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1. Overview

- This report presents the recommendations and outlines the activities of the Engagement Survey Staff Development Group.
- The Recommendations section presents the headline recommendations.
- The remainder of the report summarises the activities of the Group and also provides contextual information around the recommendations and their implementation.
2. Recommendations

- The top three priority recommendations are highlighted in red text below.
- See **Recommendations in Context** section for more detail and suggestions for progressing these items.

**Staff Development Recommendations**

| 1. | **Build a consolidated staff development resource in LibGuides** |
| 2. | **Promote a Library development culture** |
| 3. | **Identify time and space for development activities** |
| 4. | Investigate shadowing as a development tool in more detail |
| 5. | **Promote mechanisms for sourcing professional literature** |
| 6. | Facilitate 1:1s with functional leads for matrix working |
| 7. | **Establish support groups for development activity** |
| 8. | Review & disseminate Library approach to Above & Beyond scheme |
| 9. | Invite HR Business Partner to give Library a ‘development health check’ |
| 10. | Review job descriptions and ensure current versions are in place |
| 11. | Collate and promote T1 cheatsheets for common finance tasks relating to training/travel (and for other tasks if required) |
| 12. | Review purpose and frequency of all established meetings |
| 13. | Provide financial support for payment of CILIP chartership fees (and equivalent certification schemes) |
| 14. | Agree feedback and performance mechanisms via 1:1s / PDRs |
3. Background

- Staff Development was identified as an area for attention when the 2018/2019 LCS Employee Engagement Survey results were analysed.
- All LCS staff were invited to join a Task & Finish Group to progress work in this area.
- In April 2019 the Group was formed from LCS volunteers with a remit (see Appendix 1) to deliver a document outlining identified issues with development and propose recommendations for improvement.

4. Group Approach & Activities

- The group comprised staff from across teams and grades (see Appendix 2).
- The Group met twice in May 2019.
- The first meeting concentrated on agreeing ways of working and establishing feedback and consultation mechanisms to elicit feedback from across all library teams.
- The second meeting concentrated on analysing feedback from the consultation exercise and agreeing recommendations for proposal to Library Management.
- Following the meetings, a report was drafted and agreed and submitted to Library Management in June 2019.

4.1. Consultation Activities

- The group brainstormed consultation options and agreed and implemented a range of activities.
- The consultation period ran throughout May 2019.
- A Padlet was set up with development questions to prompt input from all staff.
- Group membership and contacts were advertised to staff and invited to approach/email any member for discussion.
- Development Drop-ins were scheduled in May and members of the Group were available for more in depth conversations.
- A LibGuide was created to consolidate and promote these activities and also to highlight a few existing development resources as an aid to discussion.

4.2. Analysis Activities

- All Group members reviewed feedback from the Padlet, drop-ins, ad hoc conversations and emails.
- The Group came together to brainstorm and identify:
  - Major issues and themes arising from the feedback
  - Agree recommendations to improve experiences in these area
• The Group also reflected on their own involvement in the group from a personal development perspective.

5. Themes & Issues

The following were identified as major areas of concern/discussion and were used to help identify and frame recommendations.
6. Recommendations in Context

This section provides background and context to the recommendations, together with suggested ways forward. It incorporates some of the valuable suggestions made via the various feedback mechanisms and group discussions.

1. **Build a consolidated Staff Development Resource in LibGuides**
   - Information is scattered or hard to discover and bringing all development content together would be a helpful tool.
   - Something along the lines of the Newcastle approach is envisaged, e.g. [Newcastle University Library Staff Development Toolkit](#).
   - It is important to keep this up to date once built.
   - Suggest a couple of volunteers are sought to take the lead on building and maintaining the guide, with all staff able to contribute suggestions. This lead role can be rotated over time – and operate as a development activity.
   - LibGuides would be a useful tool for housing this content as it allows for all kinds of materials to be included and easily updated.

2. **Promote a Development Culture for the Library**
   - A clear statement of support for staff development should be communicated to all staff.
   - It is evident from feedback that there have been concerns about management support for this activity in the past and this would give an opportunity to be explicit about the current approach.
   - The Staff Development LibGuide would be a good place to flag this culture – a short statement from the Librarian / Library Management Team could be prominently featured.

