

# Champions as collaborators: involving students in collaborative practice to improve the Library



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# University of Exeter – facts & figures

- 20,700+ students (inc. 3,900+ international):
  - 16,000 Undergraduate
  - 2,300 PGT
  - 1,400 PGR
- 3 campuses:
  - Exeter (Streatham & St Lukes)
  - Cornwall (Penryn campus - shared with Falmouth University)

# Student Experience

- £9,000 'fees'
- Emphasis on the student as customer
- NSS as a key indicator
- Regular feedback from students on lack of core texts
- Inspiration: Students as Change Agents  
<http://as.exeter.ac.uk/eqe/projects/change/>
- Desire to involve our users with service development

# Collaborative practice

“Collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision-making as they work toward a common goal”

Friend & Cook, 1992

“...communication, sharing, and problem solving between the physician and nurse as peers; this pattern of practice also implies a shared responsibility and accountability for patient care”

Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health, 2005

# Exeter's Library Champions – who?

- Taught students
- Self-nominated in line with Student's Guild recommendations
- One per subject (Exeter and Cornwall)
- Roughly 40 per year



# Exeter Library Champions – what?

- Meet with Liaison team
- Promote the Library within their departments
- Spend a budget of £1000 on Library resources
- Report back via SSLCs
- Focus Groups

University of Exeter Library  
10 February

Athicha, a postgraduate student in the Graduate School of Education and a frequent user of St Lukes library, was presented with her prize by Library Champions Sophie Hunter, Josephine Hornsey and Andrew Eckert. Library Champions are a vital team of student volunteers who liaise with and promote the Library, as well as influencing Library purchasing in their subject area.



# How we support them



Library Champion

Want to comment on Library services?  
Want to suggest a book for the Library?

Contact your Library Champion:  
They can order books and  
represent your views



- Support via email/Facebook/poster
- Advice on book/resource selections

# What did they get from it?

- Opportunity to influence Library decision making
- Skills development: advocacy, negotiation, budgeting & promotion
- CV enhancement
- Certification, Exeter Award & references (if required)

# Examples of collaboration #1

## Book purchasing

- Usual model not effective enough
- Not PDA or EBA
- Different kind of user selection
- Cost of academic materials



# Examples of collaboration #2

## E-book focus groups

- What do they really think?
- Do they actually use all the functions available?
- Which interfaces do they prefer?
- DRM issues awareness



# Examples of collaboration #3

## Changing fines/borrowing periods

- Feedback about high fines from students
- Champions sand pit first
- Challenging our preconceptions



# Examples of collaboration #4, #5 & #6

- Digital resources access routes
- Silent Study room rules
- Reserving desks



# References

- Friend & Cook, 1992, **Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals**, Longman (lots more recent editions)
- Miller-Keane Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health, 2005, Elsevier