



LIBRARY STRATEGY 2025-27

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands in Greater Western Sydney and beyond.

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



Library



INTRODUCTION

When we set out to develop Western Sydney University Library's next strategy, we knew it had to be **shaped *with* our people – not just *for* them.**

Over four days in early 2025, more than 100 colleagues from across our eight locations – Campbelltown, Hawkesbury, Liverpool, Milperra, Nirimba, Parramatta City, Parramatta South, and Penrith – came together to share ideas, challenge assumptions and reimagine our future.

Building on the work that came out of our 2022 *Library Reimagined Project*, we asked big questions about our purpose, our value and our role in a changing world. Most importantly, we made sure **every voice was heard.**

This strategy is a result of those conversations, shaped through lived experience and collective insight. It answers the questions **'why?'** and **'what?'**. And offers a shared direction and a flexible foundation – one that is able to adapt to the rapidly shifting needs of our students, emerging technology and the priorities of the University.

It doesn't attempt to list every action or initiative. Instead, it gives us **a framework to guide our decision-making**, shape our priorities and focus our efforts for the greatest impact over the next three years.

The need for this strategy is clear. Our sector is evolving. Student expectations are shifting. The University's strategic priorities are focused squarely on student success and retention. **We need to be ready – not only to respond, but to lead.**

This strategy helps us do just that. It aligns our work with where the University is heading, and it positions the Library as a vital partner in enabling the success, wellbeing and lifelong learning of our diverse student community.

Libraries are evolving, and so are we. This strategy is our shared vision for what's next.



Fiona Salisbury
Executive Director, Library Services

OUR STRATEGY'S CONTEXT

Our strategy and associated plans exist to serve the University and its strategy. Our priorities and actions are building blocks that will work together to deliver on the University's purpose and vision.



STRATEGY SNAPSHOT

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to **empower students and researchers to reach their full potential.**

OUR VISION

Our vision is to be a **vibrant, student-centered hub of learning, discovery and connection,** ensuring every student feels a sense of belonging.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to **curate and create scholarly information, resources and experiences** that fuel curiosity, discovery and lifelong success. We **nurture rational and innovative thinkers** who are equipped to thrive in a fast-changing world.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