3. **Identify time and space for development activities**
   - 1:1s / Team meetings to be used to discuss time and space issues and to identify opportunities for all staff to build this in to routines.
   - This can include encouraging staff to utilise all spaces across our campuses for carving out time for reading/reflection activities or opportunities.
   - Rota-ing time for personal development is a possibility but would need more consideration due to staffing levels.
   - Organise further visits for LCS staff to other libraries / museums in Exeter and further afield for example the GW4 Universities.
4. **Investigate shadowing as a developmental tool in more detail**
   - Shadowing featured as an issue throughout Padlet, drop-ins and in the Group’s analysis discussion – both in terms of shadowing library colleagues and more widely (ESS, University wise and other organisations).
   - There were differing views on what works well and how to facilitate this.
   - Shadowing can be accomplished by sitting alongside people and seeing their day to day work, or working alongside people on specific task based/project based activities.
   - To work well there was a feeling that those providing the shadowing opportunity might need training/support.
   - It is evident that additional work is required to scope exactly how shadowing could work effectively as a library development tool.
   - It is recommended that a volunteer is sought to investigate and progress this - and this could perhaps evolve into a Shadowing co-ordinator role for the Library.

5. **Promote mechanisms for sourcing professional literature**
   - There were numerous comments about establishing a professional development fund for use by library staff.
   - It was also noted that it was possible for staff to do this already, but also that it was unclear to many how to take advantage of this.
   - It is recommended that simple guidance is produced outlining how staff can suggest professional literature for purchase or via document delivery (Resourcing Team) and that this can be featured on the Development LibGuide, together with promotional info to flag new purchases.
   - In line with the sustainability agenda we should look for a digital first approach to this (and also to enable colleagues in Digital Humanities, Special Collections and Penryn to have easy access).

6. **Facilitate 1:1s with functional leads for matrix working**
   - In order to have more in depth discussion on task based feedback, it would be useful for those working under matrix management to have discussions with ‘functional leads’ not just assigned line manager. This has already been set-up at the Forum Library and Chris Launder is in the process of having 1:1s with Information Assistants.
   - Sometimes complex issues need to be discussed and there is not sufficient scope for this under the present setup.

7. **Establish support groups for development activity**
   - The Reading Group established by Amy McEwan was a great example of how small support groups can aid development.
• It was recommended that other Groups are established and promoted through the Development LibGuide.
• These meetings should be varied in terms of day/time so that all can take advantage of opportunities.
• The following Groups were suggested. Volunteers should be sought to initiate set up and ongoing facilitation:
  
  o CILIP Chartership Support Meeting and / or HEA Aspire Support Meeting.
  o Writing Group support meeting. This group could identify avenues and topics for staff to produce articles and contribute to professional literature – e.g. items for SCONUL focus etc. and also to establish a ‘Day in the Life of blog’ as part of the Development LibGuide. Here LCS colleagues (and ESS and other contributors) could outline their typical days and interested colleagues could pursue discussion on items of interest.

8. Review & disseminate Library approach to Above & Beyond scheme
• There was lots of discussion relating to the Above and Beyond scheme.
• Comments related to underuse of ‘thank yous’ and also lack of clarity about how instant and other awards were agreed via the Library Management Team.
• It is recommended that Library Management review the current approach and disseminate to staff via the Development LibGuide criteria and approach of the Library to these awards.

9. Invite HR Business Partner to give Library a ‘development health check’
• It is unlikely that the Library is the only service looking at good practice in staff development.
• An interesting suggestion was made to invite our HR Business Partner to provide some expert advice and oversight through the question.
• The group was unsure whether this service was currently in place but hope Library Management can discuss options with HR.

10. Review job descriptions and ensure current versions are in place
• Concerns were raised about job descriptions being out of date.
• This made some development tasks difficult, particularly some certification schemes that ask staff to reflect on development and align activities to their job descriptions.
• It is recommended that a job description review exercise takes place possibly linked to PDRs taking place during summer 2019.
11. **Collate and promote T1 cheatsheets for common finance tasks relating to training/travel**
- Working with T1 was noted as a disincentive to some staff in pursuing development activities.
- It is recommended that quick cheatsheets are collated and disseminated throughout the library outlining how to work with T1 in terms of library staff booking training and travel and other development related purchasing, e.g. This is how you book and claim travel etc.
- Existing guidance from the Future Finance Training Team should be used to avoid duplication of effort.
- It is hoped that simple guidance in this form will help overcome these obstacles.
- Cheatsheets should be developed for other finance tasks performed by library staff, as required.

