing, and I think one of the most interesting kind of phenomena for me over the last, it's probably longer than a decade now, it's just one's mind plays tricks, that you know, kind of all the prophecies around digital meaning we don't need physical spaces anymore or don't need physical books have been countermanded with actually what we've seen is year-on-year increases in use of our spaces, predominantly by students but it does vary from institution to institution and depending on what institution you're in, the role of libraries in helping to develop long-term strategic thinking about the estate as a whole of which the traditional library is a part but increasingly a blurred boundary between other kinds of learning spaces. ... So we know the NSS is a big driver for change, ... the growth in student numbers meant that there were degrees of dissatisfaction with the experience of their library, the library being a proxy for my

space used for independent learning. It doesn't always need to be a library. There's a proxy for that. ... So a kind of formal tool through which advocacy and influence could be used by the library and by the librarian to capture that student voice and play it back further up the agenda. So we moved some of our traditional physical libraries into more flexible open learning spaces that didn't have books in anymore. We opened a large shared student learning hub. Again didn't have books. A great variety of different kind of learning spaces and very strongly using student voice. We worked with the Senior Executive of the university to advocate for long-term investment in a new library facility.

...

Interviewer: What are the implications of these changes?

Respondent: I mean I recognise absolutely the students as consumers term and recognise it is part of our lexicon. I'm more comfortable with the students as partners, but it depends on the language of one's own institution in all sorts of ways. ... there is a particular heightened sense of need to get the balance right between the stewardship of our years of collecting ... and the transition that we're in and quite far into digital. I don't think the two are mutually exclusive. I think that's part of the way in which we need to work through this and I think we've proved that over the years by the kind of the people who thought it would all be digital and print wouldn't matter anymore. I think it is both. I think there are a number of challenges that are evident at every particularly research-intensive but I would imagine at every university library really here, one of them is kind of a perception that digital is free and that both the content should be cheaper and done stewarding print into the long-term but also that managing services that are digital are somehow free and cheaper

than it is to do things physically. And there is an efficiency angle but actually it should be really about effectiveness I suppose and the quality of the experience and very rarely does it seem to be cheaper. It might enable us to do things differently and we've all done that. ... So there is a kind of resource shift in that, but in many ways the shift to digital is not cheap and it's not free and there are still grand challenges. So we have a forever responsibility to stewarding those physical collections from the rare books manuscripts archives, ... We have a responsibility to do that digitally as well. So like many universities, we're looking at how we meet the challenge of digital preservation and that costs and there aren't magic solutions, but we know it's part of our core institutional responsibility not just to what we might narrowly define collections in the past, digitised content or born digital archives, but also research data and corporate records and other kinds of digital learning objects and digital research objects which have, you know, blossomed through changes in technology which research and educational experiences. I think that one of the most powerful ways in which we can work as a community as a whole is by looking at this particular problem, the balance of print and digital and how we serve not just our local communities but our national research community and by nature international, but you know, we can work perhaps at a regional or a national more appropriately and I think there the kind of deep philosophical and practical questions about shared print which has already had a lot of progress through the UK Research Reserve in relation to journals, but we've got a long way to go in terms of monographs and how we approach that, but I think those are very important questions for us to seize and for thinking how in the kind of age we're at and that balance of print, the cost of storage, the cost of space, the cost of everyone duplicating activity in that space and the more effective ways in which we're digital must mean we need to take further

that kind of national debate about now we work at scale in terms of digital services or share national collections and collecting.

Interviewer: Moving us on, I'm wondering about your thoughts on open access and the publishing environment more generally? In terms of how the publishing environment has changed. What impact it's having on libraries?

