Library and Information Service
Annual Report 2017
Library and Information Service

VISION  To be distinguished as a leading university library in Africa and beyond, known for commitment to partnership in student success, esteemed scholarship and research.

MISSION  The NWU Library and Information Service provides access to cutting-edge and relevant resources and services to fulfil academic expectations of our user communities in a professional, creative and innovative manner.
| 1 | Chief Director’s Message |
| 2 | New structure implementation |
| 2 | Implementation Plan |
| 2 | Structure of the Library and Information Service (LIS) |
| 3 | Strategic priorities |
| 3 | Positioning the LIS within the University |
| 4 | Facilities |
| 4 | Access to information resources |
| 5 | Resources |
| 5 | Information Literacy |
| 5 | LibGuides (Subject guides) |
| 5 | LibCalendars (Booking system) |
| 6 | eFundi |
| 6 | Our Technology and e-Strategy |
| 6 | Library web page |
| 6 | EZProxy |
| 6 | Social media |
| 6 | Library Blog |
| 7 | BLOG STATS |
| 7 | Open Research |
| 7 | Digital Scholarship |
| 7 | Digital collections |
| 7 | Institutional Repository |
| 8 | LIS Research week |
| 8 | Open Access Week |
| 8 | Research Data Management (RDM) |
| 8 | Open Journal System (OJS) |
| 9 | Bibliometrics |
| 9 | Our Marketing and Advocacy |
| 9 | Marketing Plan |
| 9 | Reporting on activities |
| 9 | Library calendar 2018 |
| 9 | Our Communication with LIS staff |
| 10 | Governance and Leadership |
| 10 | Restructuring |
| 10 | Library Code of Conduct |
| 10 | Quality Assurance |
| 10 | Community outreach |
| 11 | Our Staff development |
| 11 | Challenges and opportunities for the LIS in 2017 |
| 12 | Conclusion |
Chief Director’s Message

In the year 2017, the Library and Information Service (LIS) continued to excel in its service to the university community. Following the 2016/2017 restructuring at the NWU, the libraries on the campuses of Mafikeng, Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark now form part of the NWU Library and Information Service.

The year could be best described as comprising two halves, the first one being the transitional period to a new management structure of the North West University as approved by council in 2015. The second half, witnessed the full implementation of a new unitary library system as the entire institution dealt away with the previous management model. It is also important to mention from the outset that with libraries, collaboration is the norm because of the interdependence on one another. As such, policies and guidelines which informed operations under the previous university management model were to an extent available but needed to be reviewed in line with the new strategy. The LIS management therefore spent quite some time on policy development to guide management and operations in the new set up.
New structure implementation

Implementation Plan
At the start of 2017, a new structure implementation plan was developed to guide the transitional period from the old to the new structure. The plan comprised 10 deliverables as follows:

• Management structures
• Staffing
• Space requirements
• Infrastructure planning
• Budget arrangements
• LIS Operations
• Library policy
• Library Information Systems
• Senate Library Committee

The deliverables had timeframes ranging from February to September 2017 and some of the milestones include the placement of staff according to section 189a, the establishment of the LIS policy, the Senate Library Committee, consolidation of financial approvals, and the deployment of some staff to other units such as Finance and Information Technology. The implementation plan ensured a smooth transition to the new structure, which was fully implemented on 1 July 2017.

Structure of the Library and Information Service (LIS)
The LIS has two levels of management with the first level comprising high level managers which include the Chief Director, two Directors and two Senior Managers.

The second level comprises managers of various sections of the LIS, which include Information Resources, Library Systems, Information Services and Loan Services. They are responsible for the day to day management of the LIS sections.

The staff directory is available at [http://library.nwu.ac.za/staff-directory](http://library.nwu.ac.za/staff-directory)
Strategic priorities

Positioning the LIS within the University

As the NWU restructuring process took place during 2016, the LIS implemented the new structure to align services to support the core business of the NWU through intercampus co-ordination. The Senate Library and Information Service Committee (SLiSC) was established and comprises the senior library management, DVC Research and Innovation and/or Deputy Deans of the eight Faculties and is headed by Prof Robert Balfour, DVC: Teaching & Learning.

The LIS provides service excellence aimed at the diversity of its users as a whole in terms of levels of study, physical location (Mafikeng, Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark), mediums of communication, needs and preferences. Students from all disciplines share the library as place. The libraries fulfil social and intellectual roles in sharing resources and provide a physical place for users to meet outside the lecture room, thus allowing students to interact collaboratively in a knowledge space.

Services are designed towards providing access to global information and knowledge.

The NWU libraries are attractive, well-resourced and popular facilities on campuses and promote and support the research, teaching and learning activities of the University. The libraries are some of the most visited buildings on campus, with visits of 808 986 for 2017.
Facilities

It is an exciting time for academic libraries as they repurpose library spaces and enhance their relevance to student learning. By repurposing spaces to meet the needs of students, libraries are becoming a favourite destination for learning and social collaboration on campus.

