Strategy and Vision

2018-24

1 August 2018

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Section One: Overview

1.1   Background

The University of London was founded in 1836 for public benefit, to promote education of a university standard, the advancement of knowledge and learning, and to provide an institution open to all, irrespective of race, creed or political belief. It was the first university in the UK to open its courses to women (1868), and encouraged distance learning across the globe through its external programme (1858).

The current University strategy (2014-19) aims to build upon these proud traditions, with the strategic vision:

> To make a unique contribution to learning and research-led scholarship through our unrivalled network of member institutions, our global reach and reputation, and the breadth of our high-quality innovative academic services and infrastructure.

1.2   About Senate House Library

Senate House Library (SHL) received its founding collection in 1871, and is the central library for the University of London and the School of Advanced Study (SAS). Its supports the University strategy by providing access to arts, humanities and social science research and special collections in the heart of London's student and research community. Members have access to millions of books and journals, digital resources, and beautiful study spaces designed by Charles Holden. It offers modern resources in a heritage setting.

The key purpose of the SHL strategy is to enable the University to achieve its strategic vision so that knowledge is available to anyone in the world. The timeline for this broad goal is the University's 200th anniversary in 2036.

1.3   Vision and values

Our core vision can be summed up as follows:

'SHL will be recognised as a national research resource for arts, humanities and social sciences.'

As a modern research library at the heart of London's museum and Knowledge Quarter, SHL will offer prestigious reading rooms for silent study alongside new space to support innovation and research. It is where researchers gather to access nationally significant collections and collaborate, experiment and produce new outputs throughout their academic lives.

SHL will play a fundamental role at the heart of the federal University, providing leadership and collaborative opportunity for member institutions around collection management and development, digital scholarship, services and engagement.

In line with the University's founding values, SHL will reach beyond academia. The 'SHL Digital' platform will provide access to content, services and learning resources to anyone in the world.

When combined with its programme of outreach exhibitions and events, SHL will ensure that diverse global audiences benefit from the University's academic excellence, research outputs and innovative high-quality academic support – making the University socially relevant.

1.4   Strategic goals

To deliver this vision, Senate House Library has set five strategic goals:

Strategic Goal	Strategic Framework	Key Delivery Infrastructure
1. To develop our collections as a nationally recognised resource for arts, humanities and social sciences scholars	• Collection Development Strategy • Collection Management Policy • Collection Overview and Key Research Strengths • Business development strategy	• Collection Development Group • Collection Advisory Group • SAS Institute Advisory Groups • Budget: academic expenditure £1m per annum, inflated 5-10% with annual income generation targets from digitisation and licensing
2. To provide world class research facilities and a premier researcher experience	• Storage strategy • Service development strategy • Library Modernisation Programme (LMP)	• Service Development Group • Budget: primarily staffing resource • Capital programme: LMP (£1.3m over 3 years), delivering long-term efficiency savings
3. To support and enable digital scholarship	• 'SHL Digital' Strategy • Digital Preservation Strategy (SHL as lead partner with stakeholders across the University)	• Digital Development Group • ITGG at University level • Budget: Royalty revenue, SHL IT core spend with financial and resourcing support from University IT Governance Group

4. To facilitate greater engagement with our collections and resources	• Engagement Strategy:
	   o Membership
	   o Academic
	   o External
	• Research Strategy
		• Engagement Development Group
		• University-level External Engagement Strategy Board
		• Budget: engagement expenditure £140k per annum, not inflated

5. To create a customer-focused internal culture of excellence, and support staff development	• University Dignity and Respect Policy • SHL training programme	• Staff Development Group • Budget: £30k for staff training and development, including support for study schemes

1.5   Requirements

To deliver these goals SHL requires:
- Rolling 3 year operating plan focused on the user experience
- Clear articulation about how all SHL activities contribute to the University's mission, vision and strategy (and associated academic, digital and engagement strategies)
- Agreement and understanding about how SHL supports, and is supported by, other University departments
- Greater collaboration with SAS and federal member libraries around areas of joint benefit
- 'One University' approach to its operating plan, budget allocation and expenditure

