Library and Information Service

BENCHMARKING EXERCISE AT CAPE PENINSULA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (CPUT) LIBRARY

1   Background

In the LIS Annual Performance Plan for 2019, a benchmarking exercise was set as a priority. At a Library Management Meeting (LMC) in April, CPUT was identified to conduct a benchmarking activity mainly regarding research support services, research data management and quality assurance.   Liaison took place between the Offices of the Chief Director NWU LIS, Dr Mathew Moyo and the Director of CPUT Library, Dr Elisha Chiware. 21 – 22 August 2019 was identified for the benchmarking activity with LIS staff Ms Louise Vos, Mr Siviwe Bangani and Mr Vuyo Ngayeka. CPUT supplied a detailed benchmarking visit programme beforehand according to our benchmarking needs:

NWU_Visit_Programme_FINAL (1).docx

NWU LIS staff welcomed by CPUT library staff: Dr Elisha Chiware (Director CPUT Libraries), Ms Janine Lockhart (Manager Research Support) and Ms Debbie Becker (Manager Quality Assurance).

2   Feedback on benchmarking

The report will be divided into the following subsections, which are Research Data Management Services/ Institutional Repository, Research Support, Library Management System, Quality Assurance and Marketing matters. There will also be short reporting on some other matters of interest.

2.1 Research Data Management (RDM) Services and IR

CPUT uses three open access platforms. DSpace Cris for CPUT research output and special collections, DSpace for ETD's and MediaTum and Figshare for data management services. The Figshare platform is named eSango, an isiXhosa term for gateway. RDM services at CPUT fall within the ambit of the library's research support manager and librarian. The research librarian is also responsible for training researchers to formulate research data management plans. The RDM policy has not yet been approved. CPUT Figshare has 55 items at this stage.

Another interesting fact is that CPUT is currently collecting patents of their researchers from Google Patents and adding them to the IR.

From the beginning of 2020, CPUT students will no longer be required to submit print copies, only electronic copies will be accepted.

The overall impression is that, despite the fact that CPUT had a head start when it comes to RDM services, the NWU is at this stage more or less on par with them. They are however functioning on a high level because they have a complete research support team.

Online thesis
submission workflo

2.2 Research Support Services (RSS)

Of interest is the fact that library research support services are centralised in the office of the Library Manager for Research Support who oversees all library research support services and activities at the university. Apart from the Manager Research Support, the team consists of three other specialists: the IR Librarian, Metadata Librarian and Research Librarian.

The Research Support team takes responsibility of ensuring thorough usage of their platforms in terms of training and further research related support, working closely with Library ICT in the development and maintenance of the applications / programs.

KPAs_Research
support team.docx

The research support team attends Faculty Board meetings with the Faculty Librarian. To collect metrics, CPUT is currently using a spreadsheet for researchers based at the university. They have created a booklet that succinctly explains all the research support services at the university.

Booklet_Research
support.pdf

2.3 Library Management System

CPUT uses ALMA as its Library Management System. Servers are cloud-based. It seems that updates and upgrades are easy to manage – as the upgrades are the company's (ExLibris) responsibility. The statistics are quite extensive and easy to generate. It appears that ALMA has more capabilities to generate reports than Sierra. Maybe we have not yet used Sierra to an extent that it gives the same extensive reports. We need to investigate.

Vuyo also came back with a bag of ideas and information regarding ICT issues. His complete report:

VuyoCape Town
Benchmarking.docx

2.4 Quality Matters

2.4.1 CHELSA statistics database

 The CHELSA statistics database allows for the input and retrieval of statistical data on a monthly or annual basis and provides a central source for library statistics. Debbie Becker, CPUT Manager Quality Assurance initially developed the structure of this database for use within CPUT libraries. CHELSA has agreed that all academic libraries will use this database for the input of annual library data listed by CHELSA. Each Institution has full access to CHELSA-level data (for both input and viewing of reports) as well as the option of using the Institution-level database for capturing of their own internal statistics. This option eases the reporting of any library statistical data.