The Research Commons in Potchefstroom and Vanderbijlpark became established and integrated part of the LIS. The Commons were used extensively, indicating that such a dedicated space is essential to cater for the needs of master’s and doctoral students. The Mafikeng library boasts with a new Research Commons that was launched during December 2017.

Access to information resources

The changing role of the library is indicated by the changing nature of library collections and the changes in user behaviour. Collection development is moving from ownership of a collection to the provision of access to information sources, including in house and remote information. At the core of the Library’s strategic efforts is the goal to build a collection of resources that supports the strategic aims of the University, reinforces the high standard of teaching at the Institution, and facilitates student success and research output. The LIS embraces the digital future with e-book collections, but also continue to expand existing print collections. Databases are evaluated annually according to the average price per search, uniqueness and necessity within the subject group for continued subscription. The process of evaluation, recommendation or cancellation of the e-collection, ensures collection refinement, development and growth. Weeding of old and irrelevant material ensures collection relevance, and optimum use of prime spaces.
Resources
A task team was set up to review the Information budget allocation criteria. The process will be in consultation phase with all stakeholders in the 1st quarter of 2018. Faculties will be approached to give input to the proposed guidelines which will be submitted first to the LIS Senior Management Forum for approval. Historically the allocation criteria across the three campuses were different. The budget will be distributed in line with the university’ strategic objectives; although LIS management will still try to keep to a balanced approach in terms of print and e-collections. It would be kept in mind that some schools and/or programmes had been moved between faculties and schools for budget purposes.

Information Literacy
The LIS contributes to the Information Literacy component of the NWU Academic Literacy programme which is compulsory for all first year students. Hands-on training linked to the AGLE during 2017 was only on Potchefstroom. Faculty librarians conducted information literacy training to undergraduates and postgraduates throughout the year. A dedicated Librarian: Research Support assisted with research focused training sessions to postgraduate students, academic and research staff as well as post-doc researchers.

LibGuides (Subject guides)
LibGuides continued to serve as one of the main access points to electronic resources, training activities, training manuals of importance in the different subject fields. The guides also serve as tools to assist in integrating library resources and services into the academic curriculum. The usage of LibGuides are an indication of the relevancy of those guides to the users. Total LibGuide views for 2017 were 228 697, with the most popular LibGuide being: the Undergraduate support guide with 76 374 views.

LibCalendars (Booking system)
The LibCal software from Springshare was implemented as a Booking & Events feature used for the booking of training events and seminar rooms. The link for room booking is available on the library webpage, and also as QR Code at the seminar rooms. Due to the collaborative working demands of the students’ teaching-learning environment, seminar rooms are extremely popular.

eFundi
LibGuides are integrated into eFundi (the NWU Learning Management System), on the condition that lecturers chose to integrate it into their subject pages. The Library maintains a web page for users with various links to Library services on eFundi. There were 7863 visits from 1785 visitors to this page.
Our Technology and e-Strategy

Library web page
As a result of the new corporate colour of the NWU, the appeal of the library web page had to change. In consultation with the library webmaster a page was developed with exactly the same content and layout as the previous web page, just a different colour in line with the Corporate Identity Guidelines.

EZProxy
The EZProxy software remained stable and ensured transparent access with authentication to off-campus library users and the statistics are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Page Views</th>
<th>28,103,187</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Unique IPs</td>
<td>202,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Visitors</td>
<td>560,147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social media
Social media has become a powerful liaison tool. This fast and direct means of communication is beneficial for quality and prompt service delivery.

Library Blog
All library and staff news are posted on the news column on the web page and the Library Blog. It keeps the web page interesting and current with what’s happening in the library.
The Blogposts rose from **5 945 hits in 2016** to **11 756 in 2017**.

**BLOG STATS**

11 756 hits

The LIS facebook pages are lively spaces for questions and answers, introduction of new developments, announcing of key library issues. Since the University is looking into reducing the number of Facebook accounts, the LIS is also looking into the possibility of combining the current three accounts into one.

**Open Research**

Attention was given to the redesign and development of the Library Research Support web page [http://library.nwu.ac.za/research-support](http://library.nwu.ac.za/research-support) indicating the library support during all the steps of the research cycle, and especially to show users the Library’s role in Open Research.

**Digital Scholarship**

The use of digital evidence in the creation of scholarly communication is an important trend and academic libraries have a role to play in creating awareness, developing skills and supporting digital scholarship. Two LIS staff members attended the Digital Humanities (DH) Summer School in Oxford and International DH Conference in Montreal in 2017. In addition, other Lis staff members also attended and presented Data carpentry and Library carpentry workshops.

