

Session 7, Friday

**Julie Archer, *University of Sunderland***  
**24/7 – The Sunderland experience**

### **Abstract**

Following on the success of the 24-hour computer suite at The Murray Library, both usage and user feedback indicate more facilities would be welcome. In offering 24/7 library services we would not only be supporting student recruitment and retention but leading the way among the Universities in the North East Region. Our commitment to learners would be proactive, in providing a quality learning environment when they needed it regardless of their personal life styles and commitments.

During 2001 I researched this type of provision, including visits and discussions with other Universities who operated 24-hour access to library facilities. It was identified that this type of provision is both popular (usage figures high) and an aid to student recruitment (feedback from open days). In August 2001 I presented a paper to the Director of Information Services. The proposal was accepted and the implementation process begun.

To operate this facility in a safe and supportive environment we installed CCTV on all three floors of the library and created a reception desk in the library foyer, where users could prove their identity and sign in. During the overnight period The Murray Library is staffed with appropriately trained security personnel. The staff is not only First Aid and security trained but also library trained. All this planning was done in collaboration with the University's Estates Service and Health & Safety Representatives.

What services would we offer and to whom? The provision would offer not only computing facilities but access to print, audio and electronic resources, photocopying and an attractive learning environment, with plans to offer self service issue and returns in the future. Any registered student or member of staff of the University of Sunderland has right of access.

In the December 2001 we commenced a one-year pilot at The Murray Library and the 24-hour library service has never looked back and continues to develop and expand. While in response to the growing number of enquiries in November 2002 we held a joint one-day conference with Sheffield Hallam University and Liverpool John Moores University on 24-hour library services, which was attended by more than 45 UK university representatives.

An annual user survey is carried out in May of each academic year to identified possible developments and user satisfaction. The success of this service has led the University of Sunderland to expand the service to the St Peter's Library and introduce self-service circulation.

### **CV**

Julie Archer begun her career at the University of London, Institute of Education, and although staying in the academic library sector has moved between the Further and Higher Education sectors, including a one year international exchange at Massey University, New Zealand. Julie Archer's present post is at the University of Sunderland as the Site Librarian for the Murray Library and Learning Resource Centre.

During her career Julie has gained a wide experience in the management of learning and information resources, as well as their development, in both the Further and Higher Education sectors. She has significant experience of Project Direction and Management in cross-sector library partnerships.

Her particular interests lie in meeting the needs of lifelong learners through academic library

services and cross-sector partnership, and she teaches Information Skills across a range of topics using her knowledge and experience of information resources.