12. **Review purpose and frequency of all established meetings**
- Feedback suggested that some meetings take place just because they have become a regular item in the diary, or as a means of simply communicating information which could be done more effectively by other means.
- Task or project based meetings rather than general updating meetings were suggested.
- The frequency of meetings could also be looked at e.g. some might want weekly/fortnightly/monthly 1:1s – there does not necessarily need to be a ‘one size fits all’ approach.
- It is recommended that for all forthcoming meetings a point is added to the agenda to discuss the purpose and frequency of the meeting and to act accordingly. Some meetings may continue as is, others be rejigged, and others disbanded and replaced by other means.

13. **Provide financial support for payment of CILIP chartership fees (and equivalent certification schemes)**
- It is recommended that commitment to staff development is shown through payment of CILIP chartership fees (and any other like professional body schemes).
- Details to be included on Development LibGuide.

14. **Agree feedback and performance mechanisms via 1:1s /PDRs**
- There was significant and varied discussion of feedback and performance issues.
- It was clear that this was an area where staff wanted to see change but also that this was not an area where a ‘one size fits all; recommendation’ could be made.
- It was clear that people like to receive feedback in different ways and means.
• The underlying issue that emerged is that people do value feedback on performance and improvement and that this is not always forthcoming or as regular as it could be.
• In light of this it is recommended that feedback mechanisms are discussed at 1:1s and PDRs so staff and line managers can be clear about what works best for them.
• It was also noted that we should not think of this as a one off exercise but ensure that there is an ‘eternal feedback loop’ so that ongoing dialogue continues. A simple ‘2 way feedback’ prompt as part of 1:1s could act as a starting point.

7. Group Reflections

• The activities involved in participating in this work group supported staff development.
• The group participated in a range of different activities including:
When the team came together it was with the overall encouragement to:

“Remember above all being part of the group should be fun and rewarding”

Here are a few thoughts from the team on what they got out of the group’s work.

Natasha: It was encouraging that everyone felt time pressures and saw resetting our development culture as a key priority. I found hearing colleague’s development activity ideas interesting.

Lee: the major thing I got from the group was the recognition that there has been a real shift in culture in support of development within the Library recently, which is so encouraging. I also enjoyed introducing colleagues to the joy of LibGuides and it was great to see people getting stuck in and playing around with those.

Chris: It was revealing to hear honest thoughts on the lack of performance management and to be able to respond. I feel sure we can develop a positive development culture from this point forward.

Simon: it was really revealing to realise that other colleagues have the same work pressures, concerns and worries about issues. Sometimes you think you’re the only one because we never really talk about these issues.
8. Thanks

“We would like to thank everyone who took time to contribute their thoughts and feedback as part of the consultation exercise. You gave us plenty of ideas to draw on”.  

Image: Word Cloud of all feedback received via Padlet & drop-ins.
Appendices

Appendix 1 - Engagement Survey Development Action Group Terms of Reference

Purpose

To produce a set of recommendations which will lead to improved scores against each of the following questions in the engagement survey

Q6. I feel sufficiently challenged by my work
Q13. I receive constructive feedback on my performance
Q15. There are sufficient opportunities to learn, develop and improve my skills in my current job
Q16. There are sufficient opportunities for me to develop my career at the University of Exeter
Q18. I found my last PDR/Probation meeting useful
Q41. My manager welcomes feedback on their own performance

To produce a set of recommendations for how personal development could contribute to improving the scores for the questions below

Q12. I feel able to speak up and question the way things are done (through a variety of means)
Q14. I feel able to influence decision making that affects me and my role
Q45. I feel part of my service/discipline
Q1. I would feel confident explaining to someone who didn't work here what the different services within Education and Student Support are responsible for
Q2. I understand how Education and Student Support contributes to the success of the University

If other factors or improvements are identified which don’t sit readily under a particular question but relate to improving communications these should be captured in the final document.

Deliverables

A document setting out the identified issues with communications

A prioritised set of recommendations for action which are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound, these must identify which question they relate to (and one action may relate to more than one question).

Where actions may be outside the control of the Library, these will be passed on for consideration by the relevant area of the university. Any actions relating to ESS will be fed back in through the ESS Senior Management Team.
Membership

A balance of colleagues at different grades and from different parts of the team, all members to contribute equally.

Chair – to be chosen by the group

Timescale

To be completed by the end of May

Ways of Working

To be determined by the group but must include a mechanism for library colleagues not part of the group to contribute to its work.

Appendix 2 - The Engagement Survey Staff Development Group Membership.

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<th>Name</th>
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