

UCL School of Pharmacy Visit – 18 September 2015

I would like to thank Michelle Wake for hosting the visit to the UCL School of Pharmacy.

History of the School of Pharmacy and its Library

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) was formed in 1841 in London, with the School of Pharmacy and library being established in Bloomsbury Square in 1842. The School of Pharmacy became a college of the University of London in 1926; however, the RPS remained financially responsible for the School until 1949. During the 1930's it was decided to move the school, labs and library to better accommodation at Brunswick Square, but due to the outbreak of World War 2 construction was delayed and the School moved temporarily to Cardiff. It was not until 1955 that the School moved into the new building at Brunswick Square and was officially opened in 1960. In 2012 the School became part of University College London (UCL). The School has grown in size from 48 freshers in 1948 to more than 200 freshers in 2015.

The Library of the School of Pharmacy was moved to the Brunswick Square site and was set up by Tony Evans, opening in 1959. Over the years the Library has supported sub-sites and currently looks after a wide range of stock and multimedia. The Library currently supports 147 staff (including 60 academic staff), 717 undergraduate students, 150 postgraduate students, PhD students and the general public. The Library is part of SCOUNL and the M25 group and has students using the facilities from a number of other schools.

Due to having always been situated in a square, the School is known as “the Square” and has a motto of “the Square of Excellence”.

School of Pharmacy Teaching

The School offers a General Pharmaceutical Council accredited MPharm (undergraduate) 4 year degree. Students then spend a year in pre-registration training and take their final exams before becoming registered. The School is hoping to offer a 5 year MPharm degree in the future which will incorporate this additional year of training. As part of their degrees, students learn about law, ethics, and the business of the profession.

The Library received a special mention in the most recent reaccreditation and helped ensure that the School received a Excellent/Good rating in the 2014 REF assessment. The Library supports a diverse range of research within the School's academic departments of Pharmaceutical & Biological Chemistry, Pharmacology, Pharmaceutics, and Practice & Policy.

The School is looking to provide more courses in the future, increase research and meet operational plan targets.

The Library - basics

Originally the Library was shared with the RPS, with each school having its own sub-library. Since moving into the current building the Library has expanded. 2009 saw the complete refurbishment of the Library, with walls being removed and floors levelled to make as much use of the available space as possible. It is felt that good use is made of the available space following the refurbishment. During

the refurbishment the whole space was gutted. The refurbishment took place during the summer holidays and although a small library was made available most stock was inaccessible. Student views were sought to influence the new design. With hindsight there are aspects of the design which would have been created differently.

Upon reopening the Library saw a 30% increase in use during the first term. The most recent NSS score was good, with an 84% satisfaction score. Students did comment on a lack of study space; however, they like the staff and stock.

The Library has 13 members of staff – 4 full time and 9 part time (term time) staff. During term times the main Library is open until 10pm, after which there is a small area that is open 24 hours (however, it is inaccessible after 11pm due to building security).

The Library uses the UDC classification system for its holdings, following on from the RPS library, but in a simplified format. In addition to book and journal stock, the Library loans laptops and iPad (thanks to alumni donations), which is a very popular service. Additional services offered by the Library include mediated literature searches, open access repository support, reference and bibliometrics support, information literacy embedding, bibliographical database training, cataloguing, online reading lists, interlibrary loans, School archives, special collections, public & alumni engagement, and various UCL responsibilities.

In addition to study space within the Library itself, the Library provides access to resources in extra study areas outside the Library itself.

The Library has a Twitter feed - @squarelibrary

Across UCL there are a total of 18 libraries.

Walking Around the Library

You enter the Library through the 24 hour printer area, which provides 4 printers. Students receive 200 free credits per month on the School of Pharmacy machines and £12 per year credit on UCL machines. All printing is “Follow Me” printing and so can be collected anywhere within the School.

The Library is moving to a RFID system and so was having work done to install the necessary equipment over the summer.

The Library itself has a clean, bright look to it and is viewed as an extension of the labs. Shelving is 6 shelves high, maximising shelving area. The reference collection and short loan collection are kept separate from the main collection, although an experiment in having the short loan collection in with the main collection took place. The collection comprises of 4 week, 7 day and short (that day or overnight) loans. The issue/enquiries desk is waist height and includes lower level access for disabled access.

There is some fixed shelving, with additional manual roller rack shelving to utilise space. Customers do not appear to dislike this type of shelving. The journal collection covers a substantial period, and paper copies of pharmacy specific journals are maintained and often not available electronically. Additional journals are available electronically.

The Library offers a book swap, where books of any subject can be donated and bought with a small donation to charity.

Study space, although at a premium within the Library, is well designed. Individual study carrels are areas for silent study and are bright spaces to work in. Group study spaces are provided in the form of pods. There are approximately 50 seats within the Library.

The School's archive is maintained by the Library and includes books dating back to the 17th century as well as historical equipment. PhD theses are maintained by the Library, with older theses being kept in storage.

The Library maintains a feedback board and a Green Awareness board.

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