

Supporting teaching in the Henry Grunfeld Library

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This article considers the planning and the operation of the Henry Grunfeld Library in The London Institute of Banking & Finance, with a focus on how it supports teaching. In some ways, the opening of a new campus library in London in 2016 goes against the trend in higher education institutions of increasing digitisation and electronic mediation, but the new library has come about to cater for the needs of students and to support an organisation-wide drive to enhance the student experience. At almost one year old, the library has evidence of good engagement with undergraduate students. We are committed also to keeping engaged with our academic staff through the new library and our well-established e-library, KnowledgeBank.

The London Institute of Banking & Finance

The London Institute of Banking & Finance was launched in September 2016 as a planned rebranding of ifs University College. The institute can trace its origins back to 1879, when the Institute of Bankers was founded in London. Educating bankers and supporting them at key points of their careers have always been priorities, as has keeping up with commercial changes and evolving legislation and regulation. The following key dates give a snapshot of some of the milestones since 1879:

- 1879 foundation of the Institute of Bankers in London
- 1987 The Institute of Bankers gained its Royal Charter
- 1996 first link between the qualifications offered by the institute and a university degree
- 1997 name changed to the Institute of Financial Services (ifs)
- 2013 granted university college title, and it became ifs University College
- 2016 rebranded and relaunched in September as The London Institute of Banking & Finance

Further details of qualifications currently offered by the institute, its role and its background can be found on its website <http://www.libf.ac.uk>

The framework of professional qualifications includes programmes leading to awards in banking, mortgage advice, financial advice and trade finance. It is aimed at people working in the financial services industry who would like to enhance their skills and further their careers, based anywhere, and available via distance learning. This framework has been completely overhauled since 2015 and will be relaunched in January 2017.

Full-time undergraduate degrees are offered in the institute's London campus. They include the BSc (Hons) in Banking Practice and Management and the BSc (Hons) in Finance, Investment and Risk. A distance-learning MSc in Banking Practice and Management is available to students who aspire to a senior role in the banking industry. Financial capability qualifications are available to young people in the 14–19 year-old age group who would like to pursue financial education in school.

The Henry Grunfeld Library

The Henry Grunfeld Library was planned during 2015 and opened its doors to students for the first time in mid-January 2016, with its official opening in March. It is situated on the fourth floor of the campus of The London Institute of Banking & Finance in Lovat Lane, near the Monument in the City of London, and forms part of the student centre there. It is dedicated to the memory of Henry Grunfeld, a distinguished banker who was active in the City of London in the twentieth century. The library receives support from the foundation that bears his name.

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From its beginnings, the library has aimed to be a flexible and collaborative learning space for undergraduate students and their teachers, and it can also welcome any other students pursuing programmes of study of the institute. Alumni are also welcome to use the library, and staff and students of other universities can be admitted by appointment if they wish to consult the library's historical collection.



In her speech at the official opening of the library, the Head of Learning Resources and Libraries, Nicola Scull (2016), outlined the decision in 2004 to close the former library in order to make way for an electronic library, KnowledgeBank. This was born in 2004 with a mission to be accessible to all students and alumni wherever they were and whenever they wanted it. It has gone from strength to strength, and now includes dedicated collections of e-books, e-journals, newspapers, soft skills resources and electronic insights. This e-library is available to all staff, students and alumni. The core subject matter of the e-library comprises banking, financial services, economics, management and organisational change, and leadership.

Fast forward from 2004 to 2015, and the Head of Learning Resources and Libraries was asked to make proposals for a new flexible learning and library space on campus, to cater mainly for undergraduate cohorts. The proposals were supported by the new CEO, Alex Fraser, and by senior staff with responsibilities for enhancing the student experience. Scull also summarised feedback from students prior to 2016 about their felt need for a dedicated learning and library space. She pointed out that they needed more support in using their e-library, more help with referencing and more opportunities to develop digital and information skills.

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The Henry Grunfeld Library strapline is *learn, study, collaborate*, and to this end the space is very flexible, offering:

- qualified librarians available to students and staff during opening hours
- spaces for quiet study and for group study / group work and seminars
- twelve PCs linked to the internet and KnowledgeBank, our electronic library
- a collection in print of core undergraduate texts, daily newspapers and financial and news magazines
- an historical collection showcasing the *Journal of the Institute of Bankers* (now known as *Financial world*) (1879–)
- a dedicated Bloomberg terminal, available to students and staff, and bookable
- a bookable PC space that can be used for digital skills workshops, or for other classes, as required by teachers

Support for teachers

Keeping academics engaged with the library and with KnowledgeBank is a key priority for us at The London Institute of Banking & Finance. We encourage all teaching staff to keep up to date with database developments and new resources. As librarians, we regularly monitor and copy edit references in the VLE and for assignments. We also welcome opportunities from our academic colleagues to join them in class or workshops to demonstrate resources and searching techniques.

Keeping up to date with new developments and resources is an essential element of a teacher's continuous professional development. As far as we can, we offer induction sessions to new academic staff members. We invite teachers to sign up to test out new resources on trial, as their feedback is very important. We organise refreshers and demonstrations of key items such as the *FT*, Statista and the EIU (Economist Intelligence Unit). We send a monthly digest of library and database news to the academic forum, which they receive on the VLE and by email. We offer one-to-one help at any stage for teachers, if they would like it. Teachers can also book the computer space in the library for a class or workshop. Library manager, Ian Simpson, is keen to use every available means to keep our academic colleagues engaged with libraries and updated with resources.

Like many libraries, we are fortunate to have a few very enthusiastic academic staff members who fully appreciate the value of libraries and information and digital literacy skills. These 'champions' can help to reinforce our key messages. Their advocacy and good will are a major help at difficult times and when we have to make decisions about new or existing resources.

As librarians, we form part of the wider team of Learning Resources and Libraries, under the leadership of Nicola Scull. We enjoy very good working relationships with our colleagues in the VLE team and the publications team. On the VLE, librarians are asked regularly to copy-check references for accuracy and Harvard compliance (our own version of Harvard). In this way, we help to improve the integrity and presentation of the content written by academics and other authors. We monitor some of the VLE forums to advise on resources and search techniques, as appropriate. As well as liaising regularly with our VLE colleagues, we are in weekly, if not daily, contact with course directors and student support staff, and with the careers and student engagement managers.

Perhaps the most enlightening exchange that we have with academics, both for librarians and academics, is when we are asked to demonstrate resources

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and searches to students during workshops leading up to assignments. The request is usually made by a teacher to a librarian to illustrate searching and browsing on an assignment topic, for instance. The demonstration can last anything between thirty and sixty minutes. It often raises interesting comments and questions from students and teachers, and can lead to good resource discovery all round!

Reference

Scull, N. (2016). *Speech at the official opening of the Henry Grunfeld Library*, 10 March

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