Section Two: Strategic Goal 1: Collections

'To develop our collections as a nationally recognised resource for arts, humanities and social sciences scholars'

2.1   Overview

SHL's reputation as a national resource for arts, humanities and social science scholars will depend on the quality of its collections. Eight core areas of research strength will be refined, with a focus on acquiring unique, high profile material as well as the latest research outputs **(Collection Acquisition)**. We will also make this material as widely available as possible through cataloguing, digitisation and by licensing to commercial partners to consolidate the revenue streams which underpin our financial sustainability within the wider university **(Collection Development).**

SHL will work with in partnership with SAS and its institutes to achieve this goal, bringing in modern collections to support the School's taught courses and research programmes. It will also continue to work closely with the federal member institutions, playing a leading role around collaborative collection management and online licensing, and contributing to wider sector initiatives such as Jisc's National Bibliographic Knowledgebase **(Collection Management).**

Key indicators of success would be:

- Award of Arts Council England designation by 2022
- Archive accreditation by 2024
- Major collection donation by 2021
- New storage model and infrastructure by 2024

2.2   Collection acquisition

SHL will grow its nationally and internationally recognised collections in the arts, humanities and social sciences – reflecting the latest published research outputs, whilst acquiring high-profile, unique special collections of printed material, archives and digital media. Over the next five years SHL will reconfigure its expenditure on journals to embrace digital output via subscription bundles that increase the range of titles that we offer, although we will retain unique print journals with high research value.

A collaborative collection management framework will enable federal members to map and promote our respective collection strengths around monographs, reducing collection overlap and prioritising spend in key areas. This will provide greater value to the federal members by 2024, and encourage more of their students to visit. Equally, SHL will invest in more e-book provision over the period to ensure that remote learning is also supported.

Based on clear collection policies for our eight core research strengths, SHL will seek to acquire high-profile special collections, with the aim of establishing Senate House Library as a prestigious research centre for arts, humanities and social science collections, evidenced by the award of Arts Council England designation for at least one core research area, and archive accreditation, by 2024. SHL will work with the Development Office to build a fund by 2023 to purchase high value collections.

2.3   Collection development

With new stock control introduced from 2018-19 thanks to RFID tagging all open access material, −
we will identify collections with no or poor metadata, and prioritise work to remedy the situation via
a catalogue pipeline, based on their potential research value. This will ensure that more material can
be discovered on our evolving web discovery platform.

The establishment of shelf-ready acquisition of material, following the reclassification of all open
access material by 2020, will speed up the supply of new materials and free resource from the
Metadata team to work on cataloguing projects.

As part of SHL's business development, investment in our digitisation pipeline will continue, building
upon the success of the last few years. SHL will work with commercial partners to publish unique
and distinct and collections online, generating income to underpin SHL's financial sustainability
whilst supporting the University's strategic goal to extend its 'global reach and reputation'.

2.4   Collection management

By 2019, RFID tagging of open access material will permit greater collection management through
stock control and user analytics. The most appropriate material will be made available on open
access, whilst optimising the use of storage space for the research reserve through rationalisation
and disposal of end-of-life stock. This will ensure SHL's collections remain relevant to the needs of
researchers. Additional wayfinding support will also be provided via interactive map applications.

By 2020, all open access material will be brought together under one classification scheme. This will
support the researcher in finding the most appropriate material through the creation of 'one
collection', replacing the multiple classification schemes that are known to confuse readers.

By 2022, a collaborative collection management framework with federal member institutions will
provide an opportunity for a shared storage model at an offsite facility (with the potential to
generate revenue from third party clients). Space can be liberated in the Tower by relocating the
research reserve offsite, to be used either for special collection storage in partnership with federal
members or other institutions (generating revenue from storage costs plus a library management
fee for the production of material in the special collections reading room), or additional study space.

SHL will continue to contribute to and lead on initiatives such as the National Bibliographic
Knowledgebase, which also requires a common storage solution to underpin the national
monographs strategy (UKRR-M) from 2020.

