

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

STRATEGIC PLAN 2007-2012

1. Mission Statement

The role of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies is to promote and facilitate, within London, nationally and internationally, research and scholarship at an advanced level across the whole field of law; to conduct research; to disseminate its results; and to provide to all those undertaking research in law a library facility with up to date technology, that is international in both character and standing.

2. Research

2.1 Research in General

2.1.1 Now: the Institute has a proven capacity to undertake research projects by means of the following modes of activity: through the assembly of research teams managed and normally led by members of the staff of the Institute; through work undertaken by individual members of staff; through specialist in-house research centres, such as the Centre for Corporate and Partnership Law, the Sir William Dale Centre for Legislative Studies; and the Woolf Chair research team; and through the integration of support for research with its own programmes, through the creation of competitively awarded Visiting Fellowships. The Institute currently has acknowledged expertise in the following areas: legal education; the legal profession; legal services provision; access to justice; legal ethics; company law; financial services law; public law; European law (including European integration and EU accession); EU criminal law; international law; comparative law; legislative drafting; legal skills; and law reform.

2.1.2 Aim: to develop, organise and, where feasible, externally fund, ongoing programmes of research not only in areas where the Institute currently has expertise, but also, as circumstances and resources permit, in new fields, as recommended by the IALS Reviews of 2000 and 2005.

2.1.3 2007-2008: to undertake further evolutionary development of research activity in respect of both pure and applied research, but particularly the former; to investigate the feasibility of establishing a new chair and post-doctoral research post. (NB: the role of the holder of the chair would be to act as a co-ordinator of research, and to provide further academic leadership, as well as pursuing his/her own scholarly activities); to launch a research programme on mediation in the three great religions; to launch a new SALS working group on solicitors' conflict of interest; to further work on pensions reform; to take forward results in understanding professional competence arising out of the Institute's work on Peer Review of professional lawyers.

2.2 Publications

2.2.1 Now: the Institute's activities in this area can be divided into four principal categories; the Institute's own publications, appearing under its own imprint; publications appearing under the auspices of the Institute in association with commercial publishers; publications by Institute staff arising from academic activities initiated by it; and other activities, including involvement in editorial work. The Institute continues to be involved in the editing and preparation of a number of journals, book series, on-line and loose-leaf services, in association with commercial publishers.

2.2.2 Aims: to maintain and develop further links with commercial publishers in areas where the Institute has expertise and interests, particularly in new areas of law; to explore opportunities to develop capacities in electronic publishing.

2.2.3 2007-2008: to arrange for the publication of further reports arising from research undertaken by the expert working groups of the Society for Advanced Legal Studies; to publish the research output of the research staff of the Institute; to publish the proceedings of selected symposia, conferences and seminars run by, or at, the Institute; to continue online publication of appropriate materials through further development of the IALS Community within the School's "SAS-SPACE" E-repository on the web.

2.3 Fellowships

2.3.1 Now: the Institute has a well established portfolio of competitively awarded short term (3-12 months' tenure) Fellowships, both quasi-stipendiary (Inns of Court Fellowship) and non-stipendiary (Visiting Fellowships), together with other occasional awards. The Institute has also introduced a new Visiting Senior Research Fellowship scheme. These Fellowships, tenable for three-year periods, have been introduced with the aim of enabling the holders to develop more substantive research programmes than is possible with short term Fellowships.

2.3.2 Aims: to review the operation of the existing portfolio of schemes and, where appropriate, to investigate the possibility of introducing and seeking external funding support for new Fellowships where a perceived need exists; to monitor the results of Fellows' work effectively and to achieve and record identifiable published results from projects undertaken.

2.3.3 2007-2008: as above.

2.4 Seminars, Conferences, Workshops and Lectures

2.4.1 Now: regular programme of seminars, public lectures, workshops and conferences organised by the Institute, some in collaboration with other organisations (from within and outwith the School). It has established nationally recognised fora in respect of company law; overseas law and related research; legal skills; financial services law; comparative company law; legal education, ethics and the practice of law; legislative drafting (in association with the Statute Law Society); legal history; and Jewish law. In addition, the Society for Advanced Legal Studies organises its own complementary programme of lectures and workshops covering a wide spectrum of subjects.

