Working Library User Survey 2017

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1.   Introduction and Background

An online user survey was conducted of the Working Library in the Lent Term 2017. Responses were invited from all students, researchers and Fellows of the College.

The aims of the survey were fourfold, namely, to garner users' perspectives on -

- the extent to which they considered the Working Library to meet their needs

- ways in which they predicted their future usage patterns may change

- how the Working Library could be improved

- the extent to which the Library fulfils its purpose in contributing to College life and learning.

User surveys of the Working Library are normally conducted every four years. Their underlying purpose and goal is to collect relevant and appropriate data from all users that will in turn enable the Working Library to improve its contribution to College academic life going forward, and to fulfil its departmental role in the most effective way. In a departure from previous surveys, non-users were included in this survey.

All members of the College academic community – students, researchers and Fellows – were invited to participate in the Working Library User Survey (WLUS). A total of 1,142 survey invitations were initially sent out, followed by three reminders, the first after five days, the second after nine days, and the third after twelve days. In all, 541 (47%) of respondents completed the survey, an increase of 6% over the 2013 survey.

As seen in Table 1 below, of the total respondents, 293 (54.2%) were undergraduates; 27 (5%) were one-year postgraduates; 94 (17.4%) were other postgraduates; 96 (17.7%) were Fellows; 19 (3.5%) were College Research Associates and Teaching Associates; 12 (2.2%) were others (e.g. Beaufort Visiting Scholar, Erasmus student).

Compared to the response rate in the 2013 survey, there was an increase of 27% (n=63) responses from undergraduates, while responses from Fellows more than doubled. College Researchers/Teaching Assistants were also invited to participate in the survey for the first time.

	2013	2017
Survey population	1,040	1,142
Survey completed	426	541
Division of respondents:		
Undergraduates	230	293
One-Year Postgraduates	41	27
Other Postgraduates	114	94
Fellows	36	96
College Researchers/Teaching Assistants	-	19
Others	5	12

Table 1. Response rate by College members in 2013 and 2017

Figure 1 shows that responses from students varied according to subject. Subjects with a higher response rate included - 57% of all Natural Sciences students (n=67), 60% of all Engineering students (n=61), and 54% of Mathematics students (n=40).
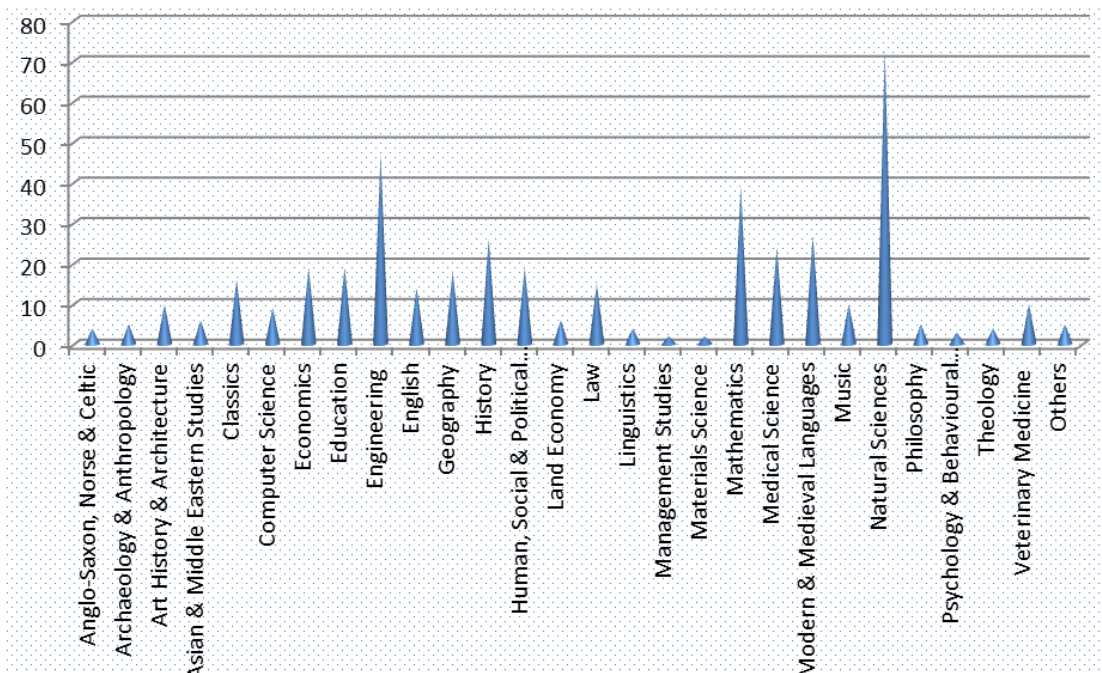
Figure 1. Responses by academic subjects

2.   Library usage patterns

This section reports general findings relating to the frequency with which users accessed the Library, their preferred time of using the Library, and then more specific findings relating to patterns of usage of Library services for undergraduates, postgraduates and Fellows.

2.1   Frequency of users accessing the Working Library

A majority of the respondents (40%, n=219) use the Working Library either 'daily' or 'a few times per week'; 16% (n=85) use the Library 'once a week'; nearly a third of respondents use the Library 'a few times per week' (see Figure 2). Non-users numbered 70 (13%).

Main reasons given by the majority of non-users (69% or n=47) for not using the Working Library services were:-

- resources available at other work/study places are sufficient for their needs;

- convenience of accessing another library;

- work in own office in the department;

- no need for accessing library resources.

A majority of non-users (92% or n=61) indicated that they would not use the Library even if changes or improvements were made.

Figure 2. Frequency with which users access the Library

Comment

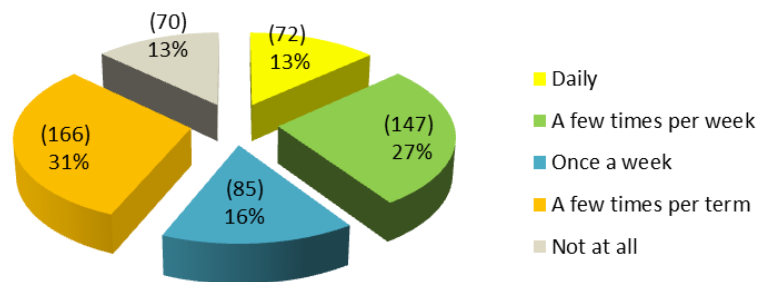Overall, the findings suggest the Working Library is used by a large majority of College members; more than one-third use it either 'daily' or 'a few times per week'. Given the availability of other libraries in the University of Cambridge system, this is an encouragingly high usage.

2.2. Usage patterns of undergraduates, one-year postgraduates, other postgraduates, Fellows and others

Undergraduate students use the Library more often than other groups (see Figure 3). Over one-half of the undergraduates (56% or n=166) use the Library either 'daily' or 'a few times per week'; 18% (n=54) of them use the Library at least once a week. In terms of the usage pattern of postgraduate students, the picture differs for one-year postgraduates and other postgraduates. A higher number of one-year postgraduates use the Library 'a few times per week' whereas other postgraduates (studying courses of two or more years) use the Library 'a few times per term'.