**Digital collections**

A task group was formed to identify current and future digitisation projects across campuses.

Due to the restructuring, and to alignment of processes, increased effort was made to manage digitisation activities from one location with ETDs and examination papers receiving first preference. The examination papers of the Unit for Open Distance Learning (UODL) were added to the database of exam papers maintained by the Library. In total 24 827 pages were scanned and digitized during the period under review.

**Institutional Repository**

During April, a milestone was reached for Boloka, the Institutional Repository, when the 20 000 items indexed mark was reached. The LIS took notice of the NRF requirements regarding NRF funded theses & dissertations - that all funded research should be visible on the IR within one year after completion. Process changes took place to handle the submission of theses and dissertations on Boloka smoothly. The NWU-IR guidelines document was finalised and will be approved in 2018. Faculty Librarians assisted in eliminating the backlog of journal publications (2014 – 2017) that existed in the Institutional Repository.

[https://nwulibraries.wordpress.com/category/institutional-repository/](https://nwulibraries.wordpress.com/category/institutional-repository/)
**LIS Research week**
The organisation of a successful Library Research Week during September proved beneficial to young researchers and will be continued in future. Adobe sessions were scheduled for some sessions in order for participants to attend across remote campuses.

**Open Access Week**
Marketing of Open Access journals and research tools are important for research support. Active participation in the International Open Access Week initiative presents an opportunity to collaborate with key role players such as the Institutional Research and e-Research Offices.

The OA week was launched at the Mahikeng campus with guest speakers, Dr. Reggie Raju from the University of Cape Town and Ms Denise Nicholson from the Witwatersrand University. Sessions were linked on Adobe Connect to other libraries. Events were held on all three campuses. The program and activities were captured on the following page link:

http://library.nwu.ac.za/open-access-week-2017

**Research Data Management (RDM)**
LIS staff participated in sessions for library and software carpentry, workshops held by the Institutional eResearch office and liaised with role players on Open Access and RDM. RDM plans are linked on the Research Support Web page and the Librarian for Research Support and Faculty Librarians assist researchers and post-graduate students to compile RDM plans. Discussions for the Figshare pilot project commenced and staff from different LIS departments were involved. Further participation will include loading of datasets onto the platform to determine if Figshare will meet the research data management needs of the NWU researchers and funders in terms of managing, sharing, discoverability and impact to the research community and society.


**Open Journal System (OJS)**
In keeping up with the trend of self-hosting scholarly publications, the LIS registered OJS as a project with NWU IT Services. Currently the OJS project is in early pilot phase with two journals - *Journal for Language Teaching* with Prof Tobie van Dyk as editor, and the South African *Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation* with Prof Hani Moss as editor - exploring the platform. The LIS plans to launch OJS in 2018 with at least three journals being managed through the platform full-time.
Bibliometrics
As visibility of NWU research output is vital, awareness and training opportunities in the use of bibliometric tools were a priority and in line with the research goals of the university. Information Services staff were trained and supported by the Librarian: Research Support to market and create awareness for ORCID as well as the Research Impact tools - INCITES, h-index in Scopus, Web of Science and Google Citations as well as Altmetrics. Faculty Librarians provided information sessions and assisted academic staff and researchers to set up their ORCID accounts and assisted to establish their h-indexes and prepare for NRF ratings.

Our Marketing and Advocacy
The emphasis of this strategic goal is on increasing the visibility of the LIS internally and externally and to position and promote the LIS as an active partner in the academic and research community.

Marketing Plan
A Marketing Plan was developed for the LIS. The plan gives a brief overview of the libraries, the NWU and the LIS vision and strategic goals, a situation analysis, stakeholder map, marketing communication with attention to tools and action programmes, as well as the necessity of assessment. This plan will be refined in 2018 with the input of role-players of all NWU libraries. With some refinements, the LIS Marketing Plan will provide strategic guidance, as marketing is a daunting and relatively new endeavour for libraries.

Reporting on activities
The Library was involved in all major activities on the campuses. News reporting on all library activities was done. The extent of reporting depends on the matter. Feedback on all activities is covered in the library news column on the library web page, Facebook and library blog. Events of strategic importance are covered on @NWU and Eish!, the official NWU staff newsletter.

https://nwulibraries.wordpress.com/category/activities/

Library calendar 2018
As with previous years, the library was responsible for the popular and colourful desk calendar based on the institutional academic timetable. The calendars have been distributed at the institutional office and all three campuses. The calendar is a powerful marketing tool. Apart from portraying the academic calendar, it also has library content which guides the LIS outreach activities.