2.5   Infrastructure

Supporting strategies	Supporting infrastructure
Collection development strategy	Collection development group (SHL)
Collection management policy	Collection advisory group (federal)
Collection policies for eight core research areas	SAS advisory groups (IMLR, ILAS, ICWS)
Business development strategy	SAS libraries group (IHR, ICLASS, IALS, Warburg)
Space strategy	

Section Three: Strategic Goal 2: Study Space and Services

'To provide world class research facilities and a premier researcher experience'

3.1 Overview

Modern research libraries are valued for more than just their collections. Providing an inspiring place for creativity and collaboration is a vital part of their remit, with an expectation from users that a visit to a library will produce valuable output that cannot be replicated in any other space on campus or at home. SHL users regularly comment on the importance of its unique environment.

SHL will continue to promote its heritage reading rooms on the fourth floor, complete with Holden architecture and furnishings, which remain an iconic part of SHL's identity. Including floors five to seven, SHL will continue to provide access to over half a million items on open access in a silent study environment. However, SHL also recognises changing academic practice in the digital age, and will introduce collaborative space to incubate and foster interdisciplinary research, and stimulate digital scholarship, by 2022 **(Study space).**

From the 2018-19 academic year, SHL will develop a new service model based on the fundamental principle that staff are available to help, assist and support research in a friendly, welcoming atmosphere. In an age of high student stress, the sanctuary of secure surroundings and empathetic staff will offer security, empathy and calm. The new service model will be more flexible than the old fixed service-points, extending across all floors of the library, with co-designed services driven by user feedback and regular engagement via a user advisory forum **(Services).**

Key indicators of success would be:

- Flexible opening hours in response to user need by 2020
- Customer service excellence accreditation by 2021
- Refurbishment to increase the number of study spaces by 2024

3.2 Study space

From 2018-19 SHL will develop and deliver a vision for study spaces in line with user needs. We will review all library estate from floors four to seven, exploring options to liberate more space by moving some of the research reserve offsite from 2019 in partnership with our external storage supplier Crown, until a new offsite storage facility is available by 2024.

We will refurbish the seventh floor with a focus on the needs of postgraduate activity, with collaborative working, creative studios and digital labs for federal member institutions, SAS researchers and other higher education institutions with London campuses that cannot provide direct library services. This will integrate with plans to develop the North East Quadrant as an inter-collegiate teaching block as part of a wider estates strategy that supports the core academic vision for the University.

In the medium term, Tower storage will be devoted to SHL and federal member special collections until investment for further development can be found, generating revenue for the University.

Longer term planning will depend on the future of the Tower. Onsite storage will be increasingly restricted to unique and distinctive special collections that support core research areas, with more space devoted to alternate uses. Contingent on capital investment and an external storage solution, the remaining floors of the Tower will be repurposed by 2036 to create a new vision for the library and its services, which will increasingly focus on the student experience and revenue-generating opportunities.

Many of these will reflect different aspects of the learning journey, such as a **Creative Zone** (providing space for artists in residence, community groups and high-profile events), a **Digital Zone** (to support digital scholarship, grow 'SHL Digital', and develop a digital lab to develop new tools alongside data science practitioners from other parts of the Knowledge Quarter such as the BL and Turing Institute) and an **Enterprise Zone** (to provide student services such as careers advice, alumni mentorship, start-up support and employment opportunity with external SMEs that rent space).

3.3   Services

The new service model will deliver a streamlined, cost-effective library from 2018-19 onwards. RFID hardware will increase the range of automated services SHL can offer, as well as providing an opportunity to increase opening hours during periods of peak demand. This will be accompanied by a refit of the current layout of the circulation desk and the introduction of more automated services such as Library Chat.

User services will be underpinned by a proactive approach to customer service excellence, driven by a fundamental ambition to help, assist and support research – a shift to a user-focused culture over the next three years from 2018-19 as part of a process to achieve customer service excellence accreditation by 2021. As part of this cultural change, we will introduce 'freedom within a framework' to empower staff to make instant decisions based on actual service situations. It will help to grow SHL's reputation as a 'can do' organisation that is attuned to its user needs.

New services will be introduced annually from 2019 as part of regular review cycle, incorporating user feedback from regular surveys and focus groups. Stakeholders will be encouraged to co-develop services as part of this review cycle. Any refurbishment plans for the library estate will answer user needs and deliver the services that they support.