Respondent: Okay. I think it's a really interesting area of review, analysis, debate for us. We know it still is an issue which is dominating much of our major conferences and therefore we are not at the end of the topic by any means and it's easy to look at the kind of intervention of the Finch Report. What was that? Five years ago now? It was a critical moment in time. We also know libraries have had an interest in open access for a long-long time working in research. So it's not as if that was year zero, but for the UK it was a pretty fundamental kind of shift in expectations followed by changes in direct research funder requirements and I think in the UK the introduction of direct compliance issues from research funders has been incredibly instrumental in making a sort of transformative change to debates about open access and open access practice not just being a kind of at the margins activity but something which is now mainstream, and certainly in the libraries I've worked in over the last ten to fifteen years, I think the challenge has been moving from open access as a kind of nice to have boutique industry to one which now needs to be mainstream. The question of how that happens is not easy because it is genuinely a new area of business which we've all had to grow and it is difficult in many institutions I've worked in to move from a position of that being based on kind of start-up funding and project funding, and if you're lucky, some external like

RCUK funding to a position where that is mainstream through our resource budgets and so on. So I think we are still in a transition in that and of course as we speak today, we're looking forward to the change of organisational structure in and governance with the introduction of the UKRI which itself will bring new perspectives on how we go forward with that, but in terms of where we stand now, you know, from a philosophical perspective, I'm delighted in some aspects and direction we've gone. There's no question that the green open access movement has got much more traction because of the changes in funders. I think like many librarians, I'm anxious about the additional money we're now spending, much of it through external parties, but the kind of very large expenditure which has, on the back of the Finch Report, seems to have created and distorted an additional market in the cost of gold open access. It does not feel sustainable. I do not think the systems which we have yet in place, however good our CRIS, our research information systems, however good our repositories, are yet mature, and I think there's huge inefficiency in how we manage the administration on the back of changes in open access. I also think we're in a position where there are some really good innovative practices, including small university presses that have started up at different universities, but we've not yet made that transition in terms of kind of major academic presses, and you know, I think there's a long way to go whatever ground we've made up of open access and the costs are not sustainable.

Respondent: ... If I can add one thing because I think we, at our peril, ignore disciplinary differences in the behaviours and attitudes and confidence towards open access and I'm wary of using a kind of maturity model. It's certainly true. We know that biomedical are one end of kind of acceptance in relation to open access as core

practice with all the constraints and appropriate ethical arrangements around patients and clinical data. At the other end it's easy to see it in kind of a remedial mode. We have the arts and humanities that feel deeply concerned about working in a more open way. I am really reluctant to see that as a problem with the arts and humanities. I think it's a problem about how we've approached open access both within libraries and within funders of assuming that one size fits all. I think we've got to really-really make sure we understand how we can support that transition and that movement within a deeper understanding of disciplinary difference and I think that for me is key to being ready to support REF ... about monographs, which I'm sure will be wrought with exceptions to make a policy actually workable, but nonetheless, we must work in partnership with our colleagues in that area who, you know, whose research is also ground-breaking and has wide societal and cultural implications and has different norms.

Interviewer: When you look to the future, is there anything else in your thinking about the role of the university library into the future?

Respondent: I guess the one which I haven't really spoken about directly is around the library as publisher and the library's role in publication ... but I think it is interesting to observe the ways in which repositories or whatever they look like in the future, have become part of an embedded kind of structure around the dissemination and communication of scholarly outputs and that seems to me that we've got a long way to go in trying to formulate the kind of changed role of libraries not always for owning content but about managing access to content and about being a facilitator to the wealth of materials that is there. Indeed I think the

library as kind of access not owner, sorry, the kind of behaviours and philosophy around access not ownership are going to be more and more critical to our future whether I think of cultural objects and collecting or whether we think of that kind of broader sense in how that plays to kind of educational delivery or research delivery. in each of our institutions we have to find the narrative and the story don't we that works for our institutional environment and I think I'm certainly not fully-formed in my own thinking about, as you described, the library as institutional kind of knowledge shaper, maker, or whatever, but nonetheless I also think that it does exist as a continuing part of our role for hundreds and hundreds of years and in a sense it is a modern take on an existing role about helping to manage, provide access, shape, influence and sometimes produce knowledge. It just has so many more permutations within the possibility of digital and the way in which we work within corporate structures.

