

Library Client Survey 2008

The University Library conducted a Library Client Survey in September 2008. This survey is one of a regular series conducted by Insync Surveys (formerly Rodski Survey Research) for a number of Australian and New Zealand University libraries. The UTAS Library has run these surveys in 2001, 2004, and 2006 and now in 2008.

The survey provides useful information about what is important to Library clients and how well the Library is performing. It allows the Library to compare the results against our performance in previous years, and against other libraries that use the Insync Survey tool.

What is important for Library clients?

The survey statements that were rated top three in importance were:

- 1. Library staff are friendly and helpful*
- 2. Access to electronic resources is easily available*
- 3. The Library collection is adequate for my needs*

Two of these, the Library collection and the staff, rated in the top three in importance in the 2006 survey.

How is the Library performing?

The survey statements that were rated top three for performance were:

- 1. Library staff treat me fairly and without discrimination*
- 2. Library staff display professionalism*
- 3. Library staff are friendly and helpful*

These were also the top three items in the 2006 survey. Seven of the top 10 performance statements in the 2008 survey relate to Library staff. Clients were asked to comment on the Library and 11.9% of the comments related to Library staff – 95% of those comments were positive statements about the quality of staff and their helpfulness, friendliness and eagerness to assist.

Four of the top 10 performance statements appeared in the top 10 importance list. They were *Library staff treat me fairly and without discrimination; Library staff are friendly and helpful; Library staff provide clear and accurate answers/responses to my queries; and The Library website is easy to use.*

Areas of lowest performance (although each scored over 4 out of 7) were:

1. *Access to computers to support study/research is adequate* (lowest score, lower than in 2006 when it was also the lowest score)
2. *Library staff keep me informed about new services, resources and collections*
3. *Group study facilities are adequate*

The lowest performing category was Facilities & Equipment. This is attributable to the low scores relating to access to computers, adequacy of group and quiet study facilities, adequacy of individual seating, and facilities for using personal laptops.

Client comments about access and numbers of computers were overwhelmingly (85%) negative. Clients made 653 comments in this category – second only behind the number of positive comments about staff.

Where are the most important areas for improvement?

The most important areas for improvement are those where clients perceive a significant difference between importance and performance. For example, 2 of the 10 lowest performance statements appeared in the top 10 most important statements (*Library collection is adequate for my needs; and Course-specific resources are easy to find and access*). In these instances, client needs are not being met and the Library needs to take action to address the discrepancies.

The survey also measures gaps between importance and performance scores. Gap scores of 2.0 or higher are considered significant. The 2008 survey has two statements with overall gaps greater than 2.0 – *Access to computers* and *Adequacy of the collection*. None of the 2006 overall gap scores were greater than 1.74.

The areas with the greatest gaps – and therefore the most important areas for improvement are:

1. *Access to computers to support study/research is adequate* (gap score 2.06, up from 1.73 in 2006)

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2. *The Library collection is adequate for my needs* (gap score 2.01, up from 1.74 in 2006)
Library clients ranked adequacy of the collection #3 in importance so the gap here is particularly significant.
3. *Individual seating is adequate* (gap score 1.94, up from 1.04 in 2006)

Adequacy of opening hours no longer appears among the top 10 gaps overall – most likely a result of the extended weekend opening hours in Morris Miller and Launceston libraries in 2008 that the Library introduced after the 2006 survey.

However if we view the results by Campus/Branch Library then there are some significant gaps of 2.0 or above which represent areas for potential improvement:

1. *Access to computers to support study/research is adequate*
Identified as a significant gap in the Clinical Library (2.41), Launceston Campus Library (2.08), Law Library (2.17), and Morris Miller Library (2.37).
In 2006, this statement was a significant gap in the Clinical Library (2.62), the Music Library (2.43) and the Law Library (2.34).
2. *The Library collection is adequate for my needs*
Identified as a significant gap at the Cradle Coast Campus (2.72) and Music Library (2.44).
In 2006, this statement was also a significant gap for these locations – Cradle Coast Campus (2.76) and Music (3.06).
3. *Group study facilities are adequate*
Identified as a significant gap for the Clinical Library (2.08) and the Law Library (2.05).
4. *Quiet study facilities are adequate*
Identified as a significant gap for the Cradle Coast Campus (2.12), reflecting already documented noise problems in the new building.
5. *Facilities for using personal laptops are adequate*
Opening hours meet my needs
Identified as significant gaps by Law Library clients, ranking facilities for using personal laptops (2.15) and opening hours (2.03).
6. *The Library collection is adequate for my needs*
Identified as a significant gap by Music Library clients (2.00). In 2006 Music Library clients had identified a gap of 2.22 for this statement.

Client comments were categorised by Insync into thematic areas. The top 5 themes included 3 areas of negative comments - about the number of and access

to computers, number of group study facilities and noise and crowding of the environment.

What can be done to improve in these areas?

These areas had significant overall gaps (greater than 2.00) or were amongst the lowest scores for performance but in the highest for importance.

The Library collection is adequate for my needs

- During 2008 approximately 11,500 books were added to the Library's collections and 106 journal subscriptions were begun. Almost all new subscriptions were electronic journals.
- During 2008 several major purchases added large numbers of journals and electronic books to the collection, for example *JSTOR Arts & Sciences V and VI*, *JSTOR Life science*, *Safari techbooks*.
- During 2008 a working party of Library staff examined increasing the number of electronic books in the Library's collections. Ebooks can often be used by several clients simultaneously, are accessible 24/7 from on and off-campus and have the potential to significantly increase access to book content. Several major purchases were made and work will continue in 2009 to develop mechanisms to increase the collection, promotion and use of electronic books in the Library's collections.
- In 2009 the Library will establish a mechanism and policies for clients to access material held in the CAVAL CARM store in Melbourne. The store is a high-density climate controlled print repository, housing a shared collection of close to one million volumes of archive and research material for University Libraries. Requested material will be delivered electronically to the client.
- The Library has developed a methodology for assessing the strength of our collections in a specific subject area and then allocating funds to address any gaps. In 2009 the Library's Education collection will be assessed.
- The Faculty of Education has generously indicated it plans to give the Library \$20,000 in 2009 to assist in building the Education collection across all 3 major campuses in a balanced way.

