

# LibQual+® Survey Summary 2012

## 1. Background

The LibQUAL+® Survey is an in-depth survey for library users developed by the American Research Libraries (ARL). It allows libraries to benchmark their results against each other. The survey is designed to measure perceptions of service quality and identify the gaps between desired, perceived and minimum service levels. It covers three main areas, the physical library, information resources and customer service.

The University of Leicester Library last conducted this survey in 2006. In 2011 we were one of seventeen UK academic libraries running the survey as part of the SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries) cohort. Ten of the cohort are from Russell Group and 1994 Group institutions. The survey ran between Monday 7 November and Monday 5 December 2011. The survey cannot be altered or customised, except for a limited number of additional questions, due to its use as a benchmarking tool.

Our thanks go to everyone who took the time to complete the survey and give their views. They also go to the Students' Union for their support with promoting the survey.

### Respondents

The survey was completed by just over one thousand respondents: 532 undergraduates, 326 postgraduates, 95 academic staff and 55 other staff. Of these 564 gave 866 additional free text comments about the library service. This is a response rate of 4%, compared with a cohort average of 7.3%. The response rate is lower than we would have liked, and we will consider the issue of incentivising participation in future surveys.

## 2. Overall Satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with the Library has improved, and we perform well against our benchmark partners. This is especially pleasing as both the minimum and desired expectations of our users have risen since 2006.

	Leicester 2006	Leicester 2011	Average for UK benchmark partners 2011
	Maximum points: 9		
With the way I am treated in the Library	7.21	<b>7.40</b>	7.36
With the level of support for learning, teaching and research	6.70	<b>7.23</b>	6.88
With the overall quality of the Library service	6.87	<b>7.36</b>	7.07

## 3. Frequency of Library Use

- 86% of the undergraduate respondents use resources within the Library daily or weekly, compared with 67% of postgraduates and 46% of academic staff.
- 83% of all respondents access library resources through a Library web page daily or weekly, and this level is stable across user groups

#### 4. Most Important Areas

The overall top five most important areas for users were:

- Making electronic resources available from home/office
- A Library website enabling me to locate information on my own
- Making information easily accessible for independent use
- Library staff who are consistently courteous
- Print and/or electronic journal collections I require

Nor surprisingly for undergraduates the physical library was in the top five with adequacy of service hours and the library as a haven for study, learning or research included.

#### 5. Library as Place

As anticipated following the substantial investment in the Library building, satisfaction with the Library as place overall has significantly improved since 2006. In particular we exceed postgraduates' expectations in terms of an inspiring space and space for group study.

	Leicester 2006	Leicester 2011	Average for UK benchmark partners 2011
	Maximum points: 9		
A space that inspires study and learning	5.95	<b>6.80</b>	6.28
Providing a quiet space for individual work	6.44	<b>6.62</b>	6.60
Being a comfortable and inviting location	6.14	<b>7.50</b>	6.83
Being a haven for study, learning or research	6.30	<b>6.88</b>	6.60
Space for group learning and group study	6.03	<b>6.94</b>	6.64

However, we cannot be complacent. Further analysis indicates that we do not meet expectations of the Library as a quiet space for individual study for postgraduates and staff. In addition, perhaps as a consequence of the Library's popularity, the free text comments elicited 174 comments about the Library building and environment. The bulk of requests wanted more and better PCs, 50 felt the Library was too noisy and 48 that the Library was generally overcrowded. For the Library' response please see section 11.

#### 6. Customer Services

Overall, as was the case for the comparator libraries, users ranked the library staff and their performance as being overall satisfactory and greater than the minimum level of service required.

	Leicester 2006	Leicester 2011	Average for UK benchmark partners 2011
	Maximum points: 9		
Library staff who instil confidence in users	6.75	<b>7.14</b>	6.68
Giving users individual attention	6.48	<b>6.68</b>	6.10
Library staff who are consistently courteous	7.42	<b>7.68</b>	7.32
Readiness to respond to users' queries	7.37	<b>7.44</b>	7.25
Library staff who have the knowledge to answer user' queries	7.31	<b>7.51</b>	7.28
Library staff who deal with users in a caring fashion	7.05	<b>7.53</b>	7.17

Library staff who understand the needs of their users	7.09	<b>7.28</b>	7.06
Willingness to help users	7.29	<b>7.57</b>	7.21
Dependability in handling users' service problems	7.18	<b>7.07</b>	6.99

However, respondents feel that Library staff are not handling problems as well as in 2006, and this was highlighted by both undergraduate and postgraduate students. For the Library' response please see section 11.

