

THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS
CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN LIBRARY & INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT (CERLIM)

**The Development of UK Academic Library Services
in the context of Lifelong Learning**

Final Report

**Peter Brophy
Jenny Craven
Shelagh Fisher**

April 1998

Publication Details

© JISC 1998

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance of many expert colleagues in the preparation of this work. We are particularly grateful to John Allred for his comments and advice on early drafts, and to the participants in the Expert Workshop held in July 1997 in London. Grateful thanks are also due to Judith Hilton for her interest and input, and to colleagues in CERLIM for their suggestions, assistance and support.

Peter Brophy
Jenny Craven
Shelagh Fisher

Manchester
April 1998

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Peter Brophy is Professor of Information Management and Director of the Centre for Research in Library & Information Management (CERLIM) at the Manchester Metropolitan University. Previously he was Head of CERLIM at the University of Central Lancashire where he was also Head of the converged Library & Learning Resource Services. He is President-elect of the Institute of Information Scientists and has published widely in the field of library and information management.

Shelagh Fisher is Reader in the Department of Information & Communications of the Manchester Metropolitan University, having previously been Principal Lecturer and Research Manager in CERLIM at the University of Central Lancashire. She has undertaken research and published on a wide range of issues concerning the impact of information technologies on the individual, on libraries and on society.

Jenny Craven is a Research Fellow in CERLIM at the Manchester Metropolitan University. As well as her work on lifelong learning she is involved in studies of the social impacts of the Internet, and is currently working on a project funded by the British Library Research & Innovation Centre.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
SECTION A: INTRODUCTION	5
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND	6
SECTION B: LIFELONG LEARNING	13
CHAPTER 2: LEARNING: A LIFELONG EXPERIENCE	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Stakeholders in Learning	15
2.3 Adult Education	18
2.4 The process of learning	20
2.5 The organisation of learning	21
2.6 Conclusions	26
CHAPTER 3: THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES IN LEARNING	28
3.1 Introduction	28
3.2 Access	28
3.3 Multimedia	28
3.4 Computer-Mediated Communications	29
3.5 The TLTP Programme	29
3.6 The Electronic Library	30
3.7 Networked Learner Support	30
3.8 Conclusion	32
CHAPTER 4: LIFELONG LEARNING: POLICY BACKGROUND	33
4.1 Introduction	33
4.2 International Perspectives	33
4.3 The development of UK lifelong learning policy	35
4.4 Conclusion	37
CHAPTER 5: DEARING, KENNEDY AND FRYER: TOWARDS THE 'LEARNING AGE'	39
5.1 Introduction	39
5.2 The Dearing Report	39
5.3 The Kennedy Report	44
5.4 The Fryer Report	45
5.5 The University for Industry	47
5.6 Other Reports	48
5.7 The Learning Age	50
5.8 Conclusions	54
SECTION C: LIBRARIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING	55
CHAPTER 6: LIBRARIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING	56
6.1 Introduction	56
6.2 The role of libraries in the lifelong learning process	56
6.3 Problems in providing library and information services to lifelong learners	60
6.4 Academic libraries and lifelong learning in the UK	63
6.5 Non UK library provision for lifelong learning	68
6.6 The role of public libraries	72
6.7 Conclusions	74
SECTION D: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	76
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS	77
7.1 Introduction	77
7.2 Developing Basic Services	78
7.3 Focus on Content	79
7.4 Hybrid Libraries	79
7.5 Converged services	80

7.6 Multi-Agency Provision	80
7.7 Integration of Library Services into Learning	81
7.8 Libraries as Social Centres	82
7.9 Information Quality	82
7.10 Electronic Resources	83
7.11 Information Skills.....	85
7.12 Helpdesk Services	85
7.13 Lifelong Relationships.....	85
7.14 Dynamic Management	86
7.15 Conclusions	86
CHAPTER 8: RECOMMENDATIONS	87
8.1 Recommendations directed primarily to JISC and HEFCs	87
8.2 Recommendations directed primarily to institutions and their librarians.....	88
8.3 Recommendations directed primarily to the library community.....	89

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lifelong learning is high on the agenda of government, employers, employees, students and institutions. This Report, published shortly after the Government's Green paper *The Learning Age*, considers the broad policy framework of higher education and how academic libraries – which increasingly include networked IT services within their remit – need to respond. It is the outcome of a Supporting Study funded by the Electronic Libraries programme (eLib) and was conducted by a team of experts from the Centre for Research in Library & Information Management (CERLIM), led by Professor Peter Brophy.

The background of learning itself, including the influence of groups such as the Royal Society of Arts with its *Campaign for Learning*, is discussed in the first two Chapters of the Report, which also present a working definition of lifelong learning:

Lifelong learning is a deliberate progression throughout the life of an individual, where the initial acquisition of knowledge and skills is reviewed and upgraded continuously, to meet challenges set by an ever changing society.

Attempts to define a simple – or even a single – model of lifelong learning are unlikely to succeed for, as the RSA has demonstrated, learning is a *messy* process. People do not follow a set pattern once they have left the classroom, but are subject to a wide range of influences on their learning activities and styles. Indeed much current policy, such as the development of Individual Learning Accounts, will put the learner in the driving seat and confound any who wish to impose tight structures on learning. So, for librarians as for others involved in education, the issue will be to ensure that services and advice are available where and when they are wanted and needed. The mature students who will make up the bulk of the new lifelong learners will settle for nothing less.

In Chapter 3 of this Report, the authors turn their attention to information and communications technologies and summarise the impact that the new networked environments will have for lifelong learners and for those delivering services to them. Here, having reviewed the impacts of multimedia, computer-mediated communications, networked learner support and other issues, the Report concludes that “the key to successful use of technology in lifelong learning lies in designing packages and support from the perspective of learning, not from the viewpoint of technology”. Technological solutions should thus be built on a clear understanding of the learning process.

Chapters 4 and 5 of the Report summarise the policy framework which is now emerging for the development of lifelong learning as a national priority. Issues are drawn out of the international arena, as for example in the work of the European Commission in promoting the European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996, as well as from the pre-1997 domestic agenda. However, since the election of the new Labour

government in May 1997 the number of relevant consultation and policy papers published has mushroomed. They include the Dearing Review of higher education, the Kennedy Report on widening participation in further education, the work of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning, the DfEE's 'Learning Grid' proposals and the Library & Information Commission's consultation paper, *New Library: The People's Network*. Above all, the long-awaited Green Paper *The Learning Age* is important for setting out the government's view on and response to the recommendations of earlier papers. Each of these documents is considered in turn in Chapter 5. Together they make clear that lifelong learning will be the major policy initiative for the coming years. Librarians will need to take note and respond appropriately.

Chapter 6 of our Report concentrates on the services which are being offered to lifelong learners by libraries at the present time. Clearly, some lifelong learning takes place through traditional courses (and through research) and the long-established range of library services which are already in place will continue to be needed to serve this clientele. As the Report observes, some institutions may legitimately decide that the provision of such opportunities, usually on-campus, is their contribution to lifelong learning. However, most lifelong learners in higher education will be mature students who need to dip into and out of education at different times of their lives and careers. Many will want higher education delivered to them, where they are, at their convenience. The library services which will be needed to support them are not yet in place.

Yet there are examples of good practice in the development of library services for non-traditional students. Many of the 'new' universities in particular have developed outreach services which deliver books and journals to their users, and use information and communications technologies in innovative ways to try to overcome the disadvantages of studying at a distance. Few academic libraries have yet made major inroads into work-based learning, but examples can be found. Looking further afield, there is much to be learned from Australia, Canada and the United States where libraries have been forced by the circumstance of geographical dispersion to devise new ways of serving their clientele.

The Report's conclusions fall under thirteen headings:

- Higher education libraries will need to commit themselves to develop, publicise and deliver a *basic set of library services designed for lifelong learners*. As Dearing found, it is the basic, 'bread and butter' services such as access to books and study space that learners themselves regard as the highest priority. Redesigning service delivery to account for the basic needs of lifelong learners is thus a very high priority.
- On the other hand, libraries need to refocus their services on *content* rather than form, and ask themselves how the required content can be delivered to the lifelong learner – rather than becoming blocked by the difficulties particular forms present. Here they can provide leadership in how information sources can be presented within the structures of learning which teaching staff devise.

- The *hybrid library* concept has much to offer the lifelong learner through its emphasis on a managed mix of traditional and electronic services. Current eLib hybrid library and clump projects should be encouraged to take on board the needs of lifelong learners if they have not already done so.
- *Convergence* should be seen as a positive step for the lifelong learner, since it provides a single point of contact for academic support services and ensures that a single policy is pursued in their interests.
- The future of library support for higher education lifelong learners will best be secured through *multi-agency provision*, by which is meant a planned and managed co-operative alliance of providers (university, further education, public etc. libraries and others). However, because courses will be marketed nationally and internationally, it will not be adequate to rely only on regional co-operation.
- A key issue will be the extent of *integration of library services into learning*. As new learning environments are designed and established the role of the library will change - what is being introduced is an entirely new kind of environment where the student can easily and within the same interface access information (“library”) and expertise (“tutor”) while discussing ideas with fellow students (“seminar”) and using a self-diagnostic tool.
- Libraries will continue to play their sometimes unrecognised role as *social centres*. They are places where people can meet, study in groups as well as individually, and find supportive experts. For the off-campus lifelong learner, this role might be found in the public or college library, but will only be satisfactory where it is planned, resourced and managed with lifelong learners in mind.
- *Information quality* will be a matter of increasing importance since electronic services are often not subject to the level of quality control exercised over printed and other traditional publications. Libraries have an important role to play in quality assurance, and again lifelong learners will need this support – especially where their study is unmediated and off-campus.
- *Electronic resources* offer new and exciting opportunities for supporting lifelong learners with the information they need. However we lack, as a library community, good models of the electronic library in its world-wide networked setting. We also, as a profession, lack the depth of knowledge that is needed to design and create the electronic services of the future.
- *Information skills* pose a particular problem for the lifelong learner, who is typically short of time and may be remote from the physical library with its expert advisers. Where, as Dearing recommended, skills work is embedded in the curriculum librarians will have to redouble their efforts to ensure that information skills are adequately covered and assessed.
- For the non-traditional, lifelong learner the provision of good *helpdesk services* may make the difference between success and failure. However, these services need to be designed as part of the overall learning environment, so that academic staff are involved in and take account of their design and function, and the help desk is not the last, desperate port of call.
- If lifelong learning is to be a reality, universities will need to think in terms of developing *lifelong relationships* with their clientele. Libraries, through their

'external' and other membership arrangements, could be in the vanguard of this movement.

- Finally, the rate of change is so rapid and the agenda to be addressed so vast that academic libraries will need *dynamic management* if they are to serve the needs of lifelong learners.

The Report concludes with twenty-three specific recommendations, directed to JISC and the HEFCs, to institutions and their librarians and to the library community as a whole.

Section A: Introduction

Chapter 1: BACKGROUND

Lifelong learning and the learning society are not new issues. Some of the earliest ideas about lifelong learning can be traced back to the 17th century when Comenius wrote that "...no age is too late to begin learning..."¹ Other references have been traced back to the 1940s² and more recently in literature dating to the 1960s and 1970s.³ However, what was at one time a minority interest has exploded into world-wide significance in the late 1990s: lifelong learning has become an important focus for society. Factors such as the information society, the rapid expansion of new technologies, the rate of economic, industrial, commercial and cultural change and, in the West, increased competition from emerging economies in South and Central America and Asia, where labour is cheap, plentiful and increasingly skilled, have all contributed to a new political imperative: 'Education, Education, Education' is the oft-repeated slogan of the new government in the U.K.

The effect that rapid technological and organisational change have had on lifestyles and attitudes to work is such that the traditional division of three stages of life: "education and learning - leading to work - lastly, to retirement"⁴ is diminishing, and together with this has been the demise of the "job for life" culture. So 'lifelong learning' is becoming much more than a passing political fad and instead describes a very real change in the lives of individuals and in the activities of societies.

The seriousness with which governments are taking this issue is illustrated by the Global Conferences on Lifelong Learning, the first of which was held in Rome in 1994⁵, and by the European Commission's designation of 1996 as the European Year of Lifelong Learning, generating a multitude of publications, policies, projects and initiatives. New organisations such as the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) have been set up to provide input and to be involved in European and international projects on lifelong learning.

¹ Comenius, J. Pampaedia, In Longworth, N. and Davies, W.K., Lifelong learning: new vision, new implications, new roles for people, organisations, nations and communities in the 21st century, London: Kogan Page, 1996.

² Giere, U. Lifelong learners in the literature: adventurers, artists, dreamers, old wise men, technologists, unemployed, little witches and yuppies, International Review of Education 40, no. 3 - 5 1994, p.383 - 393.

³ Cresson, E. Presentation of the European Year of Lifelong Learning 1996. (WWW) http://www.ispo.cec.be/cgi-bin/vdkw_cgi/xafala5c0-1688, (1996).

⁴ Cresson, E. Presentation of the European Year of Lifelong Learning, 1996. (WWW) http://www.ispo.cec.be/cgi-bin/vdkw_cgi/xafala5c0-1688, (1996).

⁵ Creating and sustaining learning organisations: integrating the development of human potential, First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning, Rome: November 30 - December 2, 1994. Reports from the conference:

World Initiative on Lifelong Learning, Lifelong learning : developing human potential: an action agenda for lifelong learning for the 21st century, Brussels, World Initiative on Lifelong Learning, 1995.

Longworth, Norman, and Geest, Leive de, eds., Community Action for Lifelong Learning for developing human potential, Brussels, World Initiative on Lifelong Learning, 1995.

The World Initiative on Lifelong Learning was formed to develop the sharing of good practice relating to lifelong learning and to set and monitor standards for global lifelong learning. Many of the Initiative's activities, which include global conferences, books and journals, research projects and lifelong learning projects with Higher Education institutions, were based on recommendations which emerged from the First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning. Initiatives include Community Action for Lifelong Learning (CALL), which outlines recommendations for sectors of the community and the Action Agenda for Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century (1995)⁶ which includes the following recommendations:

- Creation of Learning Organisations.
- Development of skills profiles.
- Initiation of individual lifetime learning plans.
- Provision of learning opportunities in lifelong learning.
- Creation of a learning passport.
- Improvements in accessibility to learning.
- Increased use of educational technology.
- Accreditation of courses wherever they take place.
- Initiation of portability in qualifications.
- Prioritisation of essential new research.

As a result, there is a growing awareness of the need for individuals to take responsibility for their learning, not just at school, college or university level, but throughout their lives, and to constantly review and update their knowledge and skills. The current unstable job market means people are often forced to re-consider their careers and learn new skills in order to keep up with employers' ever changing needs. The Cities of Learning movement sees towns, villages and regions developing as "learning areas".⁷

Cities of Learning include Edinburgh, Glasgow, Southampton and Liverpool as well as a number of other cities across Europe. In Liverpool, the City Council, together with education, training and business communities, is working towards what has been described by the Director of the Liverpool City of Learning Initiative as "a dynamic, strategic framework within which the critical social and economic roles that learning can play are fulfilled".⁸ In 1996, Liverpool hosted "Inspiration 96" which looked at the role of lifelong learning and the information society. Following this, projects such as UNITED (Using New Information Technology in Training and Education) have been set up to encourage the development of learning networks and to open up access.

⁶Longworth, Norman and Davies, Keith W. Lifelong learning: new vision, new implications, new roles for people, organisations, nations and communities in the 21st century, London: Kogan Page, 1996

⁷ Longworth, Norman and Davies, Keith W. Lifelong learning: new vision, new implications, new roles for people, organizations, nations and communities in the 21st century, London: Kogan Page, 1996

p.110.

⁸ Lyon, J., The future starts here, Library Manager, 18, May 1996, pp. 24.

The change of government in May 1997 provided a significant impetus to the development of a coherent policy for lifelong learning in the UK. Less than a year later it is impossible to gauge the extent to which the deluge of policy and consultation documents presage a real change in UK practice. *The Learning Age*, as the February 1998 Green paper was called, opens with an interesting quotation from the Prime Minister – “education is the best economic policy we have” – but then broadens out into a much more visionary approach to learning for all. This document, and others related to it, are considered at length in Chapter 5.

Lifelong learning has been placed firmly on the agenda for higher education in the UK by the publication of the Dearing Committee’s Report⁹, which appeared under the title “Higher Education in the Learning Society”. Its first Chapter is entitled “A vision for 20 years: the learning society” and begins:

“The purpose of education is life-enhancing: it contributes to the whole quality of life. This recognition of the purpose of higher education in the development of our people, our society, and our economy is central to our vision. In the next century, the economically successful nations will be those which become learning societies: where all are committed, through effective education and training, to lifelong learning.” (para. 1.1, p. 7)

A culture of lifelong learning will have implications for the delivery of all education and training, which must extend “beyond the traditional institutions to include the home, the community, companies and other organisations”¹⁰.

The Learning Age will have major implications for all institutions involved in education, which will not find it easy to cope with the massive changes which are implied. Thus, although education needs to operate within some kind of organised structure, it has been noted that “learning is messy”¹¹. People in general do not follow a set pattern once they have left the classroom or the lecture theatre: “sometimes learning is simple, linear, conscious and brief, sometimes it is deeply unconscious and extraordinarily complex”¹².

It must be expected that this “messiness” will become more and more pronounced as lifelong learning becomes embedded in society. Educators may try to impose order, as may governments and institutions, but individuals will follow their own motivations as they respond to the pressures, challenges and opportunities of learning. Ideas such as

⁹ The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education Higher Education in the Learning Society: Report of the National Committee (Chairman: Sir Ron Dearing) London: HMSO, 1997. Ref. NCIHE/97/850. ISBN 1 85838 254 8.

¹⁰ Information Society Forum. Working group 4: education, training and learning in the information society. 1996.

(www) <http://www.ispo.cec.be/cgi-bin/vdkw CGI/xafa1a5c0-1719/> (1996)

¹¹ Greany, Toby, Reaching our potential in a learning society: the Campaign for Learning assesses how we can learn to learn, RSA Journal, CXLV, no.5479, May, 1997, pp.8-9.

¹² Gear, Jane reported in RSA Journal, CXLV, no.5479, May, 1997, p.8.

the “learning bank”¹³ which provide credits to be used throughout life will further empower individuals to define their own learning patterns. Rather than impose one “model” on society, it is more fruitful to accept that lifelong learning needs to be messy and almost chaotic, subject to rapid change and largely self-determined. Charles Handy describes the learning process as being more than simply “memorising facts, learning drills or soaking up traditional wisdom”.¹⁴ This comment was made in the context of the learning organisation, in which Handy recognises that these factors do contribute to learning, but that they are just one small part of the much larger process involved in lifelong learning.

Universities and other academic institutions have a crucial part to play in the development of a culture of lifelong learning and the delivery of appropriate learning opportunities. Firstly it is important to recognise that traditional university undergraduate and postgraduate courses, especially when offered in modular formats available through part-time study and perhaps within a well-developed credit accumulation and transfer scheme, will continue to provide many of the opportunities that people seek.. However, if lifelong learning does become embedded as the norm for the whole population there will also be challenges to develop new kinds of provision. We can expect increased demand for distance learning, with delivery off-campus to the workplace, home or local learning centre. We can also expect an increase in collaborative provision, involving businesses, community groups, professional associations and universities. The support of courses delivered in this way will have to be addressed.

Libraries should also expect to play a central role in the delivery of higher education. As librarians well know, the increase in independent learning which has accompanied increasing student numbers has meant that libraries, learning resource centres and similar facilities are often the place where the bulk of a student’s learning takes place. Can university libraries work in tandem with public libraries, college libraries and others to provide the network of resource centres which will enable lifelong learning to be a satisfying and fulfilling experience? Can they be the contact points where students gain access to a wide range of high quality networked resources? Can they provide the contact with expert advice, not only on information sources, which learners so often need? Can they provide the study areas where groups of like-minded individuals can come together to learn? These are some of the questions and challenges which face librarians today.

The Study which has led to the current report is one of a series commissioned by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) of the UK Higher Education Funding Councils within the context of the Electronic Libraries Programme (eLib). It began with an intention to define, compare and contrast a series of “models” of lifelong learning, thereafter considering the library’s role in relation to each. That exercise has led to the conclusion that the key model is the one that has been identified in the

¹³ Richards, Huw, Lucky election winners face cash hangover, Times Higher Educational Supplement, 21 March 1997.

¹⁴ Handy, Charles Managing the dream: the learning organisation, London: Gemini Consulting Series on Leadership, 1992.

RSA's Campaign for Learning¹⁵, one which firmly recognises that the "right" model can be defined only in relation to the individual and to the learning need, thus enabling the individual to:

- Create a safe environment – and so enhance motivation.
- Remove self-limiting beliefs - ranging from "Show me and then leave me to it" to "I can't do that" - learning can be painful as well as rewarding.
- Identify individual learning styles - encourage learners to consider their learning strengths and weaknesses.
- Identify positive outcomes - manageable/achievable/relevant goals or "chunks".
- Identify the steps needed to achieve these outcomes – create a learning plan.
- Take those steps - include application/practice. Much of what we learn is adapting to new challenges - learning environments need to be constantly re-evaluated.
- Review progress regularly – provide feedback & support from mentors & teachers – and allow flexibility for changes.
- Achieve results - build confidence/self esteem - learn from mistakes in a blame free culture (the 'safe environment' again).
- Start again

It is undeniable that the wealth of educational research which has been carried out in the past few decades has greatly increased our understanding of learning - of how and why learning occurs and of how learners can be motivated, assisted and enabled. To say that lifelong learning is "messy" is not to deny these insights but rather to point to the dangers of assuming that a single all-embracing model can be devised – and that libraries will be able to devise equally neat models on which to base their services. In fact flexibility and constant change are almost certainly the keys, and the design of services will be unlocked by those who place the learner at the centre and seek to understand how, why, where, when and what learning takes place. In the following sections we refer to key elements of this research and demonstrate this importance for the future organisation of learning and hence of learning support agencies such as libraries.

However, 'lifelong learning' is a term that can be and is interpreted in many different ways. In the United States it is usually taken to mean pre-school or adult education, i.e. that learning which occurs outside the formal, traditional school - college - university system. Europe often links the term with day release from work. Other terms associated with lifelong learning are "the elimination of inequality in education", and the "democratisation of education",¹⁶ providing a more political and polemical view.