Improved management information via a data dashboard from 2019, associated analytics and clear Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will ensure SHL resource is deployed on an evidence-based model to be cost effective, whilst ensuring high standards of customer service.

3.4   Infrastructure

Supporting strategies	Supporting infrastructure
Space strategy	Service development group (SHL)
Service development strategy	Staff development group (SHL)
Communication and marketing policy	Federal service standards group (federal)
	Staff development plans

Section Four: Strategic Goal 3: Digital scholarship
'To support and enable digital scholarship'

4.1   Overview

As more library services and content move online, driven by e-publication, born digital collections and distance learning, the management and promotion of digital resources is a growing and vital part of the modern research library. SHL will lead a cross-University initiative to create a digital ecosystem, in line with the role played by most Higher Education library services as information management professionals.

SHL will work with SAS on the scholarly communications agenda to improve the discovery of existing resources such as the library catalogue, University publication resources and the open access repository (SAS Space) via SHL's web platforms by 2020. This will form part of a broader initiative from 2018-19 to produce a University-wide digital preservation strategy that will increase access to digital content, provide shared storage solutions within a framework, and produce cost efficiencies by 2020 **(Digital ecosystem).**

Underpinned by the digital ecosystem and IT infrastructure, we will develop 'SHL Digital'. This platform will deliver collections, content, training and learning resources to a global audience. It has the potential to generate new revenue streams – positioning onsite access to SHL as the 'value-add' offer – whilst contributing to SAS's role as a leader in the digital humanities and digital scholarship. **(Digital learning).**

Key indicators of success will include an integrated and embedded University-wide digital preservation strategy by 2020 and a 'digital lab' within the library by 2024.

4.2   Digital ecosystem

SHL will work with University departments to review and fully map the inter-dependent infrastructure for various digital resources that affect SHL and SAS Libraries, as well as SAS and the University more broadly. The resulting knowledge of the digital ecosystem will enable SHL to provide an archive storage framework solution for digital and digitised content; research data management; digital research outputs; and web archiving by 2021, drawn from a common digital preservation strategy co-produced with IT and CoSector.

SHL will review several key component parts of its own digital ecosystem. The contract for the Library Management System was awarded in 2016 and will commence a review in 2019, focusing on value for money and service provision. There is an opportunity for SHL to provide an LMS framework for other federal members, should they wish to use the same supplier under the terms of SHL's contract, making it easier to align collection development and standardise user experience across the wider University. Other components within the library to be reviewed will include the archive management system and the digital asset management systems.

SHL's website will be reconfigured to align with the main University site in terms of style and branding, with a transition and migration to the new site by September 2019. SHL will use this project as an opportunity to enhance integration of core services – such as tighter integration with

the library catalogue discovery service; embedded web chat for additional customer service communication channels, as well as preparing for integration with forthcoming central university systems, such as eCommerce, CRM, automated enquiry services and electronic way-finding. The website will evolve into a platform-independent service where users can access content from anywhere in the world via an integrated Discovery landscape by 2019. This will support full text search of digital content and publications such as SAS Space and Humanities Digital Library, alongside the main library and archive catalogues, and will form part of 'SHL Digital'.

SHL will expand its services and content beyond London, and embrace the concept of a 'digital passport' that allows students enrolled at federal member institutions to sign up for SHL's membership and services seamlessly, as well as perform a range of portable account management activities by 2020 and access SHL content from wherever they are in the world – creating a digital library environment that does not depend on physical space.

4.3   Digital learning

The digital ecosystem is more than just a robust, cost-effective and comprehensible infrastructure to support access to content – it exists to enable learning and scholarship. For SHL, this means providing more skills-based learning resources to assist users work in a modern research library, as well as sharing expertise with groups outside academia.

SHL will work with the University's Worldwide team to produce online learning products that act as skills accelerators, focusing on research methodology such as digital literacy skills. This will be accompanied by a second MOOC highlighting the treasures of SHL's collections, tied into SHL's plans to commemorate its 150th anniversary in 2021. Whilst the content will support 'Worldwide', they can also be offered via 'SHL Digital' as standalone resources to support CPD activity or lifelong learners outside formal Higher Education.