### 7. Information Resources

The continued investment in electronic resources, the redesign of the Library web pages and the introduction of the Library search engine, has helped the Library improve from the 2006 position, when we were not meeting minimum expectations.

	Leicester 2006	Leicester 2011	Average for UK benchmark partners 2011
	Maximum points: 9		
Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office	6.74	<b>7.16</b>	6.94
A Library website enabling me to locate information on my own	6.94	<b>7.21</b>	7.06
Providing the printed materials I need for my work	6.62	<b>6.78</b>	6.67
Providing the e-resources I need	6.79	<b>6.81</b>	6.80
Easy to use tools that allow me to find things on my own	6.91	<b>7.22</b>	7.06
Making information easily accessible for independent use	6.98	<b>7.10</b>	7.11
Print and/or electronic journal collections I require for my work	6.73	<b>6.98</b>	6.87

We are now pleased that we are meeting expectations of undergraduates and postgraduates. However, we are still failing to meet the requirements of staff, as apart from the provision of print materials we do not meet minimum expectations. For the Library' response please see section 11.

### 8. Information Literacy

The Library has improved in all aspects and also performs above the bench mark average.

	Leicester 2006	Leicester 2011	Average for UK benchmark partners 2011
	Maximum points: 9		
The Library helps me stay abreast of my field	5.95	<b>6.40</b>	6.11
The Library aids my advancement in my academic discipline	6.66	<b>7.33</b>	7.00
The Library enables me to be more efficient in my academic pursuits	6.58	<b>7.11</b>	6.92
The Library helps me distinguish between trustworthy and untrustworthy information	5.61	<b>6.08</b>	5.92
The Library provides me with the information skills I need to do my work or study	6.14	<b>6.96</b>	6.45

## 9. Local Questions Summary

Our survey contained five questions that we chose to include. Not all benchmark partners contained these, and one of them was not previously used in 2006.

	Leicester 2006	Leicester 2011	Average for UK benchmark partners 2011
	Maximum points: 9		
Adequate hours of service	7.59	<b>8.17</b>	7.16
Availability of subject specialist assistance	N/A	<b>6.76</b>	6.41
Making me aware of library services	6.55	<b>7.23</b>	6.46
Teaching me to how access, evaluate and use information	6.46	<b>6.94</b>	7.53
Timely fulfilment of reserve requests/holds	6.98	<b>6.84</b>	7.21

Our opening hours are clearly much appreciated by Library users.

We are currently not meeting users' expectations concerning the speed with which held books requests are supplied. Satisfaction has dropped since 2006 and undergraduates rated the service even lower than the average, at 6.40. For the Library' response please see section 11.

## 10. Conclusion

The LibQUAL+® Survey has enabled us to update our understanding of how students and staff rate the University Library, the services and the staff. Benchmarking has shown that in many areas we perform better than our benchmark comparators.

Our top five strengths were:

- Adequacy of opening hours
- Space for group learning and group study
- Making the user aware of library services
- Library staff who deal with users in a caring fashion
- A comfortable and inviting location

However, we cannot be complacent as the analysis shows that expectations are rising too. We realise that there are some areas where we are not meeting our users' current expectations and our responses to these are given below.

Our top five weaknesses were:

- Providing the electronic resources needed
- Quiet space for individual work
- Timely fulfilment of holds requests
- Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office
- Providing the print and/or electronic journal collections required

## 11. Our Response

### Information resources

- We have prioritised investment in materials over the past years including buying thousands of eBooks and 70+ new journals for 2012. We plan to continue to make this our priority.
- We are conducting an exercise with each College to review the journal collections.
- We will review the Library website during summer 2012 to make further improvements.
- We will work with IT Services to try and simplify authentication to Library resources

### Customer Service

- We are undertaking a review of the holds/reservation service, with implementation of any changes planned for Autumn 2012.
- There will be further training for staff focusing upon handling problems
- We will establish a 'Book A Librarian' service to improve access to specialist subject support.

### Library as Place

- We are carrying out a review of the study environment in relation to noise, implementing changes for the summer exam period 2012.
- ITS are replacing all the PCs in the PC Zones this summer.
- We are planning to introduce a netbook loan scheme within the Library in Autumn 2012.
- We are talking to the University about the longer-term provision of a Researcher Reading Room, in the Library and social learning space beyond the Library.

If you have any comments please contact the Library

Email: [library@le.ac.uk](mailto:library@le.ac.uk)

Phone: 0116 252 2043

Louise Jones  
Director of Library Services  
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