



Memorandum of Understanding on Library Collaboration

University of Edinburgh, Library & University Collections

Freie Universität Berlin, Universitätsbibliothek

THIS Memorandum of Understanding is made on _____ 17.9. _____ 2020
BETWEEN:

THE UNIVERSITY COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, a charitable body registered in Scotland (SC005336), incorporated under the Universities (Scotland) Acts and having its main administrative offices at Old College, South Bridge, Edinburgh EH8 9YL; and

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN, whose administrative office is at Kaiserswerther Str. 16-18, 14195 Berlin.

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as the “Memorandum”) is not intended to be legally binding and no legal rights or obligations shall arise as a result of its terms except that the sections below relating to Costs; Information Sharing & Confidentiality; and Intellectual Property shall be legally binding.

If any dispute does arise, both parties shall attempt to resolve it through amicable discussion. In the event they are not able to completely resolve the dispute, the parties agree that any disputes between them shall be governed by the law of, and shall be subject to, the jurisdiction of the country of domicile of the defendant to the action.

It is the intention that a formal, legally binding agreement is entered into between the parties to govern arrangements between them in respect of the specific project/activities arising out of this Memorandum.

Vision

This MoU sets out initial ideas for a collaboration between the University of Edinburgh’s Library & University Collections and Freie Universität Berlin’s Universitätsbibliothek, built on mutual trust, respect and friendship.

Our universities have a number of similarities (e.g. size and research intensity) as well as differences (e.g. organisational hierarchy and history). We seek to work together to share our knowledge and professional experience, both good and bad, in order to encourage best practice for the benefit of both libraries. By explicitly connecting our university libraries, we want to strengthen the co-operations between our universities which are currently being fostered in many ways, e.g. through the UNA initiative.

Aims of our collaboration:

- Strengthening the cooperation between our universities, including other parts of UoE and FU in our activities, making our libraries an important part of international relations



- Raise awareness for strategic partnerships and their benefits among staff/within the organisation
- An official cooperation can be a good starting point for acquiring funding for future joint projects.

In the first instance, our collaboration might have three main areas of focus:

1. New and innovative library services,
2. Our people and their professional development,
3. Organisational change.

Ideas for Collaboration

1. Innovation Workshops

In a series of online events, staff could meet and exchange practical experience and prospective plans on new library services as well as library-faculty co-operation, with the aim of critical discussion and feedback. Special fields of interest are the presentation and discoverability of collections in the digital space as well as the support of academic research and teaching with these collections.

The events can be short and lightweight using effective methods of online collaboration. They can either be held with a recurring group or core group of people, or alternate attendance according to the topic. They could take the form of:

- presenting a services/collaboration that has been successfully implemented and might be of interest to the partner library
- presenting a not or not yet successful service/collaboration, and looking for alternative routes together
- presenting a problem or challenge and discussing or developing solutions in the form of a future service/collaboration

2. Staff Development and Exchange

Both Libraries would enable staff at all levels to undertake short exchange visits (in person or virtual) between our libraries, to see how work is carried out in different national contexts. Staff may be able to make use of Erasmus+, UNA Europa or institutional funds to cover travel and accommodation costs. Further benefits of this potential arrangement include:

- Ease of making arrangements for visits to specific teams.
- Opportunity for return visits (like having an exchange partner).

This arrangement will not preclude the ability of staff to receive visitors from, or to visit any other universities, but our institutions may, as part of the relationship envisaged by this Memorandum become a preferred partner for job-shadowing and information-sharing exchanges.

Visits can be combined with language learning purposes.

While both libraries desire to continue in-person visits, it would be intended that they would also prepare and enable to organize staff development and exchange remotely when necessary.



3. Organisational and Service Review - Being a Critical Friend

Parties shall discuss whether to agree to an arrangement whereby each year there would be a site visit of members of each library's senior management team, alternating between Berlin and Edinburgh. Visits may last two or three days (virtual or in person visits).

It is envisaged that the visiting party would be invited to undertake a light-touch review of the services offered by the hosts, in the manner of a critical friend. The visitors would be able to meet with staff and ask questions about the services, organisational structures and the day-to-day work. The visitors can provide feedback verbally or in writing with suggestions for improvements to be considered by the hosting management team.

If this proposal is agreed, it would NOT be intended that this would be an audit, but more a light-touch review of a range of services offered by each library, and each library would host a visit every second year. The intention being that some external input from library professionals with different experiences will contribute to improving services in both libraries.

The review can be concluded by a workshop to create ideas that further the identified strengths and address possible weaknesses.

Notes

- It is intended that both partners should appoint a small team (not just one individual) to coordinate and organize the activities envisaged by this Memorandum.
- This collaboration is based on the benefits of meeting in person and experiencing new places, thus forming a productive and creative relationship. But travel possibilities may be limited due to several factors, including budget, time and special circumstances (like the current pandemic crisis). Options of virtual mobility and online events may be developed and put in place as an additional (not just alternative) strand of collaboration.
- In most cases, the events will take place in English. For some of the Berlin staff this is a challenge and needs to be addressed and kept in mind, to keep the communication balanced.

Validity

This Memorandum will be in effect from the date of signature for a period of five years and may be terminated by either side at 10 months written notice.

This Memorandum may be modified by mutual written consent. Such amendments, once approved by the parties, will become part of this Memorandum.

This Memorandum may only be renewed if, after a review process between the parties, the parties agree in writing to renew it.

Costs

Each party shall each bear its own costs and expenses in fulfilling this Memorandum.



Information sharing and confidentiality

Each party shall keep secret all confidential information belonging to the other party which is shared between them and all shared information shall only be used for the purpose of fulfilling this Memorandum. This obligation to keep secret will not apply to information that a party is required by law or a competent court or other authority to disclose.

Each party will ensure that any publicity is accurate and not misleading and does not contain reference to the other (including branding and logo) without that other party's prior written consent.

Intellectual Property

Unless otherwise agreed in writing in relation to specific projects, all intellectual property belonging to a party providing it to the other before, on or after the date of this Memorandum shall remain the property of the party providing it. Any intellectual property rights created in the course of activities anticipated by this Memorandum shall vest in the party which created them (or whose employee created them) unless agreed otherwise in writing between the parties.

The undersigned agree to this Agreement on behalf of their respective Universities:

Date: 17.9.2020

(Place and date of issue)

University of Edinburgh

Freie Universität Berlin

Mr. Jeremy Upton
Director of Library & University Collections

Dr. Andreas Brandtner
Director University Library

Mr. Gavin McLachlan
Vice-Principal and Chief Information Officer, and
Librarian to the University

Prof. Dr. Verena Blechinger-Talcott
Vice President International

Prof. James Smith
Vice Principal International