Interviewer: Thank you that has been absolutely fascinating. Thank you so much.

[End of Transcript]

Appendix 5: Extract: summary data of stakeholder perspectives of the university library

<i>Theme 1. Situating the university library in its wider environment: Changing higher education (HE) and technological advancement.</i>		
<i>University Library Directors</i>	<i>Senior Leaders</i>	<i>Publishers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant focus on student experience. • Experiencing the clash between managerialism and academic culture. • Committed to the role of libraries in society. • Recognise the impact of HE growth and diversification on universities and to some extent how these impact on libraries. • Limited up-to-date awareness of impacts of technological transformation. • Limited consideration of funding and revenue generation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant focus on the impact of sector growth and diversification and impact on libraries. • Understanding of culture of managerialism and tension between academic culture. • Significant awareness of impact of technological transformation. • Deep understanding of the importance of the student experience. • Mindful of funding and income challenges. • Informed and forward thinking about the role of libraries in society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial business mindset dominates. • Varying levels of awareness of impacts of technological transformation. • Aware of funding challenges for HE. • Some awareness of the strategic importance of the student experience. • For one publisher, awareness of tensions between managerialism and academic cultures. • No awareness of the role of libraries (widely) in society. • Define libraries narrowly, their information acquisition role and work with publishers.

Appendix 6: Case study consent from UQ

Request for permission for the University of Queensland Library to be the subject of a case study in a PhD project

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to request permission for the University of Queensland Library to be the subject of a case study in the PhD project of the University Librarian.

Project title: What is the role of the library in a modern university: a Bourdieusian analysis

Researcher: Ms Caroline Williams MA MBA

PhD student, School of Education, the University of Nottingham, UK and University Librarian, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD, Australia

Supervisor: Professor Sarah Speight, PVC The University of Nottingham, UK.

Purpose of the study

The aims of this project are to better understand how key stakeholders understand the role of university libraries, how university libraries have changed, and the implications of current changes for the future. This is important now because university libraries are faced with shifts in technology, changing user demands, and increasing budget pressures which are forcing academic libraries to transform.

Methodological approach

There are three methodological interventions in the study. Firstly, a series of semi-structured interviews which were conducted in 2018–19 with university library directors and university librarians, senior leaders in higher education and publishers. From this a thematic analysis was undertaken.

Secondly, as the interview study was carried out before the COVID-19 pandemic there was a need to provide insight into the experience of COVID-19 and an opportunity to include a case study.

Thirdly, as understanding the impact of the library internal and external environments and the interplay between them are vital to this study an appropriate analytical framework was required. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930- 2002) was fundamentally concerned with social structures and the elements of interaction between them. Therefore this theoretical and methodological approach provide an appropriate framework for this study.

Participation in the study

The case study applies the learning from the interview study and thematic analysis to UQ Library. The case study demonstrates the evolution of the role of a university library over four years, from

March 2019 – March 2023, with reference to its past and future aspirations. UQ Library was not considered as a research case study until after the demands of responding to COVID-19 had eased. The approach taken was a review of key emails, documents, papers and presentations, both internal and external to UQ Library. These documents were generated in a non-research context, without expectation of future use in this way. The case study does not refer to any individuals by name although position titles are used. None of the activities and event described are considered to be confidential or sensitive.

Permission

Permission is requested to review and analyse UQ Library internal documents and experiences for the purposes of the PhD study *What is the role of the library in a modern university? A Bourdieusian analysis*.

As the DVCA of the University of Queensland, I give my permission to the researcher, Caroline Williams, to review and analyse UQ Library internal documents and experience for this project.

