IMPERIAL

Head of Content and Discovery

Department/Division/Faculty:	Library Services
Campus/Location:	South Kensington Campus (**minimum 60% on campus**)
Job Family/Level:	Professional Services Level 5
Responsible to:	University Librarian & Director of Library Services
Line management for:	4 FTEs
Key working Relationships (Internal):	Other Heads of Teams in Library Services, Finance, ICT
Key Working Relationships (External):	Sectoral organisations including RLUK, SCONUL and UKSG; content and software providers; purchasing consortia; relevant user groups and communities
Contract type:	Maternity Cover. Fixed Term, full time, ending June 2026.

Purpose of the Post

To lead the Content and Discovery team, setting the strategic direction of the team and ensuring its operational efficiency. The postholder contributes to Library Services' strategic plan and its operational underpinnings, ensuring that Content and Discovery helps the department to achieve its strategic objectives. The postholder ensures that the team's budget is managed transparently and effectively and works with other library teams to ensure that Content and Discovery is meeting their needs.

The Content and Discovery team procures and manages library information resources, cataloguing them so that they can be easily found. The team manages systems which underpin essential library functions, including the library management system, reading list system, and self-service borrowing machines. The team also works closely with the Scholarly Communications Management team to manage payments for and routes to open access publishing.

The postholder is a member of the Library Leadership Team and works closely with the University Librarian & Director of Library Services and the other Heads of Teams to ensure the department functions efficiently and that staff across Library Services feel valued, heard and supported.

Key Responsibilities

- As a member of the Library Leadership Team, fully participate in the development and implementation of the department's aims and vision, making a positive contribution to all aspects of the service

- Take part in appropriate library management groups, lead projects within the department, and represent the department on relevant internal and external committees and groups

Strategic development of information resources

- Ensure that the information needs of all of Imperial's communities are supported through the efficient and cost-effective acquisition of and access to appropriate information resources

- Lead on the identification of innovative methods of content delivery, advising colleagues on current developments and opportunities

- Lead on the development and implementation of appropriate metadata policies and procedures across Library Services

- Work in close collaboration with the Library Content Strategy Group, the Head of Library Liaison (Medicine and NHS) and the Head of Library Liaison (Business, Engineering and Natural Sciences) to lead on collections strategies and policies

- Identify and analyse data to inform the strategic management and development of information resources and to evaluate and develop services

- To contribute to the strategic assessment of Library Services' future space requirements for its physical collections, in collaboration with other Heads of Teams, leading on particular workstreams or projects (for example, the closed-access basement)

Budget oversight

- Work with other members of the Library Leadership Team to set, monitor and manage annual budgets in accordance with the university's financial requirements

- In consultation with the Head of Administration and Operations and the University Librarian & Director of Library Services, structure and allocate materials budgets and ensure that budgets are spent within agreed expenditure levels

- Oversee the information resources budget profile, ensuring accurate and transparent reporting and effective processes and workflows

Library technology

- Lead on the continual improvement of the library management system (LMS), discovery system, reading list system and other key systems to support learning, teaching and research

- Collaborate with other Alma and Primo customers to develop and adopt new technologies and approaches and collaborate on liaison with key suppliers such as Ex Libris
- Oversee the management and development of library self-service and stock security systems
- Lead on assessing how developing technologies such as AI can improve Library Services' systems and processes

Team management

- Ensure the design and implementation of effective and efficient workflows across and beyond the Content and Discovery team (total team members = 17)
- Lead and develop the Content and Discovery team, modelling and ensuring a professional and collaborative team culture
- Manage the the Content and Discovery team, including line-management of certain staff members, selection, appraisal, training, professional development and performance management
- Determine the team's goals and service priorities in consultation with the University Librarian & Director of Library Services, and monitor its success in achieving them
- Lead the implementation of innovation and change within the team in alignment with the department's strategic objectives
- Ensure effective communication to all team members and between different teams

Relationship management and sector engagement

- Build effective relationships with others within Library Services and across the university, contributing to and leading cross-departmental discussions and events
- Work closely with ICT on strategic and operational matters and exploit opportunities for joint working on new initiatives aligned to Library Services' strategic priorities
- Actively engage with sector groups, networks and mission groups (such as RLUK, SCONUL and UKSG), leading on initiatives where appropriate
- Represent Library Services as appropriate with delegated authority from the University Librarian & Director of Library Services

Other

- Lead projects across Library Services, acting as project manager or sponsor where required
- Participate in staff induction and training programmes

- Liaise closely with other Heads of Teams, sharing knowledge, best practice and ensuring positive working relationships between teams

- Pursue an active programme of self-development and continuous updating of skills, understanding of new technologies and professional knowledge

Person Specification

Requirements Candidates/post holders will be expected to demonstrate the following:	**Essential (E)/ Desirable (D)**
Education	
Education to degree level, or equivalent qualifications or knowledge	E
Project management qualification or equivalent knowledge	D
Experience	
Experience of information resources management and development, including proven success in management of a substantial subscriptions portfolio and experience in negotiation, monitoring and evaluation of library resources	E
Evidence of strategic and innovative thinking to evaluate scenarios and lead on the development and improvement of services	E
Successful record of planning and managing budgets effectively	E
Experience of using Ex Libris library management system products	D
Knowledge	
Good understanding of IT systems for library management, discovery and eresources management	E
Good understanding of the evolving culture of higher education and the external environment regarding learning, teaching and research	E
Knowledge of current strategic trends and sector-wide developments in digital library services	E
Knowledge of research and scholarly publication lifecycles, including experience of working with transitional deals and other routes to open access publication	E
Up-to-date knowledge of general IT developments, with a demonstrable knowledge of emerging technologies and their application to innovative service delivery within higher education	D
Skills & Abilities	
Proven leadership skills in a middle/senior management role, including experience of leading and managing change	E

Strong people management skills, and proven track record of leading and motivating teams	E
Ability to work collaboratively, negotiate, influence and advocate to a diverse set of stakeholders	E
Excellent organisational skills and a proven ability to prioritise, balance and schedule workloads both for yourself and for a team	E
Effective interpersonal, presentation and communication skills	E
Proven ability to implement complex and long-term planning and organisation, and to be effective in project management and business case development	E
Excellent team player, flexible and co-operative, coupled with high level of personal responsibility and initiative	E
Proven ability to analyse data to inform strategic management and development of information resources	E

Further Information

Please note that job descriptions cannot be exhaustive, and the post-holder may be required to undertake other duties, which are broadly in line with the above key responsibilities.

Our values are at the root of everything we do and everyone in our community is expected to demonstrate Imperial:

- Respect
- Collaboration
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Innovation

Employees are also required to comply with all Imperial policies and regulations.

We are committed to equality of opportunity, to eliminating discrimination and to creating an inclusive working environment for all. We encourage candidates to apply irrespective of age, disability, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment, sex, or sexual orientation. You can read more about our commitment on our webpages.

Updated 19 May 2025