2.4.2 Aims: to keep under review the range and format of activities offered and to introduce provision in additional subjects and fields by reference to the interests of Institute staff and perceived demand; to improve recognition through standardised leaflets and posters; to ensure all events are advertised on the IALS website in good time; to develop email mailing lists linked to the website; to develop contacts databases; and to co-ordinate management of contacts lists, with a view to possible benefits for fund-raising.

2.4.3 2007-2008: to introduce a new series of closed seminar groups to include subject-based members of the judiciary, and academics both from law and other disciplines. (NB: these seminars would be able to discuss issues that could not be aired in individual case hearings.) To broaden the format of the Institute's lectures in order to obtain a wider range of views on the topic(s) being considered; to investigate the possibility of holding a regular series of informal seminars or workshops to discuss issues at the frontiers of legal research; to organise a series of seminars for the legal and other professions on law reform and EC criminal law. To automate the mailing lists by the introduction of a contacts database, adopt a new standard IALS format for advertising events on paper and in electronic format to increase branding, and to make more use of email notification of events.

3 Student Recruitment

3.1 Now: the Institute has a successful MPhil/PhD research degree programme, which reinforces and supports its role as a centre for advanced legal research.

3.2 Aims: to maintain student registrations at the optimum number based on the level of the Institute's academic staff establishment and recommended maximum individual staff supervisory loads; to maintain internal management controls to regulate numbers.

3.3 2007-2008: to recruit more students in the areas of law reform and legislative Drafting as well as other PhD research areas.

4. Teaching and Learning

4.1 Postgraduate Research Programme

4.1.1 Now: MPhil/PhD registrations currently accepted in the fields of administrative law; arbitration and alternative dispute resolution; commercial law; comparative law; corporate law; European law (including European integration and EU accession); financial services law; insolvency law; law enforcement; legal education; legal practice and the legal profession; legal skills; legislative studies and legislative drafting; partnership law; public and private international law; trade law.

4.1.2 Aims: to maintain a viable community of research students which can support and reinforce the Institute's wider role as a promoter and facilitator of legal research through their involvement in its programme of research, training and publishing activities; and to continually monitor individual and institutional supervisory capacities; to provide a comprehensive training programme covering all the skills required by such students.

4.1.3 2007-2008: to explore the possibility of further expanding the provision of the successful research methodology course, including the broadening of its recruitment and the possible collaboration with other organisations working in this field; to explore further with BIICL the possibility of using members of its staff for supervisory duties.

4.2 Postgraduate Taught Courses

4.2.1 Now: an MA in Advanced Legislative Studies is offered by the Institute's Sir William Dale Centre for Legislative Studies.

4.4.2 Aims: to keep under review the possibility of postgraduate taught course initiatives in areas where the Institute has acknowledged expertise, and where such provision would be complementary to that in the London law schools.

4.4.3 2007-2008: to increase student numbers on the course to around 15; to continue development of an IALS Virtual Learning Environment within the School's "Study Online" VLE in support of learning and teaching on the MA.

4.3 LLM Teaching

4.3.1 Now: the Institute sees its principal role as that of supporting the LLM programmes of the Colleges of the University of London, through library and other provision (eg, space).

4.3.2 Aims: see para. 9.1.2 below.

4.3.3 2007-2008: to consider, if the University's Subject Panel in Law is willing to reconsider the policy which precludes the Institute from participating in the Colleges' LLM programmes, whether the Institute could make some modest contribution to the various programmes in areas where its staff or visitors have special expertise.

4.4 International and Professional Training and Research

4.4.1 Now: modest programme of training and consultancy activities in professional training, with a bias towards advanced legal skills and trans-national training environments, undertaken under the *aegis* of the International and Professional Training and Research Unit (IPTRU). The Centre for Legislative Studies offers an annual Summer course in legislative drafting for professional drafters from the Commonwealth and beyond; and undertakes regular training projects for the European Commission.

4.4.2 Aims: to continue to undertake and, where appropriate expand, its programme of activities where they further the mission of the Institute.

4.4.3 2007-2008: to undertake a review of the policy, management and finance of the International Professional Training and Research Unit, following the departure of its Director; to explore the possibility of running London-based teaching programmes, on the model of the successful Dickinson Gateway Semester Programme, with South Western University; to explore the possibility of hosting a Fellowship programme for the Temple Bar Association.

5. Quality Assurance

5.1 Now: procedures are now in place for the admission, annual review, and monitoring of student feedback in respect of all postgraduate research and taught students within the Institute.