All SHL exhibitions and interpretation tools will be published digitally with additional online content, providing access to academic content and SHL's collections to a global audience. These services and products will be incorporated into 'SHL Digital'.

However, in line with user expectations of a modern library, the physical space has a role to play in stimulating and supporting digital scholarship. SHL will work with SAS Central Academic Initiatives to create a 'digital lab' and maker space as part of the LMP Phase 2a refurbishment, setting aside real estate within the building to support teaching and research around digital humanities.

4.4   Infrastructure

Supporting strategies	Supporting infrastructure
SHL Digital strategy	Digital development group (SHL)
Digital preservation strategy	Digital preservation strategy group (University)
Digital ecosystem map	IT Governance Group (University)
SAS Digital Humanities strategy	Enterprise Architecture Group (University)

Section Five: Strategic Goal 4: Engagement
'To facilitate greater engagement with our collections and resources'

5.1   Overview

The University's founding ambition is to advance knowledge and learning, and to provide an institution open to all, irrespective of race, creed or political belief. In response, the University has developed an external engagement strategy to achieve this aim, with SHL identifying a core role given the acknowledgement that libraries are cultural organisations that are familiar to and trusted by wider society. As a bridging organisation between higher education and community, SHL's engagement strategy will help make the University socially relevant to diverse audiences.

SHL will actively promote the value of the library to its current users **(Membership engagement)** and support academic activity around SHL's core research strengths **(Academic engagement)**, increasing the number of active members from SAS and the University federal member institutions.

SHL will expand and grow the range of audiences that interact with resources by raising the profile of the institution and demonstrating its value to wider society, working with commercial licensees and partner organisations across the national library sector, within the Knowledge Quarter and throughout the local community **(External engagement).**

Key indicators of success will include an increased number of registered members using the resources year on year, more members drawn from the local community, greater tourist awareness of SHL and its events and the implementation of a visiting research fellowship scheme by 2019 to demonstrate the international value of SHL's collections.

5.2   Membership engagement

SHL will regularly engage with its members to ensure its collections, space, services and activities serve their needs. Regular feedback will be sought via a biannual user survey, pulse and exit surveys, focus groups and 'live' ratings mechanism to provide value statements around SHL collections, space and services. This will form part of SHL's management information that underpins performance and development work across other strategic areas.

As part of business development, SHL will increase the number of active users from federal member institutions and SAS via a better understanding of their requirements, and encourage more departing students to sign up for full membership as returning ECRs or alumni because they have a clearer understanding and appreciation of SHL's value. Focus will increasingly shift towards growing the number of postgraduate users, as well as creating 'SHL Digital' for global online memberships.

5.3   Academic engagement

A key part of SHL overall engagement strategy is to grow academic use of the collection, with a particular emphasis on postgraduate activity. SHL will support the academic initiatives of SAS and Worldwide, especially those that focus on SHL collections and demonstrate use in the form of citation capture, successful funding bids or increased enrolment for taught courses.

SHL will hold annual 'research open days' to promote the collections to a range of stakeholders, supported by a funded visiting research fellowship from 2019. Teaching support will continue, such as summer schools and taught MA provision that link SHL space with unique materials and in-house expertise, along with SHL staff contribution to academic events, conferences and published output both within the University and across the wider Higher Education landscape.

SHL will work with the Friends of SHL and the University's development office to generate funds that enable these activities alongside collection development, as well as use the network of alumni to advocate the value of SHL to a wider academic constituency. It will work proactively to develop academic partnerships within the Knowledge Quarter, as well as national and international academic institutions that support the dissemination of the arts and humanities.

5.4   External engagement

SHL will work with colleagues to craft a single programme for University external engagement activities, in particular collaborating with SAS to deliver public engagement programmes. The core activity will be high profile exhibition and events seasons to 2024, with 2021 marking the 150th anniversary of the library. Funding applications will be made to Arts Council England under the 'grants for arts' scheme by 2022 to support artists in residence, linked to plans to refurbish space.