Currently the Senior Librarian Electronic Resources is our library's Institutional Administrator and uses this database for reporting on CHELSA level, also to access certain statistical information. It is however necessary to expand and give more staff the option to report on all statistics being generated in the libraries. The reporting of NWU library statistics are not yet aligned this is a major issue when creating reports. Access to aligned and updated statistics is critical when having an external audit. Automated monthly alerts remind staff to import statistics.

Debbie is the Global Administrator of this database, and is willing to assist us in the setup of a database on Institutional level.

CHELSA Stats
Administrators guid

CHELSA Stats db
flow chart.docx

2.4.2 External programme evaluation

Post review visit

The LIS template is in line with the CPUT EPE template. They post all their EPE reviews according to Faculty on their Quality Assurance web page.

 A positive is that they have a short review after the visit of a panel. The implementation of such a document will add value and will ensure follow-up:

Post review
visit.docx

2.4.3 Surveys

The Manager of Quality Assurance has a solid Library Systems background. She mentioned that they did LibQUAL several times in the past - all the results are on their QA web page. As LibQUAL is very expensive, and they do not use it for benchmarking purposes, they decided to develop their own surveys, broadly based on LibQUAL. They post the surveys on Blackboard (our eFundi), then students need to complete the survey before they can proceed.

Onboarding documents for new staff and student assistants

 CPUT Libraries make use of the following documents to ensure that all new staff and student assistants receive the same attention and assistance to settle in:

Final Onboarding
document for new s

FinalOnboarding
document for new p

2.4.4 Quality Assurance LibGuide

The CPUT Library's Annual Reports, Strategic Planning documentation, Policies and Guidelines, Reviews and Audits, Surveys, Statistics database, Standards and Measures, Faculty programme reviews and Staff Job Descriptions are easily accessible on one LibGuide. This is a one-stop page for all QA matters.

2.4.5 Official library documents

Accurate and updated templates of all official library documents and notices are shared on Google Drive.

2.4.6 Attendance of conferences

To attend an overseas conference, a staff member must present a full paper and provide a feedback report.

For a national conference, only one staff member per section can attend. It is necessary to give feedback upon return to the rest of the section.

2.5 Marketing matters

The marketing librarian is responsible for all marketing activities of the library. She is also responsible for the library web page and for the design of all library marketing material, including the institutional branding thereof. It creates tension not to have the support of an institutional designer.

She has a marketing team and works with staff with specific skills for marketing. The marketing team has representatives on all campuses of CPUT and she works closely with Faculty Librarians. She is also responsible for a quarterly library newsletter. When showing her our library blog (WordPress), she was very excited and impressed about the possibilities of this platform, and especially the immediacy of getting information out there to all staff.

2.5.1 Social media

She conceded that social media had not taken up as envisaged. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are the social media platforms used by CPUT. She emphasised that you need somebody who is interested in social media; they decided to make use of three senior students to assist in the handling of the three different platforms. Especially Instagram is currently very popular amongst students.

2.5.2 Library notices

She created a library template for all library notices to ensure uniformity. Managers complete the content as necessary. All notices must be laminated. Example of a notice:

Library Notices.jpg

2.6 Other matters

2.6.1 Faculty Librarians

2.6.1.1 Train the Trainer

The completion of a Train the Trainer Course is compulsory for all Faculty Librarians. The CPUT Graduate Centre for Management offers this as an accredited short course over six months (only six days contact time).

2.6.1.2   Other responsibilities

The Faculty Librarians attend all Faculty Board Meetings; they are on Faculty Teaching and Learning committees; they are on the Faculty Committee mailing list; visible by doing presentations on Research Days and involved in information literacy. Information Literacy is a credit-bearing module within certain first-year courses.

2.6.2   Library Spaces

The CPUT Library is in the same position as many other university libraries. They need to create new, or repurpose current spaces to stay in touch with changing user needs. They could manage to create a small research commons – a bigger one is in planning stage. The learning commons is welcoming and is used extensively.