Other postgraduates and Fellows present a similar Library usage pattern. Both of these groups use the Library more on a termly than weekly basis. Nearly one-half of the postgraduate respondents (47.9% or n=45) and Fellows (46.8% or n=45) use the Library 'a few times per term'. Of all the non-users, Fellows have the highest number of non-users; 26% (n=25) of them do not use the Library at all.
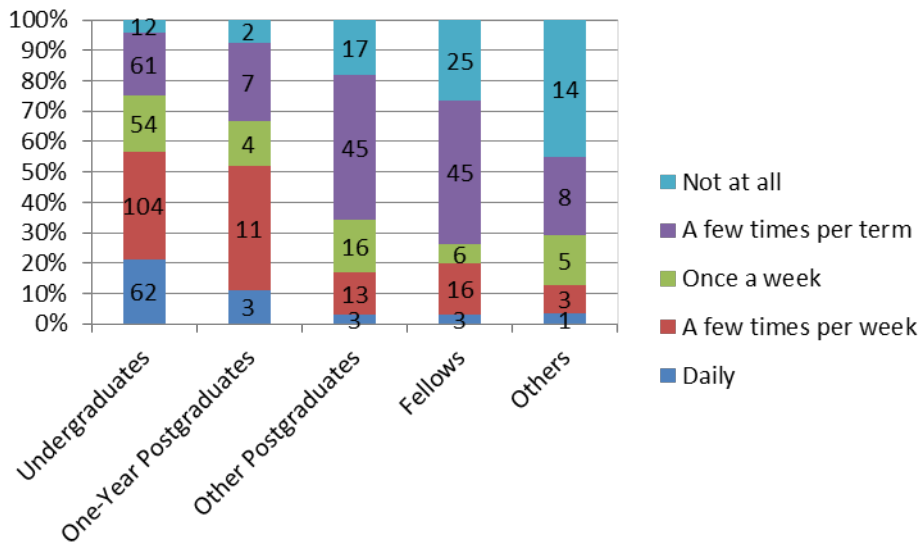
Figure 3. Frequency in use of Library by undergraduates, one-year postgraduates, other postgraduates, and Fellows

2.3. Preferred time of using the Library

For this question, respondents were invited to choose – where applicable - more than one preferred time of using the Library, hence the percentages do not tally to 100%. Survey findings suggest that the Library is busier in afternoons and outside staffed hours than in mornings. Relevant figures are:-

- 70% (n=332) of the respondents use the Library in the afternoon;

- 71% (n=335) use the Library outside staffed hours;

- 35% (n=167) use the Library in the morning.

Different groups of users have their preferred time for using the Library. Figure 4 indicates that undergraduate respondents tend to use the Library more in afternoons and outside staffed hours than in mornings. Seventy-five percent (n=210) of the undergraduates use the Library outside staffed hours (that is, at times other than 9am to 5pm), and 72% (n=202) use the Library in afternoons. Only 29% (n=82) of respondents frequent the Library in mornings. In contrast, one-year postgraduate, other postgraduates, and Fellows have a more steady use of the Library throughout the day.
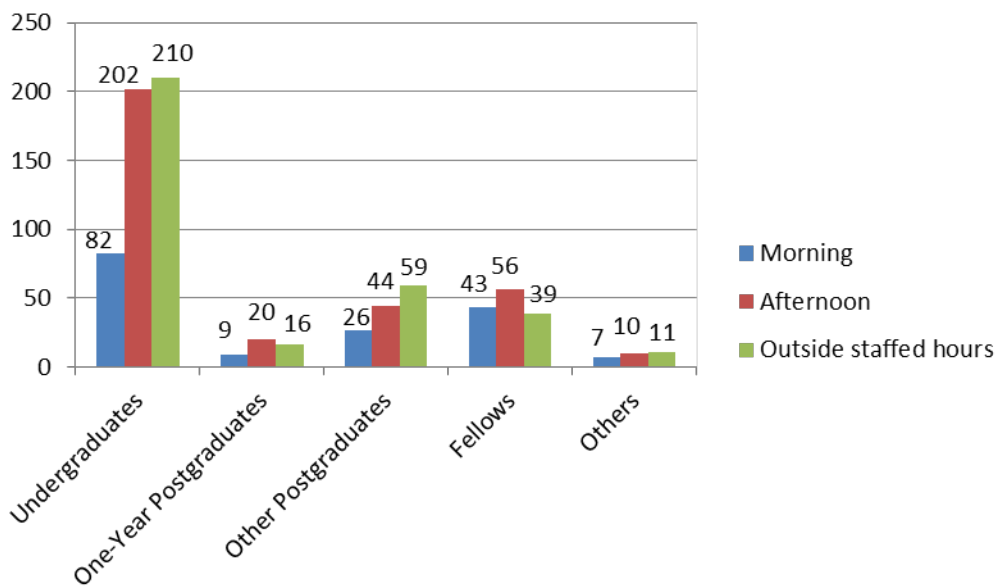
Figure 4. Preferred time of using the Working Library

Comment

Since students form the largest sector of College population, it is not surprising that they are the largest user group. Among students, undergraduate students are the largest sub-group. They are also the most intensive users, a fact reflected in the Library's book stock primarily catering to their needs. Additionally, unlike postgraduate students who may choose to work in their own offices in their departments, many undergraduates do not have that option, and thus use the Library as their base for study outside their rooms. There are proportionately more Fellow non-users than other groups, a finding that is perhaps not surprising given that the Working Library is regarded primarily as serving its student population.

The reason why a majority of undergraduate students use the Library in afternoons and outside staffed hours may be explained by their having to attend more lectures than postgraduates, and many of these lectures take place in mornings; postgraduate students on the other hand, may be more research-based, with fewer lectures. This gives them more options and flexibility as to when they choose to use the Library.

2.4. Usage pattern of Library services

Figure 5 shows the most used Library services (ie. used either daily/a few times per week or once a week) by students and Fellows are, in descending order - photocopying/printing/scanning (63%),

followed by study/revision (58.4%), and borrowing/returning/renewing items (38%). Library lockers were least used (91% of respondents did not use them).
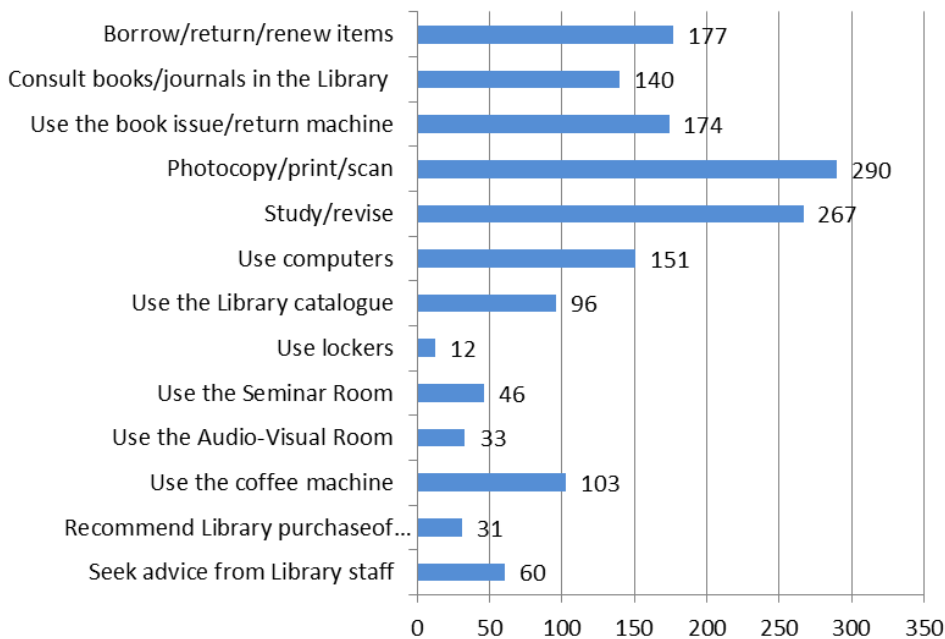
Figure 5. Usage patterns of Library services

Undergraduate usage of Library services

Library services most used (ie. used either daily/a few times per week or once a week) by undergraduate students are – photocopying/printing/scanning (63% of respondents), followed by study/revision (58.4%), and use of the book issue/return machine (47%).

Postgraduate usage of Library services

Library services most used (ie. used either daily/a few times per week or once a week) by postgraduate students are – study/revision (58% of respondents), followed by photocopying/printing/scanning (55%), and use of computers (39%).

Fellows' use of Library services

Fellows report using the Library for the following three main services (ie. used either daily/a few times per week or once a week) in descending order: 31 (48%) photocopying/printing/scanning,

followed by consulting books/journals in the Library 18 (29%), and borrowing/returning/renewing items 14 (22.2%).

Comment

The Library services most used by postgraduates are thus - study/revision, followed by photocopying/printing/scanning, and use of computers. This differs from undergraduates in the sequencing of the top three services most used (undergraduates' top three services being – photocopying/printing/scanning, study/revision, and using book issue/return machine.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, patterns of Library use adopted by Fellows bear little similarity with either of the student cohorts (undergraduate or postgraduate). Fellows' second most used service is to consult books and journals (a reference function), neither of which is in the student groups' top three services. However, all three groups report borrowing/returning/renewing in their top three Library services used.

3. Resources

This section reports the findings relating to the Library book stock.