5.2 Aims: to continue to maintain and, where necessary, to improve standards and to continue to observe the best practice in all matters, in accordance with the provisions of the School's Quality Assurance Framework.

5.3 2007-2008: as above.

6. Finance

6.1 Now: if exceptional items relating to the building development project (below, para 8) are excluded, the Institute aims to operate a broadly balanced budget, due largely to its capacity to generate external non-HEFCE income, which now represents over 60% of the total. There are ongoing difficulties in maintaining the library's capacity to acquire books and periodicals, given that these costs consistently inflate at a higher rate than

HEFCE Special Funding. The significant additional sum required each year to make up the shortfall has to be met from savings elsewhere in the library and/or additional income generated by the library and/or gifts of books from publishers.

6.2 Aims: to seek to preserve and enhance the fiscal autonomy of the Institute as far as possible; to continue to balance its operating budget; and to raise funds from external sources for specific projects.

6.3 2007-2008: to seek to ensure that a proportionate share of the Special Funding from HEFCE to the School is ring-fenced for the Institute; to discuss with the School whether it will be feasible for a bid to be made for an increase in HEFCE Special Funding of the Institute, in order to keep pace with inflation in staff costs, library book and serials, etc; to seek to preserve the Access Funding grant from HEFCE in the light of the ever-increasing demands on the library from legal scholars from other UK universities, whose own library holdings are being eroded; to continue to monitor its charges for external library services; to keep under review its capitation charges levied to the University law schools for library services provided in respect of their postgraduate taught courses; to undertake a review of fund-raising policy and the preparation of an overall strategy dealing with all the main potential sources of revenue; to undertake a review of the title, terms of reference and membership of the Development and Advisory Committee.

7. Staffing

7.1 Now: between 1995-1996 and 2003-2004 the Institute enjoyed a significant expansion in its academic establishment, which permitted a substantial increase in its research and publication activities. In recent months, a number of these posts have been lost, in some cases as a result of external funding coming to an end, and in others as a result of a change in research orientation following the change of Director. The establishment of additional academic posts is seen as being of fundamental importance to the Institute's fulfilment of its mission. The cumulative expertise available within the Institute's library is a unique resource for the support of advanced research and scholarship in law.

7.2 Aims: to seek external funds for the establishment of new academic posts in appropriate fields.

7.3 2007-2008: to investigate the feasibility of establishing a new chair and post-doctoral researcher (see para 2.1.3 above).

8. Premises

8.1 General

8.1.1 Now: the Institute's library is now almost full and the building has no space to allow it to expand, either in facilities for readers or space for the collections. Outside the library the expansion in academic activities that has taken place in recent years has resulted in acute shortages of office and teaching accommodation, and the strategies identified in previous planning periods to alleviate these difficulties have now been implemented. The quality of existing accommodation is deficient, particularly as plant and services come to the end of their useful life. The Institute's preferred option is the erection of a new building on the adjacent vacant site; the refurbishment of its existing accommodation; and a rationalisation of the space usage of both the Institute and the British Institute of International and Comparative Law.

8.1.2 Aims: to secure the additional accommodation and the refurbishment of existing accommodation, vital for the maintenance of the Institute's existing services, and the development of new initiatives, particularly in relation to the library; to undertake a major fund-raising appeal to raise the funding necessary for the above, and the other development projects prioritised by the Institute's Development and Advisory Committee. To upgrade facilities as opportunities allow.

8.1.3 2007-2008: to seek to ensure that the planning application submitted by the University in respect of the new building is processed as quickly as possible; subject to planning permission being obtained, to implement the plan to enclose the front (south east) corner of Charles Clore House; to implement the reconfiguration and refurbishment of the reception area (particularly in the light of the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act and the need for better access for the disabled); to continue the ongoing programme to redecorate and refurbish public areas of the Institute. To pursue funding to install fixed projection equipment in IALS teaching rooms. To review the configuration of administrative offices in the light of recent developments in the School.

8.2 Health and Safety

8.2.1 Now: the Institute's Health and Safety Committee monitors the health and safety of its staff, students and visitors, and regular formal reviews of health and safety matters are undertaken by the Management Committee. Comprehensive risk assessment and safety audits of the building have been undertaken and procedures revised in the light of the findings.

8.2.2 Aims: to implement the University's health and safety policies, and to raise the awareness amongst staff, students and visitors of the relevant issues; to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of all staff and visitors.