Name of permission-giver:

Kris Ryan

Signature of permission giver:



Date:

19 July 2024

Appendix 7: Extract: summary data of the university library past, present, and future

Feature/ Time	Past	Present	Future
Purpose of the university library	<p>Collections and collecting the heartland of libraries.</p> <p>Access to information for students and academics.</p> <p>Manage processes and practices to deliver the collection mission within resources (staff, spaces, technologies, budgets) available.</p>	<p>Supporting the university mission in relation to teaching, learning and research.</p> <p>Align resources (staff, spaces, technologies, budgets) available to this mission.</p> <p>Change processes and practices (and therefore staff expertise and use of space) to deliver the mission.</p> <p>For some universities other functions of libraries include management of cultural collections, wider remit in support for research, managing learning and informal study spaces.</p>	<p>Supporting the university mission in relation to teaching, learning and research.</p> <p>Support university mission in relation to its contribution to society and community.</p> <p>Supporting university community to engage with changing information and digital environment.</p>
Collections and collecting	<p>Individual institutions buying, collecting, storing and lending print materials.</p> <p>National collecting through Legal deposit with inter-library lending dominated by the British Library scheme.</p> <p>Growth in digital information and the advent of the hybrid library (print and electronic collections).</p>	<p>Balance of hybrid library shifted to make digital dominant (with some print).</p> <p>Special collections in a range of materials, largely print with digitisation underway.</p> <p>Move to collaborative practices across universities for print retention and negotiation of digital deals with publishers.</p> <p>Pay for access only and pay to own. Big Deal and rising prices for journal subscriptions.</p> <p>Open Access movement.</p> <p>Legal deposit legislation for digital (as well as print) for national collections.</p>	<p>Divided views on whether the move to OA will be successful.</p> <p>Hybrid library persists — print legacy and special collections and digital first for new content.</p> <p>Drive to mobilise the academic community in relation to publisher practices and break the link in academic reward through publishing in high impact journals.</p>
Academic publishing and libraries relationship with publishers	<p>Libraries and publishers' partner.</p>	<p>Libraries and large publishers antagonistic due to subscription price increases.</p> <p>Doubt over the future success of the Open Access movement.</p> <p>Research funding bodies setting policy to mandate open access for research publications, strengthening library position.</p> <p>Publishers consider business acumen lacking in libraries and library voice not necessarily impactful in negotiations for subscriptions and as advocate for OA.</p>	<p>Publishers as supplier of research infrastructure and increasing stronghold in universities.</p> <p>National and international collective action (joining forces of academics, libraries and university senior stakeholders) required to address publisher stronghold.</p>

Appendix 8: History of the University of Queensland Library in its context pre pandemic

This table draws heavily on *The University of Queensland Library. A centenary history, 1910-2010*, by John East, (2010).

1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010–2019
University environment					
<p>Post war expansion of university education in Australia.</p> <p>Funding from Australian Universities Commission.</p> <p>Direct federal government investment in university libraries 1964–66.</p> <p>Student numbers at UQ growing by 1000 per year, reaching 15,000 in 1968.</p> <p>First UQ computer, a General Electric installed in 1962.</p> <p>1974 St Lucia campus inundated by flood.</p> <p>Active Student Union and civil liberties and anti-racism protests.</p>		<p>1984 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (ATSIS) Unit established.</p> <p>From 1985 dramatic decline in Australian dollar.</p> <p>1988 Government education reforms: increase in post-graduates (PG) and research, demise of distance education, introduction of corporate management.</p> <p>1989 Introduction of student tuition fees, by 1996 fees risen by c.40%.</p> <p>1990 UQ in top four of universities in Australia.</p> <p>1990 UQ connected to the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet), and first supercomputer installed on campus.</p> <p>1992 c. 25,000 students enrolled (21% PGs).</p> <p>1996 Government funding to UQ cut by 5%.</p> <p>1998 Review of IT at UQ led to the formation of Information Technology Services (ITS).</p>		<p>Strengthening Australian dollar from 2003–2008.</p> <p>2004 Student numbers c. 34,000.</p> <p>1995–2005 Student numbers at UQ rose by 49% (UG) and 88% (PG).</p> <p>Growth in campuses and investment in buildings.</p> <p>Expansion of UQ wireless network.</p> <p>2008 Global Financial Crisis.</p> <p>2011 Research Computing Centre (RCC) established to coordinate growth in research technologies and high-performance computing.</p>	<p>2010 UQ celebrates first 100 years.</p> <p>2010 Numbers of PCs linked to UQ network c. 20,000.</p> <p>2010 First round of the Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) assessment for universities.</p> <p>2011 St Lucia and Gatton campuses inundated by flood.</p> <p>2012 National annual Student Experience Survey launched.</p> <p>2014 Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation (ITaLI) formed.</p> <p>2019 Development of UQ Research Data Management (RDM) system.</p> <p>2019 Over 55,000 students enrolled (36% international students).</p>

