

Customer Services Group UK Annual Conference 2016



Conference Biographies & Abstracts



Chris Brill

Chris Brill is a senior policy adviser at Equality Challenge Unit (ECU). ECU work to further and support equality and diversity for staff and students in higher education institutions across all four nations of the UK and in colleges in Scotland.

Chris is currently supporting projects looking to address the underrepresentation of particular groups in higher education. He has particular experience in working with institutions to tackle disability and age equality issues, and has led research projects on the interaction of reasonable adjustments and competence standards and how institutions can support staff and students experiencing mental health difficulties.

Keynote Address

The higher education landscape is currently in a state of change. A new regulatory body (the Office for Students), a new Teaching Excellence Framework (with a focus on information capture and provision) and calls for institutions to facilitate an increase the numbers of students from underrepresented groups are all outlined in the recent higher education White Paper, 'Success as a knowledge economy.' The Stern review into the Research Excellence Framework also makes recommendations on how institutions can adopt processes to manage research activities, and reform of the Disabled Student Allowance (moving costs of particular adjustments to institutions) will require institutions to reflect on their practices and move to a more inclusive environment.

How will these drivers, and the post-EU referendum climate, affect equality and diversity within institutions? From its position as a national organisation working with institutions to promote equality, ECU will provide suggestions on how these changes may affect providing accessible and inclusive customer service within library services. Delegates will have the opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities this poses to them as staff working in this area, and how institutions can lead the way in promoting inclusivity in service provision.



Kit Heyam

Kit Heyam is a Library Services Assistant at Leeds Beckett University, a PhD student and teaching assistant at the University of Leeds, and the Lead Coordinator of the charity York LGBT History Month. He has worked in library services for nine years, and since coming out as a trans man in 2014 he has delivered trans awareness training to over 200 staff and students at several Yorkshire universities. He has appeared in both an academic and an activist capacity on BBC2 and BBC Radio York.

Trans-aware customer service

How can we ensure that our transgender customers are not an afterthought? This presentation will explore the relevance of trans issues to all aspects of library customer service, and will provide recommendations for proactively creating a trans-inclusive service. Starting with the basics, it aims to equip you with the confidence to deal with common terminology concerning trans issues, and to handle situations in which unfamiliar concepts arise. Taking a case study-based approach, it will then identify the aspects of library services that are most likely to fail trans customers, and prompt you to consider how we can tackle this. How can we make sure that the process of updating personal details on a library account is smooth and sensitively handled? Are our databases and library management systems equipped to represent those customers who identify outside of the male/female gender binary? Is the confidentiality of trans customers adequately safeguarded? Do trans people have a welcoming and positive experience in our libraries, without fear of awkward reactions from staff or the discomfort of being referred to by incorrect pronouns? This presentation aims to bring these issues into the spotlight, to advise on solutions, and to signpost you to further training resources.



Jane Reynolds

Jane Reynolds is the Head of Customer Services, University of Bristol, where she is responsible for the management, development and coordination of front-line customer services across the nine libraries and three study centres at the University. This includes leading the development of accessible and inclusive services. She is a Chartered member of CILIP and her career prior to libraries spans wholesale and retail management, training and HR. Increasingly she finds that her pre-library experience supports the more customer focussed approach to service delivery within Library Services at Bristol. Jane is committee member of CLAUD, a group that works to promote accessible libraries in the HE sector and a member of the CSGUK Communications Task Group.

Working with others to provide Accessible and Inclusive Library Services

At the University of Bristol our Library offer includes additional services available through the Library Support Team. We work closely with all student services but have a special relationship with the Disability Service Team and IT Services and have collaborated closely in the lead up to the DSA changes, and in general to provide a more joined up approach to supporting Dyslexic and Disabled Students.

At the heart of our offer is the desire to provide more accessible and inclusive library services as by ensuring things are easy to use and study spaces are flexible, students whatever their needs and preferences can function independently and use the library on an equal basis with others.

Last year we set up an Accessible and Inclusive Library Advisory Group the remit of which is '*...to ensure that Library services and spaces are designed so that they are accessible and inclusive to all our customers whatever their individual needs*'. The group considers access and inclusion in the broadest sense to include age, caring responsibilities, disability, gender, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic class and transgender. Our work includes representation on project groups and looking across and beyond Higher Education for examples of best practice.



Bryony Ramsden

Bryony is a Subject Librarian at the University of Huddersfield, and has worked in libraries since the late 1990s.