It follows that lifelong learning does not necessarily come within the framework of formal education. It takes into account all aspects of learning and provides a

¹⁵ Ref. 11. Greany, pp.8-9.

¹⁶ Knapper, C.K. and Cropley, A.J. Lifelong Learning and Higher Education, London: Routledge, 1985, p.19

framework within which an individual can reflect on the past, undertake informal or formal learning in the present, and prepare for the future in terms of lifetime learning experiences.

This view can be taken a step further, by looking on lifelong learning as an “achievement of higher levels of self-actualisation” or as “liberation, self-realisation and self-fulfilment”¹⁷. Lifelong learning can also be viewed more in terms of a means to an end, or as “a system of fundamental principles which serve as a basis for raising and tackling ... problems”¹⁸.

Learners are made aware that they are learning by aiming towards specific goals. Achievement of these goals becomes the motivation for what can be called “deliberate learning”¹⁹. The distinction between one-off or day-to-day learning and lifelong learning is that with the latter, learners should retain what is learnt, and move on through life acquiring new skills to back up existing ones, rather than simply learning for a one-off activity, such as an examination or qualification.

The major characteristics of lifelong learning have been defined by Cropley²⁰:

- Lasting the whole life of an individual
- Lead to the acquisition, renewal and upgrading of knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the needs of a constantly changing society
- Be dependent on the motivation of the individual to learn
- Acknowledge the contribution of educational resources available, including formal and non-formal education.

Reference has been made to the fact that both deliberate and one-off learning should occur throughout one’s lifetime and that there is a place for both these types of learning within the context of lifelong learning. The need to integrate several types of learning will have implications for higher education institutions, who will have to accept that they make up just one small, but important, part of the system. Higher education institutions will also need to promote the skills needed for lifelong learning and give learners the opportunity to acquire them. This defines an important role for teachers in higher education, who are seen as having a “trickle down” effect on whole generations of potential lifelong learners²¹.

¹⁷ UNESCO Final report of the International Meeting of Experts on the Implementation of the Principles of Lifelong Education, Paris: UNESCO, 1983.

¹⁸ Turchenko, V. Continuity as the cornerstone of the new paradigm of education, Paper presented at an International Meeting of Experts on the Implementation of the Principles of Lifelong Education, Hamburg, May 1983.

¹⁹ Tough, A. The adult’s learning projects, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971.

²⁰ Cropley, A.J. Lifelong learning and systems of education: an overview, *In* Cropley, A.J. ed. Towards a system of lifelong education, Oxford: Pergamon, 1980.

²¹ Knapper, C.K. and Cropley, A.J. Lifelong Learning and Higher Education, London: Routledge, 1985, p.44

Tough²² made some predictions for the learner of the future. He talked specifically about adult learners, although the elements listed below could be applied to many types of learner:

- will have a high regard to deliberate learning, i.e. learning for a specific reason, skill etc.
- will be a normal aspect of life
- will be skilled in deciding what to learn
- will be skilled in planning and arranging own learning
- will be able to obtain appropriate help where necessary

Tough goes on to state that the responsibility for helping learners to learn will largely lie with “educational institutions, libraries, employers, professional associations”. Responsibilities may include:

- Improve existing methods of help available
- Develop new methods of help
- Larger amounts of appropriate knowledge made available.

Taking into account the above definitions and references, a working definition of lifelong learning in the context of Higher Education could be:

Lifelong learning is a deliberate progression throughout the life of an individual, where the initial acquisition of knowledge and skills is reviewed and upgraded continuously, to meet challenges set by an ever changing society.

Academic libraries must be ready to play their part in the support system of this growing and diverse population of learners and would-be learners, and to motivate them to achieving specific goals set throughout a lifetime of learning. The increasingly technological environment in which we live will change the nature of learning and the role of those who support it fundamentally.

Finally, a word of warning! The term “lifelong learning” has been hijacked by every commentator in almost every possible context and is not infrequently used as a substitute for thought about societal change. As we will demonstrate some looseness of definition is valuable, yet at the same time a clear definition is essential if progress is to be made.

In the next section of this Report we will demonstrate how we arrived at our definition and the context, mainly within the UK, within which the lifelong learning agenda is being developed. In Section C we will examine the impact of lifelong learning on libraries, in part by examining some recent initiatives taken by university libraries. Section D contains our conclusions and recommendations.

²² Tough, A. The adult's learning projects, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971.

Section B: Lifelong Learning

Chapter 2: LEARNING: A LIFELONG EXPERIENCE

2.1 Introduction

Dictionary definitions are of necessity brief, but give us a starting point. For Chambers', to learn is "to gain knowledge, skill or ability"²³ while for the OED it is "a process which leads to the modification of behaviour or the acquisition of new abilities or responses, and which is additional to natural development by growth or maturation".²⁴ Webster's' definition is "to gain knowledge or understanding of, or skill in, by study, instruction, or experience..."²⁵. "Knowledge", "Understanding", "Skills" and "Abilities" are the outcomes: learning itself is the process.

At the broadest level, learning is of necessity a lifelong experience: every individual action, reaction and encounter involves learning, even if only at the subconscious level. Life is a learning experience. But if life is not to be a process of involuntarily drifting from one experience to another, without direction, and if societies are to function and develop, then learning needs to be planned, directed, evaluated and reviewed. As we shall demonstrate, individuals, organisations and societies all have a stake in ensuring that learning can take place and that, through learning, the well-being of those same individuals, organisations and societies can be secured. Put at its highest, learning is the process through which humankind will achieve its full potential.

At the most basic level, planned and directed learning opportunities are needed to enable individuals to access future learning opportunities: to get a foot on the bottom rung of the ladder of personal development. In the past, literacy campaigns were directed at this goal: the aim was to teach each individual the basic skills (traditionally, "the three Rs": reading, writing and arithmetic) so that they could progress. The war which had to be waged for the principle of universal literacy was hard fought, and there are battles still to be won for there are many parts of the world where basic literacy is still a major problem. Even in the UK levels of illiteracy are alarmingly high and stubbornly resistant to action. But even as action to resolve these problems continues, the agenda has moved on. An influential OECD Study published in 1995²⁶ focused on the concept of "functional literacy" and used a threefold definition:

1. *Prose literacy* - the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts including editorials, news stories, poems and fiction;
2. *Document literacy* - the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in various formats, including job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables and graphics; and

²³ Chambers' 21st Century Dictionary 7th ed. Edinburgh: W & R Chambers, 1990.

²⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary on compact disc. 2nd ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

²⁵ Gove, Philip Babcock, *et al* eds. Websters' third new international dictionary of the English language unabridged Massachusetts: G & C Merriam Company, 1976.

²⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Literacy, Economy and Society: Results of the first International Adult Literacy Survey Paris: OECD and Statistics Canada, 1995.

3. *Quantitative literacy* - the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, to numbers embedded in printed materials, such as balancing a chequebook, figuring out a tip, completing an order form or determining the amount of interest on a loan from an advertisement.

These definitions do not aim to establish a universal standard of literacy, but to provide working criteria on which to judge individuals' ability to function in a modern society (in the OECD's words, "literacy is essential to full civic participation") and without which employment would be almost impossible to find. Although the connection was not made explicitly by the OECD Report, they may also be taken as a baseline without which any post-school individual would find it difficult to access further learning opportunities and thus to engage in the learning society.

But we also need to ask what it is that is distinctive about higher education. The Dearing Review²⁷ (which we consider in greater detail in Chapter 5) asked this question and came to the following conclusion:

"It can be defined as the development of understanding and the ability to apply knowledge in a range of situations. The requires information and the opportunity to engage in 'learning conversations' with staff and other students in order to understand and be able to use new concepts in a particular field. A successful student will be able to engage in an effective discussion or debate with others in that field, relying on a common understanding of terms, assumptions, questions, modes of argument, and the body of evidence. Learning also involves acquiring skills, such as analysis and communication, but these in isolation do not constitute learning."

2.2 Stakeholders in Learning

The information explosion, technological change, organisational change and societal change are all factors which will have profound implications for everyone involved in learning. It is not just the individual who needs to be concerned about this. Stakeholders in learning include:

- The individual as learner
- The employer who needs skilled staff
- The academic institution whose mission is to enable and deliver effective learning
- Society which needs well-educated citizens

²⁷ The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education Higher Education in the Learning Society: Report of the National Committee (Chairman: Sir Ron Dearing) London: HMSO, 1997. Ref. NCIHE/97/850. ISBN 1 85838 254 8.

- Government which can deliver its programmes and secure future prosperity through the development of a highly skilled and flexible workforce.

This multi-dimensional approach has also been adopted quite widely by organisations which are seeking to take a broader view of their responsibilities and interests than that implied by simple “customer” or “shareholder” perspectives. Cameron has suggested that one of the most critical activities of organisations is the establishment and maintenance of a "coalition" of external and internal individuals and groups - also called constituencies - which are supportive of the success of the organisation²⁸. As Brophy and Coulling remarked, “quality to the student may be focused on the process of education - the lectures and lecturers, the support services, and so on - while employers might focus much more on the outputs of institutions and the skills which they bring with them into the world of work”²⁹.

For all of these stakeholders, higher education will need to be influential in developing higher levels of literacy such as might be expected of individuals who are equipped both for advanced learning and for positions of responsibility in organisations and society. The Association of Graduate Recruiters issued a report, also in 1995, which examined the skills which a new graduate should possess. Its focus was placed on “Self Reliance Skills”. These are:

- Self-Awareness - including the ability to identify where personal development is needed;
- Self-Promotion - including the ability to promote one’s own strengths in a convincing way;
- Exploring and Creating Opportunities - with good research skills to identify sources of information;
- Action Planning - including making a plan, implementing it and evaluating progress;
- Networking - developing a support network of contacts;
- Matching and Decision Making - including prioritisation, matching opportunities to skills and making informed decisions;
- Negotiation - including the ability “to negotiate the psychological contract from a position of powerlessness”;
- Political Awareness - understanding the tensions and power struggles within organisations;
- Coping with Uncertainty - adaptability to changing circumstances;

²⁸ Cameron, K. Measuring organizational effectiveness in Institutions of Higher Education *Administrative Science Quarterly* 23(4) 1978, pp. 604-629.

²⁹ Brophy, P. and Coulling, K. *Quality management for information and library managers*. Aldershot: Aslib Gower, 1996.

- Development Focus - including a commitment to one's own lifelong learning, a reflective style and an ability to learn from others' mistakes;
- Transfer Skills - the ability to apply skills in new contexts;
- Self-confidence - an underlying confidence in one's own abilities and a "personal sense of self-worth, not dependent on performance".

These skills (and it should be noted that none of them are discipline specific), together with an appropriate level of knowledge, may be taken as a reasonable objective for all individuals in an advanced society. Lifelong learning may thus be seen as a progression, first to an acceptable standard of literacy, and then on through life to a high level of knowledge, skill and ability such as that outlined above. The process of achieving this level, which then must be evaluated, reinforced and further developed, is what learning is about.

Knapper and Cropley³⁰ suggest that lifelong learning would be facilitated by changes in the orientation and organisation of the existing content of courses and identify a number of areas thought to define the minimum content necessary in a system devoted to lifelong learning. These include knowledge of communication, science and technology, the fine arts, ethics and citizenship, time and space and how to care for one's own body. These themes, it was suggested, should run through all courses and programmes to the maximum extent possible. Extending this approach to university education and lifelong learning raises issues surrounding specialisation and fragmentation of content, as opposed to integrating insights from a variety of disciplines. The Dearing Report (which we consider in greater detail in Chapter 5) enters this debate with its consideration of key skills. Interestingly it quotes with approval research which shows that embedding such skills in the curriculum, rather than treating them as a separate 'add-on', is the most effective method since students respond best to skills acquisition which has been contextualised. This view can then be broadened out, so that, as succinctly expressed by Harvey and Knight³¹, "higher education is about transforming the person, not simply about transforming their skills or domain understanding". Tuijnman³², reflecting on the "education vs. training" debate, observes that the UK is moving closer to the model used in Japan and Germany where there is more reliance on employer sponsored industrial training, and comments that "it seems doubtful whether the ideals of lifelong education can be given real meaning in the context of a training market model". It follows that there are inconsistencies between the understandings of higher education which we have outlined and the skills-motivated, employer-led view which motivates much current policy. Although these tensions have not yet been made explicit, the reconciliation of

³⁰ Knapper, C.K. and Cropley, A.J. Lifelong learning and higher education, London: Routledge, 1985

³¹ Harvey, L. and Knight, P.T. Transforming higher education, Buckingham: SRHE/Open University Press, 1996p.133

³² Tuijnman, A.C. The expansion of adult education and training in Europe: trends and issues. *In*: Raggatt, Peter et al. eds., The learning society: challenges and trends, London: Routledge, 1996.

these differences will be an important determinant of the success of policies like the University for Industry (see Chapter 5).

2.3 Adult Education

It is useful, in considering lifelong learning in the context of higher education, to reflect on the experience of adult education over the last few decades. An adult learner is defined, according to the U.S. National Advisory Council for Adult Education, as: “An adult who is enrolled in any course of study, whether special or regular, to develop new skills or qualifications, or improve existing skills and qualifications”³³ This is both a broad and a narrow definition: it is broad in that it encompasses every student in higher education, but it is narrow in that it focuses on formal courses of study. In fact, of course, settings for adult learning need not necessarily be within a formal structure. They may include “families, community action groups, voluntary societies, support networks, work groups and interpersonal relationships”.³⁴

Attempts to identify the principles of adult learning led Burndage and Mackeracher to outline thirty-six learning principles which included theories such as “adults are able to learn through out their lifetimes” and “past experience can be a help or hindrance to learning.”³⁵

Dakenwood and Merriam³⁶ list a more manageable eight principles of adult learning:

- Adults’ readiness to learn depends on the amount of previous learning.
- Motivation produces more widespread and permanent learning.
- Positive reinforcement is effective.
- Learning materials should be presented in an organised fashion.
- Learning is enhanced by repetition.
- Meaningful tasks are more easily learned.
- Active participation in learning improves retention.
- Environmental factors affect learning.

Adult learners and adult learning efforts are varied since prior learning and prior experience mean that it is uncertain how one adult will respond to learning, or to new ideas and skills. Adults also have a tendency toward self-directed learning and adults’

³³ National Advisory Council for Adult Education, Terms, definitions, organizations, and councils associated with adult learning, Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Council for Adult Education, 1980.

³⁴ Brookfield, S.D. Understanding and facilitating adult learning: a comprehensive analysis of principles and effective practices, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1986. p4.

³⁵ Ref. 24. Brookfield, 1986, p28-29.

³⁶ Dakenwald, G.G. and Merriam, S.B. Adult education: foundations of practice, New York: Harper & Row, 1982.

self-concepts as learners will have an effect on the success of their learning experiences.

A recent UK survey³⁷ showed that 23% of adults are currently learning and a further 17% have been learning in the last three years. 48% learn for reasons connected with work and 36% for personal development reasons. Universities (21%) and colleges (15%) are the most cited locations for learning, followed by the workplace (15%), informally at home (10%) and adult education centres (9%). Two thirds of those studying, and three quarters of people of working age, are aiming for qualifications. 93% of people believe “learning is something people do throughout their lives”. Participation in learning is still skewed by social status and educational experience. Fifty percent of adult learners are middle class, 33% are skilled working class, 25% unskilled working class and 23% are unemployed.

Tett³⁸, in her analysis of statistics relating to participation in higher education produced by the Scottish Office, maintains that the adult participants tend to be under 35, from skilled, managerial or professional backgrounds and have positive memories of, or tangible achievements from, school. Non-participation rates are highest from older age groups, ethnic minorities, those from semi- and unskilled occupations, those living in rural areas and women with dependent children.

Groups in formal post-compulsory education comprise 16-18 year olds in further education, 18-22 year olds in further and higher education and “mature” students aged 23+ in further and higher education and elsewhere. “Mature” students are a very disparate group comprising, for example, women who interrupted their education to rear children, people wishing to pursue a change of career (either voluntarily or through redundancy), retired (or Third Age) individuals, professionals wishing to advance their careers, the long-term unemployed and those affected by significant life-changes (e.g. bereavement, financial loss).

The high incidence of self-directed (non-formal) learning amongst adults was highlighted as early as the ‘60s and ‘70s by Johnstone and Rivera³⁹, and Tough⁴⁰. Tough found that 98% of his interview sample had undertaken “learning projects” in the previous year. (He defined a learning project as “a series of related episodes, adding up to at least seven hours”). An OECD report⁴¹ in 1979 concluded that self-directed learning accounted for approximately two thirds of the total learning efforts of adults. The fact that adults were choosing to conceive, design, execute and evaluate self-directed learning activities and that many adults view this as the natural way to

³⁷ Sargant, N. et al, The learning divide: a study of participation in adult learning in the United Kingdom, NIACE/ DfEE, 1997.

³⁸ Tett, L. Education and the marketplace. In: Raggatt, P. , Edwards, R. and Small, N., eds. The learning society: challenges and trends London: Routledge, 1996 p.150-161

³⁹ Johnstone, J.W.C and Rivera, R.J. Volunteers for learning. Aldine Publications., 1965

⁴⁰ Tough, A. The adult’s learning projects: a fresh approach to theory and practice in adult learning Ontario Inst. For Studies in Education, 1971

⁴¹ OECD. Learning opportunities for adults, OECD, 1979

learn had, said Brookfield⁴², “enormous practical implications” for the design of formal curricula and teaching methods. Indeed, in the 1990s, the demand for open learning has mushroomed. Field⁴³ points to the use of open learning materials by individuals and self-help groups and for many of these, open learning is an opportunity for self-directed *furtive learning*. Field argues that the learning process may be more attractive to learners if some protection is offered from the outside world, a view which resonates with the RSA’s starting point for learning, “Create a safe environment”, outlined in Chapter 1 above.

While there are a variety of settings in which adults can learn, Tough⁴⁴ found that, paradoxically, most adults felt that education and learning was not truly valid unless certified by a professional educator and, with few exceptions, this leads to the identification of ‘valid’ learning within institutions. However, it has also been noted by many commentators that formal educational institutions do not have assessment systems which are geared to learning as a continuum nor to the celebration and certification of most adults’ learning outcomes. Instead they are, as Longworth has written, “based on division, and the celebration of success for the few at the expense of failure for the many, within a restricted set of predetermined aptitudes”.⁴⁵ It is here that the divide between higher education and the needs of adult learners in a learning society may be most keenly felt.

The image of the “traditional” route for higher education students has been full-time attendance, between the ages of 18-21, physically based within a higher education institution, usually away from the parental home, for a duration of three or four years, with minimal but adequate financial support. This model is being increasingly challenged “by the accelerating changes in the once almost exclusive constituency of qualified school leavers”⁴⁶. Changes have not only been in social and educational backgrounds, but also in modes of attendance. They are full-time, part-time, sandwich course or distance learning students, benefiting from access courses, accreditation of prior learning, credit accumulation and transfer, accredited in-house courses whilst in employment, or partnership programmes between employers and higher education.

2.4 The process of learning

A key question, and one on which a vast body of educational research has focused, is “how do people learn?”. The literature on learning processes and learning styles is

⁴² Brookfield, S.D. Understanding and facilitating adult learning Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986 p.150

⁴³ Field, J. Open learning and consumer culture *In*: Raggatt, P. , Edwards, R. and Small, N., eds. The learning society: challenges and trends, London: Routledge, 1996 p. 136-149

⁴⁴ Tough, A. The adult’s learning projects: a fresh approach to theory and practice in adult learning 2nd ed. Ontario Inst. For Studies in Education, 1979.

⁴⁵ Longworth, N. Discerning Learning: Higher education and the Incoming Tide, *In* Longworth, N. and Davies, W.K., Lifelong learning: a new vision, new implications, new roles for people, organisations, nations and communities in the 21st century. London: Kogan Page, 1996.

⁴⁶ Silver, H and Silver, P. Students: changing roles, changing lives. SRHE/Open University Press, 1997

immense and there have been significant shifts in educational practice in recent decades. In higher education there has been a marked increase in independent learning, brought about in part by increases in student numbers and staff-student ratios.

Library staff tend to be very aware of this change because of the increased time they now have to spend assisting students with their coursework and because of the lack of basic independent learning skills which they frequently encounter. At the same time, library staff are ill-equipped to deal effectively with many of these students – they are unlikely to have been involved in course planning, are not conversant with the learning style being promoted by the course team, and are probably not familiar with the detail of the assessment regime. They may be uncertain as to just where their role lies in facilitating and encouraging learning experiences. As information experts librarians will tend to concentrate on how information is identified, retrieved and used in the learning process, rather than on issues like social interaction as a learning experience. We return to this issue in our Conclusions in Chapter 7.

If institutions implement the Dearing Review's recommendation that each should develop a 'learning strategy' there may be an opportunity for these issues to be debated and for librarians to map out a clearer role within the learning process as a whole. This could only be to the benefit of lifelong learners.

2.5 The organisation of learning

A wide variety of models of education are now in use with an equally wide terminology. In this section we summarise the main ways in which learning is organised, recognising that there are many overlaps and many variations in the way courses are organised.

2.5.1 Distance learning

Unlike 'open learning' (see 2.5.3), distance education can be very selective in its student intake, in particular at university and professional levels. Keegan⁴⁷ identifies the following elements:

- Separation of teacher and learner, which distinguishes it from face-to-face lecturing
- Influence of an educational organisation, which distinguishes it from private study
- Provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue
- Possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialisation purposes
- Participation in an industrialised form of education which, if accepted, contains the genus of radical separation of distance education from other forms

To these may be added the adoption of information and communications technologies. It is already noticeable that a wide range of distance learning courses are available on

⁴⁷ Keegan, D. On defining distance education. *In* Stewart, D., Keegan, D. and Holmberg, B. eds. Distance education: international perspectives, London: Routledge, 1988

the Internet, and the internationalisation of higher education is gaining momentum from this source.