3.1. Extent to which the Library book stock meets users' needs

Respondents were asked to describe the extent to which the Library book stock meets their needs. As seen in Figure 6, over one half of respondents (54% or n=254) regard the Library book stock as 'adequate'; 25% (n=118) think the book stock is 'excellent'; with 11% (n=50) commenting that the book stock is 'inadequate'.
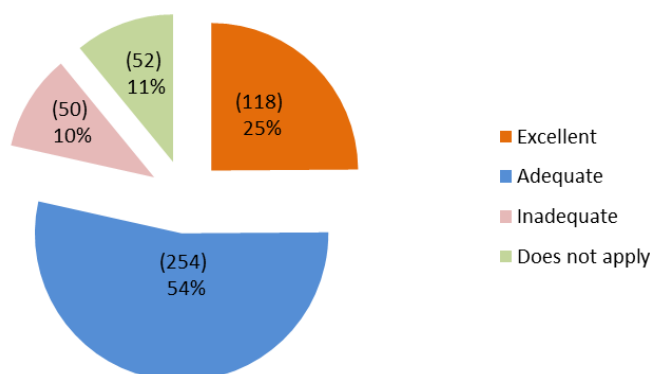

Figure 6. College members rating the Library book stock

Undergraduates

Figure 7 below indicates that 79% (n=221) of undergraduate respondents commented that the Library book stock is either 'excellent' or 'adequate'; 11% (n=31) said the book stock is 'inadequate'; 10% (n=29) claimed that the book stock 'does not apply' to them.

Figure 7. Undergraduates' rating of Library book stock

The satisfaction levels of both first and second year undergraduates is very similar - 78% (n=73) of first year undergraduates rated the book stock either 'excellent' or 'adequate'; 11% (n=10) felt that the book stock is 'inadequate', and 11% (n=10) claimed the book stock 'does not apply' to them.

Of the second year undergraduates, 73% (n=68) of the respondents thought the book stock was 'excellent' or 'adequate'; 11% (n=10) said the book stock was 'inadequate', and 16% (n=14) claimed the book stock 'does not apply' to them.

A further important finding is the difference between third year undergraduates on the one hand and first and second years on the other. The highest response of undergraduates for all four years was that the Library book stock was 'adequate' in their subject. However, it is noteworthy that third year students in particular rated the Library book stock as 'adequate' rather than 'excellent', while first and second year undergraduates demonstrated a greater willingness to rate their subject book stock as 'excellent'. One may surmise that as students progress through their courses, and as some of the courses become more specialised, they become more aware of the limitations of the Library book stock.

While numbers of first and second year undergraduates describing the book stock as 'inadequate' are small across all subjects, numbers were highest in Geography (n=4), MML (n=3) and History (n=2).

Of the first and second year undergraduates who responded - 'does not apply' – the figures were highest for the following subjects:

- Engineering (n=11)

- Mathematics (n=10)

- Natural Science (n=2)

- MML (n=1)

Postgraduates

Figure 8 indicates that 80% (n=84) of postgraduate respondents commented that the book stock is either 'excellent' or 'adequate'; 14% (n=15) felt that the book stock is 'inadequate', and 6% (n=6) claimed the book stock 'does not apply' to them.
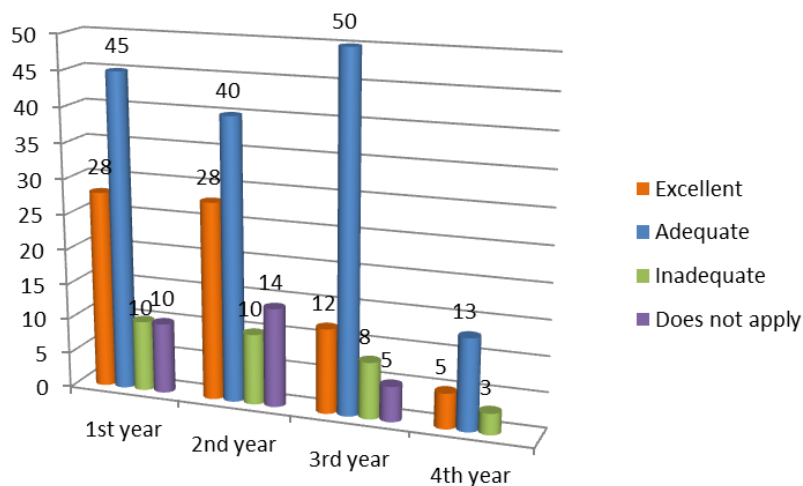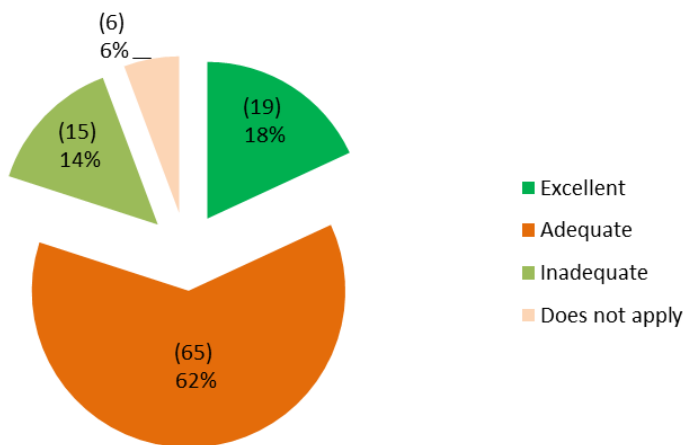

Figure 8. Postgraduates' rating of Library book stock

Comment

In general, it is encouraging to see that a large majority of undergraduates are satisfied with the Library book stock. Only a relatively small number of undergraduate respondents (11% or n=31) commented that the book stock is inadequate.

Compared to third and fourth year undergraduate respondents, there are more first and second year undergraduates who claimed that the Library book stock 'does not apply' to them. This 'does not apply' figure may be because students do not require textbooks for the subjects they are reading, or they borrow books from other libraries. It is particularly noteworthy that more students in two subjects in particular - Engineering and Mathematics - claim that the Library book stock 'does not apply' to them.

Three are three possible reasons why these undergraduates might claim that the book stock is inadequate:

1. There is a lack of books for general reading in their particular subject.

2. There are not enough copies of core textbooks.

3. Library staff have been unable to secure accurate advice on the essential titles.

Recommendation

Continue the current close liaison with Directors of Studies for their suggestions on the purchase of books for the Library. In addition, develop stronger links with College Research Associates and Teaching Associates for their advice on purchasing suitable titles for the Library collections. In similar vein, Library staff should engage academic staff more systematically in undertaking reviews of the current book collections in their respective subjects.

3.2. Improvement of the Working Library book stock

Respondents were asked whether they thought the Working Library book stock could be improved. Two-thirds of the respondents (66% or n=303) felt that the book stock could be improved, while the remainder (34% or n=160) felt that the book stock could not be improved.

Figure 9 shows that over one-half of respondents would like the Library to stock more copies of core textbooks for borrowing, and a similar number would like more copies of secondary/supporting texts (55% or n=165; 57% or n=170 respectively).
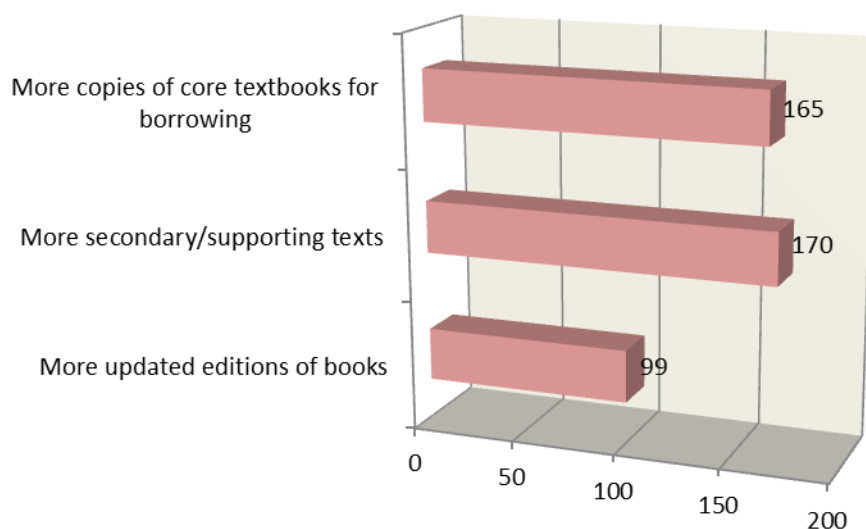

Figure 9. Improvement of Library book stock

Comment

A majority of respondents felt that the Library book stock could further be improved by having multiple copies of core textbooks for borrowing, especially in popular subjects where there are more students studying the same course. This would help ease the demand for core texts, especially in popular subjects. Although a student can recall a book, unless the borrower returns the book immediately, it could be too late for a student urgently needing the book to complete an essay. Hence students might decide to source the book elsewhere or even purchase their own copy. Equally important, respondents would like the Library to purchase more secondary/supporting texts to broaden the Library collection. Hence two equally important and competing choices are presented in future decisions on the allocation of library resources – between more core texts, and more secondary, supporting books. The Library has always tend to cover every subject appropriately, and this lead us, as it always has done, to prefer further titles to further copies, given limited resources. Multiple copies should be provided via ebooks.