She was research assistant on the first phase of the Library Impact Data Project (<https://library3.hud.ac.uk/blogs/lidp/>) which proved a correlation between library use and level of degree attained. She is currently undertaking a PhD using ethnographic methods to study user behaviour in academic libraries.

Learning from and supporting international students

During the second phase of the Library Impact Data Project [<https://library.hud.ac.uk/blogs/lidp/>] we found international students were comparatively low users of the University of Huddersfield library. This presentation discusses the approach taken and data collected to try and learn more about why international students in particular are low users. Initially, research utilised a primarily quantitative survey. Qualitative data was then collected using ethnographic methods to both gather information not normally discovered via surveys, and to help participants articulate their responses more easily. The research had only a small number of participants but proved revealing in the nature of the similarities found across the data.



Harinder Matharu

Harinder Matharu has worked in Higher Education for three years. He spent two years managing a Student Green Fund project, the aim of which was to introduce a positive change in the way students engage with the natural world by encouraging them to live more sustainable lifestyles. He is currently the User Experience and Engagement Manager at the University of Leicester's Library.

Your Library: your story

'Your Library, Your Story' is a Library project which works with students as partners to increase user engagement and experience. From creating a student User Panel to undertaking ethnographic research, the University of Leicester Library will be working with students to ensure that the services we provide meet the needs of our users. One of the projects will investigate what a Library can do to meet the needs of students with autism and we will be working with the Union's Autistic Society to do so.



Carol Keddie

Carol is the senior assistant librarian for Arts, Design and Humanities at De Montfort University, with specialist responsibilities for Fine Art, Dance, Drama, Performing Arts, Design Crafts, Product and Furniture Design and Design Innovation. Carol is also responsible for managing the library Disability Team and is the Universal Design for Learning Champion for Library and Learning Services. She is a fellow of the HEA, a chartered member of CILIP and is a committee member of ARLG East Midlands.

Implementing the Universal Design for Learning framework at De Montfort University

This interactive session will provide an introduction to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and how they are being implemented within Library and Learning Services at De Montfort University. Delegates will also have the opportunity to reflect on how they may already be incorporating elements of UDL in their own libraries and discuss ideas on ways of enhancing inclusivity.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for teaching, learning and assessment which aims to provide an inclusive experience for every student. De Montfort University is taking an institution-wide approach to delivering enhanced services which will benefit all students. UDL is a central element in our teaching and learning strategy. Library and Learning Services are designing their teaching and learning to reflect the UDL framework; it can also be applied more widely to the way we deliver all our services and provide access to resources.



Denis Shukur

Denis Shukur is the Chief Executive of the University of East London Students' Union, a post he has held since August 2015. Prior to this post Denis was the Deputy Chief Executive (Membership) at Goldsmiths Students' Union where he oversaw the implementation of the membership strategic plan that led to an increased electoral turnout, increased number of academic representatives and higher participation in student activities. He graduated from Queen Mary, University of London with a degree in Geography and Politics and worked as a sabbatical officer with responsibility for academic representation, student welfare and democratic functions of the union. He has also been involved in many community organisations including Tolerance in Diversity and Citizens UK, where he worked on fostering better community relations and working on life changing campaigns such as the City Safe zones and Living Wage Campaign. Denis is a member of the National Union of Students Black Staff network committee where he oversees policy creation and campaigns to promote greater equality.

Segmenting the Student Population

Denis will speak about his current role, developing the Students' Union's new strategy which is based on attitudinal segmentation, where focus on enhancing student experience is based on understanding student's needs, finding similarities and forming segments and communicating with segmented students based on their needs.



Andrew Mackey

Andrew Mackey is an independent consultant with a specific interest in customer service. Having worked at a senior level in the public, private and voluntary sectors he began working independently in 2003 and now has a wide range of experience of working with organisations on customer service, people management and organisational development issues. He is a qualified Life Coach and holds a Diploma in Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP). He is also an accredited Investors in People specialist and a lead assessor for the national Customer Service Excellence standard.

Opening up our services: lessons we can learn

The session will help bring together the various strands that have been discussed throughout the day. In particular it will challenge delegates to think about the following issues:

- Who are our customers?
- How do we get to know what they need and expect from us?
- When we talk about 'accessible' and 'inclusive' services, what do we really mean – particularly for our specific customer groups?
- How do we make sure that our staff share our understanding of accessibility and inclusivity and how do we make sure they deliver effectively?

The speaker will draw on a selection of examples from a range of sectors to demonstrate how other organisations have addressed these issues effectively, showing how new and exciting approaches can make sure that services are truly open to all.