2.5.2 *Franchised courses*

Franchised courses are traditional higher education courses but delivered away from the parent university, usually at a college of further education⁴⁸. The parent institution retains responsibility for validating and reviewing the courses, and students are registered by the franchiser. The franchisee (i.e. the local college) has responsibility for running and managing the courses, including responsibility for providing adequate library resources to students and staff. The course may involve elements of distance learning, including specially prepared materials, but frequently the learning methods are identical to those employed in traditional mainstream higher education (i.e. lectures, tutorials, essays, projects etc.). Not infrequently, only the first year of a three or four year degree course is franchised and students join the main in-house cohort for the remainder of their course.

Research on franchised and other partnership courses between higher and further education shows that they are aimed at students who tend to be local, mature, need to study part-time, have been under-achievers, have caring responsibilities and financial difficulties⁴⁹. Between 1991-2 and 1992-3 the number of franchised students increased from 10,000 to 35,000.

2.5.3 *Open learning*

A 1991 EC paper⁵⁰ on open and distance learning in Europe defined open learning as “any form of learning which includes elements of flexibility which make it more accessible to students than courses traditionally provided in centres of education and training. This flexibility arises variously from the content of the course and the way in which it is structured, the place of provision, the mode, medium or timing of its delivery, the pace at which the student proceeds, or the forms of special support available and the types of assessment offered (including credit for experiential learning). Very often the “openness” is achieved, in part at least, by the use of new information and communication media”.

Thus the open learner is usually studying in order to achieve a recognised qualification and often uses materials which have been specially prepared for this purpose and which do not depend on tutor support. The “course” does not require attendance at formal classes or at an institution, does not assume previous qualifications nor does it impose any time-scale for its completion.

⁴⁸ Goodall, D. and Brophy, P. A comparable experience?: library support for franchised courses in higher education (British Library Research and Innovation Report, 33) Preston: Centre for Research in Library and Information Management, 1997

⁴⁹ Opacic, S. The students' experience of franchising. *In*: Abramson, M, Bird, J. and Stennett, A. eds. Further and higher education partnerships: the future for collaboration. SRHE/Open University Press, 1996.

⁵⁰ Open distance learning in the European Community. Report from the Commission on Open & Distance Higher Education in the European Community SEC (91) 897 Final, 24 May 1991

2.5.4 Work-based learning

The recent EC White Paper on teaching and learning⁵¹ identified two main areas where higher education has a role to play in work-based learning:

- Reintroducing the merits of a broad base of knowledge.
- Building up employability.

The Paper acknowledges the fact the higher education cannot stand alone in the learning society, but must work with others to achieve the above aims.

Work based learning can be incorporated into:

- Sandwich courses
- Employment-based learning programmes
- Joint education and industry initiatives
- Continuing professional development programmes

The University for Industry will almost certainly lead to a considerable expansion in work-based learning: we consider this initiative in Chapter 5.

2.5.4.1 SANDWICH COURSES

Sandwich courses were developed in the 1960s, and include a lengthy period of work placement mid-way through a (usually full-time) university course. Sandwich courses have strong links with higher education and employment, as the placement is an essential part of the overall qualification.

Many vocational degree courses also include a short period of work placement, often at the end of the first or second year depending on the length of the course. This is seen as an important element of the course as it prepares students for entry into the workforce, while still in a learning environment.

5.4.2

EMPLOYMENT-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMMES

This type of learning does not necessarily have any obvious links to traditional higher education institutions. Organisations can offer learning in the form of in-house training, external privately run courses and conferences run by relevant professional bodies. However, the introduction of Credit Accumulation & Transfer (CAT) Schemes and modularised courses which were developed in the 1980s have seen a continued involvement of higher education Institutions and the work-force through partnerships with local organisations such as the Training Enterprise Councils (TECs).

The development of NVQs has been influential in securing the recognition of occupational learning and it is hoped that this will continue to achieve “improvements

⁵¹ European Commission, Teaching and learning: towards the learning society, European Commission, 1996. (www) <http://www.cec.lu/en/comm/dg22/dg22.html> (1996)

in workplace competence of personnel at all levels...”⁵². Evidence of competence is another outcome of work-based learning, which can go towards the achievement of NVQ standards, themselves competence based. There are however, a number of issues surrounding the assessment of such competencies, and also the recognition of awards such as the NVQ compared to other recognised qualifications. Co-operation between relevant parties i.e. education providers, professional bodies and employers, may be the only way to overcome deficiencies in the quality of NVQs and their assessment. The whole issue of competence-based assessment remains a topic of lively debate.

One example of work-based learning is the Employee Development Schemes started in the Ford Company in 1989 as EDAP (the Employee Development and Assistance Programme). These schemes have had a remarkable growth. They offer employees opportunities to undertake learning activities of their own choice voluntarily, normally in their own time, but with financial help from the employer. Training and Enterprise Councils and Industrial Training Organisations may also give financial help in the early stages. The Department for Education and Employment advocates these, principally for smaller employers: "Experience suggests that these schemes bring business benefits and are very successful in promoting a culture of learning in employment ..."⁵³

2.5.4.3 JOINT EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY INITIATIVES

A number of programmes have been developed which have allowed universities to link education to the workplace, and thus give students the chance to acquire skills which could be useful in their working lives. Examples are:

- PICKUP (Professional Industrial and Commercial Updating)
- EHE (Enterprise in Higher Education)
- Discipline Networks, the successors to EHE
- IGDS (Integrated Graduate Development Scheme)
- CAEL (Council for the Advancement of Experimental Learning) Programs- US model, works on the theory of “learning by doing”.
- CLEO (Compact for Lifelong Educational Opportunities) - US model provides career information. and inventories, lifelong learning experiences, degree information. etc.

⁵² Brennan J. and Little, B. A review of work based learning in higher education London: Department for Education and Employment & Quality Support Centre, 1996, p.14

⁵³ Lifetime learning: a consultation document. Department For Education and Employment, Scottish Office, Welsh Office. 1995.

2.5.4.4 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Professions provide their members with many updating programmes in continuing education. There has not only been considerable debate about the extent to which professions should make it mandatory for members to attend such courses, but also about who should be providing such courses. Universities and colleges of further education also offer continuing education for the professions, as do many professional bodies and others.

2.5.5 *Extra-Mural Courses*

Extra-Mural (literally “Beyond the Walls”) Courses are a particular form of adult education traditionally provided by universities in the UK. Their origins are in the use of peripatetic tutors sent to industrial areas from Oxford and Cambridge in the 19th century. This practice was followed by some, but not all, of the redbrick universities (e.g. Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Southampton etc.). Unlike adult education generally the epitome of university extra-mural work was the “tutorial class”, a three year sustained programme at degree level, often in collaboration with the Workers' Educational Association which was founded in 1903. Many tutors and students from these classes, including R. H. Tawney and E. P. Thompson, achieved international academic reputations. The high level of commitment required by students, the cost, and the increasing importance attached to vocational and industrial work and not least the emergence of the Open University as a major force in distance education, brought about a change in these programmes in the 1970s.

Extra-mural courses were traditionally viewed as a form of adult education. As a result, extra-mural departments were often viewed as “valuing mainly liberal over occupationally oriented work”⁵⁴ which led them to be isolated from the rest of the institution. The current interest in lifelong learning and of “preparing citizens for the learning society” has raised the profile of extra-mural activity which may provide a way forward. Although terminology is changing, what are in effect extra-mural courses are run at many colleges and universities throughout the UK.⁵⁵ Courses range from short one day programmes to longer in-depth courses

2.5.6 *Independent Learning*

Independent learning can be understood to have several meanings. At one extreme it has been taken to mean correspondence courses. At the other, as Gagne points out, everyone is an independent learner to some extent, for everyone learns as part of everyday life. In formal classrooms each learner sorts and understands the teachings in his or her own way. Therefore, “all learners perceive and codify stimuli in an individual, idiosyncratic fashion and to that extent all learning activities are characterised by a degree of independence”.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Duke, Chris *The learning university: towards a new paradigm*, Buckingham: Open University Press, 1992, p.4.

⁵⁵ For example: <http://www.qub.ac.uk>

⁵⁶ Gagne, Robert M. *Learning research and its implications for independent learning* In Weisgerberger, R.A. ed., *Perspectives in individualized learning*. New York: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1971.

It has also been argued that independent learning is an impossibility, as the term can be used of too many concepts to have meaning, for example factors that influence the “independent” learner could be “a teacher in a classroom, an author of a book or a producer of a film, record or tape...”,⁵⁷ all of which could render the learner as not being truly independent. Brookfield identifies independent learning, and more specifically adult independent learning, as “learning which occurs independently of the formal education system and which is characterised by learner responsibility for the direction and execution of learning”⁵⁸. Here the definition has focused beyond everyday experience to a learner-centred and essentially informal activity, and this is probably the most useful approach.

2.6 Conclusions

Adult learners are a disparate group in terms of background, age, educational attainment and motives for learning. Each individual’s prior learning and prior experience influences his or her responses to learning new ideas and skills, as do factors such as personality type and current job. The motivation to learn can be prompted by work-related reasons or by the desire for personal development, or both. The need or desire to engage in learning can occur at any point during an adult’s lifetime.

There have been significant changes in the development, structure and delivery of university courses thus allowing adults to undertake a more flexible approach to their studies (by distance learning, part-time and franchised courses) than that required by full-time attendance on traditional courses. Adults are keen to take up the opportunities offered. Between 1991 and 1992, there was a three fold increase in the number of students undertaking locally franchised courses, for example.

Work-based learning is incorporated into sandwich courses, employment-based learning programmes, continuing professional development programmes, and other education and industry initiatives involving the higher education sector. It is set to see rapid expansion through the University for Industry and other developments.

The “messiness” of lifelong learning described in Chapter 1 stems from the complexities of the learning process itself, combined with the infinite number of variables and motivations which characterise the adult learner. Learning is a process from which the acquisition of and development of skills, abilities, knowledge and understanding are the outcomes. Learning needs to be a structured process involving planning, direction, evaluation and review. Learning is a lifetime experience.

Yet we cannot assume that the future will be no more than an extrapolation of the past. Of all the influences on society and on the individual the emergence of the networked

⁵⁷ Lawson, Kenneth Philosophical concepts and values in adult education. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1979 p.27.

⁵⁸ Brookfield, Stephen D. Adult learners, adult education and the community, London: Teachers College Press, 1984, p.26

information society may prove to be the most profound in the coming decades. Before we describe and analyse current governmental and societal views on lifelong learning, we therefore turn in the next chapter to a short discussion of the likely impacts of information and communications technologies on learning.

Chapter 3: THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES IN LEARNING

3.1 Introduction

No consideration of lifelong learning would be complete without reference to the enormous impact which Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) are making and have the potential to make. In a very short period of time it has become possible to deliver interactive learning materials and a real-time supporting infrastructure to most locations on the planet using the Internet. The World Wide Web has become an everyday tool for many millions of people in only a few short years. Suddenly the technical infrastructure which will enable those seeking to deliver and support lifelong learning to reach those seeking to access and use its opportunities is in place. Some see this as the key ingredient which will enable lifelong learning to become a reality:

“.. the information technology revolution is creating a new form of electronic, interactive education that should blossom into a lifelong learning system that allows almost anyone to learn almost anything from anywhere at any time”⁵⁹

It is almost impossible to predict the full impact of the information and communications revolution on education. In this short Chapter we attempt merely to highlight some of the most significant developments.

3.2 Access

Figures for use of the Internet vary wildly, but it is fairly safe to assume that before the end of the millennium in excess of 100 million people will have access to the Internet. Although their access may not be without problems - it may be from an out of date PC or may rely on a slow telecoms line - they will nevertheless be able to access much educational material that was previously not only inaccessible but completely unknown. More than that, the existence of a market of this size will encourage more and more producers of materials, packages and support services to develop suitable software. What may now appear to be rather crude and low level learning packages will become more and more sophisticated and will be much better adapted to the networked environment in the future. Access to the Internet will provide access to such materials and will be a key driving force behind lifelong learning. As technology advances, greater bandwidth will enable products of increasing sophistication to be delivered.

3.3 Multimedia

There will be continued development of multimedia products which contain a well-designed mix of video, audio, text and graphics which will incorporate both learning

⁵⁹ Halal, W.E. and Liebowitz, J. Telelearning: the multimedia revolution in learning, *The Futurist*, Nov-Dec 1994, pp. 21-26, quoted in Raggatt, Peter et al. eds., *The learning society*, London: Routledge, 1996.

materials and supporting information sources. Such materials may be delivered online, probably using the World Wide Web and with links provided to relevant sites and systems across the world, or may be packaged as CD-ROMs (or equivalent) thus enabling very large amounts of data to be transported very cheaply and used with acceptable response times and without incurring large telecommunications costs. A feature of multimedia packages is that they can be used non-sequentially, so that the learning experience can be tailored to the needs of each individual - providing that the learner has sufficient support and guidance not to become lost in a never-ending maze. For this reason it is to be expected that the role of the "learning designer" will be crucial: multimedia will cease to be a product put together by technical experts but will be the delivery vehicle for well-designed learning experiences which are based on sound pedagogic approaches.

3.4 Computer-Mediated Communications

Networks will also be used increasingly to enable people to communicate over distances (or merely around the same office) using video conferencing and sophisticated software products. These will include conferencing software such as FirstClass[®] which is a computer conferencing package which has evolved from email and bulletin board systems to provide a system which enables large numbers of individuals to participate in discussions or to observe or follow discussion "threads". It operates through a very simple graphical interface or can be configured to launch from a web browser: many thousands of Open University students already use FirstClass. More sophisticated products like Lotus Notes[®] also have wide user bases. Such packages enable students to share data and to communicate in designated groups, and allow tutors to guide the discussions and deliberations of large groups of students.

3.5 The TLTP Programme

The Teaching & Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) was launched in 1992 by the then Universities Funding Council with the dual aims to "make teaching and learning more productive and efficient by harnessing modern technology and to help institutions to respond effectively to the current substantial growth in student numbers and to promote and maintain the quality of provision". To date there have been three phases to the Programme with total investment not far short of £100 million. To give just two examples, the *TILT: Teaching with Independent Learning Technologies* Project has produced a large number of packages for different subjects, including "GraphIT!: an introduction to graphs & plots for basic statistics", a package on "Sharpening of Dental Instruments" and a "BIOSIS Biological Abstracts on CD-ROM Tutorial". *Personalised Advice on Study Skills* at Edinburgh University, uses computer- and text-based study skills packages to help students to study better and supports staff through analysis of group and individual study problems. It also offers tailored guidance to students.

The TLTP Programme came in for considerable criticism in an evaluation undertaken by Coopers & Lybrand, the Institute of Education and the Tavistock Institute in 1996. Among their findings were:

“We received several reports of where senior management was judged, as one project director put it, to have “no vision at all” and where TLTP material was apparently ghettoised within a single part of a single department.”

“Very few of the projects appear to have any systems in place which would allow the measurement or quantification of any gain. It is therefore difficult to see how ... any benefits ... within the participating institutions ... can be assessed.”

“By far the greater part of the material of TLTP aims to computerise the technologies of books and lectures we found many of the packages lacking in innovation as they did not compare well with the best of the genre.”

“We found that project teams who were willing to indicate explicitly that their work was based on a particular model of learning were an exception.”

and so on.

Of course much of value has come from TLTP. However, the criticisms that have been made reinforce the view that for technology to be effective in promoting and enabling lifelong learning the pedagogic issues must be at the forefront. In this Report, we have for this reason concentrated first on learning, and taken a much briefer approach to the technologies.

3.6 The Electronic Library

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the support of learning with quality information (i.e. information which is timely, accurate, reliable, accessible and so on) is an essential for learning. Reference to the previous Chapter will confirm that some of the most important approaches to learning are dependent on the ability to gather, analyse and synthesise information. In a rapidly changing world in which information can be out-of-date almost as rapidly as it is produced it is important for the learner to be guided to appropriate sources - and to learn the skill of finding such sources for him/herself. We consider some of the most important developments among university libraries in Chapter 6 below, including the eLib Programme itself. However, it is worth noting here that many commentators see the future of the library profession in assuring information quality rather than in direct end-user support or in the acquisition of information sources. Interesting eLib projects in the Access to Networked Resources category may point the way forward, while the new “hybrid library” demonstrator projects which will provide unified resource discovery and resource delivery services emphasise the point.

3.7 Networked Learner Support

As network-based learning has developed a number of practitioners (both teachers and librarians) have become involved in the complex issue of supporting learners in the networked environment - both on- and off-campus. The eLib NetLinkS Project, based

at the University of Sheffield, has provided a focus for development of this concept in the UK and has hosted a number of conferences.⁶⁰

A variety of tools will be developed to enable tutors to manage the learning process. It is essential that new technologies are not allowed to swamp individuals with administrative tasks, but are designed to enable the tutor to make maximum use of technology to assist in the effectiveness of the learning of his/her students. A number of JISC Technology Application Programme (JTAP) projects are active in this area. For example, the *Networked Delivery of Undergraduate Tests* Project at the University of Bristol is providing a automated, secure testing system over JANET. Students will receive immediate feedback while the server will also collect the results from the tests so that lecturers can follow the progress of their students. Another JTAP Project, at the University of Wales, Bangor, called *Toolkit for the Management of Learning* is designing a system which will allow:

- on-line interaction between student and tutor to allow the negotiation and creation of study programmes
- the management, categorisation, browsing and searching of computer based learning resources
- the creation of individualised learning programmes from these resources
- the creation of student profiles consisting of grades, comments and suggestions based on students' use of resources and other learning activities
- the sorting, searching and querying of these profiles to allow the creation of further study programmes
- access to new technological tools as an integral part of the process of learning.

This list illustrates how the management of the learning process can itself become part of the learning process as it encourages an iterative approach which facilitates further learning. Many more examples could be cited.

What is apparent from these developments is that ICTs are starting to force a redefinition of support structures and learning environments which goes well beyond the typical 'convergence' of traditional services. In a paper at the conference referred to above, Banks⁶¹ suggested that a networked learning support strategy requires the definition of three new roles: the subject tutor - the specialist in a curriculum area; the progression tutor - the tutor with an overall view of the student's learning needs and progress, who provides counselling around this, etc.; and the information specialist - providing support around information/resource needs.

These developments illustrate that traditional structures which at first glance appear not to have been unduly influenced by ICTs may in fact be facing profound change.

⁶⁰ See, for example, the overview paper from the [2nd International Symposium on Networked Learner Support](http://www.shef.ac.uk/~is/lecturer/paper23.html), 23rd -24th June 1997 at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~is/lecturer/paper23.html>)

⁶¹ Banks, B. [Beyond the online library: the learning environment](http://netways.shef.ac.uk/rbase/papers/banks.htm)
<http://netways.shef.ac.uk/rbase/papers/banks.htm>)

The social impacts of ICTs within higher education institutions will, almost certainly, be profound.

3.8 Conclusion

ICTs will, without a doubt, revolutionise learning. To some extent librarians find themselves in the vanguard of these developments since they have felt the impact of ICTs on the services they provide relatively early. However, the lessons which have already been learned from the use of ICTs in learning need to be heeded by librarians as they consider how best to structure their services for the lifelong learner. It is always worth recalling that learning is essentially a social process. Some approaches to technology and learning have seen the future as no more than the delivery of packaged learning to the individual in the home or office. That is an inadequate and deeply inhuman vision. Yet social interaction does not have to mean face-to-face contact between tutor and student all, or even any of, the time. Students can benefit greatly from interacting with fellow students tens, hundreds or thousands of miles away. The key to successful use of technology in lifelong learning lies in designing packages and support from the perspective of learning, not from the viewpoint of technology.

Chapter 4: LIFELONG LEARNING: POLICY BACKGROUND

4.1 Introduction

The view is growing that a culture of lifelong learning is needed by society as we approach and enter the 21st century. Lifelong learning is the enabler which will help create an inclusive society in which every citizen is valued, in which every citizen can participate fully and in which every citizen can achieve his or her full potential. It will enable the development of communities which support and enrich the lives of each member. It will provide the skills and knowledge base which will secure the economic prosperity of individual societies in an ever more competitive world.

Internationally, there is a growing emphasis on education as being much more than a one-off activity, engaged in – or perhaps endured – in early life. As Jean-Claude Paye, Secretary-General of the OECD, put it in 1995:

“Continuing to expand education and training systems that rely upon learning opportunities limited to early life ... will not suffice as a strategy for meeting today” challenges Much has been said over the years about lifelong learning but, in truth, it is still a reality for only a tiny segment of the populations of OECD countries. The huge task now facing OECD Governments is to make it a reality for a progressively expanding part of the population, so that it eventually becomes a reality for all.”⁶²

4.2 International Perspectives

As we have seen, the concept of lifelong learning can be traced back decades and even centuries. However, the first *Global Conference on Lifelong Learning* was held in Rome as recently as 1994⁶³. The conference was initiated and managed by the European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI) which was set up to provide input and to be involved in European and international projects on lifelong learning.

The principles of the conference were based on the ELLI definition of lifelong learning:

“a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances, and environments.”

The World Initiative on Lifelong Learning was formed to develop the sharing of good practice relating to lifelong learning and to set and monitor standards for global lifelong learning. Many of the Initiative’s activities, which include global conferences, books and journals, research projects and lifelong learning projects with Higher

⁶² Paye, J-C. *Making Lifelong Learning a Reality for All* Paris: OECD, 1995.

⁶³ Creating and sustaining learning organisations: integrating the development of human potential, First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning, Rome: November 30 - December 2, 1994.

Education institutions, were based on recommendations which emerged from the First Global Conference on Lifelong Learning.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations from the conference have been presented as the Lifelong Agenda for the 21st Century and include:

- The Action Agenda for the 21st Century ⁶⁴
- The Community Action for Lifelong Learning (CALL) ⁶⁵

The Action Agenda focused on the individual's need for a personal learning plan, written down and supported by a mentor or guide. CALL goes on to outline recommendations for sectors of the community.

The European Commission designated 1996 as the European Year of Lifelong Learning, from which publications, policies, projects and initiatives have sprung forth. The 1996 European Year of Lifelong Learning recognised the changing way in which education is viewed and delivered, the vast amount of knowledge that is available through modern technology, and that unequal access can lead to forms of social exclusion. The EU sees the concept of lifelong learning as "promoting education and training throughout the life cycle"⁶⁶ which in turn shapes the way people view and manage their lives.