**STUDENT
EXPERIENCE**



SPACES



SKILLS



COLLECTIONS



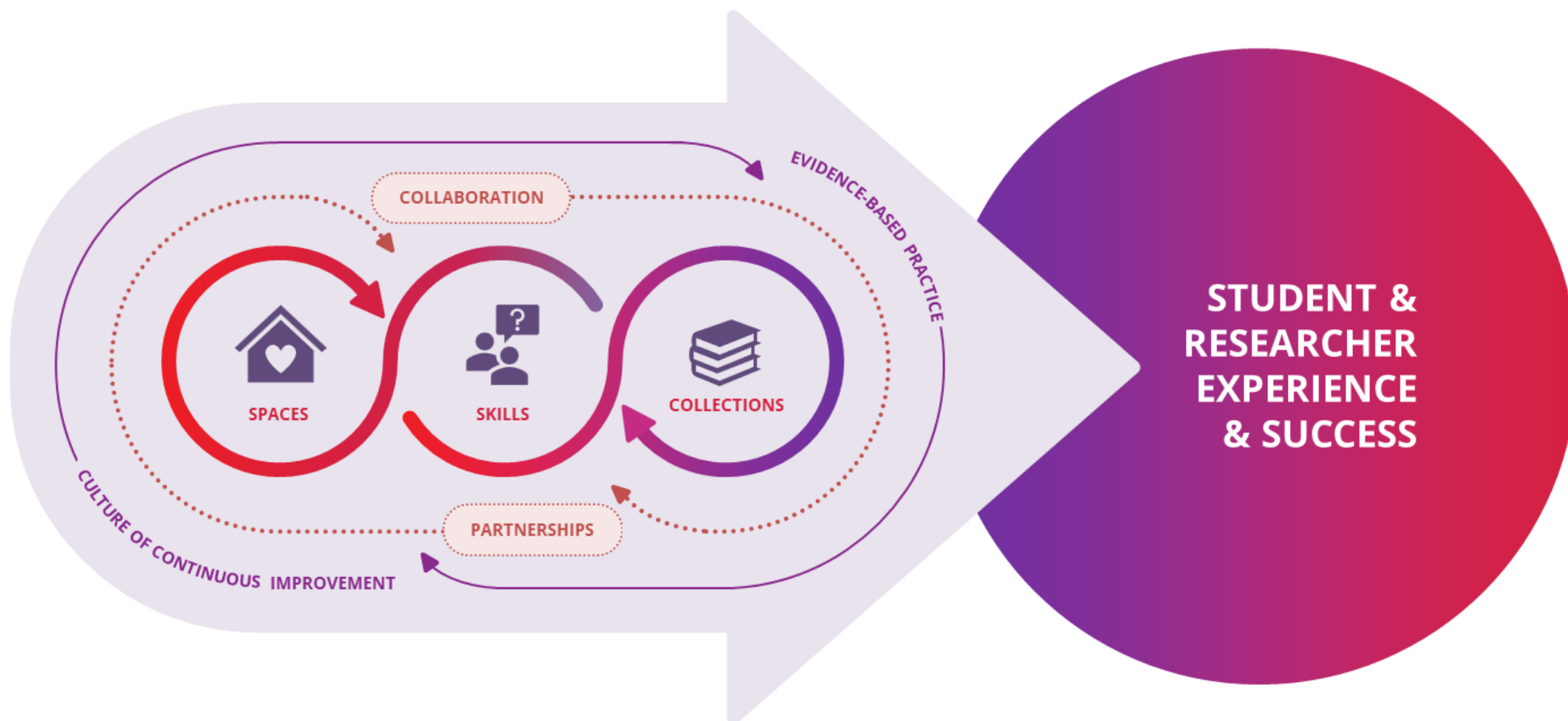
CULTURE

A SERVICE MODEL THAT DRIVES SUCCESS

Our new service model is built on the continuous interplay between our strategic priority service areas – **spaces, skills and collections**. Each of these areas is brought to life through a dynamic blend of **human interaction and digital enablement** – positioning us at the forefront of evolving knowledge experiences.

Our model is informed and enabled by **evidence-based practice**, a **culture of continuous improvement** and a **commitment to authentic collaboration and partnerships**.

Our approach moves us away from delivering isolated services to an integrated approach that fosters **shared ownership and engagement** – ensuring that the student and researcher experience is not only enhanced by what we do but fundamentally transformed for long-term success.



OUR PURPOSE

WHY WE EXIST

Our purpose is to **empower students and researchers to reach their full potential.**

We **enable open, equitable and easy access** to trusted information, tools, technology and spaces.

We champion critical and rational thought, **equipping our students with the lifelong skills** they need to succeed in an era of misinformation, advancing technology and generative AI.

We cultivate a vibrant hub of learning that **enables social connection, fosters belonging and supports wellbeing for our students.**

As a trusted keeper of knowledge, we empower our learning community to **fully participate in democracy and make valuable contributions to society.**





OUR VISION

WHO WE WANT TO BE &
THE FUTURE WE WANT TO CREATE

We will be a **vibrant, student-centered hub of learning, discovery and connection**, ensuring every student feels a sense of belonging.

We will deliver a **dynamic ecosystem that seamlessly connects physical and virtual spaces** that are welcoming, buzzing with opportunity and connected to Country. Our commitment to inclusivity, accessibility and student wellbeing will make us the **heart of campus life**.

We will be valued and trusted as **critical partners in education**, seamlessly integrating our resources and expertise into courses and the student journey to foster their success and retention. We will be **nimble and responsive to our students' needs**.

Our staff will be **recognised and valued as specialists**. We will be an **employer of choice** for librarians and professionals.

We will be known as **leaders in facilitating access to knowledge and learning resources**. And will be recognised for our **leadership in the innovative and appropriate use of technology**, setting the benchmark for excellence among Australian university libraries.

Our **collections will be extensive and diverse**, complemented by **cutting-edge resources and facilities** to drive academic success.

OUR MISSION

THE WORK THAT WE MUST DO EVERY SINGLE DAY TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION

Our mission is to **curate and create scholarly information, resources and experiences** that fuel discovery and lifelong success. We **nurture rational and innovative thinkers** who are equipped to thrive in a fast-changing world.

We place our **students and their experience at the heart** of everything we do. We deliver outstanding learning experiences to ensure all students have opportunities to develop the foundational skills that underpin critical thinking, creativity and digital fluency. Our programs set them up for academic success.

We're **champions of learning and aligned to the University's broader strategy**. We're data driven, resourceful and strategic, focusing on where we can make the greatest impact.

As a centre for knowledge, learning and inclusivity on our campuses, **we recognise and respect the deep knowledge systems of the world's oldest continuing culture** and are committed to learning from and with First Nations peoples. Our connection to Country enriches our understanding of knowledge, strengthens our sense of place and informs how we support our diverse learning community.

We **design and deliver welcoming, inclusive and vibrant physical and digital spaces** for focus, repose, play and imagination, enhancing learning and enabling belonging.

