# Birkbeck Library Communications and Marketing Strategy

## 1. Introduction

The Library’s Communications and Marketing Strategy has been developed to ensure that we communicate as effectively as possible with our users and stakeholders and that we review and continually improve our communications activities. It articulates what we are trying to achieve by communicating and outlines the methods and approaches we will employ to achieve those objectives.

To help us do this, the document breaks down our communications work into three core strands:

* Informing: this is our outward communication to users and stakeholders
* Engaging: this is when we seek the views and feedback of our users and stakeholders
* Developing: this is when we reflect on our communications activities and make changes to improve them.

The Library’s Communications and Marketing Group will take the lead in ensuring that we implement this Strategy and will prioritise work by formulating an annual plan. However, communicating clearly, consistently and accessibly is the responsibility of all Library staff.

## 2. Objectives

The Library’s communications and marketing activities help us to deliver the Library’s strategic aims, which are to:

* Enhance the student experience
* Increase the number of Birkbeck students who successfully complete their degree
* Support Birkbeck research
* Attract students and celebrate Birkbeck’s unique mission.

The Library constantly develops its stakeholder communications in order to:

* Increase awareness and promote the use of the resources and services which the Library provides to support our users
* Improve the information literacy skills of our users so that they may succeed in their studies and research, as well as their careers beyond Birkbeck
* Make sure our messages are clear, consistent, accessible, timely and helpful to them.
* Establish diversified communication channels which are fit for reaching different types of users and other stakeholders
* Create a meaningful dialogue with the Birkbeck community, to ensure our services meet its needs
* Measure satisfaction with our services and use feedback to make improvements to them
* Raise the profile of the Library within the Birkbeck community
* Promote the Library’s contribution towards Birkbeck’s mission and strategic aims.

## 3. Methods

### **Inform**

* Develop tools for communicating in a clear, accessible and consistent way.
  + Develop support materials and templates to assist library staff in communicating clearly.
  + Ensure that library staff always meet the required legal standards of visual and written accessibility by following the university’s guidelines.
  + Develop and agree key messages that we will repeat consistently and share these key messages with all library staff.
  + Incorporate Birkbeck branding, templates and digital guidelines in all our communications.
  + Use a wide range of communications channels, appropriate to each communication, to maximise reach.
* Target relevant messages at different groups of library users and other stakeholders.
  + Direct students to the support and resources available to help them study successfully.
  + Direct academic staff to the support available to help them teach effectively.
  + Ensure that researchers are aware of our support services and know how to make use of the tools we offer to benefit their work.
  + Report on Library developments at university committees.
  + Promote the Library as a hub of the university, both as a physical space and an online resource.
* Align our communications activities with those of the wider university.
  + Ensure library-related news and content feature regularly in university communication channels.
  + Develop campaigns which reflect key moments in the academic calendar and the student journey.
  + Reflect the External Relations annual communications calendar in our marketing.
  + Look for opportunities to work closely on campaigns, events and exhibitions with other professional support services and academic departments and to utilise our Library space as a venue for these.

**Engage**

* Use a wide range of channels and methods to consult with our users and stakeholders and to measure satisfaction with our services, including:
  + Annual Library/IT Services survey
  + Verbal and written feedback
  + Social media
  + National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)
  + Taught-course module questionnaires
* Develop relationships with and listen to the Student Union and other student representatives through:
  + Student–Library Partnership
  + Regular consultation with Birkbeck Students’ Union officers
  + Student representatives within Departments
* Develop relationships with academic departments through:
  + Regular liaison work of our Subject Librarians and the Library Disability and Dyslexia Service
  + User education and training
  + Attending departmental and School meetings
  + Building relationships with staff responsible for Communications within Schools and Departments
* Participate actively in the College’s committees and other forums, including:
  + Library Advisory Group
  + Education Committee
  + Research Committee
  + Research Students Sub-Committee
  + Diversity, Disability and Wellbeing Sub-Committee
  + Communications and Events Forum
  + School and Departmental committees and meetings.

**Develop**

* Analyse the effectiveness of our communications and engagement, including:
  + Visits to our website
  + Social media metrics
  + Engagement with College newsletter items
  + Use of print media
  + Use of our feedback options
  + Participation in our engagement forums
  + Attendance at user education activities
  + Enquiries received (to identify gaps in knowledge of our services)
  + Complaints about specific services and overall satisfaction with our service
  + Users and stakeholders we are not reaching.
* Develop and improve our communications and engagement by:
  + Agreeing an annual Communications Plan, created by the Library Communications and Marketing Group, which addresses gaps identified by our analysis.
  + Refining and adding to the key messages that we communicate to our users.
  + Redirecting our communications through the most appropriate channels.
  + Diversifying the way we engage with users and stakeholders.
  + Reviewing and improving our communications guidelines and training for library staff.
* Respond to user needs identified in our consultation and engagement by ensuring:
  + Feedback is a standing item on our Management Team agenda.
  + User feedback informs the annual operational plan in which service priorities are identified and agreed.
* Keep our users up to date with the results of their feedback, including:
  + Services we have introduced or improved as a result of their feedback.
  + Updates on whether we have achieved our standards and performance indicators.
  + Being honest about when we have not met our users’ expectations.