3.3. Extent to which books are available on the shelves

Respondents were asked the extent to which they find the books they need available on the shelves.

• 56% (n=262) said they 'sometimes' find the books on the shelves;

• 24% (n=111) said they 'always' find the books available on the shelves;

• 7.6% (n=36) said they 'seldom' find the books on the shelves;

• 0.4% (n=2) claimed they 'never' find the books on the shelves;

• 12% (n=61) claimed this 'does not apply' to them.

Comment

The highest percentage of respondents claimed that they only 'sometimes' find the books they need on the shelves. This poses the following questions:

1. Are the returned books not being re-shelved promptly?

2. Are the books being misplaced?

3. Are the books being used by other readers in the Library?

4. Has the book gone missing but the catalogue record hasn't been updated?

5. Are there simply not enough copies due to heavy demand?

These questions require further investigation.

3.4. Finding a Library book

Respondents were asked how they find a Library book that they need. They were able to select more than one option, hence the percentages do not tally to 100%. Figure 10 shows that a majority of the respondents use Library catalogues when searching for a book, with an overwhelming 63% (n=300) using *iDiscover*.
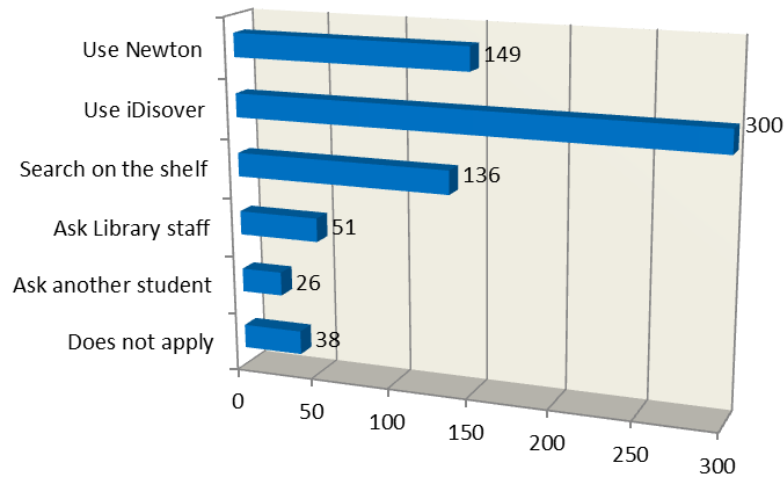
Figure 10. Ways to find a Library book

Respondents were also asked if they had encountered any difficulties in using *iDiscover*. A majority of the respondents (64.4% or n=123) said they had not experienced any problems, while 35.6% (n=68) reported that they had. For those who had experienced difficulties using *iDiscover*, the main criticism was that the new platform is slow to load the search results.

A number of respondents' comments below are illustrative of issues regarding *iDiscover* problems:

- Slow, unresponsive, not fit for purpose.

- It takes ages to load and often there are a lot of irrelevant books that come up ager a search.

- Slow with badly organised results.

- It's very slow. Takes so long to search for books.

- It's really slow and always crashes, sometimes doesn't let me log in.

- It takes ages to load and often there are a lot of irrelevant books that come up after a search.

- Some books have several entries.

- It is forever freezing or failing to work properly, failing to tell me where books are.

- Difficult to maintain multiple filters – this function could be improved.

Comment

Given that iDiscover was only launched in September 2016, it is encouraging to see that most respondents have already used *iDiscover* to find a book they need; while most have not encountered difficulties in using the new platform, significant numbers have. These negative experiences should be fed back to the University Library who controls the system.

3.5. Efficiency of the recall system

Respondents were asked to rate the efficiency of the recall system if they needed a book that was already out on loan. A majority of respondents (80% or n=377) had not recalled a book leaving only 20% who have. Of the respondents who have recalled a book, 75% (n=45) found the system efficient; and 25% (n=15) felt that the system is inefficient.

Comment

A rather high proportion of respondents (80%) have not used the recall the system if they need a book that is already out on loan. This may be because respondents do not know how to use the recall system, or that they obtain the book they need from another source. In Cambridge, students may resort to the University Library and its affiliates if they are unable to source a book from their College Library.

3.6. Sources to obtain a book not held in the Working Library

Respondents were asked about the sources used to obtain a book that is not held in the Working Library. Respondents were invited to choose more than one option, hence the percentages do not necessarily tally to 100%. Figure 11 captures their responses - 76.8% (n=349) said they borrow the book from UL/Faculty/Departmental libraries, followed by 61.2% (n= 278) who checked whether the book is available online.
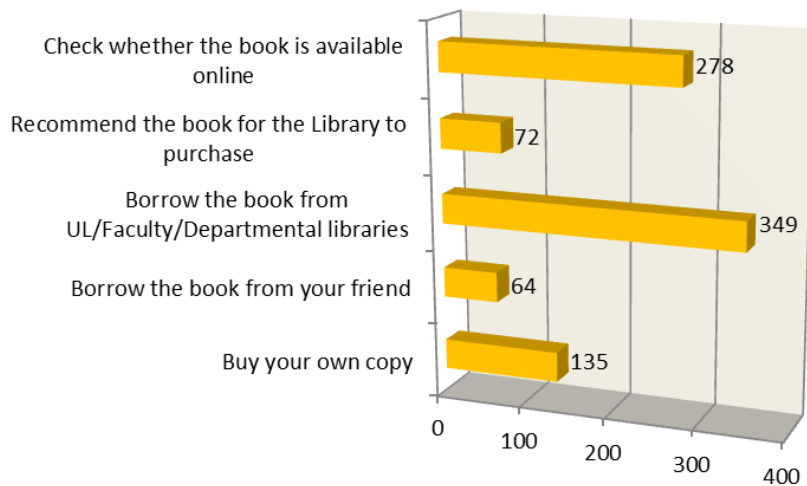
Figure 11. Sources to obtain a book not held in the Working Library

Comment

It appears that the quickest and easiest way for most users to obtain a book not held in the Working Library is to borrow from other libraries (77%), and/or to check whether the book is available online (61%). Nearly 30% of the respondents purchase their own copy. Relatively few respondents (16%) recommend the Library to purchase the book, or borrow a book from a friend (14%).

It is interesting to note that respondents would rather buy their own copy than recommend the Library purchase it. This may be because they need immediate access to a book, and/or that they are unaware they can recommend the book for purchase by the Library.

In addition, the fact that most respondents choose to borrow a book that is unavailable in the Working Library from UL/Faculty/Departmental libraries, or check whether an ebook copy is available, may explain why so many respondents have not recalled a book in the Working Library.

3.7. Collections in the Library basement

Respondents were asked whether they have consulted items held in the basement of the Working Library. Only one-third of the respondents (33% or n=157) replied that they had consulted items held in the basement, while two-thirds (67% or n=317) have not.