We enable **seamless and equitable access** for our learning community to our collections, spaces, tools and technologies.

We're **user-centric and discipline agnostic**. We collaborate with staff and students across all levels and areas of the University to achieve relevant and meaningful outcomes. We **build strong, authentic partnerships** and work proactively toward shared goals.

Our team is approachable and committed to connecting and guiding students and staff with warmth, respect and enthusiasm. We **listen carefully, stay curious and remain deeply responsive** to the needs of our diverse learning community.

With **agility and creativity**, we continuously evaluate and improve our services and processes to remain responsive, relevant and compliant. We take **thoughtful risks, stay attuned to global trends and adopt scalable, sustainable practices** that ensure the Library evolves with and adapts to the changing needs of our community. We experiment with and are early adopters of technology to enhance our practice.

We're committed to making it easier for our learning community to discover, navigate and access everything we offer. We will boldly and proudly **communicate our value**, ensuring more students and researchers can benefit from the full power of the Library.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Over the next three years, we will focus on five key areas of strategic priority that will shape what we do, how we work and what future success looks like.

These focus areas act as our guardrails – clear yet flexible enough to help us stay aligned, intentional, and adaptive in a changing environment. They will guide our decisions, help us prioritise our efforts, and ensure we are working collectively towards the outcomes that matter most for our students, researchers, and University. Just as importantly, they will help us identify what we need to stop doing or leave behind – so we can focus our energy and resources where they will have the greatest impact.



We enrich the **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**, fostering connection, belonging and success in the classroom and beyond.



Our physical and digital **SPACES** are inclusive, welcoming and inviting places for focus, collaboration, repose, curiosity, experimentation and imagination.



Our staff enable tailored **SKILLS** development, empowering our community to navigate information, think critically and build academic and digital literacy for lifelong success.



Our **COLLECTIONS** inspire and elevate the learning, discovery and research of our community.



Our **CULTURE** is underpinned by curiosity, creativity and partnership. We are future focused – adaptive, collaborative and ready for change.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: STUDENT EXPERIENCE




We enrich the **STUDENT EXPERIENCE**, fostering connection, belonging and success in the classroom and beyond. We will partner with University colleagues and students to create engagement programs for students at all levels.


HOW WE'LL GET THERE:

1.1 | ENHANCED CONNECTION, WELLBEING & BELONGING


- In partnership with University colleagues, design and deliver an engagement program to enhance student wellbeing.

 *Prioritise brain breaks between semesters and therapy dogs for study breaks. Explore indoor plants for loan.*


- Expand the Study Smart Program with culturally appropriate support for Indigenous students to enhance academic success and belonging.

 *Continue to focus on Badanami drop-ins. Investigate expanding Indigenous Study Smart services to include online offerings.*

- Facilitate social events that encourage students' sense of belonging by connecting students with each other, the Library and the University community.

 *Explore new, non-academic events, such as book clubs, speed friending, English conversation groups and maths clubs.*

- Develop personalised and tailored skills development programs to enhance academic success.

 *Use the Academic Communication Evaluation (ACE) data to extend the ACE program. Explore multilingual support.*

1.2 | A CULTURE OF CURIOSITY & DISCOVERY IS SUPPORTED

- Ignite a lifelong love of learning with programs that engage students with both the physical and digital library.



Continue to invest in thought leadership events, reimagine recreational collections, student conferences and talks. Investigate student reading groups.

1.3 | LIBRARY PROGRAMS, COLLECTIONS & SPACES ARE VISIBLE & AT THE HEART OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- Develop and implement targeted communication strategies that articulate the value of our programs and services, supporting increased visibility and student participation.



Investigate refreshed communications planning, collections promotion, merch, external newsletters promoting services, promoting the great work the Library does via news, promotions and events and continue to prioritise the Library brand.

1.4 | STUDENTS AS PARTNERS

- Embed student partnership in Library activities by expanding opportunities for co-creation across planning, program design, communications and feedback.



Continue to focus on the student-staff partner program, student feedback, learning analytics and consultation about spaces and programs.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: SPACES



Our physical and digital **SPACES** are inclusive, welcoming and inviting places for focus, collaboration, repose, curiosity, experimentation and imagination. We will deliver digital and physical spaces that are inclusive, enriched with knowledge, and alive with dynamic learning and research activity.

HOW WE'LL GET THERE:

2.1 | PHYSICAL SPACES THAT ARE CONTEMPORARY & FIT-FOR-PURPOSE

- Redesign the Whitlam Library at Parramatta South as the library of the future: offering flexible spaces that support both individual exploration and collaborative learning to bring knowledge to life.