8.2.3 2007-2008: to complete the implementation of the recommendations of the University's safety audit of the building.

9. Information Services

9.1 The Library

9.1.1 Now: The Institute's library is one of the world's major legal research libraries and plays a leading role in the support of legal scholarship throughout the United Kingdom and overseas; its primary mission is to support legal research by academic staff and postgraduate research students throughout the UK higher education sector and to collect, maintain and make available extensive collections of legal literature of national importance. It is also a vital element in provision for postgraduate taught courses in law in the University of London. The Library is increasingly active in national and international collaboration on legal information provision, particularly in innovative projects in electronic information provision. It plays an important role in supporting legal research in other sectors and continues to play a pioneering role in the rapid distance provision of library services, by electronic and other means, and a leading role in the training of law librarians.

9.1.2 Aims: to maintain and to improve the library's capacities to acquire, house on-site, and make easily accessible legal research materials; to maintain the level of staffing and staff expertise to provide legal research services and participate in new developments in legal information provision; to extend the availability of training and

advice for legal researchers; to increase remote access by the academic research community to legal research library services and investigate the potential for developing digital collections; to play a major part in the creation and development of the University of London Research Library Services and to use the new structure to improve services while ensuring locally responsive services and locally responsible management; to participate in the joint management and development of the converged Innopac Millennium automated library system serving ULRLS and external partners so as to obtain fullest advantage from its operation; to restructure the physical environment and work-flow in the library to improve efficiency and economy in its operation and to improve physical facilities for researchers; to develop partnerships and collaborative projects with other research libraries, nationally and internationally, and to participate in the formation of national research library policy; to improve the quality of the bibliographical database; to continue to provide an efficient and economical service to meet the needs of postgraduate taught course provision in the University and elsewhere, by financial arrangement with and in close co-operation with the relevant law schools; to continue to provide legal research services to other sectors on appropriate terms and invest the income in the IALS Library.

9.1.3 2007-2008: to collaborate with other members of the University of London Research Library Services; to build closer relationships with colleges of UL, establish further formal mechanisms for collaboration, and more responsive services in the context of the development of college-based LLM programmes; to continue to develop a detailed plan of future requirements for a building and refurbishment programme (para 8.1.1, above) and to identify any further measures to alleviate the current shortage of space; to refine collection development and management policies; to collaborate in the joint management of the Innopac / Millennium automated library system and identify IALS needs and priorities; to continue implementation of the Electronic Resource Management module of the library system and continue the development of a subject portal; to continue to increase the title-level entries for materials in composite electronic databases in the online library catalogue; to work towards authority control in the bibliographical database; to continue the introduction of automated binding records and procedures using the automated library system; to continue to develop remote access to electronic information resources subject to licensing restrictions; to continue a conservation and stock cleaning programme; where possible to carry out refurbishment of public spaces in the library, including a programme of furniture replacement; to investigate further secure electronic document delivery facilities and explore collaboration with Boston Social Law Library and the British Library in provision of fee-based services; to extend local and collaborative programmes for training legal researchers; to offer training programmes for academic staff at colleges of the University, and investigate the potential for further involvement of IALS Library in legal skills training in the University; to continue to seek funds for the creation of an onsite electronic legal research training suite; to continue a strategic partnership with the British Library, including implementation of collection management initiatives; to build on the FLARE partnership for collaboration with other legal research libraries in collection development; to pursue funds to undertake an update of the FLAG database and the creation of an online treaties index; to continue to participate in the LLMC Digital international digitisation project and to pursue the loan of a high quality scanner and funds for local digitisation of collections; to collaborate with other law libraries internationally including associate membership of NELLCO; to continue to develop and implement a records management system; to participate in the maintenance of an archive database system for the central University; to continue participation in development of the School's institutional digital repository ("SAS-SPACE") and the School's Virtual Learning Environment ("Study Online").

9.2 Computing Services

9.2.1 Now: computing services and facilities within the Institute are procured, managed and supported by the library and have an essential involvement in all areas of Institute activity. The computing network comprises 136 workstation computers and 14 terminals connected to 3 servers across 10baseT network infrastructure with wide-area network access by fibre-optic link to Senate House. Support is provided by in-house Information Systems Department staff in combination with the University of London Computer Centre (ULCC) and bought-in freelance expertise. The Institute now has a fully functioning wireless network throughout the building.

