



TUS

**Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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Athbhreithniú Straitéiseach ar Sheirbhísí Leabharlainne

Strategic Review of Library Services

Report of the Peer Review Group

Peer Review Group Visit, 26th/27th February 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings of the external peer review panel visit for the Strategic Review of Library Services and the findings and recommendations of the Peer Review Group conducted on 26th to 27th February 2024. The external visit was undertaken in accordance with the [TUS Policy on Strategic Review of Service Delivery Units 2019 - 2024](#), as published on the TUS website.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Higher Education Provider

Provider	Technological University of the Shannon (TUS)
Service Unit	Library Services
Date of Visit	26 th to 27 th February 2024

2.2 External Peer Review Panel

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Michele Glacken (Chairperson)	Vice President Students, Teaching and Learning & Registrar, Atlantic Technological University
Jean Ricken	Head Librarian, MTU Library, Munster Technological University
Orla NicAodha	Associate Director, Public Services & Outreach DCU Library, Dublin city University
Dr Lisa Moran	Dean of Graduate Studies, TUS.
Latif Adams	Student Representative, TUS.

Secretary to Panel: Dr Brendan Murphy

Supporting Panel: Ms. Claire Frawley

2.4 TU STAFF

Name	Affiliation
Prof. Vincent Cunnane	President TUS
Frances O'Connell	VP Student Education and Experience
Dr Johanna Archbold	Head Librarian, TUS Library: Midlands
Sarah Landy	Deputy Librarian, TUS Library: Midwest
Celine Peignen	Deputy Librarian, TUS Library: Midlands
Library Team	Assumpta Byrne; Sean Debhulbh; Michael Doheny; Dan English; Maura Flynn; Joanne Gillivan; Maeve Hynes; Brian O'Donnell; Colette Real;
Student Services and Supports Staff	Carolann Bargary; Jenny Burke; Emer Connolly; Sinead Denby; Treasa Fox; Eoin Kiveney; Sarah LaCumbre; Broze O'Donovan
Academic Stakeholders	Jim Gilchrist; Paul Greaney; Melinda Gushwa; Nuala Harding; Alison Hough; Lisa Kerr; Mary McDonnell-Naughton; Catherine O'Donoghue
Research Stakeholders	Jeff Buckley, Tara Carty; Kayleigh Foran; Frank Houghton; Aoife Lane; Neil Rowan;

2.5 STUDENTS

Student Name
Massimiliano Zanotto
Christina Connell
Morgan Fagg
Niamh Kennedy
Kevin Pakenham
James Skerritt
Jeovan Araujo

3.0 OVERVIEW OF LIBRARY SERVICES AT TUS

The library is central to the intellectual and academic life of TUS, where student and staff needs are prioritised. TUS Library leads through the provision of knowledge collections and learning services, training for information, digital and media literacy skills, and systems and expertise supporting scholarly communications and research. TUS Institutional repository is hosted and managed by the library to make TU research available and accessible to the public. The library focuses on comprehensive engagement with the TUS learning community at all levels from undergraduate programmes through to academic research, and collaboration across the organisation for the benefit of all learners. TUS Library provides onsite facilities in the Athlone, Moylish, Thurles, Clonmel, Claire St. (LSAD), and Ennis campuses.

The library endeavours to ensure provision of learning spaces onsite and online that are suitable for personal and collaborative learning. Library staff are committed to fostering learning, creativity, and innovation through ensuring access to quality library resources and services, through their expertise and commitment, and by safeguarding a library environment that is both supportive and engaging for all learners.

Alongside quality information resources, the library is committed to ensuring that students possess the core skills to locate and access the correct information when and where they need it and have the supplementary skills to know how to evaluate and use the information effectively and ethically. These goals are met through the annual library induction programmes and information and library skills sessions which cover *learning to learn*, *information literacy* and *research skills* across all campus libraries and in collaboration with academic departments.

The library operates in a very particular external context, whereby national and EU legislation and policy informs its work and creates both opportunities, expectations, and targets. The library has a combined total of 33 staff members (and draws on agency staff in Midwest). Since December 2021, the library reports to the Vice President for Student Education & Experience (VPSEE).