Edith Cresson, the European Commissioner for Education, Training and Youth, emphasised the need for citizens to be "encouraged and empowered to take on more responsibility for planning and carrying through their own personal and professional development on a lifelong basis"⁶⁷. Mme Cresson identified four key issues for lifelong learning:

- *Changing the way we think about learning, teaching and training:*
People need to view learning as an ongoing process, not one that is learned for a specific goal, i.e. an examination or qualification, and then forgotten or avoided. It is also desirable to acquire more of a broad base of knowledge, which can be built upon where and when appropriate. This view is also expressed in the book "Transforming Higher Education"⁶⁸ which sees "transformative learning" as a way of building new information onto old, and promoting new ways of looking at things: this way of learning is more of an attitude for life, and for continued

⁶⁴ World Initiative on Lifelong Learning, Lifelong learning developing human potential, an action agenda for lifelong learning for the 21st century, Brussels: World Initiative on Lifelong Learning, 1995.

⁶⁵ Longworth, Norman and Geest, Lieve De eds., Community Action for Lifelong Learning for developing human potential, Brussels: World Initiative on Lifelong Learning, 1995

⁶⁶ A policy framework for lifetime learning, 1996.

(www)http://www.transcend.co.uk/LIFELONG_LEARNING/special2/icns201.htm, (1996).

⁶⁷ Giere, U. Lifelong learners in the literature: adventurers, artists, dreamers, old wise men, technologists, unemployed, little witches and yuppies, International Review of Education, 40, no. 3 - 5, 1994, pp.383 - 393.

⁶⁸ Harvey, L. and Knight, P.T. Transforming higher education. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1996.

learning. Higher Education alone cannot achieve this attitude. The learner needs to move on from gaining a higher education qualification towards mastering skills in the workforce.

Motivation for learning must be generated from an early age in order to sustain this culture throughout life. Motivation also means developing the capacity to learn, which goes hand in hand with lifelong learning.

- *Strengthening the foundation for lifelong learning in initial education and training:*

A degree of flexibility is essential. This not only means a more flexible approach to courses, with regard to access and structure, but also with regard to transferability of qualifications, for example between Member States of the EU. One suggestion for this, made in the EC White Paper *Towards the Learning Society*, is a European Personal Skills Card. The paper also sees that a labour market that does not recognise skills and qualifications unless they conform to a standard profile is one that will “cause substantial wastage by locking out talent”⁶⁹.

- *Promoting flexible learning pathways for individuals between education, training and work:*

Whilst education and training will not necessarily guarantee employment, a lack of it can be seen as “a major factor in unemployment and exclusion”⁷⁰. The need for flexible learning pathways is essential in order to address the problem. Some countries have recognised this and offer “second chance” opportunities, with initiatives such as tuition out of normal timetable hours, open learning, and networks for the education of adults who have dropped out of school or university.

- *Focusing on the learning needs of organisations:*

Organisations need to move towards becoming “learning organisations” in order to survive. Organisational change has been brought about by the rapid movements of modern technology. In order to keep up with changes both within a specific market and as a whole, an “organisational learning approach” is needed. This looks on individual learning and organisational learning as two factors which contribute to each other’s effectiveness and ultimate survival.

4.3 The development of UK lifelong learning policy

Although, as we have seen, the concept of lifelong learning can be traced back a long way in the UK as elsewhere, the recent emphasis on the subject was encapsulated in a the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) initiative launched in April 1996. The *Campaign for*

⁶⁹ European Commission, *Teaching and Learning: towards the learning society*. European Commission, 1996.

⁷⁰ *A policy framework for lifetime learning*, 1996.

(www) http://www.transcend.co.uk/LIFELONG_LEARNING/special2/icns201.htm, (1996).

Learning was created with the aim of establishing a “learning society” by the year 2000. This learning society would see every individual in the UK participating in some form of learning throughout their lives and would motivate people to take charge of their own learning.

The motivation issue was addressed through a MORI survey ⁷¹ which divided the nation into four broad groups:

- Improvers.
- Strivers.
- Drifters.
- Strugglers.

Improvers are defined as “people who know the value of learning and are taking effective action to better themselves”. Definitions of the strivers, drifters and strugglers range from “people who know the value of learning, but are not doing enough or applying themselves enough”, to people who “neither value learning or intend to practice it”.

The Campaign for Learning aims to move as many people as possible towards the “improvers” stage. Other categories could include people who know the value of learning but who find barriers (generally beyond their control), which constantly impede their learning. Such barriers might include age, language, lack of childcare, inflexible courses, lack of access to courses etc. The model of ‘messy learning’ which the Campaign for Learning developed has already been described in Chapter 1.

Also in 1996, a Labour Party document on Lifelong Learning⁷² included a statement by David Blunkett the (then) Shadow Education and Employment Secretary, that society has a choice with regard to its future. It can “be a low-tech, low-added value, low-wage economy, or we can move into the 21st century determined to be at the cutting edge of change”. This, he stated, could be achieved “by equipping people with the appropriate skills, provided in the most appropriate format, to meet the needs of the individual and thus create a “prosperous, cohesive and contented society”. The document then went on to outline the Labour party’s framework for lifelong learning by addressing four key principles:

- Quality of teaching and research
- Access for all, in particular those who have not traditionally participated in further and higher education.
- Equity in provision of funding so that no one is denied access due to financial circumstances.

⁷¹ Campaign for Learning. *The campaign for learning*. 1996.
(www) <http://www.transcent.co.uk/llis/cfl/> (1996)

⁷² Labour Party, *Lifelong Learning*. London: The Labour Party, 1996

- Accountability and responsiveness to students and to the wider needs of the community⁷³.

As part of this commitment organisations would be encouraged to take a lead in the continuous development of their workforces and individuals would be enabled and encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Such policies were not limited to the Labour Party in opposition, however. The then-Conservative Government published a consultative paper on lifetime learning⁷⁴ in 1996 which focused on continuing education and training, and the updating of skills beyond the initial education phase, i.e. schools, colleges, universities. The paper looked towards the role of employers and how Government can contribute to developing the culture of lifetime learning and stressed the importance of “a highly motivated, flexible and well qualified workforce to the United Kingdom’s international competitiveness”. Three principles were addressed to all employers, education and training providers, as well as to individuals:

- All employers should invest in employee development to achieve business success.
- All individuals should have access to education and training opportunities.
- All education and training should develop self-reliance, flexibility and breadth, in particular through fostering competence in core skills.

The principles took as a starting-point the need for individuals to make themselves “marketable in the competition for jobs and effective in the life of their communities, through knowledge and skills”. Transferable vocational skills were seen as important since they not only have relevance to specific jobs, but can be used in employment elsewhere. However, the paper also stressed that the motivation to learn throughout one’s life must be backed up by relevant legislation and technological provision. The effects of policies and developments need to be monitored, and education and training providers need to continually improve their outputs in order to meet the needs of a learning market which is driven by customers and their choices.

Writing almost a year after the new government took office, it is timely to examine in some detail the policy framework that is starting to emerge in this area. In the next Chapter, we therefore look at the major reports of the last nine months: Dearing, Kennedy, and Fryer, and then examine the government’s response in the form of the February 1998 Green Paper, *The Learning Age*.

4.4 Conclusion

Considerable attention is being given to lifelong learning on a world-wide scale. A number of initiatives and programmes are identifying key areas to be addressed. For

⁷³ NIACE, Adult Learning in an Information Society: a policy discussion paper. NIACE Telematics Policy Group, 1997, p.4.

⁷⁴ Secretaries of State for Education and Employment, Lifetime learning: a consultation document. 1996.

(www) http://transcend.co.uk/LIFELONG_LEARNING.CONSULT.CHATITLE.htm, (1996).

example, the creation of learning organisations was a key item on the Action Agenda in the World Initiative on Lifelong Learning , whilst a key issue in the European Year of Lifelong Learning agenda was to strengthen the foundation for lifelong learning. In the UK, the Campaign for Learning, launched by the RSA has the ultimate objective of creating a learning society by the year 2000. The UK government is reinforcing its commitment to lifelong learning by preparing a White Paper for publication in November 1997, with the aim of providing an overall vision and stimulating discussion.

It is recognised therefore that a culture of lifelong learning is a fundamental requirement in society. As noted in Chapter 1, the term “lifelong learning” has been used by various commentators to describe an array of educational activities and objectives. This Report began with a plea for a clearer definition of the term if progress is to be made in pursuing many of the international and national initiatives and their admirable objectives outlined in this Chapter. Our working definition of lifelong learning is therefore repeated here and provides a backdrop to the policy documents summarised in the next Chapter:

Lifelong learning is a deliberate progression throughout the life of an individual, where the initial acquisition of knowledge and skills is reviewed and upgraded continuously, to meet challenges set by an ever changing society.

Chapter 5: DEARING, KENNEDY AND FRYER: TOWARDS THE 'LEARNING AGE'

5.1 Introduction

Although both the Dearing Review of Higher Education⁷⁵ and the Kennedy Review of Further Education⁷⁶ were set up before the Labour government took office in May 1997, they both reported after that event. The Fryer Report⁷⁷ was the first output from the new government's National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning, set up in June 1997. The final major document we consider in this Chapter, the government's Green paper entitled *The Learning Age*⁷⁸, appeared in late February 1998.

In addition to these papers, each with its own emphasis on lifelong learning, there have been a series of other significant documents appearing in recent months. We refer particularly to the Department for Education & Employment's paper on the establishment of *The Learning Grid*⁷⁹ and to the Library and Information Commission's *New Library: The People's Network*⁸⁰, since these have particular relevance to the role of libraries in the establishment of lifelong learning in society.

5.2 The Dearing Report

The Dearing Report appeared under the title of *Higher Education in the Learning Society* in July 1997. It proved to be a vast document, the 467 page main report being supported by a further ten bound volumes. As its title implied, a Committee established to "make recommendations on how the purposes, shape, structure, size and funding of higher education ... should develop to meet the needs of the United Kingdom over the next twenty years" placed its findings firmly in the context of a vision of learning as fundamental to society itself. This vision was clearly articulated at the outset:

"UK higher education must:

⁷⁵ The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education Higher Education in the Learning Society: Report of the National Committee (Chairman: Sir Ron Dearing) London: HMSO, 1997. Ref. NCIHE/97/850. ISBN 1 85838 254 8.

⁷⁶ Learning Works: Widening Participation in Further Education (Chairman: Helena Kennedy, QC) Coventry: Further Education Funding Council, 1997.

⁷⁷ Fryer, R.H. Learning for the Twenty-First Century: First Report of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning (Report PP62/31634/1297/33) n.p. November 1997.

⁷⁸ The Learning Age: A Renaissance for a New Britain. (CM 3790), Department for Education and Employment, February 1998. ISBN 0-10-137902-1.

⁷⁹ Department for Education and Employment Connecting the Learning Society: National Grid for Learning: The Government's Consultation Paper London: DfEE, 1997. ISBN 0-85522-645-5.

⁸⁰ Library and Information Commission New Library: The People's Network London: Library & Information Commission, 1997.

- Encourage and enable all students – whether they demonstrate the highest intellectual potential or whether they have struggled to reach the threshold of higher education – to achieve beyond their expectations
- Safeguard the rigour of its awards, ensuring that the UK qualifications meet the needs of UK students and have standing throughout the world
- Be at the leading edge of world practice in effective teaching and learning
- Undertake research that matches the best in the world, and make its benefits available to the nation
- Ensure that its support for regional and local communities is at least comparable to that provided by higher education in competitor nations
- Sustain a culture which demands disciplined thinking, encourages curiosity, challenges existing ideas and generates new ones
- Be part of the conscience of a democratic society, founded on respect for the rights of the individual and the responsibilities of the individual to society as a whole
- Be explicit and clear in how it goes about its business, be accountable to students and to society and seek continuously to improve its own performance.”

A report of the size and complexity of Dearing does not lend itself to simple summary. However, the following ideas and recommendations are particularly important for the achievement of the lifelong learning agenda in the UK and for the role of libraries in delivering that agenda.

5.2.1 Widening Access and Participation

Dearing recommended that the ‘cap’ on student numbers currently in place should be lifted with the objective of raising the participation rate from approximately 32% to around 45% of young people. There should be particular emphasis on increasing numbers of ‘sub-degree’ (a somewhat unfortunate term) students, especially those studying in further education colleges via franchise and similar arrangements, but no increase in degree level work in those colleges. There was emphasis on widening participation to under-represented groups, and particularly to those who had missed out on higher education the first time round. Expansion of part-time student numbers was seen as likely, especially taking into account a view expressed by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals that, “such groups could grow at a much faster rate as a consequence of the need for lifelong learning and continued personal and professional development”.

An implication of these recommendations is that there will be an expansion of off-campus (or at least off *university* campus) delivery of higher education, with obvious implications for support services. As more mature students are attracted into higher education there will be a need to rethink induction programmes and make them more relevant to the pre-existing skills and experience of new entrants. Larger numbers of part-time students could have many implications for access to library services,

including hours of opening with fully staffed services and delivery of services (although librarians were reported as doubted the feasibility of this⁸¹).

5.2.2 *Learning and Teaching*

The Report placed great emphasis on promoting the development of learning and on the need for institutions to have in place a 'learning strategy'. It was noted that as yet teaching methods have not changed significantly, despite changes in the learning environment including reductions in class contact and a much greater emphasis on independent study. Dearing quoted with approval Boyer⁸²:

“Great teachers create a common ground of intellectual commitment. They stimulate active, not passive, learning and encourage students to be critical, creative thinkers, with the capacity to go on learning after their college days are over.”

Overall, Dearing saw a situation in which “innovative teaching strategies which promote students’ learning will have to become widespread.”

As we have seen, Dearing saw UK higher education as being required to “be at the leading edge of world practice in effective learning and teaching”. On a national level this was to be achieved through the establishment of an ‘Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education’, which would:

- Accredit teacher education programmes (as we move towards a situation where all teachers in higher education in the UK have an appropriate teaching qualification)
- Undertake and sponsor research and development in learning and teaching
- Stimulate innovation in learning and teaching.

At institutional level the Report stated that “with immediate effect, all institutions of higher education (should) give high priority to developing and implementing learning and teaching strategies which focus on the promotion of students’ learning”. The Committee stated (what some might regard as an obvious point), that “planning for learning means that designing the forms of instruction which support learning becomes as important as preparing the content of programmes”. The Committee did not prescribe the ways in which institutions should address these issues, but offered some guidance on what a strategy should contain: “an effective strategy will involve guiding and enabling students to be effective learners, to understand their own learning styles, and to manage their own learning”. The Report continued, “We see this as not only directly relevant to enhancing the quality of (students’) learning while in higher education, but also to equipping them to be effective lifelong learners. Staff will

⁸¹ Report 4 of the Dearing Report is entitled Administrative and support staff in higher education: their experiences and expectations. This and later observations by librarians on Dearing’s recommendations are taken from this Report.

⁸² Boyer, E. Scholarship reconsidered New Jersey: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990.

increasingly be involved in the management of students' learning, using a range of appropriate strategies."

This section of the Report thus links very closely to Chapter 2. For librarians in higher education it foreshadows ever greater changes in learning methods and the organisation of learning, and few could doubt that this will lead to yet more emphasis on independent learning. Librarians surveyed by Dearing were unconvinced that the resources, or even the willingness, to create new, independent, student-oriented learning environments exists. Dearing's Report 4 states:

"It could be argued that an independent-learning environment ... requires two things:

- An injection of time and resources to ensure that students are able to take responsibility for their own learning; and
- A student body which is willing to take responsibility for their (*sic*) own learning."

In the view of support staff "most academic staff no longer had either the time or the knowledge to provide students with the information and skills needed to direct their own studies" while "many students were ill-prepared for an independent-learning environment". Furthermore, "library staff believed that academics were unaware of students' problems because they had become so removed from the teaching process".

5.2.3 Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs)

Dearing called them 'Communications and Information Technologies' (C&IT), unlike the rest of the world, but their centrality was obvious from the start. It was helpful that the Report's view on the contribution of ICTs to teaching and learning began with a grounding in reality and in good educational practice: "personal contact between teacher and student, and between student and student, gives a vitality, originality and excitement that cannot be provided by machine-based learning, however excellent. When free to make a choice, even though it costs more, individuals are likely to choose to receive information and experience in the company of others, even as part of a group. Our own view, stated in the conclusions to Chapter 3, that 'learning is a social process' is very much in line with this thinking.

However, with that word of warning, it was clear that Dearing was enthused by the possibilities of ICTs. One recommendation was that all institutions should be required to have in place overarching communications and information strategies by 1999/2000. By 2000/01 all students should have access to a networked desktop computer (something most have already achieved surely) and by 2005/06 access to their own laptop (ignoring the fact that technology will probably have made laptops obsolete by then!). Appropriate training for all staff would be required if the full potential of technology was to be realised, and staff roles would need constant reappraisal.

The Report noted the perhaps disappointing results from the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP – see 3.5) but encouraged further work in this area, with a new emphasis on partnerships, both inter-institutional and international and on

materials that can be used by large numbers of students. A pertinent comment for librarians to note was, “Increased use of new technology will have major implications for the way in which staff and students work. Students will need to develop advanced skills in searching for and selecting valid, relevant and up-to-date information from computer-based storage. They will look to institutions” – presumably to library staff – “to guide them through the information maze”.

5.2.4 Key Skills

Dearing spent some considerable time looking at the question of the ‘key’ or ‘generic’ skills which students graduating from universities should possess. The Report suggested that these were quite limited in number, *viz.*

- communication skills
- numeracy
- the use of information technology
- learning how to learn

It was interesting to note that, after reviewing the evidence, the Report came down in favour of *embedding* key skills in the curriculum, rather than teaching them in parallel courses. This recommendation has considerable implications for librarians, since it suggests that information skills should be taught as an integral part of students’ curricula and not as a ‘bolt on’ or additional course. It is of course much harder for librarians to control the information skills curriculum in this model, although it has the merit of making the skills much more relevant to the students’ other work. However, the assumption that appropriate generic IT skills, for example, can always be grafted onto the curriculum seems somewhat implausible, and in any case is it realistic to assume that every course team will be able to command the necessary expertise? It is surprising that there has not been more debate about this issue to date.

5.2.5 Co-operation

A theme running through the Dearing Report is that of co-operation between institutions. Co-operation may be between universities on a regional basis, may – as we have seen – involve institutions internationally in the development of new course materials, may be between industry and academia (especially in relation to the University for Industry - see section 5.5), may be between higher and further education institutions, and may involve those outside education/industry as institutions seek to develop their wider role in the community. Regional collaboration is strongly endorsed.

For librarians it was perhaps disappointing that Dearing did not give greater emphasis to the remarkable success of JISC’s information content activities, both in making content widely available and in the eLib programme. Dearing repeats the dogma of ‘exit strategies’, despite the very discouraging past history of this approach, and fails to make any real case for continued central funding for services and service development. Again, however, this is surely an area where at the very least some hard

analysis is needed since institutional vested interests could all too easily subvert strategies of national benefit.

On a broader front, Dearing has been criticised for providing very little vision of higher education beyond traditional institutional boundaries. There are no visions of a new form of higher education which engages people beyond institutional frameworks, nor even suggestions of how higher education could be embedded in an experience of lifelong learning which is centred on the learner – for example, where an individual wishes to dip in and out of professional and cultural learning that defies neat pigeon-holing as ‘further’ or ‘higher’ education. It is here that Dearing offers least to the lifelong learning agenda.

5.3 The Kennedy Report

The ‘Widening Participation Committee’, chaired by Helena Kennedy QC, was set up by the Further Education Funding Council in December 1994. It has produced a number of publications, but its key report, entitled *Learning Works*, appeared in June 1997. Its significance was enhanced by its appearance alongside the Dearing Report and its recommendations on expansion of further education which appeared to be very much in line with the new government’s thinking. It also opened up a debate about the relationship between further and higher education and the relative funding of each.

The Kennedy Report provides a number of useful and challenging commentaries on lifelong learning. Thus, for example, under a heading of ‘Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning’:

“Traditional approaches to attracting learners are not reaching a wide enough spectrum of the population. Promotional activities are successful in recruiting people who are receptive to the idea of learning; people for whom learning holds out a promise of benefit. The challenge is to reach the non-learners – people who do not respond to prospectuses, leaflets and advertisements, no matter how well they are produced. These are people who feel that learning is not for them.”

The emphasis is thus on *widening* and not simply on *increasing* participation.

An interesting recommendation that there should be a new ‘Charter for Learning’, which would set out the rights of all individual learners aged over 16, has not found favour with the government and thus will not be an issue for the higher education sector at this stage.

Early drafts of the Report contained strong calls for a redistribution of funding from higher to further education. This was toned down in the published Report, but it is now clear that further education is very much a government priority in the development of lifelong learning.

One feature of the Kennedy Report which is worthy of note is its plea for a shift away from a ‘market forces’ approach to further education, with colleges competing fiercely for students and resources, with a new national system of “permanent local strategic

partnerships”. Further education librarians may thus find new opportunities for collaboration in providing support services.

5.4 The Fryer Report

One of the new Government’s earliest actions was to set up the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning. Chaired by Professor R.H. Fryer, the Group issued its first Report in November 1997, *Learning for the Twenty-First Century*. The main thrust of this report lies in the need to develop a *culture* of lifelong learning for all:

“Above all, a vision of a learning culture will envisage learning as a normal, accessible, productive and enjoyable (if demanding) feature of everyday life for all people, throughout their lives. It will provide stimulus and opportunities for people to be able to make use of information, skills and knowledge to improve their own lives and those of their loved ones, fellow citizens and people in other countries. Lifelong learning can change people’s lives, even transform them

The challenges that must be faced if this lifelong learning culture is to be achieved are multifarious:

- The disappearance of ‘jobs for life’, illustrated by massive industrial change (e.g. in the steel and coal industries) but in fact much more widespread especially as constant technological development and rapid organisational change take hold
- The need for new skills and competencies, but in a fast-changing environment where it is very difficult to predict exactly which skills will be needed
- Social change, for example the roles played within families changing through far more one-parent families and the demise of the idea of a family ‘breadwinner’
- Social exclusion, which has worsened as social and economic inequalities have increased in recent years, and has been partly responsible for
- Lack of basic skills, which results in a vicious circle of deprivation through exclusion from employment and thus from work-based training
- and so on

The Fryer Report sees the development of the Information Society as a two-edged sword. It offers great opportunities: “learning at home and outside conventional educational establishments will become more widespread” but “increasingly, those who do not understand how to use these technologies will be excluded from active participation in civil and democratic society”. Nevertheless, Fryer is positive about the opportunities that now offer themselves:

“The most important challenge is to recognise that high quality learning is not the exclusive preserve of the educational institution or the training centre. Much

learning has always happened outside these locations, and change, including curricular and technological change, is making it easier for such change to happen. We increasingly need flexibility in the times, locations and forms of learning so that they better suit the needs of individuals and groups. We need to see that all can benefit from the emerging opportunities, both formal and informal, at all stages of their lives.”