1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010–2019
Library governance and funding					
Governance through the Library Committee of Senate. Student Union Library Liaison Committee formed in 1968. 1969 Total expenditure on the Library c. \$1M, increasing to \$3.4M in 1976.	1994 Annual expenditure on the Library \$17.4M Library Advisory Committee established as Sub-Committee of University Academic Board.		2005 Annual expenditure on the Library \$28.9M. 2008/9 Economic downturn impact on Library funding: book ordering suspended and some staff contracts terminated.	2019 Annual Library budget c. \$50M. Library is part of the DVCA portfolio, UL reporting to the DVCA.	
Library staff and leadership					
Harrison Bryan University Librarian (UL) 1950–1962. Thanks to his lobbying his successor was appointed at professorial level. With no School of Librarianship in Brisbane it was difficult to attract trained staff. 1970s Introduction of professional librarians designated as ‘readers’ advisors to liaise with departments. 1975 First Principal Librarian in charge of Reader Education. Library staffing reached 229 in 1976.	1980 54 professional librarians (8 male), and 113 library assistants (14 male), senior managers of 9 (5 male). 1983 UL commented that because of automation, “ <i>for some staff the environment to which they had been attracted is disappearing</i> ”. Reports of repetitive strain injury leading to industrial disputes. 1988 First Library Staff Officer to take on personnel responsibilities.	Period of rapid change. Technology was embraced by the UL 1993–2005, she stated “ <i>The Library is no longer simply a physical place with a large collection of printed material but a client driven service which is a gateway to information</i> ”. Adoption of business and management practices, including strategy development, customer surveys and focus on client (shifting language from user). 1992 Staffing at its highest, with 261 library staff 1994 Major restructure of Library positions and start of decline in staffing levels. 1998 84 professional librarians (72 female), 8 senior managers (5 female), including the UL. 2000 Library budget cut by 3%, 20 staff took redundancy. 2005 Library Technology Service employed 23 staff, of whom 8 were female.	2015 Organisational restructure of the Library. Staffing profile changed as many services automated and a higher proportion of staff assigned to more complex or technical roles, including digitisation, research support, data management and provision of copyright services. At the end of March 2016, the Library employed 240 FTE staff. Strategy development and renewal, and operational planning established annual practice.		