9.2.2 Aims: to continue to provide and develop integrated computing services and on-site support for Institute staff, students and readers and to improve equipment provision and network performance as available resources permit, with the aim of maximising the benefit of automated approaches in academic, administrative and library activities. To revise operational plans as necessary to enable IALS to absorb increased charges from the University for ULCC services without undue reduction in services provided by IALS. To take full advantage of any increased support available from ULCC as appropriate to IALS operational requirements.

9.2.3 2007-2008: to collaborate as appropriate with ULCC in the formulation, development and delivery of improved services for Institute staff, students and readers; to develop further the IALS Windows Server; to continue development of the library's Electronic Information Unit as an electronic training facility; to support network access facilities for library readers using their own laptop computers; to continue to upgrade and extend the presentation facilities in IALS teaching rooms; to extend further computing facilities for users with special needs; to continue development of in-house Microsoft Access management databases; to coordinate with ULCC the upgrade and replacement of computers and software for staff, students and external researchers; to document with ULCC disaster response and recovery measures; to extend training opportunities for staff and students.

9.3 Internet / Intranet Services

9.3.1 Now: the Institute website, developed and maintained by the library, forms part of its information services in support of legal research on a national and international basis and is a primary means of publicising the Institute and its activities. Information databases created by the library, directly or in collaboration with other organisations, are a significant contribution to legal research resources.

9.3.2 Aims: to continue to develop the website for publishing and information services and for marketing and promotional purposes emphasising IALS branding; to increase relevant content and services on the site; to continue to develop the electronic publication of the Institute's materials and to enable web access to databases of information held at the Institute; to develop procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the site; in collaboration with other organisations and projects, to create and make available a portfolio of databases of legal and related information of value to the academic legal community at no cost to the end user; to collaborate with the British and Irish Legal Information Institute; to maintain services on the site for the College-based LLM programmes and to advertise those programmes; to develop services to support the teaching of IALS students.

9.3.3 2007-2008: to co-operate with other parts of the central University to ensure

appropriate co-ordination in the design, construction, and delivery of services; to decide the best way to host the service and redesign the site; to explore with IALS academic staff ways to support the Institute's teaching programme, including further development of the VLE; to continue to develop new content for the IALS website; to meet international accessibility standards; to develop and maintain a law portal as part of the shared library automated system ; to facilitate *e-commerce/credit* card transactions via the site; to maintain and develop the existing web databases on the site; to host and participate in the management of the British and Irish Legal Information Institute (BAILII) service and its JISC-funded project; to continue the co-operative development of a gateway service to legal information on the internet (INTUTE); to continue to collaborate with the British Library and others on a foreign law research website (FLARE); to use INFORMS software to build online tutorials; to continue to develop the Institute's intranet; to develop members' areas for library subscribers and members of the Society of Advanced Legal Studies; to continue to produce and review usage statistics.

10. Student Services

10.1 Now: Junior Common Room and electronic information facilities in the Library (with 42 workstations) available to all postgraduate research and University of London postgraduate taught course students eligible to use the Institute. Additional computing (8 workstations) and social facilities available to the Institute's own postgraduate research students. Café Lex is open for both staff and students from Monday to Friday, serving a range of hot and cold food and drinks.

10.2 Aims: to keep provision under review and improve where appropriate, and where circumstances permit.

10.3 2007-2008: as above.

11. Context

11.1 Now: the Institute plays a full part in the academic, library and administrative affairs of the School, and also within the wider context of the University of London. It also places great importance on its national and international role and has links with many prestigious academic, governmental and professional organisations in the United Kingdom and abroad. The Institute also fulfils a vitally important role in supporting the legal profession as a whole.

11.2 Aims: to strengthen further its national and international links, and to seek to realise the Institute's full potential as a national headquarters for the academic legal community, and as a natural meeting place for legal scholars who work in or visit the Greater London area, in particular through the following:

- fostering of closer links with younger law teachers in the University of London law schools, and beyond;
- offering office space, and possible administrative backup on a self-financing basis, to law-related societies and associations that do not have premises of their own;
- holding a regular series of informal seminars or workshops to discuss issues at the frontiers of legal research.

11.3 2007-2008: to continue discussions with its stakeholders on future strategies for

the Institute in the light of current uncertainties concerning the future of the School and the central University.

Peter Niven
Administrator

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