The Fryer report goes on to articulate a vision of lifelong learning for all. Eight core principles on which this can be built are spelled out:

- A coherent vision which is articulated as the Government’s strategy
- An equitable approach, which makes “learning ... a normal, accessible, productive and enjoyable (if demanding) feature of everyday life”.
- Putting learners and learning at the centre of policy and good practice
- An emphasis on variety and diversity, in terms of the ‘what’, ‘where’, ‘when’ etc. of learning
- All branches of government, and not just the ‘Department for Education and Employment’, should be engaged in the development of a learning culture for the nation
- High quality and flexible provision
- Effective partnerships including what are termed ‘local, strategic partnerships’
- Shared responsibility between government, other public authorities and bodies, employers, providers and individuals

The Report then goes on to consider the implementation of ‘Lifelong Learning for All’ in considerable detail. Among the significant and interesting suggestions are those on the development of learning in the community and at home. Fryer suggests that the government should continue to encourage the development of Learning Cities (see page 7), Towns and Communities and should support the establishment of local Learning Centres: “At its best, a local learning centre can offer access to information technology, including personal computers with CD-ROMs, access to the Internet and broadcasting, software, print materials, and access to a learning adviser. It offers, too, a context for learning at a distance convivially. Such centres Should enrich the learning capacity of village halls in rural communities, develop the role of libraries and museums, and build on college learning resource centres.”

These references to libraries and learning resource centres are further expanded:

“In promoting lifelong learning, and widening access, full use should be made of the major community resource which is invested in libraries, museums and study centres. They already have an excellent track record in providing learners of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds with a rich and diverse range of materials, opportunities, information, facilities and staff support. They need to be seen more widely as part of a mosaic of both local and national provision, offering additional arena through which the culture of lifelong learning for all can be fostered and sustained. They too need to be connected to the proposed

National Grid for Learning” (see section 5.6) “and their staff should be supported in developing further the skills and aptitudes which will be necessary to carry through the new strategy.”

Fryer also refers to the role of higher education institutions in lifelong learning:

“As lifelong learning for all develops, more people are likely to look either to their local institution of higher education for part-time programmes of learning or further afield for high quality distance or open learning programmes.”

The Report continues,

“In future, universities and colleges are likely to see the enormous growth of part-time study, distance learning and technology based programmes. The universities themselves can be centres for the development of excellence in all of these, working in close partnership with other providers and users of learning The secret of success will be for different sorts of strategic partnership to make the most of the rich diversity and full range of universities.”

It is interesting to note that libraries are identified as one of the ‘Learning providers’ alongside schools, further education and higher education.

“We envisage that libraries will make a significant contribution to the construction and maintenance of a learning culture for all. Whether public or attached to educational institutions or private businesses, libraries represent a major source of information, understanding, knowledge, creativity, culture, heritage and leisure. They represent a vital collective resource for a range of individuals, communities and companies. In the information society their value will increase, not diminish.”

Fryer commends the Library & Information Commission Report *New Library: the People’s Network* (see section 5.6), endorses its recommendations and concludes:

“Libraries (must make) arrangements To provide clear information and ensure inclusive access, including opportunities for people to make use of the new technologies of communication and information in learning.”

5.5 The University for Industry

The idea for a University for Industry was endorsed as a central education initiative in the Labour Party’s 1997 election manifesto, since when more detail has begun to emerge. The Ufi has a number of functions:

- It will be charged with stimulating a mass market for lifelong learning
- It will provide information, guidance and advice to would-be lifelong learners. (The *Learning Direct* freephone line is already available on 0800-100-900)

- It will act as a broker to link together individuals and companies with education providers (rather than concentrating on developing its own courses)
- Where it identifies gaps in provision, however, it will commission materials and programmes
- It will provide a 'kite marking' service to guarantee the quality and standards of provision
- It will provide market intelligence on skills and knowledge needs as an input to planning future requirements

Further information on the government's planning for the UfI is emerging, especially with the publication of the February 1998 Green Paper (see Section 5.7). This document suggests that the UfI will assure the quality of local learning centres, which will include libraries.

5.6 Other Reports

Among the flood of documents which has emerged from the new government and its advisory bodies, two are particularly pertinent to the role that libraries will play in the support of lifelong learning, and we consider them here.

5.6.1 *The National Grid for Learning*

Issued by the Department for Education and Employment as a consultation paper, the proposal is for a National Grid for Learning which is defined as:

- "A way of finding and using on-line learning and teaching materials", and
- "A mosaic of inter-connecting networks and education services based on the Internet which will support teaching, learning, training and administration in schools, colleges, universities, libraries, the workplace and homes".

The importance of the Paper is that it starts to elucidate the design of lifelong learning support systems in a networked, information age. It recognises that electronic networks bring the possibility of creating a national 'grid' which would link together learners, educators and resources and which would have the potential to enrich the experience of lifelong learning immeasurably. The Grid is seen as a framework in which providers – including commercial companies which wish to offer services – can be brought together. While the design will be 'owned' by government, it will be made a reality by the providers. Furthermore, once beyond the prototype stage the Grid "should involve a shift from an essentially public service ...to a real public/private partnership enabling access nation-wide to a much wider range of services".

The initial stage of the Grid will concentrate on teacher *and librarian* development. It is recognised that there are problems in the schools sector in particular, not only with ageing equipment and the lack of suitable software, but in "the confidence of teaching staff in the use of ICT to teach". The further education sector's *Quality in Information and Learning Technologies* (QUILT) Programme is seen as an encouraging model,

while higher education's use of SuperJANET to deliver collaborative teaching across dispersed sites is also noted. Reference is made to JANET's use "to provide access to remote information sources for both learning and research purposes".

The proposals set out a series of ambitious targets for the five-year period to 2002. For example, all serving (school) teachers should be confident to use, and to teach the use of, ICT within the curriculum; the UK should be "a centre of excellence in the development of networked software content for education and lifelong learning"; general administration should "largely cease to be paper-based"; and so on. There will be a *Virtual Teacher Centre* to encourage teachers to develop their own content for the Grid.

A section on the contributions of libraries concentrates firstly on public libraries' "key role in stimulating a personal thirst for knowledge and self-improvement". It continues, "the most significant changes to the public libraries sector in the future will arise from the development of ICT. They will be transformed by the quality and quantity of new and existing information and knowledge that can be made readily and speedily available to the public". The role of the national libraries is then outlined, with the focus on the digitisation of the British Library's "magnificent collection of historic books and documents".

5.6.2 *New Library: The People's Network*

This major Report from the Library & Information Commission argues "for the transformation of libraries and what they do". Its recommendations fall under five headings, as discussed below.

5.6.2.1 A NATIONAL INFORMATION POLICY

It is argued that government must take the lead in "delivering an integrated national information policy with a strong emphasis on the central role of libraries". The immediate focus should be on the implementation of a public library networking plan, the result of which will be to "ensure that individuals in any area can enter into and interact with resources and learning programmes available outside their immediate area". All public library networks should be interconnected with a minimum bandwidth of 2 Mbps, and all branches should be connected by ISDN or equivalent. This would provide the basic infrastructure on which services could be delivered anywhere in the UK. Links with the University for Industry and the Learning Grid would be fostered.

5.6.2.2 A 'PUBLIC LIBRARY NETWORKING AGENCY'

Among the mechanisms which will be required to implement the national information policy are a *Public Library Networking Agency* to "lead and co-ordinate development and implementation of networking across the UK public library sector" including fostering a development programme for content, services, network infrastructure and staff training.

5.6.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENT

After publication of the Report it was announced that the government would create a £50million fund for the development of public library content, another key recommendation. The areas flagged for priority content development are:

- Enhancement of educational and especially lifelong learning opportunities
- Support of training, employment and business to foster economic prosperity
- Social cohesion through political and cultural information

5.6.2.4 THE DELIVERY OF CONTENT

The Report emphasises that public libraries should use the network to deliver content of all types, including commercially-produced content, government information, Internet resources and resources developed by public libraries themselves.

5.6.2.5 A TRAINING STRATEGY

The aim should be to raise the level of training in respect of networked information and its delivery among the 27,000 people employed in the UK public library sector. In particular the aim should be that each one of these people:

- Is trained in the concepts of the UK Public Library Network, as set out in the Report
- Understands the magnitude of the change programme which is required
- Acquires new ICT skills that meet set competence levels, and is able to apply those skills to all relevant aspects of their work
- Is formally assessed on these skills as part of her/his learning programme, and possesses an up-to-date record of learning achievement

5.6.2.6 OTHER ISSUES

The Report is unusual in that it gives very clear estimates of the costs involved in implementing its proposals. It also devotes a chapter to performance evaluation, and emphasises the importance of developing techniques to enable networked electronic services to be monitored and assessed, and their quality assured.

5.7 The Learning Age

The government's initial responses to Dearing, Kennedy and Fryer, and its policy framework, are set out in the February 1998 Green Paper *The Learning Age*. Although the emergence of this document as a Green, rather than the promised White, Paper was disappointing it would appear that this is a mechanism used to recognise the realities of resourcing and in particular that it would have been unwise of any government to make

promises in a White Paper which appeared in the midst of a 'Comprehensive Spending Review'. However, it does mean that there will be a round of consultation and further delay before many of the necessary actions to create the UK as a Learning Society can be put in place.

5.7.1 *The Vision*

The Green paper begins with some very challenging yet positive messages about the 'new age' which we are entering:

“We are in a new age – the age of information and of global competition. Familiar certainties and old ways of doing things are disappearing. The types of jobs we do have changed as have the industries in which we work and the skills they need. At the same time, new opportunities are opening up as we see the potential of new technologies to change our lives for the better. We have no choice but to prepare for this new age in which the key to success will be the continuous education and development of the human mind and imagination.”

It is noteworthy that, although the Green Paper begins with the previously quoted statement from the Prime Minister about education being “the best economic policy we have”, the vision goes well beyond economic concerns:

“The development of a culture of learning will help build a united society, assist in the creation of personal independence, and encourage our creativity and innovation Learning offers excitement and the opportunity for discovery. It stimulates enquiring minds and nourishes our souls. It takes us in directions we never expected, sometimes changing our lives Learning helps older people to stay healthy and active, strengthens families and the wider community, and encourages independence.”

5.7.2 *Building the Vision*

It is pleasing to note that, in the words of the Green Paper, “a great strength is our universities which educate to degree and postgraduate level and set world-class standards”.

Six principles are enunciated as the building blocks for achieving the vision:

- Investing in learning to benefit everyone – using extra funding from government but matched by contributions from employers and from individuals
- Lifting barriers to learning – providing information and advice, guidance and support to individuals, including support such as childcare to free people to pursue educational opportunities
- Putting people first – investing in flexible learning and making learning more convenient wherever it takes place

- Sharing responsibility with employers, employees and the community – promoting partnerships and encouraging the take-up of initiatives such as Investors in People (IIP)
- Achieving world class standards and value for money – requiring better management of education, the setting of appropriate standards for teaching, and quality assurance
- Working together as the key to success – with local strategies involving all stakeholders to improve access to learning, planning and advice and including working with European partners

5.7.3 *The Challenge*

While as a nation we have our strengths, it is also clear that we have our weaknesses. These lie particularly in basic and intermediate skills, where we lag well behind our competitors. A further challenge is that attitudes towards learning need to be changed so that people want to learn and to continue to do so throughout their lives.

At the same time there is recognition that at the individual level people face many obstacles in pursuing learning, including “time, cost, fear, inadequate information, complexity and inconvenience”. Among ways to improve this situation there are a set of suggestions which, although not directed at libraries and librarians, have much to say to them. We could help to remove obstacles by:

- “encouraging people to have *higher expectations* of themselves and of others
- providing learning *at a time and place to suit* the individual or firm
- ensuring that all learning has *high standards of teaching and training*
- *making learning welcoming*
- *giving people the support they need* in order to learn
- *providing qualifications for adults that are easily understood*
- recognising that, over time, *institutions and ways of doing things will need to change* in response to the needs of learners”.

5.7.4 *Proposals*

As noted above, many specific proposals, especially where they involve resourcing, are dependent on the current Comprehensive Spending Review. However, the Green Paper does point the way with a number of firm commitments. These include:

- Expanding higher and further education with an extra 500,000 people on courses by 2002. Most of this expansion is, as Dearing suggested, to be at ‘sub-degree’ level.
- Creating the University for Industry (see 0 above).
- Providing much greater opportunities for people to learn at work, at learning centres, in the community and at home.
- Improving information and advice, the first step being the establishment of the *Learning Direct* freephone service

- Setting up *Individual Learning Accounts* which will enable individuals to ‘shop around’ for their learning, but will also require investment by individuals. They will include facilities for individuals to save and borrow to finance their education.
- Overhauling, but retaining, the student loans scheme
- Encouraging learning in the workplace, seen as a ‘natural issue for partnership between employers, employees and the trade unions’
- Setting up a *National Skills Task Force* to assess skills needs and co-ordinate action. The key tasks are defined as encouraging the development of:
 - Basic skills, to tackle poor literacy and numeracy
 - Employability skills for young people
 - Specific employment skills for young people, particularly through the Modern Apprenticeship scheme
 - Technician skills, which will be a priority for the University for Industry
 - Applicable graduate and postgraduate skills, for example through Graduate Apprenticeships which will emphasise advanced management and other professional skills and qualifications
 - Managerial skills, again including a priority for the University for Industry
 - Partnerships between the new employer-led *National Training Organisations, Training & Enterprise Councils*, further education colleges and universities in order to deliver this agenda.
- In a separate section, the key skills required to enable young people and adults to “develop and maintain their employability” are listed. They are:
 - Working with other people
 - Effective communication, including written skills
 - The ability to work with numbers
 - The use of information technology
 - Developing learning skills
 - Problem-solving
- Widening access, building on the recommendations of the Kennedy Report (see Section 5.3) and some of Dearing’s recommendations on increasing participation of under-represented groups in higher education
- Improving provision for people with disabilities

There are, of course, many more detailed proposals and commitments which we have not enumerated here.

5.7.5 *The role of libraries*

Libraries share a section of the Green Paper with the ‘creative industries’, itself an interesting comment, although it should not be assumed that the role of libraries is limited to the issues which are listed. The section is positive in tone: “the public library service holds an enormous range of educational material and has the potential to deliver information and learning to people of all ages and backgrounds, right across the country”.

There had already been an announcement that £50million of Lottery funding was to be set aside for the provision of 'digital content in libraries' (see Section 5.6.2). There is also a promise that further proposals for the development of public library networking will be announced shortly, as part of the National Grid for Learning.

Nothing is said of academic libraries, either in further or higher education.

5.7.6 Summary

There can be little doubt that *The Learning Age* is an attempt to capture a new vision of learning and to make it a reality for the people of the UK. The emphases on ensuring that all young people have basic skills and are fit for employment, the widening of access to further and higher education, the new approach to and emphasis on work-based learning, and the overall emphasis on partnerships as the way forward together set a challenging agenda.

5.8 Conclusions

Libraries do not get a great deal of space in most of the reports which have been considered in this Chapter. Where they are mentioned the emphases are on them as storehouses of historical material, ripe for digitisation, or on the potential of the public library to be transformed into a networked community resource, not least to support lifelong learning. Public and national libraries are thus faced with many challenges if they are to respond to these opportunities. While it is not made explicit, libraries in higher education will also face a series of challenges if they are to play their part in the 'learning revolution'. If higher education is to become more distributed, as people learn at home, at work or in local learning centres, university libraries will no longer be able to deliver their services in a secure, familiar, physical building but will need to be wherever learning is taking place. We return to this, and other challenges in Chapter 7 below. First we outline, in the following chapter, the current situation in the provision of library services to lifelong learners in the UK by higher education institutions.

Section C: Libraries and Lifelong Learning

Chapter 6: LIBRARIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

6.1 Introduction

This Chapter examines the role of libraries in supporting lifelong learning, with particular focus on libraries in higher education institutions. Although it is recognised that all forms of study, traditional and non-traditional, are examples of lifelong learning activity, the emphasis in this chapter is on library services to non-traditional students. These are considered to be students who are undertaking part-time courses, distance learning courses, or be attending higher education courses which have been franchised to local colleges by a remote university. The first part of this chapter considers the significance and the value of library services in non-traditional forms of study, and then examines the problems which students experience in accessing and using library services and the difficulties associated with delivering and managing special services to the non-traditional student. The second part of the chapter describes some examples of current library provision for non-traditional students in the UK and selected countries overseas.

It should be emphasised that public libraries have since their inception had a role as ‘the people’s university’ in providing for lifelong learners. This role continues today for students as well as learners in all walks of life. The chapter therefore concludes with a consideration of the role of the public library in supporting lifelong learning.

6.2 The role of libraries in the lifelong learning process

The role of the library in the lifelong learning process is a topic which has engendered significant debate from a range of philosophical and educational perspectives as well as from strategic and operational perspectives among the library community. Brophy⁸³ asserted in a recent conference address that libraries are part of a social process “which transforms stored data into knowledge for the benefit of its users, and knowledge into stored data for the benefit of posterity, and that the benefit of having libraries can be seen in the impact they have on individuals and societies. Every user, regardless of his or her physical location, should be able to use all library services”. In a recent paper, Maurice Line⁸⁴ suggested that the shift of emphasis from teaching to learning, and in particular to ‘lifelong learning’, is having a fundamental impact on all types of library. He presented concepts of academic and public libraries of the future, where culture, learning and research will be fostered, and where most of the competencies of librarians and information professionals will become more necessary, rather than less, because information handling skills will be of prime importance.

⁸³ Brophy, P. Libraries without walls: from vision to reality. In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p.6-13

⁸⁴ Line, M. Re-engineering libraries for a lifelong learning society Logos 8 (1) 1997 p.35-41

Wooliscroft⁸⁵ predicts that the growth of demand for further & continuing education programmes and the increasing awareness of the benefits of lifelong learning will influence the demand for formal distance programmes. Many institutions, from secondary level up, will be required to become proficient in distance learning modes of delivery within the next few years. This should result in the flourishing of demand for library services from distance learners. Educationalists will seize upon communication possibilities afforded by electronic networks, satellite and cable broadcasting and as Wooliscroft notes, “librarians should and must be the mirror image of the work of educators in this domain”.

Library services to support adult and lifelong learning in the UK have developed in response to changes in the higher education system (distance learning, part-time study, franchising of courses), with developments in adult and continuing education and open learning, and in response to demands from independent learners. These developments are evident in both the public and academic library sectors. Developments in the public library sector are examined in the final part of this chapter.

In further and higher education, evidence from surveys of non-traditional students indicates the importance of library and information services to such students in supporting formal courses of study, whatever their mode of delivery. Goodall and Brophy⁸⁶ investigated the needs of students studying on franchised courses at a distance from the host university and found that if the students’ information needs could not be satisfied by the franchised college library or the host university library, students relied on a wide range of coping strategies to fulfil their requirements. These included sharing materials, purchasing texts, photocopying, borrowing tutors’ materials and using other libraries. Similarly, in a study of distance learning postgraduate students’ use of libraries, Stephens reports on the students’ use of a wide range of libraries particularly when the library at the course providing institution was inaccessible due to distance⁸⁷. Results of a 1979 survey⁸⁸ showed that despite the approach of the Open University of supplying monographs which contain “all the materials which the students require for the successful completion of their courses”, 70% of Open University students used a library (other than the OU library) for some of the reading material for their OU studies.

In countries with a long history of delivering distance learning courses to remote students, library provision to support distant learners is the norm, rather than the exception as in the UK. In Australia, the USA and Canada some institutions have

⁸⁵ Wooliscroft, M Introduction In. Watson, E.F. and Jagannathan, N. Library services to distance learners in the Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Learning, 1997. P.1-8

⁸⁶ Goodall, D. and Brophy, P. A comparable experience? library support for franchised courses in higher education. (British Library Research and Innovation Report: 33) University of Central Lancashire, 1997

⁸⁷ Stephens, K. The library experiences of postgraduate distance learning students, or Alice’s other story In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p122-142.

⁸⁸ Field, J.G. and Blacklock, S. Books and libraries. Policy Survey Report 4, Inst. of Educational Technology, Open University, 1979

developed sophisticated levels of service unparalleled elsewhere, largely necessitated by the large geographical spread of the population. These have been partly facilitated by the development of new technologies, including electronic information networks. The role of the library service is underpinned by philosophies which value research and information skills as fundamental to the educational process. In Australia, for example, Deakin University Library claims a strong user focus and the overarching purpose of the library is summed up in its mission statement as simply “we help people learn”.⁸⁹ Most Australian universities are funded by the Australian federal government. As a condition of this funding, universities have to comply with government policies, in particular that universities must not charge students for access to resources that are fundamental to their learning (e.g. access to laboratories, test equipment and chemicals and libraries) and that all institutions must aim to provide in their libraries at least 90% of texts and other recommended reading material for a student’s course. It is the responsibility of the enrolling university to provide the library and information service. McKnight⁹⁰ states that in Australia “it is not appropriate to expect off-campus students to use the resources of other libraries for their course reading material , or to expect other libraries to support university students”.