1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010–2019
Library services and technologies					
<p>During the 1950s there was a printed library guide and orientation tours. By the 1960s a full orientation programme, popular with students was running.</p> <p>1959 Start of reference and research services, expanded in 1966.</p> <p>1967 First coin-operated photocopier and growing interlibrary loan service.</p> <p>Student suggestion box introduced 1969.</p> <p>Declaration from the UL in 1975 that a point had been reached where services were appropriate to a modern university library.</p>		<p>1981 Automation of library operations including lending. First computer made available for student use.</p> <p>1988 First CD-ROM database for users to search.</p> <p>1993 Start of the Web and revolution in library search.</p> <p>1994 There were 28 CD-ROM databases networked for access across campuses.</p> <p>1995 The Library acquired a web server and the first Library webpages developed.</p> <p>1995 Started scanning and digitising past exam papers.</p> <p>Growth in information skills training for students and creation of dedicated training rooms in 1995.</p> <p>Library renamed the “Cybrary” in 1998 to describe the integration of print and electronic information services.</p> <p>1998 Library assumed responsibility for the UQ Archives.</p> <p>1999 Library takes on responsibility for IT training and support for students.</p> <p>1998 Library working with Queensland high schools to help them negotiate access to databases and journals. The outreach project became the UQL Cyberschool program in 1999.</p>		<p>2002 Course materials service provided on the Web and ePrints sever set up for deposit of UQ research papers.</p> <p>2004 Over 5,000 attendances at information skills activities.</p> <p>2005 Over 800 databases.</p> <p>2005 Use of the name Cybrary quietly discarded.</p> <p>2005 Services from liaison librarians move away from reference desk to bibliometrics and referencing software support, and in health sciences systematic reviews.</p> <p>2006 UQ Archives transferred to the University’s Records Management Section.</p> <p>By 2006 over 1.5 million requests per day for the Library website.</p> <p>2008 Leap of 43% in inquires to the Ask IT services.</p>	<p>2010 Computers in libraries totalled over 18,000.</p> <p>ePrints expanded to become eSpace and used to support UQs input into national research assessment exercises.</p> <p>Range of services continues to extend and includes support for researchers with publication metrics and OA publishing, object-based classes for Fryer Library special collections, technology training, and support for online exams.</p> <p>2017 Digital Scholars hub space and facilities and Digital Essentials online tutorials launched to support for student digital capability development.</p> <p>Cyberschool program closed in 2018.</p>

1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010–2019
Collections and collection management					
<p>Library card catalogue.</p> <p>1951 Size of collection is 100,000 items.</p> <p>1959 Report of the Humanities Research Council assessed the collection as “weak”. 1964 acquisitions budget boosted by grant from Australian Universities Commission.</p> <p>Number of items loaned doubled between 1963–1965.</p> <p>Theft necessitated introduction of controlled turnstiles in 1966.</p> <p>1969 Project to reclassify from the Dewey Decimal to Library of Congress, completed in 1979.</p> <p>1973–1975 A further Australian Universities Commission grant of \$150K to purchase back runs of periodicals.</p> <p>1976 Symbolic acquisition of the millionth book.</p> <p>Off-campus storage for books acquired in 1977.</p>		<p>1986–1987 Decline in Australian dollar led to cancellation of journal subscriptions.</p> <p>1988 Computer catalogue and library management system handling 20,000 transactions each day.</p> <p>Off-campus storage full by 1989. “Steady state” collections introduced (i.e., withdrawal of little used books to make room for new acquisitions).</p> <p>Online access to the collection developed in 1990s.</p> <p>1992 Collection comprises 1.5 million items.</p> <p>In 1994 journal subscriptions rising more rapidly than the rate of inflation, \$0.5M of subscriptions cut, and again in 1999.</p> <p>1996 Spending on books decreased by 19%.</p> <p>New automated library system Innopac (Innovative Interfaces) launched in 1996 and the first web interface to the Library catalogue.</p> <p>1999 More than 5,000 journals available electronically.</p> <p>In 2005 loans of print materials static and then started to fall.</p>		<p>2003 UL pointed out that <i>“content remained king and the tried-and-true scholarly journal was still more reliable than material of doubtful origin on the Internet”</i>.</p> <p>2005 More than 8,000 journals available electronically.</p> <p>2005 Over 2.1 million print volumes.</p> <p>2007 CAUL Last Copy Retention Strategy Working Group to establish shared retention of journal titles.</p> <p>2008 Print journal subscriptions fallen below 9,000 titles.</p> <p>Cross database searching of information resources through Summon Unified Discovery Search in 2009.</p> <p>Fryer library starts digitisation of print materials to make them available online.</p>	<p>2010 Collection comprises 2.5M print volumes, eBooks, databases, and other items.</p> <p>2016 Move to Primo search and Alma library management systems.</p> <p>2018 UQ Library collections become largest in Queensland comprising 2.17 million book titles and 158,000 journal titles (electronic and print). Collection used extensively — in 2018, over 20M downloads and 165,000 loans.</p> <p>UQ institutional repository, UQ eSpace, in 2018 included 428,700 items authored or co-authored by UQ researchers (106,411 of these items were open access).</p> <p>2018 Active Collections project to reduce size of print collection. Work generated a backlash from the academic community.</p>