Reimagine ergonomic and flexible furniture. Introduce wayfinding and signage, new adaptable meet-up spaces for individual consultation and group learning.

- Work with industry partners to seamlessly integrate digital resources and experiences into physical spaces to bring collections to life in new and engaging ways.



Investigate opportunities for a new immersive library experience that connects library systems and leverages new technologies.

- Visibly embed Indigenous knowledges in physical spaces.



Introduce physical Acknowledgements of Country and Indigenous artwork at our libraries.

2.2

CONTEMPORARY, FIT-FOR-PURPOSE DIGITAL SPACES THAT ARE ENGAGING & ENHANCE ACCESS & USER EXPERIENCE.

- Streamline Library website navigation for intuitive access to information, collections and resources.



Reimagine our home page, explore adding 'what's on today' feature, improve navigation (especially high-use resources), design effective landing pages and content, plus prioritise Study Smart website review and student feedback.

- Continuously improve the Library App informed by student feedback.
- Explore options for integrated discovery to improve access and student experience.



Investigate opportunities to use SMS and ALMA data to personalise experiences with digital and physical collections.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: SKILLS



Our staff enable tailored **SKILLS** development, empowering our community to navigate information, think critically and build academic and digital literacy for lifelong success. We will enable student and researcher success through Library skills programs, resources and personalised support.

HOW WE'LL GET THERE:

3.1 | ACADEMIC SKILLS INITIATIVES

- Provide all students with a clear, connected and supportive pathway to develop the academic and digital skills they need to thrive and succeed.
- Continuously enhance the Study Smart and MESH (maths support) programs to create engaging and relevant learning opportunities that respond to students' evolving needs.



Prioritise the implementation of the Literacies Roadmap. Reimagine self-directed videos and modules. Continue to focus on Study Smart guides, workshops, website, tools and appointments, MESH resources, programs, and support.

3.2 | ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & APPROPRIATE & EFFECTIVE GENERATIVE AI

- Champion meaningful understandings of academic integrity and generative AI to help students build confidence in making effective and appropriate decisions throughout their academic and professional lives.



Continue to focus on Academic Integrity and GenAI Week, plus creating and updating reference guides and FAQs. Reimagine academic integrity workshops and AIM. Prioritise professional development for Library staff so they are confident users of AI.

3.3 | **ACADEMIC SKILLS DEVELOPMENT EMBEDDED IN CURRICULUM DESIGN**

- Help commencing students identify academic skills gaps and give them opportunities to develop these skills through new pilot initiatives that embed skills development meaningfully within course design.



Continue to prioritise maths and ACE diagnostic tool to provide personalised support at scale so students build foundation skills for success.

3.4 | **SEAMLESS ACCESS TO ON-DEMAND SKILLS SUPPORT FOR ALL STUDENTS, FROM FIRST YEAR TO HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH**

- Review service levels and quality to establish consistent standards that ensure every interaction is a 'no wrong door' experience to seamlessly connect students with the skills support they need and to inform professional support programs for Library staff.
- Provide course-relevant maths, statistics and numeracy support to develop maths literacy.



Reimagine interactive modules and consultations in digital and physical spaces. Investigate more drop-in sessions in peak times.

- Enable research data management skills development to empower researchers to self-manage their data.



Continue to prioritise skills workshops and resources. Contribute to Research Development Framework. Review research consultations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: COLLECTIONS



Our **COLLECTIONS** inspire and elevate the learning, discovery and research of our community. We will provide seamless and equitable access to high-quality and relevant digital and physical collections.

HOW WE'LL GET THERE:

4.1 | ENHANCED DISCOVERABILITY

- Redesign search interfaces and discovery tools to ensure they are inclusive, user-friendly and aligned with the diverse needs and behaviours of all users – making the full collection more visible and accessible to everyone.



Continue to prioritise Primo discovery (including combining digital and physical items into the same record). Reimagine subject guides, A-Z database list and enhancing metadata. Explore new initiatives, such as new discovery services.

- Embed culturally respectful practices into metadata, cataloguing and discovery systems to ensure Indigenous knowledges are visible, valued and accessed appropriately.



Continue to prioritise working group of Indigenous Library staff and cohorts with Library leadership.

4.2 | TRANSFORMED READING LISTS

- Implement fully digital, curriculum-aligned reading lists that offer all students free and equitable access to learning resources at scale.



Prioritise print to digital transformation of reading lists. Partner with academic staff to co-create zero-cost reading lists.

4.3 | CHAMPION READING AS KEY TO STUDENT SUCCESS

- Foster awareness and open conversations about student engagement with reading list resources to encourage active reading and support student success and retention.