External engagement will focus on growing non-academic visitor numbers during 'off peak' vacation periods by strengthening links with local schools, businesses, charities and cultural organisations, This will ensure that SHL and the University contribute, and are seen to contribute, to the social and economic life of the local community and wider Knowledge Quarter – as well as generating revenue under wider business development plans. This approach will enable SHL to build on its track record for inclusivity and diversity by continuing to offer space for community groups to work, thereby delivering the founding ambition noted earlier.

5.5   Market intelligence and communications

Audience segmentation and data analysis will enable the engagement activities in the three main areas to be tailored to user profiles and requirements. The generated knowledge of current and potential users will underpin a marketing and communications plan, focused on generating positive media coverage (broadcast and social) around SHL's collections and engagement programmes to maintain a high profile.

5.6   Infrastructure

Supporting strategies	Supporting infrastructure
Engagement strategy	Engagement development group (SHL)
Research strategy	External engagement strategy group (University)
Communication and marketing policy	Engagement operations group (University)
Social media policy	SAS research committee (SAS)
University external engagement strategy	
University academic strategy	

Section Six: Strategic Goal 5: Culture of excellence

'To create a customer-focused internal culture of excellence, and support staff development'

6.1   Overview

None of the previous strategic goals can be delivered without a skilled, professional and customer-focused workforce, which is clear on the business-goals of the library and has embraced a positive internal culture based on mutual respect.

SHL will ensure that all staff understand their specific contribution to the strategy by setting clear team and personal goals that align with the annual operating plan, organised into a structure that supports key processes or projects **(Organisational structure).** This will be linked to a training and continuing profession development plan relevant to each post, offering career advancement within and outside the University **(Staff training and professional development).**

In line with the founding mission of the university to be 'an institution open to all, irrespective of race, creed or political belief', we will tackle inequality in the workplace and actively promote diversity and inclusivity **(Equality, diversity and inclusivity).**

Key indicators of success will include an increased satisfaction rating in staff survey results, as well as a more diverse workforce.

6.2   Organisational structure

SHL will provide a clear structure for its strategic working groups, teams, units and line management chain to enable it to deliver the operating plan that accompanies this strategy. The main phase of restructuring will conclude in 2019, but continue to reflect some of the major changes outlined in LMP, particularly the conclusion of LMP Phase 1b in 2020.

Each post, and associated job description, will respond to the needs of the team or unit in which it sits. It will link a list of relevant activities with the way in which those activities should be carried out – placing a strong emphasis on how everyone supports colleagues and users alike based on principles of respect. Appraisals will be used to set SMART targets for each year, reviewed after six months and supported by regular line management meetings to address any skills gaps or changed priorities.

The aim is to achieve a culture within SHL by 2024 where every member of staff understands how they contribute to the overarching strategic aim to 'be recognised as a national research resource for arts, humanities and social sciences.'

6.3   Staff training and professional development

The third part of every job description contains a personal development plan and allocated training budget linked to the specific activities and associated skills. This will enable all staff to understand how SHL will invest in their continuing professional development, based on a loose curriculum approach.

Training opportunities will be supported by apprenticeships, shadowing and benchmarking opportunity with comparator organisations to provide context and exposure to best practice across the sector.

Every individual will therefore understand their potential career path within SHL, or outside the organisation (given the tapered nature of line management within any organisations). Equally, with a flexible working model in particular areas, SHL can offer employability opportunities for students within the federal University.

6.4   Equality, diversity and inclusivity

SHL is committed to eliminating the gender pay gap, ensuring it is an equal opportunities employer, and setting a positive example by supporting diversity and inclusivity. SHL will work with HR to explore alternative recruitment techniques such as identity-neutral applications, as well as proactively encouraging applications from communities where there is particular under-representation. SHL will operate a zero-tolerance policy towards staff who break University guidelines on dignity and respect at work.

6.5   Infrastructure

Supporting strategies	Supporting infrastructure
SHL annual operating plan	Staff development group (SHL)
SHL operating structure	Occupational development (funding, training)
University dignity and respect at work policy	Human Resources (line management tools)
University equality policy	SHL training programme