In regard to the consulted items, Figure 12 shows that the two most consulted collections in the basement are - bound journals (40% or n=60), followed by the Cambridge collection (33% or n=49).
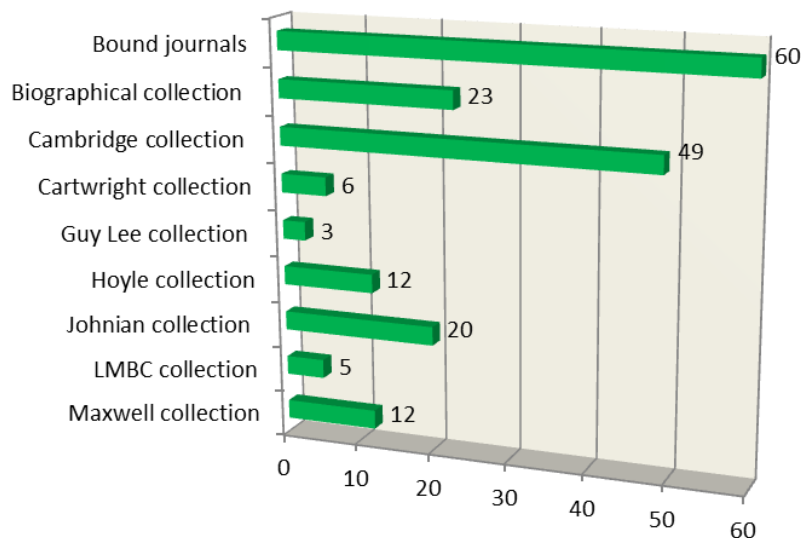
Figure 12. Consulted collections in the Library basement

Comment

Only two collections in the basement are consulted to any significant extent - bound journals and Cambridge collection. It is likely that other collections are not consulted either because Library users have no need to do so, or are unaware of them.

Recommendation

The collections in the Library basement should be promoted and publicised more widely to raise user awareness.

3.8. Changes in borrowing patterns in the Working Library

Respondents were asked whether their borrowing patterns have changed over the course of their studies. A majority of the respondents (67%, n=312) said that there was no change to their borrowing pattern; however, 20% (n=96) of the respondents said that they were borrowing less than they used to; 13% (n=59) claimed that they were borrowing more.

Respondents were asked to give reasons why their borrowing had changed. The main reasons given were –

• the need to consult and reference more books for courses;

• a change of subject which requires more reading;

• convenience of using the College Library.

These are all positive indications that the Library stock in general continues to meet the majority of students' needs.

However, the main reasons given by respondents for borrowing less than they used to include -

• books on specialised subjects are not available in the College Library;

• use of more online journals or other online resources;

• living away from College;

• change of subject which requires fewer books;

• no requirement for textbooks.

Considering the main purpose of the Library is to provide for the undergraduate user group, the above comments reflect changes in students' circumstances rather than direct criticism of the Library stock – as the main reasons for change of borrowing behaviour.

3.9. Use of Library learning resources

Respondents were asked to indicate their use of the Library's main learning resources by ranking them in order of priority, using 1 for 'Most used' and 6 for 'Least used'. Table 2 shows that print books (47% or n=214) and e-journals (32.8% or n=149) are the two most commonly used learning resources.

Rank	Learning resources		
1	Print books	47.0%	Most used
2	e-journals	32.8%	
3	e-books	14.3%	
4	Print reference (e.g. dictionaries)	3.75%	
5	Print journals	1.32%	
6	Audio-Visual items	0.88%	Least used

Table 2. Preferred use of Library learning resources

Comment

The same question was asked in the Library User survey in 2013, when most respondents chose print books as their main learning resources. Four years on, it is interesting to note that users still prefer print books as their main learning resource. Despite the wider availability of electronic books, they are still ranked third.

However, the position is reversed when it comes to journals; e-journals are ranked second, while print journals are pushed down to fifth. Users still prefer to learn from books in the traditional form of print books rather than e-books. And e-journals have a generally higher level of acceptance than e-books.

4. Work-space and noise levels

This section reports the findings relating to work-space and noise levels in the Working Library. It gauges the extent to which users manage to find a work-space; the degree of difficulty in finding a preferred work-space; areas where users experience most noise, and their preferred noise levels while working in the Library.

4.1. Availability of work-space and noise levels

4.1.1. Availability of work-space

Respondents were asked the extent to which they are able to find a work-space in the Working Library if they looked for one. Responses were as follows: -

• 29% (n=137) 'always' find a work space;

• 45% (n=218) 'often' find a work-space;

• 13.8% (n=65) 'sometimes' find a work-space.

Respondents were asked whether the work-space they find conforms to their preference. Over one-half of the respondents (61.4% or n=289) said that they either 'always' or 'often' find a work-space they prefer.

Although most respondents are able to find a work-space in the Working Library, there are occasions that they have difficulty finding a work space.

• 54% (n=254) claimed that they 'sometimes' have difficulty finding a work-space;

- 11% (n=50) said they 'always' or 'often' have difficulty finding a work-space;

- 24% (n=115) said they 'never' have difficulty finding a work-space;

- 11% (n=53) claimed this 'does not apply' to them.

Respondents were asked to give reasons for having difficulty finding a work-space and they were invited to choose more than one option, hence the percentages do not necessarily tally to 100%.

- 85% (n=255) said 'spaces are already occupied by others';

- 59% (n=178) said 'unattended desks have materials on them with no indication when the occupiers will return';

- 22% (n=66) said their 'preferred area is too noisy to work in'.

Comment

Over one-half of respondents 65% (n=304) expressed difficulty finding a work-space. One of the main reasons is that users leave their materials or belongings on the desks with no indication when they will return. This is, in effect, reserving the desk indefinitely, and seems unfair to those who wish to use the work-space.

Recommendation

In order to ensure fair use of space, it is suggested that the 'desk in use' slip system, which presently operates only during Easter Term, could be implemented all year round.

4.1.2. Noise levels

Respondents were then asked to indicate the area(s) where they experienced most noise. This proved to be the Mezzanine Floor, where there are communal tables.

Selected comments regarding the noise on the Mezzanine Floor are:

- People talk all the time in some areas of the Library. This is especially the case for the room with the big table on Mezzanine.

- I never work on the Mezzanine level due to noise.

- Mezzanine west wing – can hear loud talking even from upstairs.

- Mezzanine room – people who usually sit there can be very disruptive and see it more as a social space.

- The large working room on the Mezzanine level.

- The Mezzanine garden area attracts noisy groups of friends.

- Mezzanine (where Natural Science books are), in particular, the big room with oval table, is very loud.

- The room just off the Mezzanine floor which overlooks the Master's lodge. It is such a nice space to work in the early hours of Sunday morning when it's empty but otherwise it's full of the same group of students who have practically moved in there and are inconsiderate of people trying to work in peace.

- There are often noisy students sitting behind the glass doors on the Mezzanine Floor, which means that the First Floor working space towards the Master's garden suffers from noise pollution.

- The Mezzanine room on the right with the big table is always occupied either by loud, annoying people who don't work, but talk and eat. If they're not in there, they leave so much food in there at all times that no one apart from that group of 'cool kids' can use that part of the Library.

- Sometimes I want to sit on Mezzanine level of the Library. There are loads of people talking and occupying it pretty much constantly. There don't seem to be any other areas of the Library which suffer from this problem.

Respondents were asked what actions they would take if they were interrupted by noise. Respondents were able to give multiple responses, hence the percentages do not necessarily tally to 100%.

- 51% would do nothing;

- 53% would leave the Library;

- 40% raise the problem with the person(s) causing the noise;

- 6.8% would raise it with Library staff;

- 0.9% would raise it with the Porters (e.g. outside staffed hours).

When respondents were asked whether their work is interrupted by noise, nearly one-half of the respondents (47% or n=222) said 'yes'.

Respondents were also asked about their preferred noise level when working in the Working Library.

50% (n=238) prefer 'silence';

44% (n=207) prefer 'subdued noise';

3.2% (n=15) has 'no restriction on noise';

2.8% (n=13) has 'no preference'.

Comment

The findings show very clearly that nearly 94% of the respondents prefer 'silence' or 'subdued' noise when in the Working Library. This finding is the same as four years ago when the same question was asked in the user survey; then, 93% of the respondents preferred 'silence' or 'subdued' noise when working in the Library. The results in both surveys indicate that most of the users are opposed to excessive noise while working in the Library. The noise level on Mezzanine Floor is clearly excessive and many students are being adversely affected by it.

Recommendation

Where the same group of Library users is constantly responsible for excessive noise on the Mezzanine Floor, they should, if possible, be separated and asked to work individually in different parts of the Library. If they refuse and continue to make excessive noise, their behavior should be reported to the Dean as a breach of Library Rules.

4.2. College members' preferences for using the Working Library

Respondents were asked to indicate their preferences regarding noise levels and desks when using the Working Library. Respondents were able to give multiple responses, hence the percentages do not necessarily tally to 100%.