Although there are good examples of attempts in the UK to provide library services to non-traditional students, which are of equal standard to those offered their traditional counterparts, such examples are few. Recent studies exemplify the marginalisation of library services in the development and delivery of distance learning and other ‘non-traditional’ courses by some institutions. For example, in 1991, Peacock investigated institutional policy on part-time study in the UK with reference to library services and found, by examining public documents, that the library implications of part-time study received minimal attention at university level.⁹¹ In 1994, Goodall⁹² reported on a survey of 40 higher education institution libraries in the UK in which all respondents indicated that the provision of franchised courses had not significantly altered the way the university library was organised or the range and style of services offered. Heery⁹³, in his analysis of library services to non-traditional students, concluded that deployment and roles of academic staff and the organisation of higher education institutions is based on an established model of the traditional student e.g. careers services, libraries, refectories, academic life in general. As Goodall and Brophy⁹⁴ noted, despite the continued and growing presence of non-traditional students, the

⁸⁹ McKnight S. Library services to off-campus students: an Australian perspective In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p. 52-62

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ Peacock, A. Library provision for part-time students in higher education: a study of institutional policy and student experience in one university M.Ed. dissertation, University of Sheffield, 1992

⁹² Goodall, D. Franchised courses: the university library perspective. Education Libraries Journal 37(3) 1994. P.5-20

⁹³ Heery, M. Academic library services to non-traditional students Library Management 17 (5) , 1996 p. 3-13

⁹⁴ Goodall, D. and Brophy, P. A comparable experience? library support for franchised courses in higher education. (British Library Research and Innovation Report: 33) University of Central Lancashire, 1997

approach has been to make them fit in or run alongside the traditional higher education systems. Few formal mechanisms exist to enable librarians to contribute significantly to the needs of students. Several writers have commented on the exclusion of librarians in the development of distance learning, part-time and franchised courses^{95 96}.

There are conflicting views on the role of the library in distance learning amongst the course providers themselves, as found by Unwin et al.⁹⁷. One view is that academic study should encourage students to explore information sources for themselves, as well as examining material on reading lists. Another view is that it is the function of the distance learning materials to provide all the required information for study, and the student should not need a library. (One could argue, of course, that the distance learning course providers should be involving the library in the preparation of course materials.) It may be argued that it is spoonfeeding students to provide articles and excerpts and that it is desirable that students gain information seeking and research skills. Cavanagh and Tucker⁹⁸ assert, however, that many distance students will simply go without or will undertake a minimum of reading if access to required items is in any way difficult. Providing the full-text of readings is being realistic and may encourage some students to read more widely.

Stephens encapsulates the non-traditional student's experience of libraries in the UK with her vision of 'another Alice' based on the fictitious young undergraduate Alice in the Follett Report whose learning and information requirements were facilitated and served by purely electronic means. Stephens' Alice is "perhaps the mother of the first, following a part-time, postgraduate course, at a distance from the providing university" making frustrated attempts at acquiring essential information for her study from libraries at the course providing institution, her old university, her local university and from the public library until finally.....

"She [Alice] wondered ...if the day would arrive when an adult learner's version of a mass trespass would be needed to secure the rights of citizens to access a national resource of materials for lifelong learning in libraries".⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Brophy, P. Goodall, D., Wynne, P. Library services to distance learners: research and operational developments in a UK and European context. In. Watson, E.F. and Jagannathan, N.(eds) Library services to distance learners in the Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Learning, 1997 55-59

⁹⁶ Jenkins, J. The distance learner, the librarian and the course development team. In. Watson, E.F. and Jagannathan, N.(eds) Library services to distance learners in the Commonwealth. Commonwealth of Learning 1997 p.41-44

⁹⁷ Unwin, L., Bolton, N. and Stephens, K. The role of the library in distance learning: implications for policy and practice Library and Information Briefings (6), May 1995

⁹⁸ Cavanagh, A.K. and Tucker, J. A library service to distance learners: what should the library provide? In. Watson, E.F. and Jagannathan, N.(eds) Library services to distance learners in the Commonwealth. Commonwealth of Learning 1997 p.109-122

⁹⁹ Stephens, K. The library experiences of postgraduate distance learning students, or Alice's other story In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p122-142

The following section examines some of the barriers to library provision for lifelong learning.

6.3 Problems in providing library and information services to lifelong learners

The problems encountered by non-traditional students have been identified by Heery¹⁰⁰ as mainly being a shortage of time (largely arising from other responsibilities and commitments such as work and family), inadequate study skills and problems with essay writing. Unwin et al.¹⁰¹ note that distance learning students and part-time students are likely to be mature students, more demanding and more highly motivated than their traditional counterparts, but they have less recent experience in library use and information skills and use of IT. Non-traditional students generally find libraries daunting places. Perhaps even more significant, however, are the difficulties which such students encounter when attempting to access libraries and utilise library services.

Stephens'¹⁰² report of a study on library experiences of postgraduate students engaged on distance learning courses recounts 'dramatic evidence' for the battle with time, institutions and resources and illustrates the sometimes "clandestine nature of distance learning students' library use". The Study confirmed the value which such students place on making personal visits to libraries in order to browse books on shelves. Problems of access are noted as ineligibility for membership, restricted external borrower status, limited loan periods, difficulties associated with short loan collections, unfamiliarity with local systems, and absence of relevant stock. Stephens concludes that the burden of appropriate library provision for distance learning students is not currently being fully met by course providing institutions. Some typical examples of advice on library use given to distance learning students at UK universities is shown in Fig 6.1.

¹⁰⁰ Heery, M. Academic library services to non-traditional students Library Management 17 (5) , 1996 p. 3-13

¹⁰¹ Unwin, L., Bolton, N. and Stephens, K. The role of the library in distance learning: implications for policy and practice Library and Information Briefings (6), May 1995

¹⁰² Stephens, K. The library experiences of postgraduate distance learning students, or Alice's other story In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p122-142

- “... services depend on your ability to visit the library in person” (library)
- “...access to the book list is not essential” (course information)
- “...own knowledge of a working environment can be useful as well as access to local libraries and companies” (course information)
- “...students are advised to join public and hospital libraries as they will need access to a variety of reading matter” (course information)
- “...unable to offer a postal service for books or compensate totally for you not being able to access the services and collections in person” (library)
- “...if students have a School of Radiography close by they may be able to obtain access to its library and resources” (course information)

Figure 6.1

Examples of advice on library services to distance learning students from UK course providing institutions

Goodall and Brophy’s¹⁰³ account of the experience of students on courses franchised by a remote university to the local college is equally negative. Students’ complaints referred to insufficient copies of books, lack of space in the library, loan periods being too short (esp. short loan), too many books for reference only, difficulties in contacting relevant staff, and inadequate library induction.

A study¹⁰⁴ conducted in 1991 on the library problems of part-time students found a clear demand for longer opening hours, different loan periods, faster procedures for renewing books and more library training. There was an identified need for improved funding for part time student library services, more co-ordination in establishing services for these students, better liaison between librarians and tutors, wider distribution of reading lists and more instruction. The study concluded that there was a need for the development of specific funding formulae for services to part time students, full borrowing privileges, telephone request services, separate collections of books and arrangements for reciprocal borrowing at other libraries.

The problems outlined above largely derive from the diverse nature of non-traditional students and the difficulties posed for them by their efforts to come to terms with a tertiary education system which is primarily designed to accommodate traditional full-time students. It should be noted at this point that many courses which would be classed as ‘traditional’ require students to spend time off-campus in professional or work experience placements. Vocational study can present many of the difficulties outlined above. There are, however, other strategic and operational problems which

¹⁰³ Goodall, D. and Brophy, P. A comparable experience? library support for franchised courses in higher education. (British Library Research and Innovation Report: 33) University of Central Lancashire, 1997

¹⁰⁴ Fisher, R.K. and Moses, T.A. Library provision for continuing education students in Britain’s universities: a changing scene? British Journal of Academic Librarianship 6 (3) 1991 p.149-162

concern library managers who are attempting to facilitate access to information services for both non-traditional and traditional students.

Hall¹⁰⁵ highlights potential difficulties in library collaboration commenting that there is strong resistance between ‘unequal partners’ such as old and new universities, and between further and higher education institutions. Wynne¹⁰⁶ has described the potential pitfalls in establishing co-operative library agreements between a university and partner FE colleges to support students who are attending university franchised courses at the partner colleges. He advocates careful planning to overcome difficulties caused by incompatible or inadequate technologies at partner institutions, diverse administrative cultures and differential status of institutional library managers. Hall suggests that barriers to the successful development of library services to distance learners include conventional approaches by library staff, some of whom are unable to perceive their clientele as anyone other than 18 year old full-time students who are campus-based. Problems are also caused by conservative attitudes in academic institutions where the perception of a good library is a well-stocked library building and where there is a prevailing protective attitude towards resources being provided for students of the parent institution.

Interestingly, Unwin et al¹⁰⁷ highlight developments in the electronic library as creating barriers for distance learning students. Due to the restrictions on access required in licensing agreements, users classed as ‘external’ readers or borrowers in university libraries are not permitted to use many of the electronic information sources. They comment that “the polarity between access and holdings needs some re-examination. Whilst developments in electronic communications seems to have captured the ‘access’ label, reality seems to be somewhat different. The value of the slogan ‘access not holdings’ in relation to library services may need to be reconsidered. The electronic library could bring as many restrictions in terms of access to information as it brings benefits. Distance learning students are in danger of losing the access which they currently have to browse current periodicals”. Caution was also expressed by researchers on the use of IT for the delivery of library services to distant users in the EC-funded BIBDEL project, in which it was concluded that “older methods of delivering services will have to be employed alongside the new to find the blend of service which meets needs most effectively”.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Hall, L. Supporting distance learning: experiences and initiatives in Sunderland, UK In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p. 63-71

¹⁰⁶ Wynne, P. Fools rush in: key human factors in operationalising service delivery to remote users In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p. 109-121

¹⁰⁷ Unwin, L., Bolton, N. and Stephens, K. The role of the library in distance learning: implications for policy and practice Library and Information Briefings (6), May 1995

¹⁰⁸ Brophy, P. Goodall, D., Wynne, P. Library services to distance learners: research and operational developments in a UK and European context. In. Watson, E.F. and Jagannathan, N.(eds) Library services to distance learners in the Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Learning, 1997 p.55-59

Although the barriers to the development of services for non-traditional students are many, there are a number of examples of good attempts at developing such services in the UK and elsewhere. The following section describes some key initiatives.

6.4 Academic libraries and lifelong learning in the UK

This section outlines three key areas identified as facilitating access to libraries and library support for non-traditional and traditional students, and for individuals engaged on work-based and independent learning activities: Services, Access policies and Library co-operation. Examples of library services which have been developed specifically for distance learning students illustrate elements of best practice. The arrangements for access to university libraries other than the host institution are illustrated with typical examples of current practice. Formal co-operative agreements are being established between library consortia, although borrowing arrangements are still highly restricted.

6.4.1 Services

Sheffield Hallam University offers students a Distance Learning Support Service¹⁰⁹ with a range of services to off-campus students.. The service offers distance learning support to students studying on courses that have been deemed as appropriate to distance learning. As well as sending out books and articles in the post to students, the service also offers book loans for up to three weeks, an inter library loan service and photocopying and supply of journal articles. Expansion of the service may see a move towards a 'network' of support with access to Internet based databases and OPACs, and the possibility of offering services such as video conferencing. The Sheffield Hallam web site offers an impressive set of links to UK universities' access policies as well as a 'Distance Learning Links for Librarians' page which lists:

- Libraries offering specific support services for distance learners
- Organisations and associations
- Research projects
- E-mail discussion lists and newsgroups
- Conferences
- On-line books, articles and papers
- Journals
- Information technology and distance learning
- Directories of distance learning resources on the Internet
- A bibliography of sources on library/information resources for distance learners

The John Rylands Library at the **University of Manchester** established its Distance Learning Service in October 1997. Operated by the Document Supply Unit, the

¹⁰⁹ Sheffield Hallam University Learning Centre's Distance Learner Support Service:
<http://www.shu.ac.uk/services/lc/services/dl.htm>

Distance Learning Service lends monographs available from library stock and provides photocopies of journal articles and monograph chapters from its own or other libraries holdings. Requests are made and satisfied by post and the service is available to all students registered on the University's distance learning courses in the UK and overseas.

The **Northern College of Education** in Aberdeen offers a full range of library services to its distance learners. Two contact persons have been designated to provide support for distant students and telephone or e-mail enquiries are invited. A postal loan service is available with outward postage costs covered by the library, but return costs must be paid by the user.

Electronic library facilities will play an important role in the **University of the Highlands and Islands**¹¹⁰ Project, which aims to develop a new university which will offer students in the remoter areas of Scotland the opportunity to undertake a growing number of higher education courses on a full or part-time basis which can be attended at a specific college or at a remote location. Those students based at remote locations will be able to obtain tutor support through the UHI Network via high bandwidth computer links thus widening the scope for continuous learning in the region. As well as providing electronic library and information management systems, the project aims to provide each campus with networked learning resource centres to support research, learning and information provision, with video conferencing facilities. Interestingly these centres will not only provide IT services but will also be a focal point for teacher-student interaction.

Students who are studying on franchised courses run by the **University of Central Lancashire**¹¹¹ are able to use the services of the Virtual Academic Library of the North West (VALNOW) service which was launched in 1997. Based on the European Commission funded BIBDEL Project, VALNOW is an attempt to replicate for students at a distance the library and information services enjoyed by their on-site counterparts. Students at participating institutions have access to electronic journals, can browse the University's library catalogue and have loan items delivered by post to their local library. Requests can be made for photocopied periodical articles, and to access a range of online databases as well as the Internet. They are also able to draw on the subject expertise of specialist staff in response to reference enquiries, with electronic video-conference links bringing experts and students into a 'virtual' consultation.

The VALNOW service is an example of the development of a new initiative based on a careful R & D approach which explored a series of service options. The original EC-funded BIBDEL project took as its basic premise, four principles:

¹¹⁰ University of The Highlands and Islands Project: November 1995 Submission to The Millennium Commission. Highlands and Islands Enterprise, 1995. See also <http://www.uhi.ac.uk>

¹¹¹ University of Central Lancashire <http://www.uclan.ac.uk>

- the distance users should be provided with a service which is as close as possible to the service experienced by the on-campus user;
- the IT services should conform to open system standards where possible. However, as academic libraries operate within a broader academic information technology environment, compatibility between new and existing systems is of paramount importance;
- issues of cost-effectiveness are paramount, since small institutions and individuals will not accept systems which are expensive to set up or run;
- distant users may have little or no technological expertise, so the systems must be simple to install, maintain and use.

To avoid confusion regarding access, services and any special features for distance students, the **University of Dundee** has produced a guide specifically for students considering study by distance learning. The guide includes activities such as registering with the library and aims to ensure students are ready for their study and therefore do not waste time, or flounder, later in their course, when the pressure is on.

At **Thames Valley University** the Learning Resource Centre is a flexible, one stop-shop learning facility, open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is designed to remove the constraints and pressures of time, place and access. Students can study with, but not necessarily at, the University at any time of the day.

Special services for students studying at a distance may include collections, such as a short loan collection at the **University of Wales, Aberystwyth**, containing items which are purchased by the library specifically for distance learners. The library will also send items requested by mail to distance learning students. This facility is useful for distance learning students who may find it difficult to visit the library in person.

Students studying with the **Open University** library may soon be able to access materials via an electronic library. Since 1995 a number of projects have been undertaken to meet the aim of an electronic library and will work in collaboration with other universities and research institutes nationally and internationally. Already most OU students are using the FirstClass computer conferencing system. However, loan services from the OU library are restricted to OU staff and research students. New electronic services are under development, including the ROUTES (Resources for Open University Teachers and Students) system which is building up a database of learning support materials available online. ROUTES is being developed as part of a major, three year *Network Access Project* and uses software developed in eLib.

6.4.2 Access policies

Although many university libraries permit members of the public to use their facilities for reference use they do not advertise the fact. Some do invite non-university members to use the library facilities, but are cautious in their invitation. Independent or external users are normally granted access to the library provided they can (a) demonstrate a need to use an academic library and (b) pay a fee or subscription. The **University of Sussex** for example allows various levels of service to non-members of

the University who can demonstrate a need to use a major academic library but have no access to one. The University charges a fee for the provision of services on a cost recovery basis. **Glasgow University Library** offers external membership to users and charges for service depend on the category of membership. Graduates of Glasgow for example pay an annual fee of £15 whereas corporate membership starts at a minimum of £100. The **University of Bath** allows members of the public to use the library for occasional reference purposes and there does not appear to be a charge for this. The Library's main stated aim, however, is to provide a service to the teaching and research undertaken at the university.

Restrictions on access generally seem to depend on the subscriptions that have been paid and to which category the user belongs. So, for example, ex-staff may have different access rights from members of the general public or separate fees may be charged for consultation and for borrowing. In some cases university libraries may restrict the number of external users allowing, for example, up to 30 members of the general public to borrow books from the University Library at any one time. (**University of Exeter**).

Restrictions in services offered to external users are the case at most universities. The **University of Surrey**, for example, gives external members borrowing rights, but not to the short loan collection, and additional fees are charged for services such as inter-library loans and online searching. **Edinburgh University** claims that it "has pleasure in extending the use of its collections, facilities, and services to external users" and that "much of this material is kept on open shelves for ease of access by all its users". However, in a further paragraph it goes on to say that "the extent to which it can offer facilities to external users free of charge is limited"¹¹². Statements like this can be confusing and often external users may then be divided into special categories, each with separate rights.

Restrictions on the use of and access to electronic information are also common mainly due to the fact that licence agreements cover only members of the University. Some libraries will allow external users access to databases, but access may be restricted and a charge may be attached. The **University of Brighton** for example states that "access by external members is restricted to those databases not limited by type of user and to times when demand is low"¹¹³. They also offer online searching at a charge upwards of £25.

Students studying with the **Open University** are not be able to borrow from the library, but it can be accessed for reference purposes via telephone requests, and via the Internet. Generally, OU students are expected to make arrangements to use academic or public libraries in their own vicinity.

The **Robert Gordon University** promotes its library service to potential external members who are studying for a professional qualification or having problems in

¹¹² Edinburgh University Library <http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/intro/libpubs/extuser.htm>

¹¹³ University of Brighton <http://www.bton.ac.uk/library/externalbor.html>

keeping up to date within a profession, and offers access to anyone undertaking continuing professional development (CPD) activity. Many of the universities which offer services to external members include corporate membership as one of the membership categories. This type of membership may give employees the opportunity to use the facilities of a university library for the purpose of CPD as well as to meet the information needs of their current job or specific task.

The National Centre for Work Based Learning at **Middlesex University** offer work-based learning students access to the library as a student of the university. Services offered by the library include study sessions on information retrieval, specific work-based learning resources and access to other learning resource services such as computing and language centres located in the learning resource centre.

The SCOUNL (Standing Conference of National and University Libraries) Vacation Access Scheme allows students from higher education institutions throughout the UK and Ireland to use other libraries which belong to SCOUNL during vacation times.

6.4.3 Library co-operation

Universities may have agreements with other libraries which allow staff and students to have reciprocal access rights. Several consortia have been formalised on a geographical basis. Examples include:

Avon University Libraries in Co-operation (AULIC) involves the universities of Bath, Bristol and the West of England libraries in extending borrowing rights to all academic and academic related staff and postgraduate research students of the three institutions. However, inter-library loans and on-line search facilities are only available to members of the host institution.

The Consortium of Academic Libraries in Manchester (CALIM) comprises a network of academic libraries, all located within two square miles of each other. Libraries include Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester University, UMIST, Salford University, Manchester Business School. They serve a population of over 70,000 students and offer services such as inter-library loans, full-text transmission between libraries, union list of all journals held in CALIM libraries, plus joint subscriptions to several online services.

London Plus and M25 Access: the M25 Consortium is made up of higher education libraries in the London area located within the M25 orbital motorway. It was set up to promote co-operation between institutions and to enhance library services and staff development within this region, to “introduce some order into the complex London scene”¹¹⁴ and to provide services such as an e-mail discussion group for librarians working in these libraries (LIS-M25). A similar co-operative venture has been developed between some University libraries in London and the South East. The London Plus scheme enables part-time students to borrow material from other

¹¹⁴ Dolphin, P. A driving force within the M25, Library Association Record. 97, no. 10. 1995, p.541

participating libraries and to give full-time students reference facilities to all the libraries. Full-time students may also join other libraries on a reference basis.

Yorkshire Universities' Library Co-operative Scheme: Staff and post-graduate research students may become registered borrowers of the university libraries of Bradford, Sheffield and Hull. Borrowing rights to Leeds University library are available upon payment of a fee.

Two consortia which have established agreements with the public library service are:

The Libraries Access Sunderland Scheme which allows anyone living in Sunderland access to the 29 libraries of the City Library and Arts Centre, the City of Sunderland College and the University of Sunderland. Access is for study purposes. A Project is currently underway, funded by BLRIC, to identify key staffing features for successful cross-sectoral library co-operation.

Sheffield Access to Libraries for Learning (ALL) is based on a vision of opening up Sheffield's library and information resources to the whole city. Members of the public are encouraged to explore potential sources of information in the academic libraries. The four partners in the scheme are Sheffield College, University of Sheffield, Sheffield City Library Service and Sheffield Hallam University.

6.5 Non UK library provision for lifelong learning

A number of initiatives have been established outside the UK which aim to address the problem of access across a wide geographical area. Reciprocal arrangements and networks appear to be the most popular method of addressing the problem.

In the United States, library services designed specifically for distance learners have a considerable history. In recent years librarians in this field have been assisted by the development of a series of guidelines and standards, with adoption by regional accrediting agencies providing the 'teeth' to ensure adequate, if not generous, resourcing. The situation has been described by Simmons¹¹⁵ in an interesting paper which demonstrates examples of what can be achieved. A dominant theme is that of resource-sharing between libraries. Feldman¹¹⁶ describes Indiana's library network developments and Potter¹¹⁷ describes state-wide resource sharing strategies in

¹¹⁵ Simmons, H.L. Accreditation Expectations for Library Support of Off-Campus Programs Library Trends 39(4), 1991, pp. 388-404.