4.0 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF PEER REVIEW PANEL

Main Findings

The Peer Review Panel notes:

1. that TUS offers library services across its campus network and is committed to ensuring that services are accessible, student centred and progressive.
2. the personal and professional commitment of staff and the many innovative practices evident in the work of TUS Library.

4.1 Commendations

The panel commends:

1. TUS and the library for conducting a strategic review, particularly at a time of considerable change associated with TU integration.
2. the comprehensive nature of the self-evaluation report which provided a robust basis to conduct the review- the panel appreciates the volume of associated work.
3. the very positive feedback from the library stakeholder groups who described the library as being very open, receptive, responsive and supportive.
4. the innovative provision of services, particularly in enabling access to library services in smaller campuses.
5. the evident agility in provision of library service within existing constraints.
6. the forward thinking, ambitious and future orientated ethos of library personnel.
7. the provision of Online Services, Open Education Resources and development of LibGuides series are particularly noted.
8. the evident student-centred approach in TUS as exemplified through the commitment of library staff/senior management and the very positive views of library services expressed by TUS students.
9. library personnel for reflecting the values of the TUS strategic plan and their commitment to reflective practice and continuous improvement.
10. the collegial and constructive engagement of library personnel during the course of the peer review panel.

4.2 Recommendations

The panel identified a range of recommendations to consolidate and improve the capacity of the TUS Library to continue to support TUS students, staff and stakeholders. Recommendations are classified as Grade 1 and Grade 2 in accordance with the TUS Policy on Strategic Review of Service Delivery Units. The recommendations are presented constructively to support the future development of library services at TUS. The panel particularly highlights the importance of Grade 1 recommendations to enhance and realise the ability of the services to deliver for its stakeholders and actively contribute to the wider strategic goals of TUS.

Grade 1 Recommendations

1. Conduct a mapping exercise to identify how the library vision, purpose and priorities align with the institutional TUS Strategic Plan. Utilize the analysis conducted during the strategic review to inform the mapping exercise.
2. Develop a library strategy with KPIs that demonstrates how library activity both supports and aligns with TUS inaugural strategic plan.
3. Prioritize securing library representation on Academic Council to formally recognize its role as a core academic function supporting the educational and research current activities of the university.
4. Develop a communication strategy to enhance awareness and visibility of the range of activities/ services offered by TUS Library services among the TUS community, in particular academic staff, and researchers.
5. Formalise and extend the role of the library in academic Programme planning, academic and research policy development, and Programme reviews/validation.
6. As part of campus development planning, work with corporate services and estates to develop a long-term plan for the development of library spaces in a manner that reflects the diversity of space utilization requirements, the growing student population and the changing and diverse needs of students. Address local issues such as accessibility, adequacy of power and data points, and weather proofing. Priority should be given to issues articulated in relation to Moylish campus.
7. Review the library structure in the context of multi-campus provision including library management and staffing levels. Give due consideration to succession planning to reduce single point of failure.

8. The panel notes a particular requirement for enhancement of staffing at junior level to minimize the reliance on agency staff and to enable senior staff to engage in strategic work.
9. Consider the mainstreaming and sustainability of specialist posts supporting open education resources in the form of a skills librarian post and further enhance the library supports in relation to systematic review conduction.
10. To mitigate risk and meet the requirements of funding agencies, establish in-house Research Data Management expertise, and supports.
11. Establish a range of library working groups to develop and align policy and procedures for consistency of user experience across the university and to support regional offerings.
12. Recognise the marketing potential of the library to research and international students. prospective students from an international, undergraduate and research student perspective.

Grade 2 Recommendations

1. Consider how staff can be further supported to engage in CPD and have the required time to keep up to date with current library issues.
2. Develop formal evaluative strategies that capture the voice of the diverse student population of TUS.
3. Consider developing 'Service Level Agreements' or business partnerships with other TUS functions, in the first instance with the Building and Estates function to identify designated points of contact to enhance efficiencies in addressing operational issues in a timely manner.
4. Embed systematic rather than individual oriented approaches when scaling up innovative practices.
5. Consider how the library service can future proof the sustainability of the Laptop on Loan scheme.
6. Use a universal design lens to shape how library activities are planned and delivered.
7. Develop internal and external library storage spaces across the campuses.

Michele Glacken

Signature of Chairperson

Dr Michele Glacken