- 79% (n=367) of the respondents prefer a quiet to a noisy part of the Library;

- 74% (n=345) prefer to sit at an individual desk space rather than communal table;

- 43% (n=199) choose a seat near books relevant to their subjects;

- 33.4% (n=155) choose a seat near to, or with, their friends;

- 16.3% (n=75) choose a seat near the printer/photocopier.

Comment

A majority of respondents (79%) prefer a quiet area to work/study as opposed to a noisy area in the Library. This finding corroborates the finding to the previous question with 94% of the respondents preferring 'silence' or 'subdued' noise while working in the Library. Most users clearly value quietness while working in the Library.

5. Facilities

5.1. Levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the current provision of equipment/facilities

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the Library's current provision of resources, equipment and facilities. Undergraduate and postgraduate respondents' views were similar (see Figures 13 and 14, respectively).

Figure 13 below shows undergraduate satisfaction with Library equipment and facilities. In descending order, more than two-thirds of undergraduate respondents are either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the wireless facilities (83%, n=230). This is followed by satisfaction with printing facilities (228, ie. 81.7%), book issue/return machine (227, ie. 81.6%), and individual desk space (225, ie. 80.9%). When considering the resource that attracts the 'very satisfied' response, the book issue/return machine stands out (129, ie. 46.4%). It is worth noting that despite the fairly high level of satisfaction with 'individual desk space', the highest level of dissatisfaction – albeit low - is also with 'individual desk space' (40, ie. 14.4%).
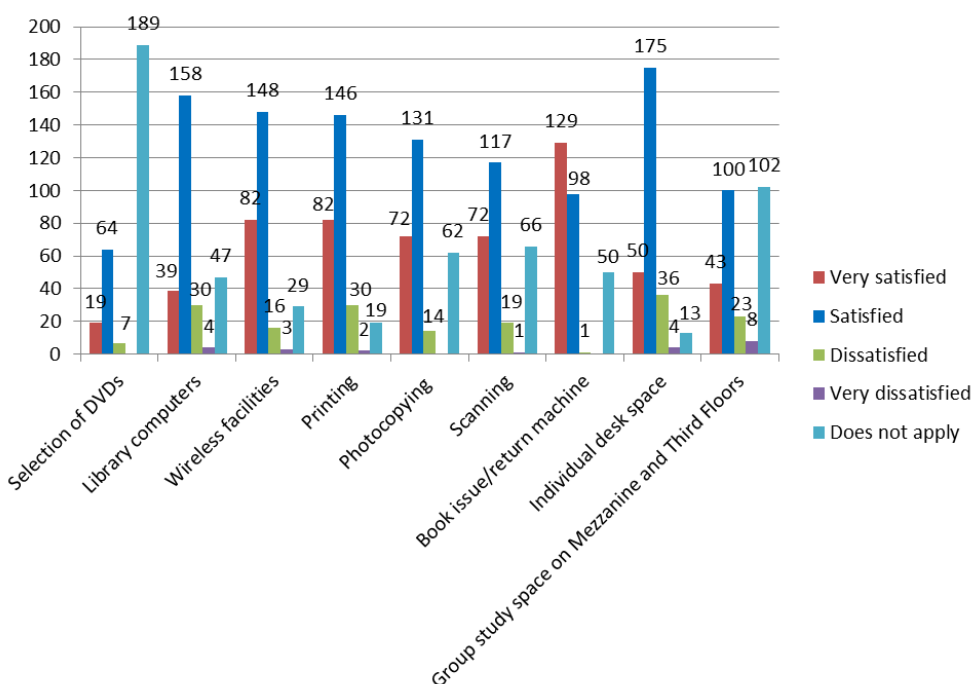

Figure 13. Undergraduate levels of satisfaction with Library equipment/facilities

Figure 14 shows that more than one-half of the postgraduate respondents are either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the wireless facilities (82, ie. 82%), followed by the book issue/return machine (82, ie. 80.4%), printing (81, ie. 80.2%), and individual desk space (81, ie. 79.4%). The resource that attracts the highest 'very satisfied' response is, again, the book issue/return machine (43, ie. 42.2%). The highest level of dissatisfaction – albeit low - is also with 'individual desk space' (17, ie. 16.7%).
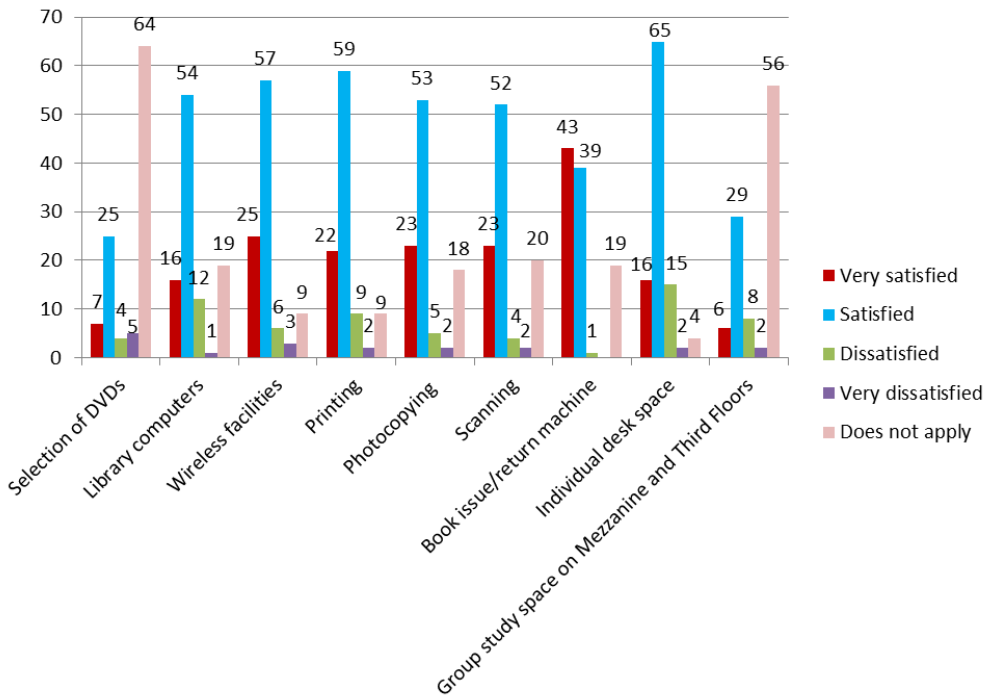

Figure 14. Postgraduate levels of satisfaction of Library equipment/facilities

Comment

There appears to be little difference between undergraduate and postgraduate levels of satisfaction with the Library equipment/facilities. Undergraduates are most satisfied with the wireless facilities, followed by printing, book issue/return machine, and individual desk space. They are least satisfied with individual desk space. Postgraduates are most satisfied with the wireless facilities, followed by book issue/return machine, printing and individual desk space. They are least satisfied with individual desk space. There is a slight difference between postgraduates and undergraduates in the sequencing of the top four most satisfied (undergraduates' top four most satisfied Library equipment/facilities being – wireless facilities, book issue/return machine, printing, and individual desk space). Although both undergraduates and postgraduates rated 'individual desk space' as one of the top four most satisfied Library facilities, the highest level of dissatisfaction for both groups – albeit low - is also with 'individual desk space'. This may be because respondents have difficulties finding an individual desk space that is quiet and in a preferred location.

In regard to the satisfaction levels of the selection of DVDs, 67.7% (n=189) of undergraduate respondents and 63.4% (n=64) of postgraduates said this 'does not apply' to them. This rather high 'does not apply' figure appears because respondents either are not aware of the DVD collection, or they do not need to borrow/use DVDs.

In terms of the satisfaction levels of group study space on Mezzanine and Third Floors, 37% of undergraduate respondents and 55% of postgraduate respondents claimed that this 'does not apply' to them. This 'does not apply' figure can be attributed to the fact the respondents prefer to work in individual work-space areas.

