Legal Information Management, 9 (2009), pp. 52–53
© The British and Irish Association of Law Librarians Printed in the United Kingdom doi:10.1017/S1472669609000139

University of Strathclyde Library

Abstract: This article by Gareth Ryan, Law and Official Publications Librarian, describes the history of the library, outlines the courses offered by the law school and details the collections and services offered by the law library.
Keywords: academic law libraries; Scotland

The University Library: history and location

The University's main Andersonian Library is situated on the John Anderson Campus in Glasgow city centre. The satellite Law Library was formerly situated within the Law School on the same campus. This library was absorbed by the main library in 2006, when the law school moved to new premises. The law collection, for the most part, remains distinct and now sits alongside the government publications collection. Over 70 members of full-time staff work within the main library. Additional staff support weekend and evening opening hours. Staff responsible for law and official publications comprise one member of professional staff supported by one member of clerical staff. They report to library services, but there is extensive liaison with the law school's library committee.

The Law School

There are currently 24 full-time members of academic staff based in the law school. In addition, there are numerous visiting professors and tutors who teach on both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

Over 700 undergraduate students study within the department. The law school offers both full-time and part-time LLBs. There is a two year full-time accelerated option for graduate entrants. In addition, the department offers an LLB in Law and a Modern Language and a BA in Law.

The Glasgow Graduate School of Law, currently a joint venture between the law schools of Strathclyde and Glasgow, offers the Diploma in Legal Practice. There are over 270 students studying on this course at present.

Post-graduate courses up to LLM level are offered in construction law, IT and telecommunications law, human rights law, and criminology and criminal justice. Over 150 postgraduate students study on these courses. Subject to approval, from 2009/10 the law school hopes to offer further LLMs in international law and sustainable development and international economic law.

Attached to the law school are the Centre for Professional Legal Studies, the Centre for Sentencing Practice, and the Centre for the Study of Human Rights Law.

The law school is also home to Scotland's first Law Clinic, which offers legal advice to members of the public who do not qualify for legal aid, yet cannot afford professional legal fees. The clinic provides an invaluable service to the community as well as a 'real life' experience of the law for students.

The Library: collection and activities

The library's law collection comprises over 20,000 books, as well as print journals and law reports. In addition, the library subscribes to major legal database services and individual legal e-journals. E-books form a growing part of the library's collection and many are accessible directly via the library's Voyager catalogue.

The library is also involved in the digitisation of high-demand class reading materials under the University's CLA license. These scanned items are made available through LearnOnline and Digitool VLEs.

Institutional co-operation

The University participates in the SCONUL access scheme. In addition, reciprocal access arrangements exist with institutions including Glasgow University, Glasgow Caledonian University and the University of the West of Scotland. Members of library staff participate in the activities of groups including BIALL, the Scottish Law Librarians Group (SLLG) and the Scottish Working Group on Official Publications (SWOP).

Reference services

An enquiry desk is devoted to law and official publications queries. This specialised reference service is offered during normal office hours, and a general service continues in the evenings and at the weekend. The library has participated in trials of a virtual reference service and currently offers web-enquiry forms for out-of-hours enquiries.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1472669609000139 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Legal research skills training

Induction sessions are offered to new students and cover library services and use of the main legal databases. Training in legal research skills is currently integrated into the first-year legal methods class through lectures, tutorials and an information-skills-based exercise. Further integration, including formal assessment and additional online support, is scheduled for the forthcoming academic year.

The library continues legal research skills training through the VLE-based Computing and Communication for Lawyers (CACL) class, which takes an information-literacy-focussed approach to finding and using legal materials. This class is formally assessed and compulsory for all LLB students. The law school's VLE is used by library staff to communicate with students. This allows answers to recurring queries to be posted and specialist guidance to be targeted at individual classes. A revised research skills training programme incorporating web-cast presentations and Informs tutorials is currently in development.

Further information

Library: http://www.lib.strath.ac.uk/
Email: library@strath.ac.uk
Law School: http://www.law.strath.ac.uk/
University of Strathclyde: http://www.strath.ac.uk/

Legal Information Management, 9 (2009), pp. 53–56
© The British and Irish Association of Law Librarians Printed in the United Kingdom doi:10.1017/S1472669609000140

[On Not] Taming the Information Wilderness

Abstract: In this article, Julie Jones looks at the past, present, and possible future of information organisation, and considers how legal research might be conducted in years to come as the internet and computer science advance. Information classification systems have historically had finite life spans and there is no reason to believe that the current crop is any different. With increasingly more information being born digital, new ways of thinking about organisation and searching methodologies are developing to handle the deluge.
Keywords: information retrieval; internet; classification

Introduction

Melvil Dewey did it. John West did it. Herbert Putnam did it, with the help of Charles Cutter. They all tried to tame the wilderness, and the wilderness overgrew them. Now Tim Berners-Lee is trying to do it again, this time with a completely different tack.

The analog age

Dewey created the Dewey Decimal System in 1876. He created his classification scheme that would organise all the world's knowledge into ten classes: computer science and information, philosophy and psychology, religion, social sciences, language, science, technology, arts and recreation, literature, and history and geography. Each of these was then subdivided into ten divisions, each of which was then sub-subdivided into ten sections. Perfection attempted in decimal simplicity.



Julie Jones

Twenty years later in 1897, Putnam and Cutter put their heads together to create the Library of Congress Classification System, which utilised the conveniently pre-existing western alphabet as a method of organising

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1472669609000139 Published online by Cambridge University Press