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- The Library has developed a web form that allows all Library clients – students and staff – to suggest specific items for purchase by the Library. The form is now available on the Library’s website and from within the Library’s catalogue.
- At the Cradle Coast Campus, the Library has recently improved facilities to provide for a quicker turnaround of items on loan.

Course-specific resources are easy to find and access

- Subject guides to Library resources in specific areas were re-formatted at the end of 2008 and now include a wider range of resources. The new guides support tagging of content, integration with social bookmarking sites, are available directly from Facebook, allow for RSS feeds and other Web 2.0 content formats like podcasts and videos, and allow for user interaction in the form of polls, comments and ratings.
- During 2009 the Library will be investigating ways of providing access to Library resources and services from within MyLO units.
- The Library’s 2009 plan includes
 - investigating the creation of online unit reading lists, for online and off-campus units, with links to electronic versions of reading list items
 - delivering information skills and training information into each MyLO unit
 - investigating opportunities to increase the visibility of Library services in MyLO
- During 2009 improved online assistance will be available to assist clients in finding their way to information.

Access to computers to support study/research is adequate

- Student computers in UTAS libraries are supplied and funded by the University, rather than the Library, and we have not been able to increase the overall numbers of computers.
- Information Technology Resources (ITR) is assessing the usage patterns of student computers so they can be located to best

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advantage. Inveresk Learning Hub computers were rarely used and have already been relocated to the AMC and Launceston libraries.

- The Library's 2009 plan includes
 - investigating the establishment of a pool of lendable laptops in the Library.
- ITR are assessing business models for leasing a laptop to each student and the Library will be monitoring developments.
- An increasing number of clients bring their own laptops to the Library and we will be taking their needs into account in planning refurbishment projects in the Science, Law, Clinical and Morris Miller libraries in 2009. During 2008 wireless access and provision for plugging in laptops was increased in Morris Miller Library Level 4.

Individual seating is adequate

- In 2009 the Library will be planning refurbishment projects in the Science, Law and Clinical libraries which will include provision for individual seating. We hope to be able to refurbish Morris Miller Library Level 2 in 2009 and 50 additional individual seats will be created in this project. The refurbishment of Level 4 in 2008 included 60 seating spaces.
- Improvements in wireless access mean that clients with their own laptops can now access Library resources from outside Library buildings, for example, from nearby buildings and cafes.

In specific branches, these additional areas of concern were identified:

Group study facilities are adequate

Clinical Library and the Law Library

The Clinical Library refurbishment proposal will include improved group study facilities. The Law Library refurbishment proposal will include larger tables for group study.

Quiet study facilities are adequate

Cradle Coast Campus

The Cradle Coast Campus Learning Hub was designed as a vibrant centre for student life on the campus. If students are unable to find a quiet place in the Learning Hub to study, or all the rooms are booked, staff at the Reception or Library Service Desk will try to find them a vacant quiet space elsewhere in the building.

Facilities for using personal laptops are adequate

Opening hours meet my needs

Law Library clients

The Law Library refurbishment proposal will include the provision of more power points, and the location of power points in the individual seating that will replace the existing study carrels on Level 1.

Library opening hours are reviewed each year and the survey results and Law Library comments will be considered in that process.

The Library collection is adequate for my needs

Music Library clients

The Art/Music Librarian works with the Conservatorium's academics to develop the Library's music collection. Most purchase requests come from academic staff members.

In 2008:

- 9.18% of the Library's Arts Faculty money (i.e. \$9,020.53) was spent on purchases for the Conservatorium of Music (the figure was 14.76% in 2007)
- 5.35% of the Library's high use materials money (i.e \$12,811.51) was spent on Music material (the figure was 12.17% in 2007)
- 68.07% of the Library's reference fund (i.e. \$58,570.81) was spent on Music, principally on purchasing *Classical Scores Library*, a database of almost 10,000 classical scores, representing the major composers and spanning all genres and time periods from the Western classical canon.

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In 2007, the Library purchased *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart : allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik* – a major music reference work in 27 volumes.

During 2009 the Art/Music Librarian will work closely with the Conservatorium academic staff to identify specific areas of the collection that need attention.

How does the UTAS Library compare with other libraries and with previous surveys?

UTAS Library's overall score was in the top 25% of the 40 other university libraries that had completed client satisfaction surveys. This was a slight increase on 2006 results.

UTAS Library was in the top 25% of university libraries in the categories of Service Quality, Service Delivery and Library Staff.

All survey categories are in the top 50% when benchmarked against the other university libraries. Two of the six categories (Service Quality and Service Delivery) have higher performance scores than in 2006. The other four scores are very close to the 2006 figures.

The 2008 survey results are drawn from a much larger sample than last time. The 2422 responses received was above-average compared to other Australian university libraries and much higher than the 1271 responses received in 2006.

The average satisfaction score for UTAS Library was 5.43 out of 7 (up slightly from 5.39 in 2006). The average quality score for UTAS Library was 5.53 out of 7 (up from 5.47 in 2006). These scores place UTAS Library very close to the top 25% of other libraries that have completed the survey in the last 2 years.

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