Report from a deviating collaborator

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University of Pretoria : Library Services
The University of Pretoria was founded in 1908
Biggest residential university in South Africa:

28206 Undergraduate contact students
14136 Postgraduate students
10837 Distance students
2441 International students
56% Female 44% Male
53% Black 47% White
4000+ permanent staff
Nine Faculties + Business School
Spread over 7 campuses
2006: 1347 postgraduate degrees
2006: 1230 research papers published
Extensive online and physical library service provided in 10 locations

Book volumes: 1,5M
Paper journal volumes: 350K
E-journals: 31 497
E-books: 131 423
E-databases: 176
Annual visits 2006: 2 094 231
Books loaned 2006: 632K
E-articles downloaded 2006: 911K
Outline

• Pre-history of Quality Assurance (QA) and the 2003 pilot audit
• Finding our QA feet in 2004
• National initiatives
  - LibQUAL
  - CHELSA subcommittee
• 2007 HEQC audit
• The future
Setting the scene

- The UP Library Service (UPLS) has a reputation for **strategic bravery, innovation** and **independent thinking**

- Our quality journey started in earnest in 2002 after realising that we have neglected this very important link in the strategic chain
Pre-history of QA in the UPLS

• **1997** Balanced scorecard: quality as a multi-dimensional concept dependent on the perceptions of many stakeholders
• **2001** SERVQUAL Client Survey: gap analysis, service recovery, service level agreements
• Deterioration and mistrust of MI
• **2002** Recovery: new management information system
Belly flop: the 2003 Pilot Audit

- Council for Higher Education (CHE) / Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) tasked to do national audits of universities
- UP volunteered to take part in pilot
- Support services neglected
- Combined report on **Criterion 4** with IT, TEI, CSC and Student Admin!
- Disappointment and disgust
Pulling ourselves together

- **Quality Unit** for the Library
- **Quality Assurance Team** responsible for continuous quality improvement
- Decide to undertake a self review and external audit
2004 Audit

- Audit preparation
- Law and Order
  24-26 October 2004
- Good results
- Advantages inherent in understanding the nature and benefits of QA
- Informed strategic planning
- At last arrived in the QA community!
In-house Client Surveys

- Annually to establish usage patterns, to gauge level of satisfaction, to gather recommendations and market our services
- **2004+** 50 staff members trained
- Structured questionnaire: one to one conversation and open remarks
- **2005** googlization included → Google Scholar SFX implementation
- **2006** outside the library on lawns and in coffee shops; student surveyors included
Meta Quality Issues

- Management
- Environmental sensing
- Learning organisation
- Attitude to change
- Attitude to quality
- Leadership
- **Investment in staff**
- Alignment
Investment in staff

• **Generally understaffed** and uneven distribution: UP = 218; WITS = 165; Rhodes = 147; US = 211; UK & AU = 164; US = 110

• **Lack of career paths**: upgrading 105 posts between 2001 and 2006

• **Performance management**
  1996: AIS pilot; 2005 campus rollout
  Performance contract has to show contribution to UP excellence

• **Opportunities** for study and development
LibQUAL+®

• 2004 Annual Stellenbosch Symposium: Bruce Thompson

• **Afrikaans translation** with University of Stellenbosch and Northwest University

• 2856 responses, 2471 with comments

• Repeated in 2006

• To be repeated in 2009
Combining results

- **2001** SERVQUAL survey
- **2004-2006** In-house surveys
- **2005-2006** LibQUAL+ surveys
- **2005** Dept. Education Innovation Postgraduate survey
- **2007** General Postgraduate survey

Attention to two problems:

1) Bandwidth
2) Support Unit for postgraduates
CHELSA

- Libraries co-operating while our universities compete for students
- CHELSA Quality Assurance Subcommittee
- Measures for Quality
- CHELSA Guidelines for Audits
Guidelines : UP response (1)

Based on the Brophy and Couling model
• Too linear and one-dimensional to represent the quality concerns of a modern university library
• Organisational model absent
• Building on strengths more important than fixing problems
• We miss knowledge stewardship, research support, open scholarship, digitization
Guidelines: UP response (2)

- **Learning organisation** not adequately catered for: processes inform and influence each other, quick continuous problem solving, change of direction, ongoing benchmarking from visits, conferences, reading etc.
- Leaning toward **traditional** processes and terminology: “user training”??
- Out-dated view of **information resources**
Self Review and Audit 2007

- Responsibility: QU and QATeam
- Staff meetings, discussions with UPQU
- Literature
- Audit Task Team
- 12 September 2006 Workshop
- Visits to UCT and WITS
- Participation in UP process
- Auditor training
- Report writing
Using the CHELSA Guidelines

• Useful tool: UPLS committed to co-operation
• Our point of departure: **the audit should be a learning experience for all staff**
• Use the HEQC definition and sloganise it as

**DOING THE RIGHT THINGS RIGHT AT THE BEST PRICE**
The UPLS Audit Report (1)

- **Part A** Quality as fitness of purpose: Library alignment with and impact on UP direction; integration with UP structures and systems **doing the right things** 1,2,4,19
- **Part B** Quality as fit for purpose: 4 main service aspects:
  1. Creating a gateway to global information
  2. Supporting teaching and learning
  3. Enabling research
  4. People for a professional service

  ... **and doing them right** 4,8,9,15,16,17,19
The UPLS Audit Report (2)

- **Part C** Quality as value for money: Library products and services as return on investment (ROI) made by University and parents/students ... *at the best possible price* 2
- **Part D** Quality as transformation: role of LS transformation agent in students’ lives and social transformation in general 1
- **Part E** Quality as fit for future: future success and sustainability
The UPLS Audit Experience

• Site visits to the main and law libraries
• Interviews with Library management team and a group of 10 representative staff members
• Two people included in other interviews
• Generally positive
• Disappointed about their neglecting research issues
What’s next for us?

• We have indeed come a long way
• Quality maturity and meta quality issues
• Impact studies
• Quality as a way of life
... and for CHELSA?

- **Peer review process**
  Yes, but not as part of HEQC audits

- **Measures for Quality**
  Yes, and soon, but how?

- **Guidelines for programme accreditation**
"An apple is an excellent thing – until you have tried a peach."

George du Maurier (1834-1896)
Thank you!

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