6. Changes in usage pattern of Library resources

6.1. Users' predicted changes in their future use of Library resources

Respondents were asked to predict how their use of learning resources might change going forward. Figure 15 below captures their predictions, chief among which is that respondents expect their use of all resources either to remain the same, or to increase. For every resource, the modal group indicates that their use of the resource will 'remain the same'. The second highest response predicts that their use of all resources 'will increase'.
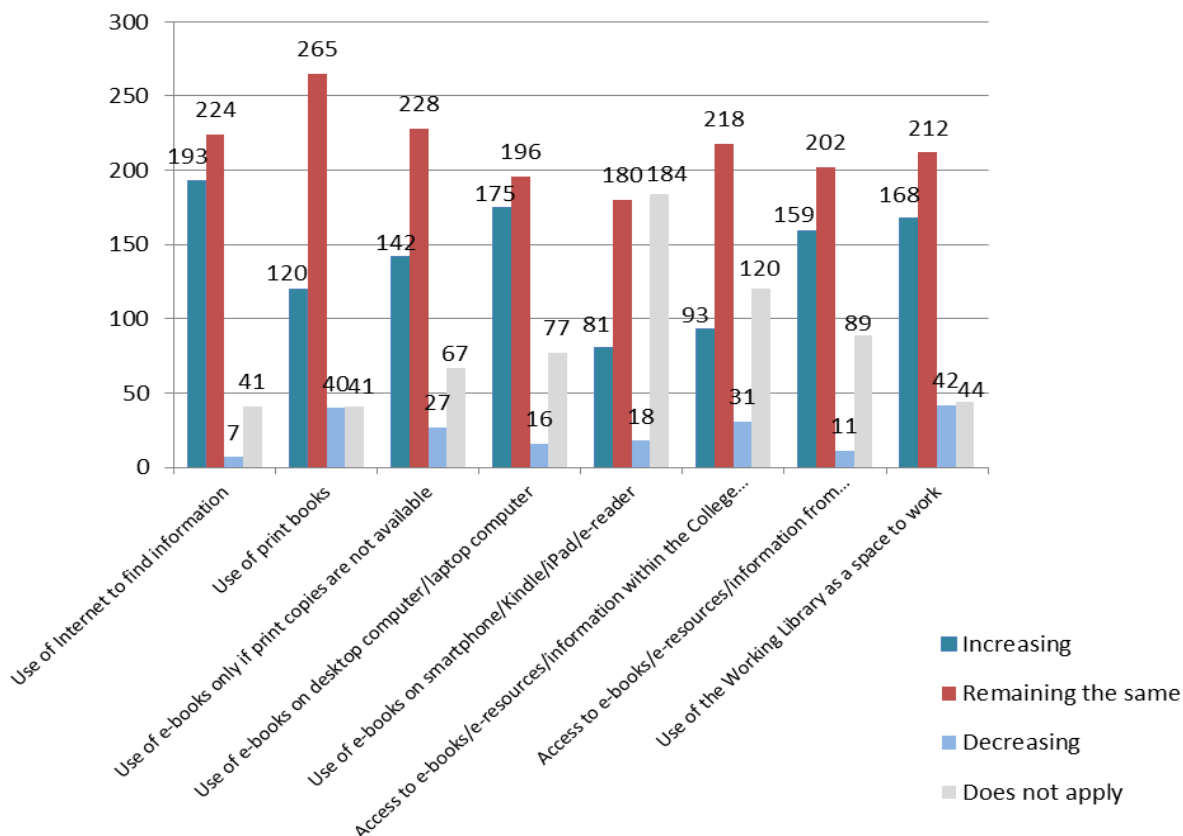

Figure 15. Possible change of Library resources usage

The largest group of respondents predicts that their use of learning resources will remain the same. This no-change applies to the following resources, in order – use of print books (57%), use of e-books if print copies are not available (49%), use of Internet to find information (48%), access to e-resources/e-books/information within the College Library building (47%), use of the Working Library as a space to work (45%), access to e-books/e-resources/information from home/office/other libraries (44%), and use of e-books on desktop computer/laptop computer (42%).

Respondents predicting their use of resources will increase, apply to the following: in descending order – use of Internet to find information (42%), use of e-books on desktop computer/laptop computer (38%), use of the Working Library as a space to work (36%), access to e-books/e-resources/information from home/office/other libraries (35%), use of e-books only if print copies are not available (31%), use of print books (26%), access to e-books/e-resources/information within the College Library building (20%), while only 17% predict their use of e-books on smartphone/Kindle/iPad/e-reader will increase.

Comment

Overall, respondents predicted that their use of all learning resources would either stay the same or increase.

Despite the availability of a wide selection of electronic books, nearly three-fifths of all respondents (57%) think they will continue to use print books; correspondingly, 49% of respondents said they will only use e-books if print copies are not available. The finding is similar to the user survey finding of 2013, when 58% of the respondents thought they would continue to use print books, and 49% of the respondents said they would only use e-books if print copies are not available. This suggests that print books are still, and will remain for the foreseeable future, the preferred source of learning resource among Library users.

In terms of future use of e-books on computers or mobile devices, a higher proportion of respondents predict an increased usage (38%) of e-books on desktop or laptop computers; whereas only 17% of respondents predict an increased usage of e-books on smartphone/Kindle/iPad/e-reader. This difference between use of e-books on computer as compared with mobile devices may be because desktop or laptop computers have larger screens which make the reading of e-books easier.

In regard to 'the use of e-books on mobile devices', such as smartphones/Kindles/iPads/e-readers, it was stated above that the number of respondents claiming this will 'not apply' to them (40%), outnumbers those who predict an increased usage (17%). This rather high 'does not apply' figure may be because respondents either do not own one of these mobile devices, or that they have difficulty downloading e-books on to them.

6.2. College members' preferred ways of being kept informed of Library news

Respondents were asked to rank their preferred ways of being kept informed of Library news, using a scale of 1 for 'Most used' and 6 for 'Least used.' Respondent preferences, in order, were – Notices in the Library (98%), followed by email (97%), and Library webpage (95%), while the least preferred method is twitter (44%).

Rank	Ways to be kept informed		
1	Notices in the Library	98%	Most preferred
2	Email	97%	
3	Library webpage	95%	
4	Information on plasma screen in foyer	88%	
5	Facebook	76%	
6	Twitter	44%	Least preferred

Table 3. Preferred ways to be kept informed

Comment

Despite the popularity of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, respondents overwhelmingly prefer more conventional methods of being keeping informed of Library news, such as notices posted in the Library and email. Currently, Library news is fragmented and partial in its circulation, with no regularity. It excludes book acquisitions, staff changes, new facilities and services. In future it is proposed that a regular Newsletter (for example, on a quarterly basis) be started with the aim of greater coverage of Library news and information, including the areas mentioned above. In addition the Newsletter could include scheduling and details of proposed new training programmes for users, such as skills to undertake searches, and referencing.

Recommendation

As a means of increasing College members' awareness of Library news and furthering their engagement in Library activities, a regular (quarterly) Library newsletter should be introduced. The newsletter could be sent to users via email and posted in the Library.

7. User satisfaction

7.1. User levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the Working Library as a work environment

Respondents were asked to express their levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with various aspects of the Library as a work environment. These aspects include overall cleanliness, cleanliness of toilets and carpets, the condition of desks and comfort of chairs, temperature and lighting.

As seen in Figure 16, the overall cleanliness of the Library drew the highest levels of 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' from respondents (96%). This is followed in descending order of 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' by the cleanliness of carpets (94%), the condition of desks and chairs (91%), comfort of chairs (86%), lighting (85%), cleanliness of toilets (83%), and temperature (83%). The two areas which drew most dissatisfaction were - temperature (14.5%), lighting (12%).
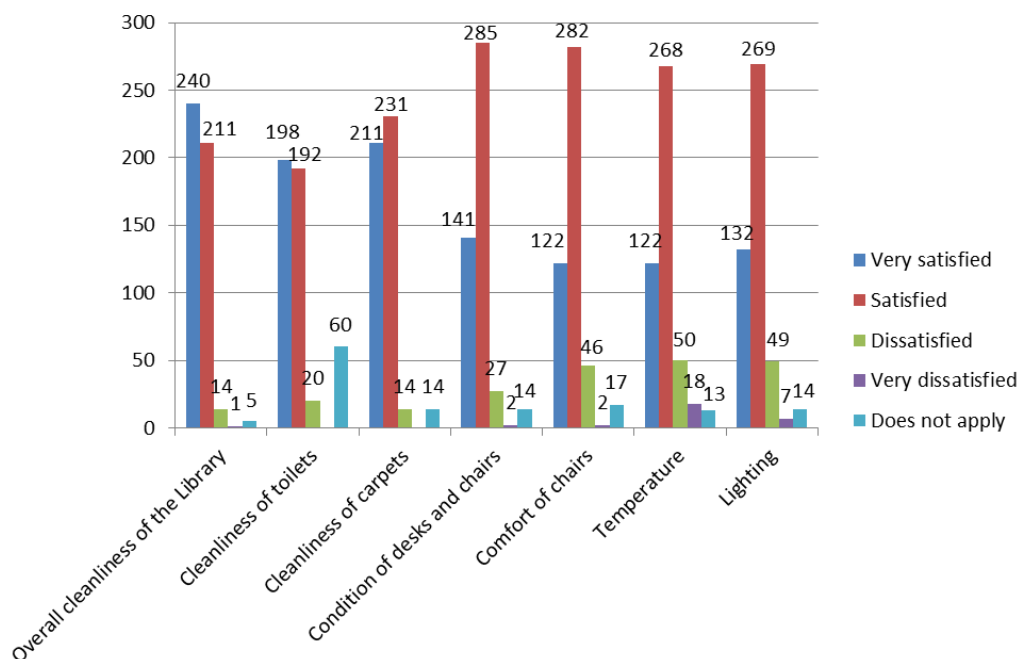

Figure 16. Levels of satisfaction with the Working Library as a work environment

The following comments on temperature are illustrative:

- It is often too hot in the library.