¹¹⁶ Feldmann, J.M. Indiana links its citizens to libraries. In: Jacob, C. (ed.) Sixth Off-campus Library Services Conference Proceedings: Kansas City, Missouri October, 1993 Central Michigan University, 1993 p. 79-82

¹¹⁷ Potter, S.L. State-wide resource sharing: a foundation for off-campus library services In: Jacob, C. (ed.) Sixth Off-campus Library Services Conference Proceedings: Kansas City, Missouri October, 1993 Central Michigan University, 1993 p. 205-225

Colorado. Collaboration between librarians, academic staff, administrators and students is emphasised in ensuring the quality of the educational experience ¹¹⁸.

A key component of the **University of Louisville's** (Kentucky, USA) library support service for distance education is the integration of library services into the structure of the course via the professor's WWW home page, and in any printed course materials. Three services are offered: information literacy, reference services and document delivery services. Based on the premise that 'information literacy' (IL) is a necessary component of any educational experience, the delivery of IL instruction is via a printed handout (integrated with course materials) mainly comprising instructions on library services needed for a particular course and how to access these through the course tutor's (professor's) home page. The Reference Service provides librarian-assisted access to databases and the Document Delivery Service provides items electronically or by post. The principles of library support for the distance education programme include centralisation of access, immediacy of access, rapid turnaround for remote delivery, empowerment of students to access information and to perform their own research¹¹⁹.

The **Ohio Library and Information Network (Ohio Link)** links 41 academic institutions within Ohio State, plus two major private research schools and the State Library. Through its five co-operative storage sites to hold the less used materials, OhioLINK now has a 'virtual library' of about 20 million books which can be made available within 48 hours, plus a range of commercial databases available on a shared basis throughout the state.

In 1996 a project entitled 'Collaborative WWW Support of Distance Learning: Library Delivery of Electronic Course-Related Materials and Resources' was undertaken jointly by the **University at Buffalo**, the **State University of New York at Binghamton** and the **State University of New York at Plattsburgh**. The three libraries collaboratively developed experimental services making use of hypertext linking and organisational capabilities of the WWW to provide integrated access to a variety of course related materials. These included materials developed by the lecturers themselves (lecture notes, assignments) and electronic library resources e.g. electronic readings and full-text electronic journals.

The **University of Illinois** offers extra-mural courses to a growing number of students who are taught at locations throughout the state of Illinois. Library support for these courses has been developed to enable students and the teaching staff involved to have access to the most convenient library to their location. This has resulted in an 'Extra-

¹¹⁸ York, V. A guide for planning library integration into distance education programs Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 1993

¹¹⁹ Edge, S.M. and Edge, D. Building library support for distance learning through collaboration. In: Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p. 14-32

Mural State-Wide Borrower's Card'¹²⁰, which can be used in the same way as for on-campus students and staff, and can be used at any of the state-wide university libraries.

In Canada, *Guidelines for the Support of Distance Learning in Canada* were endorsed by the Canadian Library Association in 1993. Slade¹²¹ describes Canada's method of providing library services to distance learners as 'outreach services' with distinctive names to emphasise their focus. Examples include *Telebook* at Simon Fraser University, *Dial-a-book* at the University of British Columbia, *Infoline* at the University of Victoria and *U.READ* at the University of Regina.

The **North Alberta Library and Information Network (NORALINK)** was established in 1992 by Athabasca University (AU), which is Canada's Open University and has around 18,000 students enrolled from across Canada. The Athabasca University library sends materials to students via the post, but has recognised that their library collection is limited compared to other university libraries. NORALINK was set up in response to AU students wanting to have access and borrowers rights to other university libraries. Participants in the NORALINK initiative include college, public and university libraries, enabling students who live where there is a NORALINK library to use its services in the same way as a student enrolled at that particular university.

Distance education in Australia also has a long history. The Australian Library and Information Association has a Distance Education Special Interest Group which publishes its own newsletter (DESIGNation). The Task Force on Library and Information Service to remote users issued a report in 1990 which included a number of recommendations for improving access to information for remote users and the Australian Council of Libraries and Information Services adopted a statement of principles on distant provision in 1991. A national library card was discussed but it was never adopted. A number of reciprocal borrowing schemes exist. These include the CLANN network¹²² in New South Wales, incorporating university, college and public libraries. The network facilitates reciprocal borrowing for both undergraduates and post graduates. The CAVAL scheme in Victoria comprises academic and special libraries.

The **Open Learning Agency of Australia (OLAA)** was established in 1992 to broker distance education courses from various universities and FE colleges throughout Australia. Students may register for units from a variety of institutions at any one time. There are no entry requirements. The Open Learning Library and Information Service produces a guide for OLAA students and provides vouchers which the students can use to pay for library services at academic and public libraries. The Open Learning

¹²⁰ Kenny, T. Off-campus library services for distance technology courses, university of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, *Illinois Libraries*. 76, Pt.1 1994, pp.27-29

¹²¹ Slade, A.L. Library support for off-campus and distance education programs in Canada: an overview. *Library Trends* 39 (4) 454-478

¹²² Wade, R. Who, why, when, what: insights into reciprocal borrowing in the CLANN network. In. *ALIA 1st Biennial Conference, Perth, W.Australia, October 1990. Conference Proceedings vol. 1 Promaco Conventions for ALIA, 1990 p. 483-494*

Electronic Support Service (OLESS) currently being developed by the OLAA is described by Van Dyke¹²³. A key objective of OLESS is to integrate existing networks to create an 'Australia-wide off-campus student-focused information web'.

McKnight¹²⁴ suggests that one reason why **Deakin University** in Victoria, Australia attracts off-campus students is the excellent and easy to use off-campus library service. This service aims to ensure that remote students have similar opportunities to make reference enquiries, borrow books, obtain journal articles and undertake independent research as do on-campus students. Collection development is formula driven based on number of off-campus students, location of course delivery and other available titles in the subject area. Liaison librarians work with academics in charge of each module to ascertain likely demand for titles.

Information services are provided via e-mail, telephone, fax and post. Librarians search catalogues and databases on behalf of students and then post on a limited number of books or photocopies. Document delivery is by a courier service or airmail. A pre-paid return 'satchel' is included in the delivery satchel to ensure quick return of items at no cost to students. Costs are defrayed by a basic levy of A\$25 per off-campus student per semester. Performance standards are applied to the off-campus library service. For loans, 95% of items held by Deakin, and available for loan, are dispatched within 24 hours of receipt of request. A request received by 11.30am will be dispatched by 3.00pm on the same day. The courier contract requires next day delivery of items to most Australian addresses. The actual success rate of the loans service is 92.5%. 85% of subject requests and 80% of photocopies are dispatched within 5 working days.

Distance learning, and similar approaches, are in principle very *inclusive*, offering opportunities to people in developing countries as much as in the developed world. In this Section we have been able to give only a brief overview and a few examples of how libraries are supporting these activities and we have concentrated entirely on developed countries. It is important to remember, however, that the potential of distance learning in the developing world may be damaged because "third world library services lack the depth, breadth and sophistication that exist in library systems in the developed world"¹²⁵. If distance learners in developed nations are under-provided with library services the situation in the rest of the world is much worse. There is a considerable body of literature on library services in most countries of the world, ably

¹²³ Van Dyke, M. Open library information for off-campus students: the Australian scenario. In Watson, E.F. and Jagannathan, N.(eds) Library services to distance learners in the Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Learning, 1997 p.221-230

¹²⁴ McKnight S. Library services to off-campus students: an Australian perspective In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p. 52-62

¹²⁵ Watson, E. F. Library Services to Distance Learners in Third World Countries: Barriers to Service, In The Sixth Off-Campus Library Services Conference Proceedings. Kansas City, Missouri, October 6-8, 1993, pp. 291-299.

collected and analysed by Slade and Kascus¹²⁶ and readers are referred to that publication for access to the wider literature on this question.

6.6 The role of public libraries

The role of the public library in lifelong learning in the UK is rooted in the founding principles of public libraries in terms of the Victorian concept that they made available the sources of educational development for those without the financial resources to attend more formal institutions. They were the ‘poor man’s university’¹²⁷ Boyle¹²⁸ argued in 1980 that public libraries should present themselves as providers and partners in adult education rather than as servicing agents and should aggressively market materials associated with continuing education and use their closeness to the community to attract and serve the working class. Boyle concluded that “the UK library system is a sleeping community education giant. The giant must awake”. The EC-funded ODIN¹²⁹ Study in 1996 concluded that public libraries must recapture their educational vision and make the decision to become key players in open and distance learning because they have much to offer. A key finding of this Study was that support by public libraries for ‘traditional’ distance education is widespread yet unrecognised. The authors recommended that co-operative actions involving public libraries, universities and colleges could prove very fruitful and that public libraries could be used to deliver open and distance learning to employees of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), women returning to work, ethnic minority groups, those who have missed out on conventional education and indeed, everyone ‘learning through life’. From diary studies of distance learning students’ use of libraries, Stephens¹³⁰ notes that the public library is regarded by distance learning students engaged on formal university courses as a good place to study and a valuable source of material. Public libraries were reported as third in order of frequency of use by distance learning students after local university and workplace or professional libraries. Stephens concludes that the role of the public library service in adult learning needs better recognition and support as a ‘people’s university’ which suffers from a lack of funding.

UK public libraries have been proactive in recent years in developing their role as providers of basic skills materials for open learning. A White Paper, released in 1992,

¹²⁶ Slade, A.L. and Kascus, M.A. Library Services for Off-Campus and Distance Education: the Second Annotated Bibliography Englewood, Colorado, USA: Libraries Unlimited, 1996.

¹²⁷ Watkin, A. The public library: the local support centre for open and distance learners. In: Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p.143-150

¹²⁸ Boyle, J. Crisis-centred, issue-based: the loneliness of distance learning. Library Review 29 1980, 159-163

¹²⁹ Brophy, P., Allred, J., and Allred, J. Open distance learning in public libraries.(ODIN Study) EUR 16904 EN, 1996

¹³⁰ Stephens, K. The library experiences of postgraduate distance learning students, or Alice’s other story In. Brophy, P., Fisher, S. and Clarke, Z (eds) Libraries without walls 2: the delivery of library services to distant users. Proceedings of the 2nd Libraries without walls conference. September 1997, Library Association, 1998 p122-142

proposed that all public library services in the UK should establish collections of open learning materials over a 3 year period. Allred¹³¹ reports that since 1992 the proportion of UK public library authorities providing significant collections of open learning materials has grown from under 25% to over 85% largely as a result of the Clywd Libraries PLAIL (Public Libraries and Adult Independent Learners) project and the subsequent Open for Learning project funded by the Employment Department. Users of these open learning centres represent a higher proportion of people aged between 25 and 59 than in the general population (84% of library users; 46% in the general population) constituting an economically important age group. They also represent proportionally more of the unwaged (41% of library users; 39% in the general population) which is also an important group in the context of lifelong learning. Although the better educated are over-represented, those with a basic education still form a significant number of the learners (13%). In Allred's survey, over two thirds of the learners were reported to be new to open learning and 40% said they were unlikely to have used any other method of learning if they had not used the library first. About 50% of public library authorities are in formal liaison with TECs, FE colleges, commercial open learning centres and educational guidance networks. One third of public library authorities have staff trained in some elements of educational guidance and over 60% of public library authorities host Training Access points (TAPs) or similar local databases of training opportunities. One example is the Open Learning Club at Croydon Libraries which provides open learning packs for use at home and provides equipment in the library for video, audio and PC-based materials. Topics in the open learning collection include: writing letters and reports, spelling and punctuation, writing CVs, interview techniques, setting up a business, keyboard skills, word-processing. Much of this kind of material is produced by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). The annual subscription fee is £20. Further developments of this type will no doubt be encouraged by a positive government response to the LIC *New Library* Report, discussed in Chapter 5.

There have been some recent developments in collaboration between the public and academic library sectors (e.g. Sheffield, Sunderland, Northamptonshire) but there is little recent evidence on how such collaboration can improve library services to students engaged on higher level courses of study. In 1978 Wilson¹³² reported on an investigation carried out to discover the effect upon the use of public libraries of high level Open University courses which required the preparation of course assignments or detailed investigation of source material. He concluded that much could be done within existing resources to improve information about access to and availability of library and specialised sources of information for hard-pressed part-time students. Barnett¹³³ examined the role of the public library in assisting university students in 1986. His survey of 31 public libraries revealed that students were not regarded by public librarians as a category of user deserving special attention. There was little

¹³¹ Allred, J. Libraries are learning centres c1997
<http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/iln3000/iln3014.htm>

¹³² Wilson, T.D. Learning at a distance and library use: Open University students and libraries. Libri 28 (4) 1978, 270-282

¹³³ Barnett, C. Public libraries, students and the provision of academic reading materials In. Baker, D. (ed.) Student reading needs and higher education: a collection of essays. Library Association, 1986

evidence of contact between universities and public libraries with regard to course design, library provision, background resources and reading lists. An Australian study¹³⁴ in 1988 found that public librarians believed that the public library service to distance learning students should be supplementary to what the home institution provides and not replace it.

6.7 Conclusions

We recognise that traditional students are a significant group of 'lifelong learners' and that increasing numbers of mature students have taken and are likely to take traditional courses, especially with the widespread adoption of modular schemes. The library support of such students is of course a major service in support of lifelong learning. Some university librarians may hold the view that in providing excellent library services to support traditional students they are doing all they can to support lifelong learning.. Examples of good practice in the provision of library services to non-traditional students are, however, difficult to find, although some universities, (most notably the new universities, e.g. Sheffield Hallam, Thames Valley, Central Lancashire) are to be commended for their efforts to meet the particular needs of distance and part-time students. The extensive use of technology is facilitating such services, but, as noted, can also create barriers to accessing information which is restricted by licensing agreements.

All universities and university libraries hold that their responsibilities are in supporting, first and foremost, the institution's own registered students and staff body. Thus, lifelong learners engaged in work-based learning or continuing professional development have access to widely varying levels of library services, dependent on whether they are registered as a student. External library membership schemes do provide such users with access to university library resources, but these usually carry some restrictions relating to, for example, borrowing rights or access to electronic resources.

On the whole, quite a depressing picture emerges in the UK regarding library provision for non-traditional students. Furthermore, evidence suggests that some distance learning courses being offered to students are by-passing the institutional library by providing direct to the student all necessary supporting information in a pre-packaged form. Statements are even made in background information to such courses to the effect that students undertaking a course do not need to use libraries or to undertake further reading. The efficacy of such an approach to the teaching and learning process in developing the student as an individual and encouraging a 'deep' approach to learning is highly questionable. Such issues have been explored in more detail by researchers such as Unwin et al¹³⁵.

¹³⁴ Doddrell, S. Report on a survey of public librarians' attitudes on services to off-campus students. Unpublished BSS thesis. RMIT, 1988

¹³⁵ Unwin, L., Bolton, N. and Stephens, K. The role of the library in distance learning: implications for policy and practice *Library and Information Briefings* (6), May 1995

Outside the UK, there is evidence of more coherent approaches to the provision of library services to lifelong learners. Some of this may be described as virtue born out of necessity, given that examples of good practice are drawn from areas which have a wide geographical spread (Australia, New Zealand, US) and a very dispersed user group. There are, however, lessons to be learned from non-UK developments. Particularly worth noting is the widespread developments of inter-library (public and academic) and inter-agency co-operation for services to students. The potential for future developments of library and information services in UK academic libraries is discussed in Chapter 6.

Section D: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 7: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

There can be no doubt that government and society are serious in their desire and intention to see the development of lifelong learning. Universities may embrace this concept enthusiastically or unwillingly, but they will not be able to ignore it. However, the changes which are required are so fundamental that at this early stage it is difficult to be certain of the shape of the higher education sector in the UK, still less of individual institutions. In this section we suggest some likely scenarios based on discussions with key individuals and a close examination of recent policy documents, including the Dearing and Kennedy Reports and the Green paper, *The Learning Age*.

Libraries are, of course, parts of their institutions, not autonomous entities and it follows that their future is bound up with that of their parent bodies. There is, however, a further gloss to this apparently obvious statement, which is that each institution's library services will increasingly be seen simply as one part of the regional, national and international resource. Librarians have become familiar with the idea that many of their users will in future access these broader services directly, without using their local service as an intermediary or provider. Since many lifelong learners will spend less time on campus than the traditional full-time student or researcher, it is to be expected that they will make even more use of such unmediated services. The future of any one academic library service, therefore, cannot be regarded as merely dependent on the parent institution.

Having said this, the clientele which the library serves is likely to remain principally that of the parent institution. A question immediately occurs, therefore, as to the likely nature of these clienteles. The Dearing Report made no specific recommendations on this, although some initial interpretations have seen encouragement for the development of a 'tiered' system, based on the Committee's "support (for) the existing diversity between institutions" and recommendation that "funding arrangements should reflect and support such diversity". It may be that some universities will see their future almost entirely as postgraduate and research institutions, while others will concentrate, as at present, on undergraduate provision. Although Dearing supported expansion of taught postgraduate courses in the context of lifelong learning, the main thrust of expansion is to be at sub-degree level (HND and HNC or equivalent) with more sub-degree provision in further education colleges. One possible interpretation of this is that there will be a continuum of institutions from those which are concerned almost entirely with postgraduate work and research to those with very strong ties into the further education sector and an emphasis on access and wide participation. It could be argued, of course, that this is a recipe for little change! However it is more likely that we will see a series of innovations which will move institutions towards an ongoing relationship with their students, so that learning becomes a matter of students accessing courses at frequent intervals throughout their lives. Such a change could, of course, alter the nature of the institutions.

An intriguing issue is the extent to which institutions will operate within a global market. There are those who predict that in the not too distant future most courses will be delivered using Information and Communications Technologies, that international networks will make the location of the student *vis-à-vis* the institution irrelevant, and that the real issue will become one of marketing such products on an international scale. It is not impossible to envisage an institution on this model with students spread all over the world, receiving multimedia packages either online or as CD-ROMs, communicating with each other and with their tutors using computer and video conferencing and never coming into physical contact with each other. It is likely that this scenario will be seen, at least in part. However, the contrary argument is that learning is essentially a social process, that there are many attractions to coming together as a group of learners either on-campus or in smaller learning centres, and that the bulk of higher education will continue to be delivered using the familiar tools of lectures, seminars and tutorials. It is worth remembering that many people do not have their own, suitable study environments and that unless they can access somewhere suitable they will find study extremely difficult and frustrating. Perhaps the most likely outcome will be a mix of the two visions: students will make extensive use of ICT but will also meet in groups with their tutors to discuss, argue and present their learning.

In the remainder of this Chapter, we make some suggestions as to the kinds of academic library service which will be needed to support such learning.

7.2 Developing Basic Services

It is clear from our investigations and discussions that the library services available to non-traditional university students are rarely planned with the attention given to the traditional, on-campus clientele. If we leave aside the element of lifelong learning which is the traditionally-delivered course or project, then access to library resources is a very hit and miss affair. A few academic libraries have made great efforts and can demonstrate good practice - as, for example at Sheffield Hallam - but most treat non-traditional learners either as part of a general category of "external readers" or simply ignore them. This is very dangerous practice. If it is in fact possible to deliver distance learning effectively and efficiently without recourse to a library, why will we need libraries at all? Of course libraries will retain residual functions, such as places for on-campus study and archival collections, but they will be on the periphery of learning. It follows in our view that there is a need for a concerted attempt to develop a basic set of services for the lifelong learner and that this should be the driver for general service delivery. A lifelong learning led approach might include some or all of the following:

- a clear statement to all students, no matter how short their course nor the means used to deliver it, of the services which they have the right to expect.
- opening hours, professional staffing etc. available at times to suit lifelong learners (e.g. weekends, vacations)
- the right to have access to the physical library on a long-term basis without payment of an additional fee i.e. membership to be part of a students long-term relationship with the institution.

- formal arrangements between libraries for the support of each other's students (perhaps building further on the M25 or CALIM type of arrangement)
- a limited set of services, but including some document delivery, which is available to students of the university based at a distance from the institution - or perhaps to all students
- access for all students (or at least for all based off-campus) to library advisory services.
- arrangements for accessing electronic services, mainly through the library's web site where links to key resources will be provided, including access for all students and staff to all dataservices.

In designing services for lifelong learners librarians need to consider the context: the learning objectives, the method of delivery, learning styles and so on. The vision of the Dearing Report is of "an institution committing itself through a compact which recognises its obligation to provide a high quality service" and the library's contribution will be to provide its service within a "quality" framework: that is, providing a service which is "fit for the purpose".

7.3 Focus on Content

At the same time it is necessary for academic libraries to shift their focus from form to content and to ask themselves how the required content can be delivered to the lifelong learner - rather than becoming blocked by the difficulties particular forms present. At present, libraries tend to be organised by form, and frequently budgetary allocations reinforce this approach: it is still not uncommon for library allocations to be split into 'book' and 'journal' funds, with online services treated as an uneasy compromise. Inter-library loans may be seen as an additional service which is severely restricted, not least on cost grounds.

Once users gain widespread access to information delivery services, these divisions will be seen to be increasingly irrelevant. Most users will wish to have access to content regardless of form, although they will also wish to be able to state a preference - which increasingly may be for electronic formats which can be manipulated within other documents. The library role will therefore be to facilitate content access as the primary concern, demonstrating how information sources can be presented within the structures of learning which teaching staff devise and help to repackage content in new ways. Managing this scenario will be a complex task (see section 7.14 below).

7.4 Hybrid Libraries

The rapid development of electronic information sources has changed the nature of academic library provision in a very few years. JISC datasets and eLib services have shown that electronic sources can replace many of the traditional materials which libraries have used, especially in the area of datasets, some journals (an area where the trend to electronic formats will almost certainly accelerate) and new media such as Web pages. However, there is almost universal acceptance that traditional formats (print, audio, video, etc.) will continue to play an important role in the total service

which users require. From this has emerged the concept of the 'hybrid library', which may be seen as a new service model which provides integrated access to the full range of services. The final phase of eLib has provided funding for demonstrator projects in this area. For lifelong learners, as for others, this concept will have great importance in providing access to the widest range of resources in a manner tailored to the users' own requirements.