Library foyer
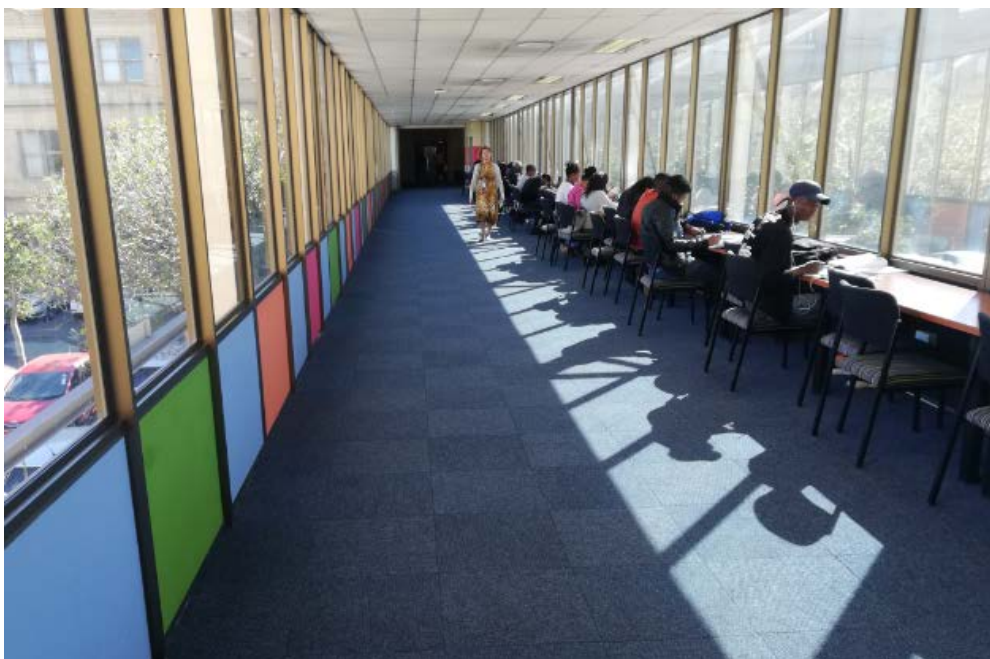
Sunny corridor

Learning Commons

2.6.2.1 24hr study area

They have just established a 24 hr study area recently. The functioning of the 24hr study area is the same that we plan at Mafikeng. Students can use it during the day and need to vacate the area at 22:00 by using the library exit. They then enter via the entrance of the 24 hr area. Also in this area are a number of workstations equipped for students with special needs – bigger workstations for wheelchair users and computers equipped with software for users who have a visual or hearing impairment. A security guide is on duty after hours.
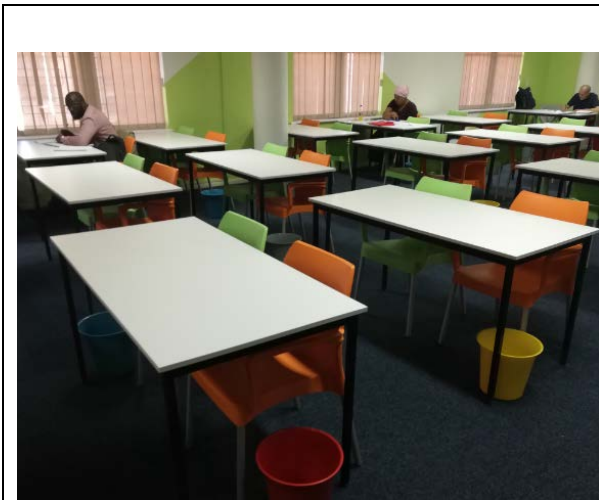
24 hr area – basic room for study

No additional power points

Workstations for users with special needs

The area is closed every day during 8:00 – 9:00 to give an opportunity for cleaning services staff.

2.6.3 Ergonomics

CPUT Management is concerned about staff health in the working environment and consulted an Ergonomics Specialist who visited the library. Staff were provided with chairs with back support, ergonomic desks and where necessary, with footrests. The footrests keep your feet supported, and lessen leg and lower back problems. This has a positive impact on staff who sit for most of the day:

Waltons
footrest.jpg

Thank you to LIS Management for the opportunity to visit CPUT. We would also like to express our gratitude to the CPUT library staff for their hospitality. They were extremely generous in sharing ideas and expertise - it was a valuable exercise.

Compiled by Louise Vos (Senior Manager Outreach, Projects and Quality)

Contributions by Siviwe Bangani (Manager Information Services Mafikeng) and Vuyo Ngayeka (Systems Support and IR)

5 September 2019

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