Leverage reading list engagement reports to facilitate conversations with subject coordinators about alignment of reading behaviours and learning outcomes.

4.4 | ENABLE OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING

- Provide stewardship of the institutional Research Profiles and Repository to preserve, showcase and provide open access to Western research – ensuring long-term accessibility, discoverability and alignment with open access requirements.



Prioritise PURE research profiles and repository, thesis repository and research metadata.

- Support the negotiation and management of Read and Publish agreements that lower financial and administrative barriers, enabling Western researchers to publish open access research outputs more easily and equitably.



Introduce engagement metrics for Read and Publish agreements.

- Support the development of open textbooks that align with curriculum needs and empower academic authors to publish open content through Western Open Books.



Continue to prioritise Western Open Books.

4.5 | ENSURE THE VISIBILITY & PRESERVATION OF PHYSICAL & DIGITAL SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

- Develop and implement a comprehensive digital preservation strategy that includes metadata creation, digitisation and secure, long-term storage.
- Raise awareness of and engagement with special collections across the University community.



Start digitising suitable physical items and explore exhibitions and talks.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: CULTURE



Our **CULTURE** is underpinned by curiosity, creativity and partnerships. We are future focused: adaptive, collaborative and ready for change. We will operate as one library to increase collegiality and collaboration in all areas of our professional practice.

HOW WE'LL GET THERE:

5.1 | STRENGTHEN LIBRARY STAFF COMMUNICATION TO BUILD TRUST, TRANSPARENCY & COLLABORATION

- Make team activities more visible to encourage understanding, spark curiosity and build engagement and collaboration.



Explore new ways to promote transparency and communication between teams, team wins/successes and team connections.

- Promote staff expertise and knowledge sharing to break down silos, strengthen collaboration, broaden participation and make it easier for everyone to stay informed about Library initiatives and their impact.



Explore ways to share individual/team knowledge and skills with colleagues to improve systems that underpin operations.

- Use inclusive and engaging communications methods that foster dialogue, knowledge sharing and alignment across all levels of the Library.
- Reimagine Library staff communications within the Library and across the University to build a more connected, transparent and collaborative workplace and operations.

5.2

FOSTER A RESILIENT, CONNECTED, & VALUES-DRIVEN WORKPLACE WHERE STAFF WELLBEING & BELONGING ARE EMBEDDED & SUPPORTED

- Build a culture of recognition that genuinely values both individual and team achievements.
- Create opportunities for meaningful connection and belonging to support an inclusive, collaborative workplace where shared values thrive, and staff feel engaged and supported.
- Refresh and improve staff engagement channels to regularly capture insights, inform continuous improvement and ensure all voices are heard in shaping an empowering workplace culture.
- Empower resilience and self-leadership to cultivate a confident, adaptable workforce that can sustain wellbeing, embrace change and thrive in a dynamic work environment.






5.3

PRIORITISE A CULTURE OF GROWTH, LEARNING, & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT SUPPORTS A COLLABORATIVE SERVICE MODEL & MOVES BEYOND HIERARCHICAL & SILOED WAYS OF WORKING

- Support growth by encouraging self-directed learning, exploration of new ideas and career planning that nurtures a strong growth mindset.
- Facilitate opportunities for cross-functional learning and knowledge sharing to strengthen collaboration, spark innovation and grow collective expertise.
- Align our structure and professional development priorities with future needs and the Library's service model and strategic direction.
- Prioritise development of service frameworks so Library staff can confidently lead transformation and review process.

MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

We will undertake regular measurement to track our progress and ensure we achieve our vision.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	MEASURES
 <p>We enrich the STUDENT EXPERIENCE, fostering connection, belonging and success in the classroom and beyond.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student feedback • Student retention • Delivery of agreed initiative/s
 <p>Our onsite and online SPACES are inclusive, welcoming and inviting places for focus, repose, play and imagination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing reach and engagement • Onsite and online visitation • Delivery of agreed initiative/s
 <p>Our people enable critical SKILLS development, empowering our learning to navigate information, think critically and build academic and digital literacy for lifelong success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program and workshop attendance • Digital learning resources engagement • Delivery of agreed initiative/s
 <p>Our COLLECTIONS enable and enhance the learning, discovery and research experiences of our learning community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection usage • Reading and resources engagement • Delivery of agreed initiative/s
 <p>Our CULTURE is underpinned by curiosity, creativity and inclusivity. We are future focussed: adaptive, collaborative and ready for change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff survey results and employee engagement • Professional development participation • Delivery of agreed initiative/s

