



Drill Hall Library learning and teaching support offer

Context

Learning and teaching support offered by the Drill Hall Library is principally delivered by the Academic Support Team and reflects two of our key strategic themes:

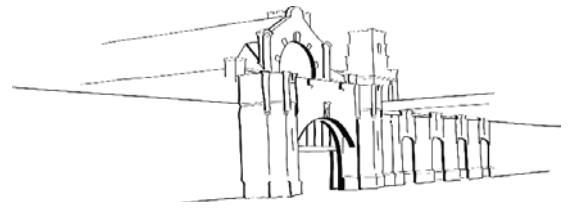
4. Collecting and **facilitating academic exploitation of information and library resources** from printed books through to innovative electronic sources in Medway subject areas
5. Developing **services that empower our community** to realise their academic needs and ambitions through the use of information and related technology

In addition, the three partner institutions' teaching and learning strategies all make reference to information or digital skills and to ensuring that students are equipped with employability skills for the workplace. The learning and teaching support offer contributes to these and other aspects of the institutional strategies.

Aim

To offer a range of activities which support learning and teaching, targeted at students undergoing taught courses for the duration of their programmes and bearing in mind the Universities' strategic aims. It is designed both to support studies and to introduce particular employability skills, and is developmental, increasing students' abilities and confidence over time. The developmental approach is taken to aid in student satisfaction and retention, as well as allowing opportunities to address attainment gaps relating to students' use of literature. Library-delivered training is most effective when delivered at the times when it is most relevant and useful for the students and wherever possible should be closely aligned to their academic studies.

The same core offer is being made to all academic units on campus, and has the flexibility to respond to the diverse needs of each University, student cohort and discipline represented. The offer suggests appropriate delivery methods and timescales for each type of input the team can provide, but these are intended to be indicative rather than prescriptive.



Scope

The learning and teaching support services delivered by the Drill Hall Academic Support Team will fall into the following areas:

- **Engaging** with academic departments to plan and develop activities for their needs.
- **Orienting** students to the services and spaces provided by the library, regardless of their course, background or route of entry.
- **Developing skills** progressively throughout students' university career, including:
 - Information finding skills
 - Evaluative skills
 - Digital skills
 - Discipline-specific skills
 - Reference management
 - Literature searching to support research
 - Transferrable skills
- **Supporting** foundation, distance, part-time and direct entry students.
- **Advocating and supporting** the use of educational technologies.
- **Empowering** students to become active consumers and producers of information.
- **Fostering** skills for life beyond university, with an emphasis on employability.

Specific sessions offered:

Orientation (week 0)

A "light touch", designed to orient students to the library building, introduce them to the basics and let them know where they can come for help. At this stage, the students generally do not want or need more detailed information about library resources and services. There will be clear signposting regarding follow-up activities available.

The Drill Hall Library team can also help shape any subject-specific library quizzes, exercises or treasure hunts which academic units may organise.

The basics – using the library (weeks 1-3)

Finding books, renewing and reserving books, managing library accounts (later in the term)

This can be timetabled for courses, but will also be offered as voluntary drop-in sessions. Self-guided activities introducing services beyond those mentioned in orientation will also be available, and online resources (e.g. videos) accessible year-round.

The basics – finding electronic information (as students approach 1st/2nd assignment)

Identifying relevant books beyond the reading list, accessing and reading e-books, introducing journal articles – what they are and how to find them.

The importance of each of these will vary between disciplines and can be timed to meet subject-specific needs. These topics will be offered as practical, hands-on workshops to ensure that students can practice using the resources. Ideally scheduled within courses, but optional drop-ins are possible.



Advancing skills (term 2/year 2)

Introducing the use of databases for identifying/accessing journal articles.

Introducing more advanced techniques/resources for finding journal literature. Timing can suit the subject area. Can be offered as practical workshops, or brief pop-up demonstrations by librarians in subject lectures.

Digital literacy (term 2/year 2)

Effective internet searching, social media for academic or professional purposes, evaluating sources of information.

Key skills for employability. These are vital skills for the 21st century workplace as well as for academic study. Can be delivered lecture-style or in practical workshops depending on the needs of the subject area.

Specialist information sources (timing as appropriate to the course)

Examples include audio-visual sources (e.g. Henry Stewart Talks, Box of Broadcasts, ARTstor), patents, company information, cartographic/map sources (e.g. physical maps, Digimap), sources of statistical data, primary historical sources (e.g. newspaper sources, Mass Observation), evidence-based medicine/health sources, legal information.

Training on accessing and using resources that are particularly required for students' academic disciplines. Best as hands-on workshops. Alternatively, short pop-up demos of resources in lectures (i.e. a demo of a resource which contains information which would enhance the learning from the lecture).

Reference management software (year 2 or 3)

Use of software such as Refworks (Kent/CCCU) or Endnote Web (Greenwich).

Use of reference management packages is best taught once students have got to grips with what references should look like and the purpose that citation serves. Can be demonstrated lecture-style, but learning more likely to be retained if delivered as a hands-on session.

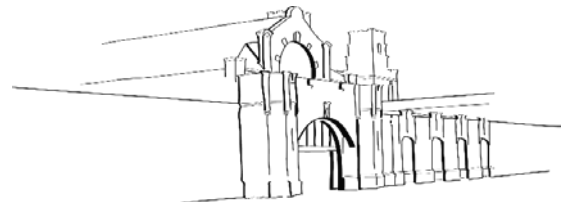
Literature searching (year 3)

How to construct a literature search for a literature review

To be presented as part of a research methods or similar module, covering advanced techniques for searching and using information as part of the research process. Lecture-style presentation is appropriate for this topic, and will be backed up with the offer of surgery-style trouble-shooting sessions for students.

Distance learning

Where programmes are delivered fully or partly through distance learning, our support can be adapted to the needs of remote students. While hands-on workshops are difficult to deliver remotely, some sort of personal interaction will be provided wherever this is possible (e.g. via webinar). This will be backed up by a suite of electronic resources such as video guides and narrated PowerPoints, accessible from home, work or placement. These resources could also be used by on-campus students to reinforce and develop their learning.



Notes

Teaching and/or training will largely be delivered by the academic support librarian for the School, Department or Centre. However, some specialised subjects may be delivered by a local expert on the resource and each librarian is backed up other members of the team in case of sickness or timetabling issues.

The majority of the support we offer is intended to develop students' skills and abilities. As such, a method of delivery which allows students to practice is often preferable. Hands-on workshops using electronic resources can be delivered in the Drill Hall Library in dedicated rooms with 24 PC stations, or the librarians can deliver sessions in other buildings across the campus with suitable facilities.

Students on **foundation or extended programmes** would be offered the orientation and basics activities in an extended format, with a greater allowance of time and increased emphasis on directed practice of skills.

Students arriving as **direct entrants** to years 2 or 3 will be able to access orientation and library basics sessions in addition to anything else which their whole cohort is offered.

The categories and modes of delivery outlined above are not exhaustive, and the Academic Support Team within the Drill Hall Library will work with programmes to ensure that the support offered matches the needs of the students.

Summary

The Academic Support Team offers a range of different training support which can be applied flexibly to the diverse needs of the programmes and students on the campus. Support begins from the week of students' arrival on campus and can continue developmentally throughout their course. The development of skills is structured to move from essential academic survival, through increasing sophistication to transferrable skills for the twenty-first century workplace.

For more information or to discuss this support offer, please speak to the academic support librarian for your subject, or contact:

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