- I find the Library a bit too warm for my liking.

- The windows on the Third Floor computer room are a nightmare. In the winter, there is no way of closing them properly against the cold and throughout the year they make the room draughty.

- Please lower the temperature.

- Please turn the radiators down.

- Temperature could be raised a bit.

- The heating is not turned on at some work-spaces, hence too cold for me to do my work/revise/study.

- I find the first and second floors too hot, there is no option to turn off the radiators.

- The temperature is always too hot.

Typical comments on lighting are:

- More light needed on the Mezzanine Floor.

- Not light enough, I prefer daylight. At night good lighting is important to me.

- I prefer to work with natural light – often these seats are taken.

- Ground Floor especially the area where new periodicals are kept, which is so poorly lit as to be almost unusable.

Comments on chairs:

- I would like to see some comfy chairs installed.

- Lots of chairs have broken backs, making them very uncomfortable.

- Disabled, need comfortable seats.

- Some comfy chairs installed.

Comment

In the Library User Survey 2013, the two areas that drew most criticism were 'temperature' and 'lighting'. Respondents found the Library too cold to permit productive work. Low levels of light in many parts of the Library were also a problem, particularly during evenings and at night. Since then, the heating has been turned on twenty-four hours a day during winter months. New lighting has been fitted in the main (but not all) areas of all floors of the Library.

It is interesting to note that, in the recent survey, two of the three areas which respondents were most dissatisfied with are also 'temperature' and 'lighting'. Respondents found some areas of the Library too warm or too cold to work in. Some of the windows on Third Floor failed to close

properly, making the areas uncomfortable to work in when it is cold. Lighting in some parts of the Library is still insufficient, especially on Mezzanine Floor and in the periodical area.

Recommendations

- **Liaise with Maintenance Department to ensure that the heating is turned off during warm or hot days.**

- **Follow-up with Maintenance Department to replace all faulty windows on the Third Floor.**

- **A plan is in place to install new lighting on Ground Floor, Mezzanine Computer room, Seminar Room, and Audio-Visual Room.**

- **Identify better and more comfortable chairs for future purchase.**

- **Create more space for informal, comfortable seating.**

- **Check all current chairs to make sure they are in good condition.**

7.2. User levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the quality of service offered by Working Library staff

Respondents were asked to assess their levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the quality of service offered by the Working Library staff. These aspects include staff politeness, helpfulness, knowledge and expertise, and efficiency.

As indicated in Figure 17 below, respondents are 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the following characteristics of Working Library staff, in descending order – politeness (93%), helpfulness (91%), efficiency (86%), knowledge and expertise (83%).
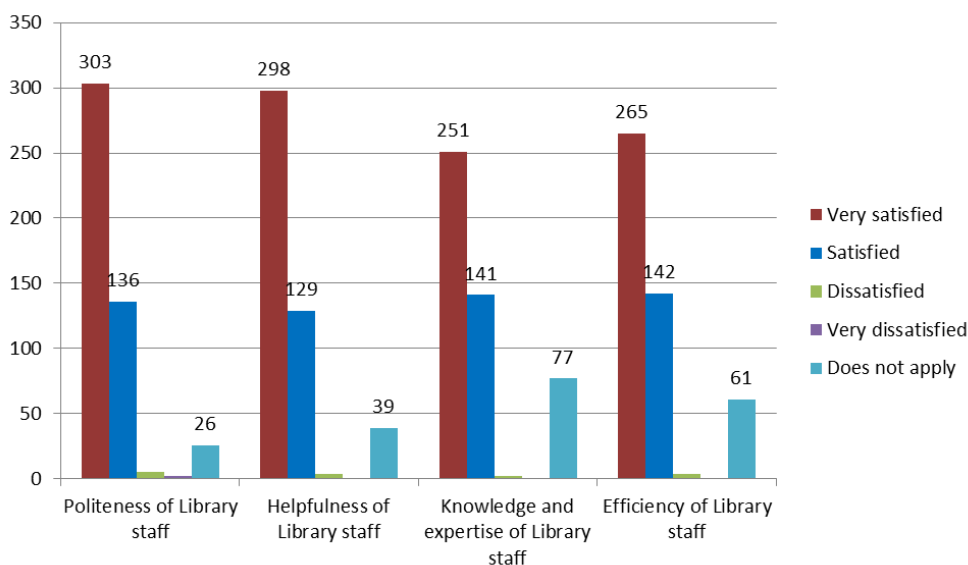

Figure 17. Levels of satisfaction with Library staff

<u>Comment</u>

Respondents expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the quality of service offered by the Working Library staff (all services between 83% and 93%). It is difficult to react to such a response other than to say that it is very reassuring.

7.3. Selected comments on improvements to services in the Working Library

<u>The following comments are illustrative:</u>

- More computers spaced throughout the Library.

- More communal areas where it is not necessary to be silent.

- It would be useful to have a planetary scanner for high volume text imaging.

- I often have to wait 5+ minutes for Windows to start on the computers. They are quite possibly the slowest computers to start that I have ever used. Could the startup times be improved?

- There should be another printer/copier on the ground floor as the current one regularly has a problem and one must then go to the 3rd floor.

- Many computers do not work and need replacing with newer models.

- More communal work-spaces.

- The windows on the top floor are very draughty and sometimes nearly impossible to close or open.

- The windows on the top floor computer room do not shut. There is a permanent, strong draft in the room and makes it extremely difficult to work and focus.

- It would greatly improve the efficiency of the library if the photocopy machines were checked every Friday night to assure they work well over the weekend.

- Please can we have UHT milk so that we can make tea.

- Seminar room facilities – better white boards, pens available, projector, etc.

- A relaxed reading space with comfortable chairs, etc.

- More information given on how to access to resources the library has.

- Please make the amount of time a book can be on loan longer. One week is too short as I use these books constantly. If there is a problem with prolonged loans preventing other students from accessing textbooks then the answer is to buy more of those textbooks.

8. **The Library departmental aim is:** *To provide a modern, efficient and welcoming Library service for all members of the College, and for all others with valid reasons to make use of the College's Library collections and facilities, so enabling the College to fulfil its statutory aims.*

Overall, as shown in Figure 18, user assessment of the degree to which the Library meets its departmental aim shows that nearly all respondents (462, ie. 98%) thought the Library meets its departmental aim either 'fully' or 'mostly'. This is clearly a very reassuring result for all concerned.
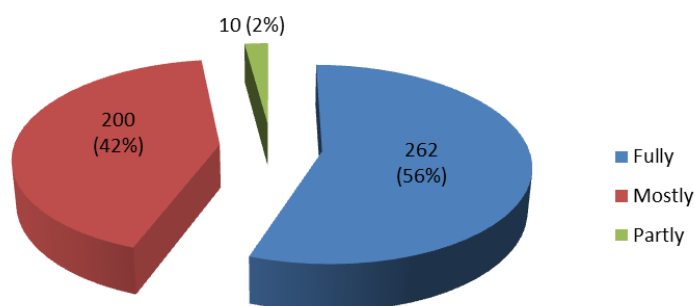

Figure 18. Degree to which the Library meets its departmental aim