1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010–2019
Spaces					
<p>A main library (Arts Faculty) with departmental libraries scattered across city and St Lucia campuses. The Main Library incorporated the Fryer Memorial Library of Australian Literature, formerly part of the English Department.</p> <p>The library building at St Lucia was deficient, it was overcrowded for students, and suffered pest infestations.</p> <p>Upward extension of Duhig building 1963–1966 and progressive amalgamation of departmental libraries. Small respite to the overcrowding challenges.</p> <p>Opening hours extended and introduction of Sunday opening hours in 1964.</p> <p>Central Library opened 1973 to relieve overcrowding in Main (Duhig) Library.</p> <p>1974 Impact of torrential rains on the new university library as the joints had not been adequately sealed.</p> <p>1976 Opening of the new Biological Sciences Library and amalgamation of the Music and Architecture libraires.</p> <p>1982 Opening hours reduced because of 5% staff budget cut.</p> <p>May 1982 students invaded a Senate meeting as part of their campaign to extend the opening hours of the library.</p> <p>1984 New Herston Medical Library opens at the Royal Brisbane Hospital.</p> <p>1989 Took over the library at Gatton with the UQ merger.</p>			<p>Opening of the Physical Sciences and Engineering Library in 1990. It was later refurbished in 1997 and renamed the Dorothy Hill Physical Sciences and Engineering Library.</p> <p>1990 Redeveloped and expanded Law Library.</p> <p>1995 Dentistry library opened.</p> <p>1996 Construction of the purpose-built Library warehouse on St Lucia campus.</p> <p>1997 Construction of the underground “Link” between the Central and Duhig library buildings.</p> <p>1998 Mater Hospital Library refurbished.</p>	<p>2000 Gatton library enhanced with a learning centre.</p> <p>Ipswich campus library growing and developing.</p> <p>2002 Library’s reach spread to opening branches to support UQ Rural Clinical School.</p> <p>2005–2006 Extension and refurbishment of Biological Sciences Library.</p> <p>2006 Library had to move out of the warehouse on St Lucia campus so that it could be used for archives and records storage. Library returned to using commercial, off-campus storage until 2015.</p> <p>24-hour access to libraries (unstaffed) became available at Gatton and Herston in 2008 and St Lucia libraries in 2009.</p>	<p>2010 Pharmacy Australia Centre of Excellence (PACE) Precinct library opened. The total number of UQ libraries now equals 18.</p> <p>2006 Redevelopment of Biological Sciences Library as a learning commons, books moved to Central Library or the warehouse at Gatton (which opened in 2015).</p> <p>2016 Gatton Library extension, creating more learning spaces.</p> <p>2017 Redevelopment of the Law Library in partnership with the Law School creating a high-quality mix of collections and study spaces.</p> <p>2019 Central Library redevelopment, converting 2 floors from collections to a learning commons.</p> <p>By 2019 closure of libraries reduced the number to 11 plus the Gatton warehouse and St Lucia Archives store. A total of 4,700 study seats were provided (the fifth highest of Australian university libraries).</p>