Our Communication with LIS staff
It is essential that staff from all three campuses are informed of the library news, activities and the involvement of their colleagues in LIS matters. Sharing the latest news, activities and new appointments – with pictures where possible, creates an atmosphere that contributes to a sense of unity. The Library Blog was identified as a perfect platform to communicate with staff. LIS staff members were contacted and encouraged to create an email alert for the Library Blog. This enables them to remain informed of the latest library news and activities, as an email is sent to all when a report is published on the blog. The blog was created with different categories of interest to make it easier to find specific reports after it has been published. Examples of categories are Conferences, LIASA, Surveys, Staff News, Community Involvement and Training.

https://nwulibraries.wordpress.com/
Governance and Leadership

Restructuring
Several meetings were held on restructuring, taking up immense management time. The Chief Director together with Directors compiled staff placement letters with assistance of administrative staff and managers. Review of job content of certain position profiles is essential. The alignment of certain processes and procedures is prioritised for 2018, as staff were under pressure to complete other administrative tasks in the last quarter of the year following the implementation of the new structure in the 3rd quarter of 2017.

Library Code of Conduct
After the LibQUAL survey, it was decided that a Library Code of Conduct should be developed to inform students of the library’s expectations of them as users. The Code of Conduct was developed, designed and launched at the beginning of February. Posters and banners were placed throughout the library and branch libraries. A newspaper report appeared in the Wapad, informing students that they were co-responsible for creating a quiet space in the libraries.

http://library.nwu.ac.za/code-conduct

Quality Assurance
- **LIS Quality Manual**
  At the end of April, the Institutional Quality Office requested that all support departments have to submit a Quality Manual according to the new NWU structure, aligned over all sites of delivery before the end of 2017. This was quite an extensive task, as the alignment of processes was to be accompanied by 55 Visio flowcharts, indicating the main processes in the library. The document was completed by November and will serve at the Library Senate Committee in 2018 for discussion and noting.

- **LibQUAL**
  Feedback of the LibQUAL survey of August 2016 was received at the end of 2016. Complete LibQUAL feedback reports were prepared at the start of 2017. Feedback was provided to the library staff at staff meetings, indicating the results, comments and the library action plan: http://library.nwu.ac.za/libqual-2016-action-plan to show users that the library is serious about improvement and take their recommendations to heart.

Community outreach
All 3 campus libraries celebrated Mandela Day in different ways. The Mandela Day activities sent out a message to the rest of the university and local community that the Library is not only academic driven, but also caring and people-centred. https://nwulibraries.wordpress.com/category/mandela-day/

Prof Hendri Coetzee from the Institutional Engagement Office was invited to provide guidance on measuring of impact regarding outreach projects. Prof Coetzee advised the LIS team to stick to our core business and determine what unique resources the Library have to offer. It is necessary to ascertain the impact the library had made in previous outreach projects and report back.
Our Staff development

LIS staff are a key asset in driving LIS service forward. Return on investment of a professional staff complement will effectively improve a professional LIS. During 2017 a focus on staff development paid off as staff registered for professional degrees and attended workshops, seminars and conferences. Some took the lead in organising workshops, while seven papers were presented at national conferences. Three papers were published in peer reviewed and accredited journals.

10 Staff members completed the UKS National Certificate in Library and Information Science.

Challenges and opportunities for the LIS in 2017

The year 2017 was both challenging and exciting for the LIS team especially as the new structure was implemented. Some of the biggest challenges encountered include the following:

- anxiety about the implementation of the new structure;
- management of change and alignment issues;
- having to negotiate different cultures and staff perceptions about how the new structure was going to work;
- unstable Rand value which affected the library budgets since most resources are paid in foreign currency;
- lack of increase in budgets for Information Resources particularly e-resources despite the need for new sources of information as indicated by academics;
- students demand for extended library hours as part of the fees-must-fall agenda;
- travelling for meetings across the three campuses particularly for staff whose responsibilities changed from one campus to cutting across all three campuses;
- increase in volume of work as policies and guidelines had to be reviewed and aligned;
- IT problems which affected meetings conducted via Adobe.

However, the year equally presented us with opportunities especially as the new structure was implemented. The opportunities include but not limited to:

- working closely together as one library system, with shared resources and responsibilities;
- new opportunities for some staff members were created which have retention value and potential for increased output;
- retention of our current subscriptions in the face of shrinking budgets;
- enhanced collaboration with Faculties, and support departments such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Information Technology, and other support units, which all came as a result of the new University strategy;
- improved working relationships;
- staff development opportunities
- third stream income generated mainly from the Library Bindery section, among other sources, which helped to cover some operational costs.
Conclusion

This report touched on key LIS deliverables for 2017. The year was both challenging and exciting for the team. The major highlights of the report include the preparation and the implementation of the new LIS structure as was approved by council in 2015. The report dwells more on the LIS strategic agenda. The strategic agenda items provide guidance to the further development of the LIS. The last part of the report raises some of the challenges encountered during the year under review, as well as the opportunities presented to the team. These opportunities could indicate a more promising 2018 in terms of success.