7.5 Converged services

The trend towards convergence is now well-established, despite occasional shifts in the opposite direction, and was highlighted by the Follett Report. The Dearing Review goes wider than this and recommends "that all higher education institutions should develop managers who combine a deep understanding of Communications and Information Technology with senior management experience" (Main report, p. 207). A recent study¹³⁶ of the views of senior academic librarians reported that convergence is seen as an inevitable trend. In the public library sector, the Public Libraries Review¹³⁷ highlighted the Government's desire to see public libraries playing an important role in the 'IT for All' programme and saw them as key players in delivering "the benefits of new technology to the wider population". A variety of reports on individual experiences of convergence have appeared¹³⁸ and SCOUNL has published some working papers on the issue. A number of conferences have been held on the theme¹³⁹. In the United States there has been at times heated debate, with eminent figures like Michael Gorman warning librarians of a 'dark age of electronic tyranny'¹⁴⁰. Despite such warnings, it now seems inevitable that academic libraries and computing services will need to provide a single interface to their users, so that guidance, help and advice can be provided regardless of the format of the information which is sought. This can only be helpful to the non-traditional lifelong learner.

7.6 Multi-Agency Provision

It has already been noted that many lifelong learners are likely to access the campus less often than the traditional student or researcher. From that viewpoint, the library service they require will best be provided by alliances which enable them to use their own local libraries as their point of access. As discussed above, the CALIM and M25 groups have both taken access to collections as a primary reason for co-operation.

¹³⁶ Mendelsohn, S. Is convergence of academic libraries and computing services inevitable? Information World Review Jul./Aug. 1996, pp. 26-7.

¹³⁷ Department of National Heritage Reading the Future: a review of public libraries in England London: DNH, 1997.

¹³⁸ See, for example, Paterson, A. Surf and Turf: issues in the development of academic services IATUL Proceedings (new series) 5, 1996, pp. 194-204, which reports on the experience at Exeter University. Some early observations on convergence can be found in a 1988 issue of the British Journal of Academic Librarianship (Vol. 3 Pt. 3), which also contains an excellent overview of the issues (Naylor, B. The convergence of the library and the computing service: the central issues, BJAL 3(3), 1988, pp. 172-186).

¹³⁹ For example the British Universities Film and Video Council Conference in London, March 1996, reported in Godwin, P. Managing convergence of academic support services in higher education, Audiovisual Librarian 22(2) 1996, pp. 124-5.

¹⁴⁰ See, for example, Young, A.P. Libraries and digital communication: collision or convergence? Journal of Academic Librarianship 22(2), 1996, 11-13.

Especially in non-metropolitan areas, such reasoning will also lead to alliances between the academic and public library sectors. Looking in another direction, research institutes may wish to establish similar co-operative arrangements both nationally and internationally. Indeed, as the dispersed, international research team becomes more common there is an interesting issue as to how library support is to be organised. Which institution takes responsibility when individuals from a number are collaborating? Will this issue lend support to calls for libraries and other services to be organised on a regional basis, or will national and international patterns of access to courses preclude even regional solutions?

7.7 Integration of Library Services into Learning

Librarians have long struggled to try to make the service provided as relevant as possible to the users' requirements. For undergraduate courses this has often been epitomised by the annual struggle to acquire reading lists in time for books to be ordered and put on the shelves. In the future, as learning becomes more and more reliant on problem solving rather than on knowledge acquisition *per se*, and as knowledge becomes out of date more and more rapidly, this approach raises a number of issues:

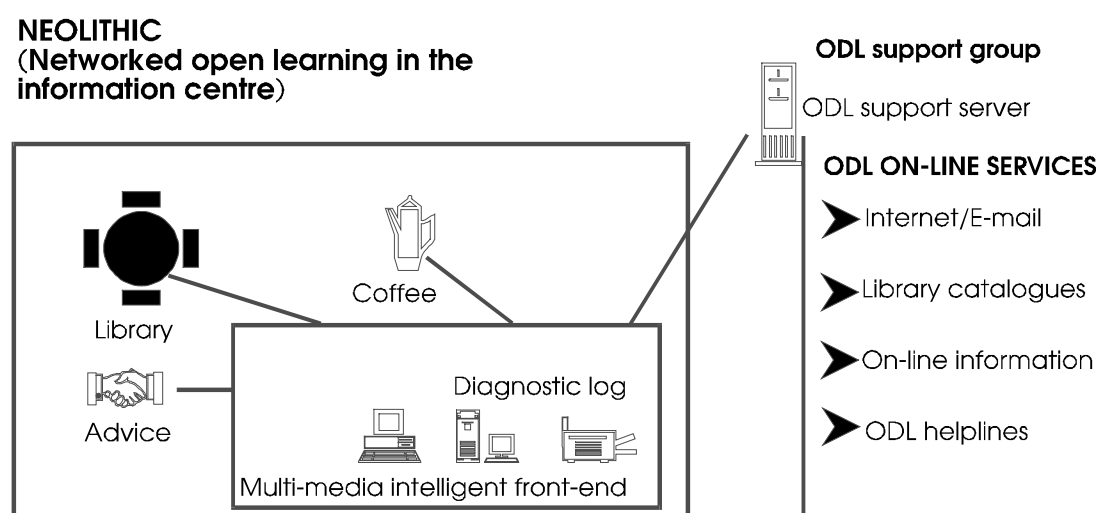
- it is not possible to predict information requirements in advance, so that the former *Just-in-Case* approach to content acquisition has to be replaced by *Just-in-Time*;
- courses' use of information will be much more dynamic, with teachers changing the emphases rapidly in response to developments
- a considerable proportion of the information will not be published in the traditional way, and may be ephemeral (web pages etc.)

For these reasons, but perhaps more importantly because the best library services become an integral part of the learning process, librarians need to become more involved with course planning. They are able to bring new sources of information, and perhaps new learning tools, to the attention of teachers and to suggest ways in which the use of library services can contribute to the achievement of learning outcomes. The "compact" between higher education and society which Dearing proposed needs to be mirrored in its smaller way between libraries and teachers. Of course there have been many attempts to achieve this in the past, but that is no reason not to try again to integrate the library service into the learning experience. We noted in Chapter 4 that there have been a number of practical developments in the area of "networked learner support" which are capable of being exploited more widely. Moving down this track it becomes apparent quite quickly that what is being introduced is an entirely new kind of learning environment where the student can easily and within the same interface access information ("library") and expertise ("tutor") while discussing ideas with fellow students ("seminar") and using a self-diagnostic tool. If such environments are to become widespread, staff in institutions will have to think about their roles in new ways. Librarians will have to gain better understanding of the learning process as a whole and will need to persuade others of the positive contribution they can make.

7.8 Libraries as Social Centres

In all the discussions of the future electronic library it is easy to lose sight of one of the key roles of the library - namely, its value as place. Libraries on campuses are often used by groups as places to meet, and with the increase in group work they often provide group study areas. Even for students and researchers working alone, the Library can provide social contact. If there is a continuing reduction in class contact hours, the availability of this 'social-learning centre' may be crucial to the student experience.

Where courses are delivered at a distance, there is considerable merit in providing some kind of learning centre to encourage this social interaction as part of the learning experience. Further education and public libraries would offer obvious centres for this kind of planned activity. In the report on open and distance learning in public libraries referred to in Chapter 6, the following illustration was used to demonstrate the possibilities of such centres¹⁴¹:



In this scenario, the physical library becomes a focus not only for traditional and electronic information but for access to suitable courses, advice, tutorial support, a support group of learners and a coffee bar.

The concept of placing tutorial support in or beside the library is not new and was discussed widely in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in further education. If the library becomes a 'learning centre' it would seem to be a logical development: the lecturer becomes a facilitator of learning and is on hand where learning is taking place.

7.9 Information Quality

The widespread availability of access to Internet resources, including the World Wide Web, has raised considerable concern about the quality of information which is being accessed. While printed publications go through a well-known and tried and tested

¹⁴¹ Brophy, P. , Allred, J. and Allred, J. Open Distance Learning in Public Libraries (Report EUR 16904 EN) Brussels: European Commission, 1996.

quality assurance procedure, involving referees, editorial boards and publishers' expert opinions, there is a lack such procedure for electronic resources. In a situation where anyone can publish anything on the Web, it is difficult for users to judge the validity of the information they retrieve.

The eLib Access to Networked Resources (ANR) projects are a partial answer to this problem, although at present their long-term future is not assured. Undoubtedly there is a role for systems which provide some kind of authoritative grading for networked resources, but at present it is unclear as to what that mechanism will be. Again, for lifelong learners, the need is likely to be acute as they may well be remote from sources of advice. Librarians will need to consider this issue in the design of their services.

7.10 Electronic Resources

As we have described in Chapter 3, information and communications technologies have much to offer the lifelong learner and may provide the boost which will make lifelong learning a reality. Libraries need to redouble their efforts to assist in the development of networked information resources and in their exploitation. However, the networked information arena poses questions about how users will be able to identify and retrieve particular information from the vast resources potentially available - the need is to provide the equivalent of a library catalogue which can be used as an access point to world-wide sources. We have written elsewhere of the problems this creates¹⁴²:

“If we assume that the principal role of the academic library is to enable its users to identify, locate, gain access to and use the information they require, then the ‘library’, whether traditional, electronic or hybrid, may be identified and characterised by a series of five functions:

- it provides tools¹⁴³ which enable users to view the ‘electronic information landscape’, through the sources of metadata which have been provided either directly by the library or to which it provides access. This is a ‘resource location’ or ‘**resource discovery**’ process. It may be seen as a two stage process of *resource identification* and *location identification* i.e. the user may identify a resource and then identify a location which holds it. The second locating process may be left to the library to perform (as when a user completes an interlibrary loan form but does not specify a holding location);
- it provides tools which enable users to gain access to the information which they have identified as being of interest to them. This is a ‘resource provision’ or ‘**resource delivery**’ process. In some cases resource delivery may be a three-stage process, whereby the user, having discovered an item, first requests it, the library then acquires it, and the library then delivers it to the user - this is

¹⁴² Brophy, P. and Wynne, P.M. Management Information for the Electronic Library (MIEL) Programme, Final report, University of Central Lancashire, Centre for Research in Library and Information Management, 1997.

¹⁴³ By ‘tools’ we include (human) advisory services as well as IT-based mechanisms.

the classic traditional library process expressed, for example, in a reservations or inter-library loan service. In an electronic context these processes are usually concatenated;

- it provides tools which enable users to exploit the information content to which they have been given access. This is a **‘resource utilisation’** process. In an electronic context the tools will include word processing, spreadsheet and database software together with filters and specialist display software such as Adobe Acrobat;

- it provides, possibly through third parties, the physical infrastructure and support services which users need to exploit information resources. This is the **‘infrastructure provision’** process. One of the functions of the electronic library will be to provide network infrastructure, PCs, printing facilities and so on. It will also provide support in the form of Helpdesk and advisory services;

- it provides management structures and procedures which ensure that the resources available to it are used to provide the maximum possible value for money to its users. As part of the management function, decisions will be taken on which resource discovery tools to provide, on how specific resources should be delivered (for example, should they be held locally or accessed from remote servers) and on which tools should be provided to enable users to exploit the information. In addition, management will provide procedures to handle the economic and legal aspects of information provision. Together, these may be described as **‘resource management’**.

These functions are shown diagrammatically in the Table below:

Resource Discovery	Resource Delivery	Resource Utilisation	Infrastructure Provision	Resource Management
Resource identification Location identification	Request Acquire Deliver to user	Exploitation tools	Space Equipment Networks Support services	Prioritisation Value for Money

Although these functions can be found in the traditional library, in the electronic environment they introduce new levels of complexity, not least because so many of the information resources are not ‘owned’ by the library in any real sense: issues such as cataloguing of networked resources are therefore far more complex than their traditional library equivalents.”¹⁴⁴

There must be some concern that many library practitioners do not seem to be as well versed in these concepts as might be expected. Developments such as Z39.50, Dublin core, Warwick framework, authentication and virtual clumps are too often regarded as esoteric concepts or simply met with a blank look. The work of units such as UKOLN

¹⁴⁴ For a further discussion of possible models see Owen, J.S.M. and Wiercx, A. Knowledge Models for Networked Library Services: Final Report Commission of the European Communities (Project PROLIB/KMS 10119), 1996.

needs to be disseminated to a wider library community, which, to be blunt, needs to be educated rapidly in the latest developments in networked information services.

7.11 Information Skills

The development of information handling skills is now recognised as central to learning. Included within these skills are the ability to identify information requirements, to develop and conduct a search, to retrieve information, to understand it and manipulate it, and to present information in a variety of contexts.

Universities have taken different approaches to the development of these skills. In some, a compulsory module is taken by all first year students to equip them with the study skills, including information skills, that they will need: an example would be the scheme developed by the University of Humberside and Lincolnshire¹⁴⁵. In others the approach taken is to embed the development of generic skills in the curriculum, so that the relevance of each skill is demonstrated within the learning context of the discipline. There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. What is clear, however, is that ways need to be found to ensure that all lifelong learners have the opportunity to acquire these skills, and develop their existing skills, so as to equip them to learn in the future.

At the same time, we still know very little about “how” users actually use information sources, especially in networked electronic environments. This is a very complex question but one which should underpin the design of the information skills curriculum and indeed service design more generally. More research on this question is needed.

7.12 Helpdesk Services

The provision of adequate helpdesk and other advisory services will be crucial to the success of academic libraries in the future. Users will expect to be able to access such services in person, by telephone, by email and through web pages and will expect rapid and authoritative responses.

The comments on the integration of library services into learning made in section 7.7 above apply equally to this section. There needs to be a shift away from thinking about lecturing staff giving expert help on their subject and library staff giving expert help on information sources to a new model of support within the learning environment as a whole. Thus the electronic helpdesk service will be designed in as part of the learning environment, not added on as a kind of optional (or perhaps taken-for-granted) extra, and certainly not as the last, desperate port of call for the student who can find nowhere else to turn.

7.13 Lifelong Relationships

The essence of lifelong learning is that each individual will be undertaking learning of some kind throughout life. This provides an opportunity for universities to transform the relationships they develop with their students. Instead of the classic route of a three

¹⁴⁵ Hunter, B. “Using a NLSI to deliver the Effective Learning Programme: problems and practicalities” published at <http://netways.shef.ac.uk/rbase/papers/hunter.htm>

or four year undergraduate degree course, followed at best by a remote relationship through an alumni society, institutions will have the opportunity to persuade students to return again and again. It is a truism of marketing that it is far easier to sell another product to an existing customer than to recruit a new customer, and universities will need to grasp the opportunities this presents by developing lifelong relationships.

The academic library could have an important role to play in these relationships, perhaps by transforming current 'external reader' membership arrangements into a new type of university membership which includes access to courses as well as to university facilities. Bearing in mind the large numbers of adult learners and scholars who are currently outside institutions, it may be that universities could use access to library services as a means of bringing such people into their communities in a much more active fashion than occurs at present.

7.14 Dynamic Management

Overlaying all of the changes in academic libraries that a commitment to the support of lifelong learning will bring there will be a need for a high level of management skills. The administrative systems used by libraries need to be reconsidered as to their suitability for a service which is based as much on access to electronic information as on access to physical objects, and in particular where users are much more mobile and present their demands at a variety of service points across a network. Services must be expected to evolve rapidly, new technologies will need to be exploited, resources will be tighter than ever.

The Dearing recommendation on *institutions* might equally be applied to libraries: "we recommend that all academic *libraries* should develop managers who combine a deep understanding of Communications and Information Technology with senior management experience" but needs also to encompass clear vision and a high level of leadership skills. The development of suitable performance measures for services provided off-campus, and more generally to non-traditional learners, will need to be a priority if effective management is to be possible. This is particularly important to enable judgements to be made on the value for money of services.

7.15 Conclusions

In this Chapter we have tried to bring together some of the key issues for academic libraries which arise from the development of lifelong learning. In so doing we have been aware of the need to tread a fine line between the need for bread and butter, traditional services to be made available (remembering that when the Dearing Review asked students what their priority was, the answer was "more relevant, or a wider range of books in the library") and the exciting prospects for transforming the role of libraries and librarians in the networked environment. In the next Chapter our specific recommendations cover both aspects - and the territory in between!

Chapter 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final Chapter we make a number of recommendations for actions which we believe would assist academic libraries in the UK to develop their services to meet the needs of lifelong learners. In making these recommendations we are aware, firstly that all of institutions' teaching, learning and research activities are already a contribution to lifelong learning, and secondly that many institutions have already taken steps to address the needs of non-traditional students. We are aware also that libraries' development will be dependent on that of their parent institutions: an institution which decides that it can best contribute to the development of the learning society by providing world-class research facilities will expect its library services to be geared to the needs of its researchers not to become a centre for off-campus HND students!

Having said that, it is clear that lifelong learning implies major changes to the pattern of higher education to which we have become accustomed. Students will enter higher education for short periods, but do so repeatedly. Students will receive higher education at the place and time of their own choice, rather than on campus within a traditional academic year. Students will build up qualifications from small units, and may do so using modules from a variety of institutions. It could be that virtually everyone comes to regard themselves as a "university student" on frequent occasions - and even perhaps permanently if institutions choose to forge enduring relationships. It is to the library needs of such students that these recommendations are primarily addressed.

One further note is pertinent: we have described the service providers in these Recommendations as "librarians" because there is no agreed shorthand term which would convey the equivalent posts in converged library+IT services and because our remit was to explore the implications of lifelong learning for the academic library. This should not be taken as implying that we regard the recommendations as applying only to unconverged services - quite the contrary.

8.1 Recommendations directed primarily to JISC and HEFCs

Recommendation 1: There should be continued encouragement at the highest level for co-operative approaches to comprehensive library provision suitable for supporting lifelong learners. In particular, given the likelihood of courses of any one institution being followed by students across the UK and any one student following modules from more than one institution, there is a need to go beyond regional arrangements and consider the issue again from a national perspective.

Recommendation 2: There is a need for more experimental work on the development of new, networked learning environments which would include the 'library' elements of support. The expertise developed in eLib might usefully be exploited to help institutions and higher education nationally develop the understanding, infrastructure and mechanisms needed to support lifelong learning.

Recommendation 3: Many eLib projects have considerable potential for benefiting lifelong learners. It would be useful if Project Teams could be asked to address this issue in the next, or final, reports.

Recommendation 4: Just as Dearing has recommended that senior institutional managers should possess a “deep understanding of Communications and Information Technologies”, so too all academic library managers need an in-depth understanding of both the theory and practice of learning and the leading edge of network applications, especially those related to information systems. There is a pressing need to address these issues at the national level.

Recommendation 5: In guiding the development of national services, JISC needs to be aware that the user community is likely to change rapidly if lifelong learning takes off. For example, a high proportion of the UK population could be members of the community and could legitimately require access to national services (including international academic networks). This has considerable implications for authentication and for demand on and delivery of JISC and commercial services and may require a change of view on licensing. It is an issue that can only be tackled effectively at national level.

Recommendation 6: Exemplars of good practice in supporting lifelong learning should be encouraged. For example, eLib projects concerned with “hybrid libraries” and “clumps” which have recently commenced should be asked to consider this wider community in designing their services. Effective dissemination strategies are needed to achieve widespread knowledge of good practice.

Recommendation 7: Further work should be undertaken, using the model developed in the work published as *The Effective Academic Library* and more recently in the eLib supporting study on management information for the electronic library, to develop performance indicators suitable for managing library services designed for lifelong learners.

Recommendation 8: The contribution which libraries make to lifelong learning has been insufficiently studied. Work should be undertaken to assess the value of libraries to lifelong learners and the impact which their services have on lifelong learning in general. This would be an important input for policy makers nationally and institutionally.

8.2 Recommendations directed primarily to institutions and their librarians

Recommendation 9: Institutions and their libraries should review their existing services, including their participation in co-operative arrangements, to determine whether they meet the needs of non-traditional lifelong learners.

Recommendation 10: Institutions should ensure that when they offer courses designed to appeal to lifelong learners, and especially where those courses will not be delivered primarily on-campus, there is a clear statement of the learning resource, including library, support which will be available and a commitment to its delivery. Work is needed to develop understanding of the costs and benefits of library support in these contexts.

Recommendation 11: Institutions should consider whether, in developing the longer term relationships with students which Dearing recommends, they should offer access to library services as part of the total service they provide. In so doing, institutions will no doubt wish to consider the resource implications of such a policy.

Recommendation 12: Librarians should be involved as key players in the development of new, ICT-based learning environments within their institutions in the context of institutional learning strategies.

Recommendation 13: Library service provision should be designed and costed as part of the development of programmes rather than delivered in a purely responsive manner.

Recommendation 14: The teaching of information skills should be reviewed to ensure that lifelong learners, and especially those whose exposure to the institution will be in short bursts, will be adequately equipped to undertake their courses and exploit information resources.

8.3 Recommendations directed primarily to the library community

Recommendation 15: Librarians should consider the mix of services which they currently provide to non-traditional students and whether a different mix (e.g. document delivery off-campus, 24 hour & 365 day opening, telephone/email helpdesk services) is required to support their institution's lifelong learners.

Recommendation 16: Methods of sharing best practice in the provision of services to lifelong learners should be developed.

Recommendation 17: Librarians should consider whether a well-designed professional development programme designed to inform professional library staff about learning theory and research on effective learning could be launched.

Recommendation 18: Consideration should be given to the skills which librarians will need if they are to be effective in supporting lifelong learning.

Recommendation 19: Academic librarians should give further consideration to the possibilities of developing service provision jointly with non-academic library/IT services, such as public libraries, and other academic services such as further education college libraries, especially where students are based at a distance from the campus or would find access to such services beneficial for other reasons. In considering this Recommendation, librarians may wish to explore how such alliances could enhance the social dimension of the learning experience.

Recommendation 20: Librarians should consider whether the design of their administrative systems is appropriate to a dispersed user community accessing predominantly electronic services. For example, it may be more appropriate to track users across a co-operative network rather than focusing on tracking stock.

Recommendation 21: Librarians should consider and debate with suppliers new licensing arrangements for access to electronic resources which, while protecting suppliers' legitimate interests, do not disadvantage off-campus learners.

Recommendation 22: More research is needed on the ways in which users actually use information and library services, especially in a networked environment.

Recommendation 23: The library community should consider whether the professional development needs of library staff, including senior library managers, are being addressed adequately within present structures. For example, there could be a case for senior management CPD courses designed specifically to assist managers to acquire the skills needed to provide effective and dynamic leadership in a period of great change. The profession should form a view on how lifelong learning can be made a reality for all library staff.

* * * * *