Appendix 9: Library staff: habitus, doxa and practice

Habitus, doxa, practice	Student facing staff	Academic facing staff	Professional librarians	Collection specialists	Technology specialists	Management specialists
Primary role	First point of contact for students.	Key contact for academics.	Named contact as liaison librarian for schools and faculties.	Print and digital collection management.	Manage library systems and digital information infrastructure.	Project and change management, business analysis, marketing etc.
Past and present focus	Past book loans, now a wide range of enquiries.	From print to digital collection development and related support for users. From literature and systematic reviews to research data management, metrics services, publishing, and learning resource creation.	Outreach with schools, attend committees etc. Design and deliver digital capability training embedded in courses. From access to special collections to object-based learning classes.	Declining work: managing print collections, metadata creation (now shared) and interlibrary loans. Management of special collections persists. New activities: digitisation, institutional repository and research data management, publisher relations, and critical review of practices for equity, diversity, and inclusion.	Roles introduced in 1990s persisted (e.g., web developers). New activities in system integration, application of AI, and repository infrastructure.	Roles introduced in 1990s extending, support new initiatives and change, savvy in business case development, staff engagement, university reporting etc.
Disposition	Customer service mindset.	Supportive and aligned to academic culture. Service delivery mindset.	Value alignment with academic cultures. Service support mindset.	Focus on collection utilisation and practical tasks and projects. Committed to access.	Respect technological know-how and problem solving.	Business-like.

Habitus, doxa, practice	Student facing staff	Academic facing staff	Professional librarians	Collection specialists	Technology specialists	Management specialists
Position in hierarchy	Lower.	Mid.	Mid – top. Decline in dominance with the growth of specialist roles.	Across whole hierarchy. Some roles may be held by professional librarians.	Mid.	At the higher end of mid, at management level.
Career progression	Choose between moving into management or obtaining library qualification to become professional librarian.	Choose between moving into management or developing as specialist in research or teaching support. Some routes require library qualification.	LIS qualification and work experience, to achieve professional librarian accreditation.	Choose between development of expertise or moving into management.	Choose between development of expertise or moving into management. All require library and information science and/or ICT qualification.	Career progression requires moving into management or moving out of the university library.
Relationships in the library	With all library colleagues, for referral of enquiries, and to understand services on offer. Can feel undervalued.	With many library colleagues, to draw on specialist expertise and to channel academic views. Power struggles between those with and without library qualifications.	With many library colleagues, to draw on specialist expertise and to feed academic views into service development. Power struggles with specialists without library qualifications.	With many library colleagues, to gain support for projects and decisions. Power struggles between collection specialists and special collection specialists, and with academic facing staff.	With some library colleagues, to gather requirements and gain support for projects. Technology gatekeeper is a powerful position.	With many library colleagues, and close relationships with managers and leaders. Their activities may not be well understood by others.

Habitus, doxa, practice	Student facing staff	Academic facing staff	Professional librarians	Collection specialists	Technology specialists	Management specialists
Relationships outside the library	With professional services for referral of enquiries, and for specialist support.	With individual academics. With professional services as partners in service delivery, and for specialist support.	With schools, faculties and individual academics. Partner on projects with professional services.	With procurement and finance departments. Engagement with academics and students often via others in the library. Lead engagement with publishers. Engagement with university cultural institutions on special collections.	With IT and other technology departments. Lead or partner with IT department on engagement with ICT vendors.	With university planning departments and others (e.g., HR and finance departments).
Other features	Work evenings and weekends. Delivery in person, phone, email, chat, and chatbots. Also, specialists who manage library spaces, technology for students, and events/engagement with students.	Organised in function-based teams (e.g., research support) and/or discipline aligned teams. Requires regular updates of skills and knowledge.	Wide range of activity. Faculty engagement requires communication skills and knowledge of all library services. Understanding of academic challenges to identify where the library can help. Gap between what is learnt in library and information science schools and practice.	Move to digital is successful. However, considering service and support for information lifecycle beyond library collections requires mindset shift.	Fluctuation in balance of responsibilities and work between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the library and IT department in-house or commercial systems on premise and cloud systems. Opportunities of AI for service improvement	